

**M.A. Semester – II
HISTORY**

**Course Code: HIST 222
Course Credit: 06 (Core)**

History of Medieval India (13th to 18th Centuries)

Units: 1 to 20

By: Dr. Naveen Vashishta



**Centre for Distance and Online Education
Himachal Pradesh University
Summer Hill, Shimla, 171005**

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NEW CBCS SYLLABUS
History of Medieval India (13th to 18th Centuries)

Core Course-HIST 222

Second Semester

Course Description

This course provides an overview of the history of India from 13 to 18 Centuries and question over how this period can be situated in the larger history of India. The course analyses the different historiographical interpretations of the period. It will broadly focus on the politics and major events in the history of the Slave Khalji, Tughluq, Vijaynagar, Balmani, Mughal and Maratha regimes. It examines the factors which influenced and shaped the internal and external decisions and policies of the regional powers besides Delhi sultans and the Mughals. Will also acquaint students with the changes took place in state sed administrative apparet. Will discover the multiple connection of power that shaped Muslim society and the heterogeneous nature of medieval society. It will look at the political changes that shaped regions during end of 17th and begining of the 18th century

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to

- a. Familiar with the different kinds of sources available for writing himories of this period
- b. Assess the appearance of the Delhi utarates and the Mughals and to learn about their origin and antecedents
- c. Have a determined grasp on the politics and major events
- d. Appreciate the dynamic changes that are not solely centred on the role of political masters based in Delhi
- e. Explain the crisis of the Delhi saltanate, Regional kingdoms, and the Mughal empire
- f. Acquaint that regional frontiers were always permeable, and the shaping and reshaping of regions was the result of constant interactions within and outside

UNIT-I

1. Characterizing Medieval India, survey of sources. The Arabs, the Ghamavids and Ghorids in the north-
2. Foundation and consolidation of the Delhi sultan, mamluk rulers, problems of legitimacy, Khalji revolution, expansion, consolidation and innovative measures of Khaljis and Tughlaqs
3. Rise of Mongol in central Asia, conquests & expansion: Mongol policies of Delhi sultan, Deccan policy of Aladdin Khalji and Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq

UNIT-II

4. The regional powers: Characteristics features of the regional states in north India, Malwa, Jaunpur, Rajputana and Gujrat

5. Rise of independent kingdoms: Establishment & consolidation of Bahmani and Vijaynagar, inter conflict. The greatness and achievement of Vijaynagar Empire; conflict between fagis and dakinta in Bahmani kingdo
6. Timur's invasion and downfall of the Delhi sultanate

UNIT-III

7. Lodi Empire, first battle of Panipat and establishment of Mughal Empire, Humayun's difficulties
8. Emergence of Sher Shah and his administration
9. Consolidation of Mughal Empire under Akbar, rajputs policies of Akbar and Jahangir, Mughals Deccan policies

UNIT-IV

10. Mughal State: Abul Farl's concept of monarchy, experiment of din-i-lahi and its critique, Mughal Rajput relation in the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries
11. War of succession, Aurangzeb's Rajput and Deccan policy; agrarian crisis and unrest: revolts of Ian Samamis and Sikhs; interpretations of the Mughal decline
12. Emergence of regional powers in 18 century, rise of the Maratha power, Shivaji & his administration

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Ray Chaudhuri, T. and Irfan Habib (eds.) The Cambridge Economic History of India, New Delhi: Longman, 1982

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Suggested Readings

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UNIT-1

CHARACTERIZING MEDIEVAL INDIA: SURVEY OF SOURCES

Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Objectives
- 1.3 Characterizing Medieval India
 - 1.3.1 Early Medieval Period
 - 1.3.2 Late Medieval Period
 - 1.3.3 Early Modern Period

Self-Check Exercise-1

- 1.4 Survey of Sources
 - 1.4.1 Sources of Sultanate Period
 - 1.4.2 Sources of the Mughal Period

Self-Check Exercise-2

- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 Glossary
- 1.7 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 1.8 Suggested Readings
- 1.9 Terminal Questions

1.1 Introduction

The term medieval has been derived from the Latin words '*medius*' and '*aevum*' which means Middle Age. Medieval India is the phase of the Indian subcontinent that lies between the ancient and the medieval period. It is related to the time period between the 6th century, after the fall of the Gupta Empire, and the 18th century i.e. the beginning of colonial domination. For the convenience of studying the state and society of medieval India, historians usually divide the medieval period into the **Early Medieval Period (700-1200 CE)** and **Late Medieval Period (1200-1707 CE)**. According to them the early medieval period refer to the phase of Indian history that stretches from the fall of the Gupta Empire to the beginning of the Sultanate period in the 13th century. The period that comprises mainly that of the reigns of the Sultanate and the Mughal period is generally considered as the late medieval period, certainly with regional variations. The medieval period is an important period in Indian history because of the developments in the field of art and

languages, culture and religion. This period also witnessed the impact of other religions on the Indian culture.

1.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the meaning of the term ‘medieval India’,
- Know about the early and late medieval Indian period,
- Examine the characteristics of the early modern period,
- Discuss the sources of Delhi Sultanate period,
- Describe the sources of the Mughal period of Indian history.

1.3 Characterizing Medieval India

The use of "medieval" as a term for periods in Indian history has often been objected to, and is probably becoming rarer. It is argued that neither the beginning nor the end of the period really denotes basic changes in Indian history, comparable to the European equivalents. Burton Stein still used the concept in referring to the period from the Guptas to the Mughals, but most of the recent authors using it are Indian. Plausibly, they often specify the period they cover within their titles

1.3.1 Early Medieval India

The start of the early medieval period is typically taken to be the gradual decline of the Gupta Empire from about 480 to 550 CE, ending the "classical" period, as well as "ancient India". According to Romila Thapar, another alternative for the preceding period is "Early Historical" stretching from the 6th century BCE to the 6th century CE. Early medieval period was earlier considered by historians as a ‘dark phase’ because during this time India was divided into numerous regional states which were in conflict with each other. But recent studies have indicated that, although India was divided politically yet it witnessed a growth of new and rich cultural activities in the fields of art, literature and language. In fact, some best specimens of temple architecture and Indian literature belong to this period. Thus, far from being ‘dark’ it may be treated as a bright and vibrant phase of Indian history.

In Northern India, at least, there was no larger state until the Delhi Sultanate, or certainly the Mughal Empire, but there were a number of different dynasties ruling large areas for long periods, along with many other dynasties ruling smaller areas, often paying some form of tribute to larger states. According to John Keay, the number of dynasties within the subcontinent at any one time was between 20 and 40.

- (i) Pallava dynasty, rulers of Telugu and some Tamil areas who ruled from the 3rd to 9th centuries.
- (ii) Harsha’s Empire which controlled almost the whole of Northern India from 601 to 647 CE, under Harsha of the Vardhana dynasty.
- (iii) Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty which was the last largest dynasty of Northern India that ruled from the 6th century to 11th century CE.
- (iv) Chalukya dynasty which ruled most of the Western Deccan and some parts of South India, between the 6th to 12th century CE.

- (v) Rashtrakuta dynasty ruling large parts of the Indian subcontinent between the 6th and the 10th centuries CE.
- (vi) Eastern Chalukyas, a South Indian Kannada-Telugu dynasty whose kingdom was located in present-day Andhra Pradesh. They ruled between 7th and 12th centuries CE.
- (vii) Pala Empire, which ruled from the 8th to 12th CE centuries in Bengal. They briefly controlled most of North India in the 9th century CE.
- (viii) Chola Empire, a South Indian empire that ruled from Tamil Nadu from the 9th century to 13th century CE.
- (ix) Western Chalukya Empire of the Western Deccan and some part of South India that ruled between the 10th to 12th centuries CE.
- (x) Kalachuri dynasty, ruled areas in Central India between 10th and 12th centuries CE.
- (xi) Western Ganga dynasty of Karnataka that ruled from 350 to 1000 CE.
- (xii) Eastern Ganga dynasty ruling Odisha region who were descendants of Kannada Western Ganga Dynasty and Tamil Chola Empire.
- (xiii) Hoysala Empire that ruled most of the modern day state of Karnataka between the 10th and the 14th centuries CE.
- (xiv) Kakatiya Kingdom that ruled most of current day Andhra Pradesh from 1083 to 1323 CE.
- (xv) The Sena dynasty of Bengal that ruled through the 11th and 12th centuries CE.
- (xvi) Kamarupa, 4th to 12th century in Assam, ruled by three dynasties viz Varman dynasty, Mlechchha dynasty, Pala dynasty (Kamarupa).

1.3.2 Late Medieval Period

This period follows the Muslim conquests of the Indian subcontinent and the decline of Buddhism, the subsequently founding of the Delhi Sultanate and the creation of Indo-Islamic architecture, followed by the world's major trading nation, the Bengal Sultanate.

- (i) Chero dynasty, ruled from the 12th to 18th century CE, ruled over parts of Eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand.
- (ii) Delhi Sultanate, whose five dynasties ruled from 1206 to 1526 CE.
- (iii) Reddy Kingdom which ruled from 1325 to 1448 CE, in Andhra Pradesh.
- (iv) Bengal Sultanate ruled over Bengal and Burma from 1352 to 1576 CE.
- (v) Yadava dynasty ruled a kingdom stretching from the Tungabhadra to the Narmada river from 1190 to 1315 CE.
- (vi) Vijayanagara Empire based in Karnataka ruled from 1336 to 1646 CE in the Deccan Plateau region.
- (vii) Gajapati Empire ruled from 1434 to 1541 CE over Kalinga (the present day Odisha).
- (viii) Rajput states that ruled Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttaranchal, Himachal Pradesh, Western Uttar Pradesh and Central Uttar Pradesh.

1.3.3 Early Modern Period

The beginning of the Mughal Empire in 1526 CE marked the commencement of the early modern period of Indian history or the Mughal era. Sometimes, the Mughal era is also referred as the 'late medieval' period.

- (i) Nayaka dynasties of Kannada, Telugu and Tamil kings that ruled parts of South India after the decline of the Vijayanagara Empire in 1646 CE.
- (ii) Kingdom of Mysore, was a Kannada kingdom have been founded in 1399 CE in the vicinity of the modern city of Mysore.
- (iii) Mughal Empire founded by Babur which ruled most of the Indian subcontinent from the 16th to 18th century CE, though it lingered for another century, formally ending in 1857 CE.
- (iv) Maratha Empire based in modern-day Maharashtra in Western India that ruled from 1674 to 1818 CE. Marathas replaced the Mughal rule over large parts of India in the 18th century.
- (v) Bharatpur State was a Jat kingdom that was founded in 1722 CE around the modern city of Bharatpur.
- (vi) Sikh Empire was a major power in the North-Western part of the Indian subcontinent that ruled from 1799 to 1849 CE, which arose under the leadership of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the Punjab region.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 What do you understand by the term medieval India?
- Q.2 What is the early and late medieval period?
- Q.3 What do you mean by the early modern period?

1.4 Survey of Sources

1.4.1 Sources of Sultanate Period

A large number of contemporary sources survive till date that helps us in the reconstruction of the period of Delhi Sultanate.

1. Literary Sources

Arabic and Persian Sources: Abu Raihan Alberuni, **Kitab-ul-Hind** English translation by E.C. Sachau, **Alberuni's India:** It provides a valuable knowledge of the society and culture of Indian people during the 11th century.

Ali Kufi, **Chachnama, 1216-17 CE:** It is a Persian version of early 8th century Arabic work which primarily deals with Arab conquest of Sind (712 CE) and contemporary rulers of Sind.

Fakhr i Mudabbir, **Adab ul Harb wa Shuja'at, 1228 CE:** It deals mainly with the art of warfare.

Alauddin Ata Malik Juwaini, **Tarikh-i-Jahankusha:** It is an important account of the Mongols from the time of the rise of Chengiz Khan. It gives information on Chengiz Khan's pursuit against Jalaluddin Mangbarni in the cis-Indus region.

Nizam ul Mulk Tusi, **Siyasatnama**: It is a detail account of the institution of slave-household, their training etc. during the rule of early Turkish Sultans.

Sadrudin Hasan Nizami, **Taj-ul-Maasir**: It is the first official account of the Delhi Sultanate. It deals with the campaigns of Muizuddin Muhammad Sam, Qutbuddin Aibek and Iltutmish. It covers the period from 1191 to 1229 CE.

Minhaj-us-Siraj, **Tabaqat-i-Nasiri**: Minhaj held the posts of qazi, khatib, sadr-i-jahan and principal of Nasiriya madrasa. Tabaqat begins from the account of Prophet and terminates at Nasiruddin Mahmud (1266 CE). It is the most authentic source for the study of early Turkish dynasties. It provides a comprehensive study on campaigns, Sultans, maliks, amirs and ulemas etc.

Amir Khusrau: He was one of the most professional historian, greatest writer and poet of the early medieval India. His account covers five Sultans-Balban, Jalaluddin Khalji, Alauddin Khalji, Mubarak Khalji and Ghiyasuddin Tughluq. He was the first Persian poet who used Hindi/Sanskrit words in his writings. His principal works are:

- (i) **Miftah-ul-Futuh**: Contains an account of the military campaigns of Jalaluddin Khalji in poetry.
- (ii) **Qiran us Sadain**: Deals with Bughra Khan's meeting with his son Kaiqubad. It also depicts the contemporary society.
- (iii) **Dewal Rani Khizr Khan**: It is a *masnavi* on romantic adventures of Khizr Khan, son of Alauddin Khalji with Dewal Rani daughter of Rai Karan of Gujarat. It also contains a brief account of Alauddin's expeditions.
- (iv) **Khazain-ul-Futuh or Tarikh-i-Ilahi**: It is a historiographical composition in prose which describes the conquests and other achievements of Alauddin Khalji.
- (v) **Tughluq Nama**: It was composed to commemorate the victory of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq over Khusrau Khan (1320 CE) leading to the establishment of a new ruling dynasty.
- (vi) **Ijazi-Khusravi**: It is primarily a collection of letters, documents, petitions etc. drafted by Amir Khusrau.

Yanya Sirhindi's **Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi, 1434-35 CE**: It covers the history from Shihabuddin Muhammad Ghori onwards. This account is significant for the study of nobles during the Saiyyid period. Ibu Fazlullah al Umari, **Masalik Absar**, a voluminous Arabic work, contains important information regarding the socio-economic conditions during the reign of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq.

Isami's, **Futuh-us-Salatin**: This work is dedicated to Alauddin Bahman Shah. It covers a period of 350 years (999-1350 CE). It is written in versified form. Isami is highly critical of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq's projects while applauds the achievements of Alauddin Bahman Shah.

Ziauddin Barani's **Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi** and **Fatawa-i-Jahandari**: Barani joined the service of Muhammad Tughlaq in 10th year of his reign and remained in the service for 17 years. But later he had to leave the job in disgrace during Firuz Shah Tughlaq's reign. Barani's **Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi** (1259-1359 CE) preserves the history of the Delhi Sultanate for a full century. **Fatwa-i-Jahandari** is primarily a work on political philosophy and was written in continuation of Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi and sums up the ideas which are already mentioned by Barani in his Tarikh. It contains ideas and aspirations of governing class. Barani has emphasised the concept of free born and

condemned the 'law born'. It deals with king, justice, army, intelligence etc. It also describes Islamic theory of Kingship.

Firuz Shah Tughlaq's **Futuh-i-Firuz Shahi**: It provides an insight into the thoughts and policies of Firuz Shah Tughlaq.

Shams Siraj Afif's **Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi**: It is a detailed account of Firuz Shah Tughlaq's reign. This work was composed after Timur's invasion of India. Afif praises the peace and prosperity prevailing during the reign of Firuz Shah Tughlaq.

Sharafuddin Ali Yazdi's **Zafarnama, 1424-25 CE**: It provides important information of Timur's invasion.

Muhammad Daud Shadiabadi's **Miftah-ul-Fuzala, 1468-69 CE**: A Persian lexicon comprises useful sketches that are helpful in understanding the development of technology during the Sultanate period.

Malfuzat Literature

Malfuzat literature may be defined as discourses, conversations, and sermons delivered by the Sufis in the assemblies of learned persons and recorded by their disciples.

- (i) Amir Hasan Sijzi's, **Fawa'id-ul-Fuad**: It contains the conversation of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya from 1307 to 1322 CE. It throws valuable light on the religion, culture and literature of the period.
- (ii) Hamid Qalandar, **Khair-en-ul-Majalis**: It is a compilation of the conversation of Shaikh Nasiruddin Chirag Dehlavi. This work is not only important for the study of mysticism but also provides valuable importance about the market control policy of Alauddin Khalji, impact of Mongol invasion etc.

Accounts of Travelers

- (i) Marco Polo: He was a Venetian traveler who visited the court of Chinese Emperor Kublai Khan in 1274 CE. On his return journey he passed through Eastern and Western coast of India. His account is very important for understanding commercial activities during the late 13th century. He has also described the life and conditions of common people.
- (ii) Ibn Battuta's **Rihla 1325-1342 CE**: Ibn Battuta was an Arab traveler of Morocco. He was the qazi of Delhi for 8 years under the reign of Sultan Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq. He provides a graphic account of Sultan's character, his projects and contemporary socio-economic conditions. His work is also significant for geographical details. The area which he covered is important for the study of routes etc.
- (iii) Abdur Razzak's **Matla'us-Sadain wa Majma'ul-Bahrain**: The author was a Persian scholar, sent as an ambassador to the court of Vijaynagar (1442-43 CE). He describes in detail his journey to the Vijaynagar court, life-style of the king, nobles, socio-economic and cultural life of the Deccan etc.
- (iv) Nicolo Conti: He was a Venetian traveler who visited Malabar Coast in 1420 CE. He provides useful information on the life at Vijaynagar court, its society and economy during the reign of Devaraya II.

- (v) Domingos Paes: He was a Portuguese traveler who visited India (1500-02 CE) and describes life at Vijaynagar Empire.
- (vi) Duarte Barbosa: He was a Portuguese official in Cochin during 1500-16 CE. His account is also important to study the Vijaynagar rule.
- (vii) Athanasius Nikitin: He was a Russian trader who visited Deccan around 1470 CE. He describes the court, army and condition of people under Bahmani rule.
- (viii) F.Nuniz: He was a Portuguese horse dealer who stayed in the Vijaynagar Empire during 1535-7. His account is valuable to study the court intrigues and civil war during this period.
- (ix) Tome Pires: He was a European traveler who visited India during the first decade of the 16th century. He gives a graphic account of the trade at Cambay and Malacca.

Assam Buranjis: To understand the regional history of Assam, especially that of the Ahoms, **Buranji literature** is the most important. Burangis were composed in Ahom dialect. Ahom kings, priests and nobles had the tradition to record the events of their time. That record was known as the **Buranji**. Later on, Buranji literature was composed in Assamese language. Some of the important Buranjis are Deodhai Asom Buranji, Tunq Khunqia Buranji, Kachri Buranji Jaintia Buranji etc.

Krishna Deva Raya's **Amuktamalyada**: It is a poetic work which primarily deals with the principles of political administration by the monarch.

Khwaja Mahmud Gawan's **Riyaz-ul-Insha**: It is a collection of letters of the Bahmani Wazir Khwaja Mahmud Gawan. It throws light on Mahmud Gawan's personal life, diplomatic relations, campaigns, court politics etc.

Muhammad Abdir Rahman us Sakhani's, **Zau-ul-Lami**: It is a voluminous work which provides the biographical details of the great personalities of the Deccan during the 15th century.

For studying the historical development between 13th and 15th century CE Kashmir numerous Sanskrit and Persian sources are available. Sanskrit works includes **Lokaprakasa** of Kshemendra which throws light on the socio-economic and administrative conditions of Kashmir. Similarly, **Rajatarangini** of Jonaraja (up to 1459 CE) and of Srivara (up to 1486 CE) brings the account of Kalhana up to 1486 CE. Among the contemporary Persian works includes **Baharistan-i Shahi**, **Malfuzat-i-Timur** and **Tarikh-i-Rashidi** of Mirza Haider Dughlat are important works which describes the socio-economic, administrative and political structure of Kashmir during the 13th to 15th centuries.

2. Archeological Sources

The Delhi Sultans did not leave behind enough epigraphic evidence of historical importance although their coins have proved to be very significant in fixing the chronology of events and correcting or ascertaining the genealogical tables of the rulers. The archaeological sources are of immense importance in the reconstruction of the history of South India and all those regional states which remained outside the influence of Muslim domination during the early medieval period. The monuments of the Sultanate period give us an insight into the culture of the times. They are a living testimony to the intermingling of the Hindu and Muslim architectural traditions and structural designs; they reveal, in clear-cut terms, the living conditions, faiths and beliefs, and the socio-cultural outlook of the sovereigns and the upper Units of the early medieval society. The inscriptions have been published mostly in the *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica*, *Epigraphia Indica* and other antiquarian journals. A collection of all the inscriptions published in the *Epigraphia Indo-*

Moslemica (1907-38 CE), chronologically arranged with summaries, is given by V.S. Bendrey in **A Study of Muslim Inscriptions**. Edward Thomas extensively used the numismatic sources in **The Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi**. His work is supplemented by the catalogues of coins in various museums of India and England. The researches conducted by Percy Brown, Burgess, Fergusson, Havell, Cousens, John Marshall and many other specialists in art and architecture provide ample material to the historiographer, interested in the reconstruction of the history of the early medieval India.

1.4.2 Sources of the Mughal Period

Numerous literary and archaeological sources are available for the reconstruction of history of the Mughal period.

1. Literary Sources

There a number of literary sources of the Mughal period. They range from the autobiographies of emperors to musical compositions.

Tuzuk-i-Baburi or the Memoirs of Babur is an autobiographical work in Turki language by Babur. It is a primary source for Babur's activities. It has been reckoned among the most enthralling and romantic works in the literature of all time.

Tarikh-i-Rashidi, a Persian work, written by Mirza Muhammad Haidar Dughlat, is a valuable source material on the period of Babur and Humayun.

Habib-us-Siyar and **Humayun-nama**, written by Khvand Amir, are accounts of the reign of Babur and the first three years of the rule of Humayun.

Humayun-nama of Gulbadan Begam, the daughter of Babur, is an authority on Humayun's reign.

Tazkiratul-Waqiat of Jauhar Aftabchi (a Personal valet of Humayun) is a remarkable work throwing light on almost all facets of the life of Humayun.

Tarikh-i-Humayun written by Bayazid is a valuable source material for the study of Humayun and Akbar.

Important works on Akbar's reign comprises **Tarikh-i-Akbar Shahi** by Qandahari, Abul-Fazl's **Akbar-nama**, **Ain-Akbari**, **Ruqat-Abul-Fazl**, and **Insha-i-Abul-Fazl**, **Tabaqat-i-Firishta** by Mulla Muhammad Qasim Hindu Shah, **Tarikh-i-Haqqi** by Abdul-Haqq, etc.

Tarikh-i-Sher-Shahi composed by Abbas Khan Sarwani gives information of the reign of Sher Shah Suri.

Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, the autobiography of Jahangir, is an important source material for Akbar's last years, Jahangir's own rule, and the early life of Shah Jahan. It is very helpful to the student of Mughal period.

Iqbal-nama of Mutamid Khan's and Muhammad Hadi's **Tatimma Waqiat-i-Jahangiri** are very useful for the study of reign of Jahangir.

Numerous chronicles were written during the reign of Shah Jahan. These include **Padshah-nama** of Aminai Qazvini, **Padshah-nama** of Abdul Hamid Lahori and **Shahjahan-nama** of Inayat Khan. These are very interesting narrations of Shahjahan's reign.

For the reign of Aurangzeb, we have **Alamgir-nama** by Mirza Muhammad Kazim, **Maasir-i-Alamgiri** by Muhammad Saqi Mustaid Khan, **Muntakhab-ul-Lubab** by Muhammad Hashim Khafi Khan, etc, as important sources.

Besides chronological accounts of the activities of the Emperors, a number of official works on provincial administration and statistical details also available. The royal grants and orders comprise yet another important source material for the period.

There are great collections of poems written during the period which throw light on the social, economic and religious conditions of that time. Innumerable literary works on the lives of great men and saints also portray the life of the people in general.

Works in Sanskrit and local languages also form a significant part in the unravelling of Mughal life. Besides **Sarvadesavrittant Sangrah** by Mahesh Thakur, a Sanskrit history of Akbar's reign, other works dealing with exploits of Rajputs are also remarkable. No account would be complete without a reference to Marathi sources such as **Kalami Bakhar** by Dattaji Trimbak, Siva-Charitra Sahitya, etc. Bakhar is *a form of historical narrative written in Marathi prose*.

Accounts of Foreign Travelers

Many foreign travelers visited India during the Mughal period. Their accounts constitute an important source material. Among the noteworthy accounts are **Travels of Ralph Fitch**; **Early Travels in India** of W.Hawkins, Finch, Withington , Coryat, W.Terry; **The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India (1615-19)** (edited by W.Foster);the **Travels of Peter Mundy**; **Travels in the Mogul Empire (1656 -1688) by Bernier (edited by A. Constable)**; **Travels in India** by J.B Tavernier, etc. These accounts along with many similar accounts deal not only with the life of the court but also with the habits, customs and attitudes of people in general. As Prof. Srivastava mention "these accounts cannot be accepted at their face-value, for some of them are mere bazar gossip, and certain others are vitiated on account of their racial, religious and national prejudices". However, these accounts do serve as an important source of information for the period under consideration.

2 Archeological Sources

Nearly all the archaeological sources of the Mughal period have been catalogued and the notable remains have been critically analyzed and put in proper shape. Exhaustive works on the numismatic sources also supplement the work of archaeological surveys. Edward Thomas, Stanley Lane-Poole, Nelson, Whitehead, Dames, Rodgers and others have contributed greatly in proper collection and explanation of numismatic sources. The architectural remains of the age attest the excellence reached by the great Mughals. Massive and magnificent palaces, big forts, great mausoleums, dream like cities such as Fatehpur Sikri, etc., are outstanding examples of Mughal architecture and form a treasured clue to the unfolding of Mughal story. Babur's mighty structures have been ravaged by time but his tomb at Kabul is a magnificent one. Akbar, a great builder, left permanent imprint in the architecture of Fatehpur Sikri, described as a "romance in stone, inconceivable and impossible at any other time or in any other circumstances". Shah Jahan's creation, one of the wonders of the world, is enthusiastically admired by one and all and bears eloquent testimony to the art and architecture of his times. The Mughal painting which reached its zenith during the reign of Jahangir also testifies to the extraordinary achievements in the field of fine arts by the Mughals. The works of Percy Brown and Moti Chand describes the technique of Mughal painting.

Self-Check Exercise-2

- Q.1 Who wrote Kitab-ul-Hind?
- Q.2 Name the first official account of the Delhi Sultanate.
- Q.3 Name the author of Tabaqat-i-Nasiri.
- Q.4 Who is regarded as the most professional historian, greatest writer and poet of early medieval India?
- Q.5 Name the work which preserves the history of the Delhi Sultanate for a full century.
- Q.6 Define Malfuzat literature.
- Q.7 Who was Marco Polo?
- Q.8 What are Buranjis?
- Q.9 Who wrote Humayun-nama?
- Q.10 Name the work composed by Abbas Khan Sarwani which gives information of the reign of Sher Shah Suri.
- Q.11 Who wrote Muntakhab-ul-Lubab?
- Q.13 Name any two foreign travelers who visited India during the Mughal period.

1.5 Summary

- The term medieval has been derived from the Latin words '*medius*' and '*aevum*' which means Middle Age. Medieval period is the period that lies between the ancient and the modern period.
- Medieval period in India is generally considered to be between 6th and the 18th century.
- For the convenience of studying the state and society of medieval India, historians usually divide the medieval period into the Early Medieval Period (700-1200 CE) and Late Medieval Period (1200-1707 CE).
- The beginning of the early medieval period is typically taken to be the gradual decline of the Gupta Empire from about 480 to 550 CE, ending the "classical" period, as well as "ancient India".
- In early medieval period in Northern India there was no larger state until the Delhi Sultanate, or certainly the Mughal Empire, but there were many dynasties.
- The late medieval period follows the Muslim conquests of the Indian subcontinent and the decline of Buddhism, the subsequent founding of the Delhi Sultanate and the creation of Indo-Islamic architecture, followed by the Bengal Sultanate.
- The beginning of the Mughal Empire in 1526 CE marked the commencement of the early modern period of Indian history or the Mughal era. Sometimes, the Mughal era is also referred as the 'late medieval period'.

- There are a large number of literary and archeological sources available for studying the history of Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire.
- The literary sources comprise biographies, autobiographies, court histories, chronicles, accounts of foreign travellers, and private correspondence etc.
- Among the archaeological sources, coins, inscriptions and monuments and paintings are important sources for the construction of the history of medieval period of India.

1.6 Glossary

Bakhar: Bakhar is a form of historical narrative written in Marathi prose. Bakhars are one of the earliest genres of medieval Marathi literature.

Historiographer: A historian, especially one concerned with historical method and the writings of other historians.

Masnavi: It is a kind of poem written in rhyming couplets, or more specifically "a poem based on independent, internally rhyming lines

Numismatics: It is the study or collection of currency, including coins, tokens, paper money, medals and related objects.

1.7 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

Ans.1 Medieval India is the phase of the Indian subcontinent that lies between the ancient and the medieval period. It is related to the time period between the 6th century, after the fall of the Gupta Empire, and the 18th century i.e. the beginning of colonial domination.

Ans.2 For the convenience of studying the state and society of medieval India, historians usually divide the medieval period into the Early Medieval Period (700-1200 CE) and Late Medieval Period (1200-1707 CE).

Ans.3 The beginning of the Mughal Empire in 1526 CE marked the commencement of the early modern period of Indian history or the Mughal era. Sometimes, the Mughal era is also referred as the 'late medieval' period.

Self-Check Exercise-2

Ans.1 Abu Raihan Alberuni

Ans.2 Ans.Taj-ul-Maasir

Ans.3 Minhaj-us-Siraj

Ans.4 Amir Khusrau

Ans.5 Ziauddin Barani's Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi

Ans.6 Malfuzat literature may be defined as discourses, conversations, and sermons delivered by the Sufis in the assemblies of learned persons and recorded by their disciples.

Ans.7 Marco Polo was a Venetian traveler who visited the court of Chinese Emperor Kublai Khan.

Ans.8 Buranjis are a class of historical chronicles and manuscripts related to the Ahom kingdom written initially in the Ahom language and later in the Assamese language too.

Ans.9 Gulbadan Begum, daughter of Babur

Ans.10 Ans.Tarikh-i-SherShahi

Ans.11 Muhammad Hashim Khafi Khan

Ans.12 Ralph Fitch and J.B Tavernier

1.8 Suggested Readings

1. Awadh Bihari Pandey, 1960, "*Early Medieval India*", Central Book Depot.
2. B.D Chattopadhyaya, 1997, "*The Making of Early Medieval India*", Delhi: Oxford University Press.
3. Elliot and Dowson, 1990, "*The History of India as told by its own Historians*", New Delhi.
4. John Keay, 2000, "*India: A History*", HarperCollins.
5. Romila Thapar, 2013, "*The Past before Us. The Historical Traditions of Early North India*", London: Harvard University Press.
6. Upinder Singh, 2008, "*A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India. From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*", Dorling Kindersley (India) Pvt. Ltd.

1.9 Terminal Questions

1. What do you understand by the term 'medieval India'?
2. Write a short note on early medieval period of Indian history.
3. What do you understand by late medieval period in the history of India?
4. Discuss early modern period of Indian history.
5. Examine the sources for determining the history of Delhi Sultanate.
6. Describe the various sources for studying the history of Mughal Empire.

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UNIT - 2

THE ARABS

Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Objectives
- 2.3 The Invasion of the Arabs on India
 - 2.3.1 Condition of India at the time of the Arab invasions
 - 2.3.2 Causes of Arab Invasions
 - 2.3.3 Arab Conquest of Sind and Multan
 - 2.3.4 Causes of the Success of the Arabs
 - 2.3.5 Causes of the failure of Arabs to Penetrate Deeper into India
 - 2.3.6 Impacts of Arab Invasion

Self-Check Exercise-1

- 2.4 Summary
- 2.5 Glossary
- 2.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 2.7 Suggested Readings
- 2.8 Terminal Questions

2.1 Introduction

The rise and growth of Islam has been considered as one of the most important events of the history of the world. Islam grew up in the desert of Arabia and its first converts, the Arabs, made it a powerful force in the Asian politics. Islam inspired a war-like spirit and national consciousness among the Arabs who decided to spread their religion and carry out military conquests across the globe. The successors of Prophet Muhammad were called *Caliphs* (Caliphs). It was under the Umayyad *Caliphs* that the Arabs succeeded in conquering Sindh.

2.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Determine the condition of India at the time of Arab invasions,
- Know the causes of invasions of Arabs on India,

- Explain the causes of the success of the Arabs,
- Understand the impact of the invasions of Arabs.

2.3 The Invasion of the Arabs on India

The Arabs had been the ‘carriers of Indian trade’ with Europe for a very long time. After conversion to Islam, they cast their greedy eyes on the rich seaports of Western India and made a number of unsuccessful attempts to establish their foothold there.

2.3.1 Condition of India at the time of the Arab invasions

Politically, India was divided into many states which were competing with each other. However, the division of India was not its chief weakness. India is a sub-continent and it was not possible to keep it under one rule at that time. Besides, even after its division, there were some extensive kingdoms at that time that were capable to meet the challenge of foreign aggressors. The weakness of India was not its division into many states but persistent fighting among them for power and glory.

During the period under investigation, Afghanistan was ruled by Hindu kings. Politically and culturally it had been a part of India since the Mauryan period. Later on, it was divided into two kingdoms, viz., the kingdoms of Jabul and Kabul. The kingdom of Kabul extended up to the borders of Kashmir in the North-East and touched the borders of Persia in the West. The kingdom of Jabul was located between the territories of Baluchistan and the kingdom of Kabul. Being situated in the North-West of India, these kingdoms had to meet the challenge of the Muslims first. However, the Hindu rulers of these kingdoms succeeded in maintaining their independence till the end of 9th century CE. Kashmir was also an independent state. It became a powerful state during the reign of Lalitaditya (725-755 CE) who even succeeded in defeating Yasovarman, the powerful Pratihara ruler of Kannauj. Yasovarman was also a powerful ruler of North India whose empire extended from East Punjab in the West to Bengal in the East and from the Himalayas in the North to the banks of the river Narmada in the South. The Pala dynasty ruled from Bengal. Thus, there were powerful states in North India at that time. Similarly, the Vakatakas, Pallavas, Pandyas, and the Cholas had strong kingdoms in the South. Even Sindh was an extensive kingdom whose boundary touched the border of Kashmir in the North, Kannauj in the East, and the Arabian Sea in the South. King Dahir captured the throne of Sindh after a contest against his cousin. Thus, he got little time to consolidate his position at the time of the invasion of the Arabs. Besides, his policy remained somewhat oppressive towards the Shudras from whom his family had snatched away the throne of Sindh and also towards the Jats of Sindh. Thus, Sindh suffered from internal rebellions and unstable rule and, thus, was comparatively a weak state of India at that time. But beyond the border of Sindh, there were powerful kingdoms in India, both in the North and the South, which though fought among themselves, were yet powerful enough to resist foreign invaders.

The Indian society was divided into castes and sub-castes and generally inter-dining and inter-caste marriages were not allowed. Yet, the caste system had not grown very much rigid. Inter-caste marriages, change of caste, and absorption of foreigners among Hindus were possible. Women did not enjoy equal rights with men, yet they occupied a respectable place in society. The Purdah system was not prevalent at that time. Women received education, participated in social and religious functions and even in administration, and had the right to choose their husbands. However, while a man could marry several women, the women enjoyed no such right. Besides, the Sati system was gaining popularity among the ruling class. The people observed high morality and the

common people led a simple life. Education was also widely prevalent and besides religious education, all other subjects of the study were also taught to the students. At that time, Nalanda, Vallabhi, Kashi, Kanchi, etc. were great centers of learning. Hinduism was the most popular religion, though Buddhism was also fairly widespread.

India was economically prosperous. Agriculture, trade and commerce, handicrafts and industries were all in a progressive stage which had brought all- round prosperity to India. Of course, the major share of this prosperity was enjoyed by the rich minority class, yet, the common people did not suffer economic hardships.

Thus, politically, economically and culturally India did not suffer from any weakness at the time of the invasion of the Arabs. Yet, the rivalry and constant fighting of different rulers among themselves, indifference to improvement of their arms and fighting skills as compared to foreigners and lack of emotional UNITY for the country as a whole were the weaknesses which were slowly coming up and, when these were not attended to properly, it weakened India in the coming centuries and, finally, led to her defeat and disgrace by foreigners.

2.3.2 Causes of Arab Invasions

The Arabs had contacts with India even before their attack on Sindh. They used to come for trade, particularly, in the South-West coast of India. Later on, with the growth of their military power their ambition also grew and they desired to capture territories in India. Their first attack was on **Thana** near Bombay in 636 CE which was unsuccessful. Afterwards, they made frequent attempts to get some foothold in India through both sea and land. But mostly, they desired to capture the North-West territories in the border of Sindh, particularly Mekran. After a few unsuccessful attempts, the Arabs, ultimately succeeded in capturing Mekran (modern Baluchistan) in the beginning of the 8th century CE which paved the way for the conquest of Sindh.

One of the causes of the attack of the Arabs was their religious zeal. The forceful propagation of Islam and conquest had been the aim of all the Caliphs. The attack on Sindh was also a part of that policy. Secondly, the Caliphs were not only heads of Islamic faith but also heads of the Islamic state. Therefore, like all powerful rulers they also desired to extend their empire. The attack on Sindh was also a part of their expansionist policy. Thirdly, the Arabs, having trade relations with India. They were aware that India was a rich country. Therefore, the lure of wealth through conquest was also one of the reasons of their attack on Sindh. However, the immediate cause of their attack was the activity of sea-pirates of Sindh who looted certain Arab ships. Historians have viewed this incident differently. Sir Wolseley Haig has observed that the king of Ceylon sent to Al-Hajjaj, the Arab governor of Iraq, some Muslim women whose fathers had died and therefore, there was nobody to look after them. But the ship in which they were sailing was captured by pirates of Debal, a premier sea-port of Sindh. Some other historians have expressed the view that the pirates looted the presents and carried off women who were offered by the king of Ceylon to the Caliph. Some others opine that the king of Ceylon had embraced Islam and he had sent some women and other presents to the Caliph and those presents were looted by sea-pirates. There is no conclusive evidence to prove that the king of Ceylon was converted to Islam but it is accepted by all historians that certain women, whosoever they might be, and some articles sent by the king of Ceylon to Hajjaj were captured by the sea-pirates of Sindh. Hajjaj demanded from Dahir, the then ruler of Sindh, to set free those women or to pay compensation. Dahir refused to do anything and replied that he had no control over those sea-pirates who had captured those women. Hajjaj felt very angry,

decided to conquer Sindh and sought permission for the attack from Walid I, the Umayyid Caliph of Damascus, which was granted somewhat reluctantly.

2.3.3 Arab Conquest of Sind and Multan

The first attack on Sindh under Ubaidullah was unsuccessful. He was defeated and killed. Another army sent under Budail met the same fate. Then Hajaj made elaborate preparations for the attack on Sindh and dispatched his youthful nephew and son-in-law, Imaduddin Muhammad-bin-Qasim at the head of a huge army. In 711 CE Muhammad proceeded towards Sindh through Mekran and first conquered Debal where he received fresh reinforcement sent by Hajaj through the sea. Then he conquered Nerun, Sehwan and a few other strongholds. By then Dahir offered no resistance to the Arabs. He left his fate and the fate of Sindh to be decided by one pitched battle against the Arabs. Ultimately, he came out of the fort of Brahmanabad and proceeded towards Rawar to face the enemy. The Hindus and the Arabs remained facing each other for a few days without any battle. The battle occurred on 20 June, 712 CE Dahir gave a heroic fight but just when the Muslim army was on the verge of collapse, his elephant, who got wounded, rushed away from the battlefield which created panic and confusion in the Hindu army. Despite this, Dahir returned to the battlefield, fought with desperate courage and ultimately fell fighting in the midst of his enemies. The fort of Rawar was then defended by Ranibai, the widowed queen of Dahir. But when the provisions of the fort failed, Ranibai performed Jauhar along with numerous other besieged ladies and the men came out of the fort to fight till death. The fort was, ultimately, captured by the Arabs. Jaisingha, the son of Dahir, offered resistance to the Arabs at the fort of Brahmanabad but had to leave it to the Arabs. Here Muhammad captured the entire treasury of Dahir and also one of his queens, Ladi, and her daughters Parmaldevi and Surajdevi. He himself married Ladi and sent her virgin daughters to Baghdad for introduction Caliph's harem. Qasim took about 8 months to acquire control over Sindh because his army met with tough resistance by the local people of many other towns, including Brahmanabad and Alor.

In 713 CE, Muhammad-bin-Qasim proceeded to attack Multan. After a few serious engagements with the enemies, he reached Multan and besieged the fort. The people offered resistance for two months but, then, a traitor pointed out to Qasim the source of water-supply to the town. Qasim cut it off and Multan was forced to surrender. He got a vast quantity of gold in Multan and therefore, named it the city of gold. Multan, however, was the last city which was conquered by Qasim.

Muhammad-bin-Qasim, the conqueror of Sindh, could not live long after his successful campaigns. He met a tragic end. According to *Chachnama*, Parmaldevi and Surajdevi, daughters of Dahir, who were sent as presents to the Caliph, falsely charged Qasim of having outraged them and of keeping them in his harem for three days before sending them to the Caliph. The Caliph was enraged and ordered that Wasim should be brought before him after sewing him in the skin of an ox. He obeyed the orders of the Caliph and sewed himself in the skin of an ox and died. Later, the princesses told the truth and invited death for them; they were tied to the tails of horses and dragged until they were dead. Mir Masum has also accepted this story of *Chachnama*. But, modern historians have refused to accept this story. They claim that the cause of the downfall of Muhammad was political. According to them, Caliph Walid was succeeded by his brother, Sulaiman, in 715 CE Caliph Sulaiman and his governor of Iraq were enemies of Hajaj. But then,

Hajaj had died by that time. So their wrath fell on his son-in-law, Muhammad-bin-Qasim, who was recalled from India and put to death along with several other supporters of Hajaj.

2.3.4 Causes of the Success of the Arabs

The Arabs succeeded in conquering Sindh and Multan due to numerous reasons. Mainly, the internal weaknesses of Sindh were responsible for its fall. Sindh was a weak province of India. It was thinly populated, its economic resources were meager and it was not strong militarily. There were sharp social divisions in Sindh. Besides, the usual distinctions of Hindu society of being higher and lower castes, the rule of Brahman kings had been oppressive towards war-like people like Jats and Meds which alienated them from their rulers. Of course, Sindh was not poor and it had good foreign trade. Yet, it was not so prosperous as to provide the means to develop itself into a militarily strong state. The family of Dahir had captured the throne quite recently and neither his family nor he had succeeded in providing a stable, strong and popular government in Sindh. His provincial governors were virtually semi-independent and quite a large Unit of the populace was not loyal to him, particularly, the Buddhists and the trading class who did not cooperate with him. Therefore, Dahir was not able to fully utilize the resources of Sindh against the Arabs. Sindh was located at the extreme West corner of India and therefore, other Indian rulers remained indifferent to its fate. The Arabs possessed superior arms, cavalry, military tactics and were inspired by religious zeal as well. In their comparison, the Hindus lacked not only the military resources but also emotional UNITY. The Hindus could not develop that sense of UNITY even on the basis of their religion and culture which could inspire them to fight the Arabs with emotional zeal to protect their country. Therefore, their ideal remained limited and their conflict with the Arabs remained only a struggle against an aggressor to save their kingdom. Dahir committed a number of tactical mistakes from the very beginning. He could not foresee the danger of the Arab invasion, once they had conquered Mekran. He remained totally inactive when Muhammad was conquering Debal, Nerun and other places at lower Sindh. It was a fatal mistake on his part that he left his fate to be decided by a single, pitched battle against the Arabs. He failed to divide the strength of his enemy which he could do if he had chosen to attack him from different directions and at different places, and he did not exploit the difficulties of Muhammad-bin-Qasim in his favour when sickness prevailed in the Arab camp before the battle of Rawar. Of course, Dahir was a brave and courageous fighter and he fought gallantly but it was absolutely wrong on his part to risk his life in the battle as a common soldier. Qasim was certainly a more capable commander than Dahir and that was fairly responsible for the success of the Arabs. The Arabs could get traitors also from the Indian side. At the battle of Rawar, one Indian suggested to Qasim some ways and means to bring down the morale of the Indian army. Nerun was surrendered to the Arabs without giving a fight; the Jats supported the Arabs after the battle of Sesam; and a traitor showed to the Arabs the source of water-supply to the fort of Multan. The treachery from the Indian side certainly helped in the success of the Arabs. Besides, the superior commandership of Muhammad, the religious zeal of the Arabs and their better arms and military tactics were certainly responsible for their success.

2.3.5 Causes of the failure of Arabs to Penetrate Deeper into India

The Arabs failed to penetrate deep into India. Their conquest remained confined to Sindh and Multan and, finally, Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni absorbed them within his empire in the 11th century CE. Historians have attributed several causes for the failure of the Arabs in India.

Elphinstone assigned the following reasons for it:

- (i) The success of Sumer-Rajputs against the Arabs.
- (ii) The faith of the Hindus in their culture and religion.
- (iii) The frequent dynastic changes among the Hindu states because of their constant rivalry, but each of them was determined to oppose the advance of the Arabs.

Lane-Poole added some others to them, which were as follows:

- (iv) The existence of strong Rajput states in the East and the North.
- (v) The Caliphs did not send sufficient military force to help further advance of the Arabs in India.
- (vi) The failure of the Arabs to consolidate their kingdom of Sindh.
- (vii) As Sindh was not profitable to the Caliphs economically, they refrained from further conquest in India. Apart from these, the following other reasons have also been assigned by different historians for the failure of the Arabs in India beyond Sindh.
- (viii) In 750 CE, the Abbasid Caliphs replaced the Umayyad Caliphs which lowered the prestige of the position of the Caliphs itself. It also led to conflicts among the Arab officers in Sindh, which weakened their position.
- (ix) The Arabs became ease-loving, lazy and therefore, weak from the time of Caliph Harun-al-Rashid.

H.G. Wells writes in his book *The Caliph's Lost Heritage* that "Islam was separated from its novel and life-giving sources" and, "the religious zeal and simplicity of the Koran was replaced by rigid philosophy and higher standard of life." It was not only the Caliph who led a life of ease and corruption but the entire Arab race followed the way shown by their head of the State and religion. The later Caliphs remained neither powerful nor respected. They became puppets in the hands of their more powerful slaves. They drew their power not from their own race, the Arabs, but first from the Persians and then from the Turks. Such Caliphs and the Arab race were not competent to extend their power in India.

- (x) Taking advantage of the weakness of the Caliphs, the Arabs in Sindh became independent in 871 CE But it also led to their division and the Arab kingdom of Sindh was divided into two kingdoms, viz., the kingdom of Multan in the North and the kingdom of Mansura in the South.
- (xi) The new rising tide of nationalism, particularly among the Persians and Turks, led to the division of Islam and weakened its power. It, therefore, lost its aggressive strength, at least temporarily, in India.
- (xii) Sindh was not prosperous and it was located on the extreme west boundary of India. No power could hope to conquer India by forming Sindh as the base of its power.
- (xiii) The Hindus had powerful kingdoms in the interior of India and each of them was determined to resist the advance of the Arabs further into India. That ensured the safety of India at that time.

Therefore, the failure of the Arabs to advance further into India was not unusual. On the contrary, it was surprising that the Arabs succeeded in maintaining their hold on Sindh and Multan for nearly 300 years. The Hindushahi kingdom in West Punjab and the Pratihara kingdom in the

North-West were powerful enough to turn the Arabs out of Sindh. The Hindus had both the power and the reason to turn the Arabs out of Sindh. Yet they did not attempt it. The primary reason for it was that they did not pay enough attention to what was happening on and outside the border of India at that time. Not then, but a few centuries later the Hindus had to pay a heavy price for their ignorance and indifference.

2.3.6 Impacts of Arab Invasion

Colonel Tod, in his famous book, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan* described that the invasion of the Arabs had a tremendous effect and the entire North India was terrorized by it. However, no historian accepts his view nowadays. The Arab invasion had a very limited effect on Indian politics. Stanley Lane-Poole writes, "It was simply an episode in the history of India." Wolseley Haig also writes. "It was a mere episode in the history of India and affected only a small portion of the fringe of that vast country". The Arabs did not break the military strength of India and therefore, did not pave the way for the conquest of India by Islam. They simply drew closer the contacts of Indians with the Arabs and the Islamic world. Besides, they were the first who established the rule of Islam in India and converted Hindus to Islam in quite large numbers.

The Arab conquest of Sindh was of great significance from the cultural point of view. The Arabs were deeply influenced by the Indian culture and civilization. They were fascinated by the wisdom, administrative acumen and high moral character of the Indians. The Arabs learnt much from fine arts, philosophy, astrology, astronomy, and mathematics, science of medicines and literature of India. They employed Hindu artists and architects to construct their buildings. They also learnt from Buddhist and Hindu philosophy, literature and religious ideals. The Sanskrit texts, the *Brahma Siddhanta* and the *Khanda-Khadhyak* were translated into Arabic language during the period of Caliph Al-Mansur. The Arabs learnt the philosophy of Sanyas and Tapa from the Indians. The Arabs also gained the knowledge of numericals and profited from the science of medicine of Indians. The religious fanaticism of the Arabs was also diluted by the friendly social conduct and liberal religious outlook of the Indians. Dr A.L. Srivastava has expressed the view that not only the Arabs but Europeans also drew advantage from the knowledge of the Indians in the 8th and 9th centuries CE because of their contacts with them through the Arabs. Thus, though the Arabs came to India as conquerors they failed to influence Indian politics and culture in any way. Instead they themselves and through them the western world also drew advantage in many fields by coming in contact with the Indians, which also justifies the view that by that time the Indian people and their culture had not lost their vigor and were in a position to contribute constructively to the culture and knowledge of the world.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 Who were *Caliphs*?
- Q.2 Where and when the Arabs did first attacked India?
- Q.3 From who did Al-Hajjaj sought permission to attack Sindh?
- Q.4 When was the Battle of Rawar fought?
- Q.5 Who defended the fort of Rawar after the death of King Dahir?
- Q.6 Name the two daughters of King Dahir.
- Q.7 Which city of India was named by Muhammad-bin-Qasim as the 'City of Gold'?

Q.8 Who was the successor of Caliph Walid?

Q.9 Who wrote the book *Caliph's Lost Heritage*?

2.3 Summary

- The Arabs captured Sindh under the Umayyad *Caliphs*.
- At the time of Arab invasion, India was divided into many states which were competing with each other.
- Sindh suffered from internal rebellions and unstable rule and, thus, was comparatively a weak state of India at that time.
- Politically, economically and culturally India did not suffer from any weakness at the time of the invasion of the Arabs.
- Yet, the rivalry and constant fighting of different rulers among themselves, indifference to improvement of their arms and fighting skills as compared to foreigners and lack of emotional UNITY for the country as a whole were the weaknesses.
- The Arabs had trade contacts with India even before their attack on Sindh. Later on, with the growth of their military power their ambition also grew and they desired to capture territories in India.
- One of the causes of the attack of the Arabs was their religious zeal. The forceful propagation of Islam and conquest had been the aim of all the *Caliphs*.
- Initial attacks of Arabs on Sindh were unsuccessful. The Battle of Rawar occurred on 20th June, 712 CE in which Dahir gave a heroic fight but was ultimately defeated by the Muhammad-bin-Qasim.
- In 713 CE Muhammad-bin-Qasim captured Multan.
- The Arabs succeeded in conquering Sindh and Multan due to numerous reasons.
- Mainly, the internal weaknesses of Sindh were responsible for its fall. Sindh was a weak province of India.
- The Arabs failed to penetrate deep into India. Their conquest remained confined to Sindh and Multan and, finally, Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni absorbed them within his empire in the 11th century.
- The Arab conquest of Sindh was of great significance from the cultural point of view. The Arabs were deeply influenced by the Indian culture and civilization.

2.4 Glossary

Caliph: The chief Muslim civil and religious ruler, regarded as the successor of Muhammad.

Harem: The separate part of a Muslim household reserved for wives, concubines, and female servants.

Jauhar: A Hindu practice of mass self-immolation by women in the Indian subcontinent to avoid capture, enslavement and rape by an invading Islamic army, when facing certain defeat during a war.

Pirates: The sailors who attack other ships and steal property from them.

2.5 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

Ans.1 The successors of Prophet Muhammad were called *Caliphs* (Khalifa).

Ans.2 The first attack of Arabs was on Thana near Bombay in 636 CE.

Ans.3 From Walid I, the Umayyid Caliph of Damascus.

Ans.4 On 20th Hune, 712 CE.

Ans.5 Dahir's queen Ranibai.

Ans.6 Parmaldevi and Surajdevi

Ans.7 Multan

Ans.8 Sulaiman

Ans.9 H.G Wells

2.6 Suggested Readings

1. B.D Chattopadhyay, 1994, "*The Making of the Early Medieval India*", New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
2. J.L Mehta, 2010, "*Advanced Study in the History of Medieval India (Volume-I: 1000-1526 CE)*", Sterling Publishers Private Limited, New Delhi.
3. L.P Sharma, 2008, "*History of Ancient India (Prehistoric Age to 1200 CE)*", 3rd Revised Edition, Konark Publishers Private Limited.
4. Manan Ahmed Asif, 2016, "*A Book of Conquest: The Chachnama and Muslim Origins in South Asia*", Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

2.7 Terminal Questions

1. Describe the condition of India at the time of Arab invasions.
2. Analyze the causes of the invasion of Arabs on India.
3. Describe the invasion of the Arabs on Sindh and Multan. Why they failed to penetrate deeper into India?
4. What were the causes of the success of Arabs against India?
5. Discuss the impact of Arab invasion of India.

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UNIT-3

THE GHAZNAVIDS IN THE NORTH-WEST

Structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Objectives
- 3.3 Ghaznavid Dynasty
 - 3.3.1 Causes of the Invasions of Mahmud Ghaznavi
 - 3.3.2 Conditions of India at the Time of Invasion of Mahmud Ghaznavi
 - 3.3.3 Invasions of Mahmud Ghaznavi
 - 3.3.4 Estimate of Mahmud's Character and Achievements
 - 3.3.5 Impact of Mahmud's Invasions on India

Self-Check Exercise-1

- 3.4 Summary
- 3.5 Glossary
- 3.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 3.7 Suggested Readings
- 3.8 Terminal Questions

3.1 Introduction

The Ghaznavid dynasty was a Muslim Turkish dynasty of *Mameluk* origin, ruling large parts of Iran, Afghanistan, Transoxiana and the North-West Indian subcontinent from 977 to 1186 CE. The dynasty was founded by Sabuktigin upon his succession to the rule of Ghazni after the death of his father-in-law, Alptigin, who was an ex-general of the Samanid Empire from Balkh, North of the Hindu Kush in Greater Khorasan. Although the dynasty was Central Asian Turkish, it was thoroughly persianized in terms of language, culture, literature and administrative practices and there by became a Persian dynasty.

3.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Know about the Early Ghaznavids,
- Understand the causes of the invasions of Mahmud of Ghazni,
- Examine the conditions of India at the time of invasion of Mahmud,

- Describer the invasions of Mahmud of Ghazni,
- Form an estimate of the character and achievements of Mahmud of Ghazni.

3.3 Ghaznavid Dynasty

The Yamini dynasty generally called as **Ghazni dynasty** claimed its origin from the family of Persian rulers. During the course of Arab invasion, the family fled to Turkistan and became one with the Turks. Therefore, the family has been accepted as Turk. Alptigin, a Turkish slave of the Samanid ruler Abdul Malik of Bukhara, founded the independent kingdom of this dynasty. He captured the kingdom of Jabul, with its capital **Ghazni**, from Amir Abu Bakr Lawik in 963 CE, but he died the same year. He was succeeded by his son Ishaq who ruled only for three years. Then, the throne was captured by Balkatigin, the commander of the Turkish troops. Balkatigin was succeeded by his slave, Pirai, in 972 CE. But Pirai was a cruel king. His subjects invited Abu Ali Lawik, son of Abu Bakr Lawik, to invade Ghazni. Jaipala, the Hindushahi ruler of Kabul and Punjab, who did not like the rise of a strong Muslim state at his border, also sent his army to help Abu Ali Lawik. But they were defeated by Sabuktigin, son-in-law of Alptigin. The success of Sabuktigin against the enemies of Ghazni enhanced his prestige. He, ultimately, dethroned Pirai and himself became the ruler of Ghazni in 977 CE and laid the foundation of **Yamini** or **Ghaznavid Dynasty**. Sabuktigin was a capable and great warrior. Slowly, he conquered Bust, Dawar, Ghur and some other nearby places. Towards the east lay the Hindushahi kingdom of east Afghanistan and Punjab. Sabuktigin started attacking its boundaries and occupied a few forts and cities. The Shahi ruler, Jaipala could not ignore these attacks and attempted to curb the rising power of Sabuktigin. Since then began the long struggle of the kingdoms of Ghazni and Hindushahi which continued till Sultan Mahmud finally defeated the Hindushahis. Jaipala attacked Ghazni twice and was supported by certain other Rajput rulers also who sent their contingents to help Jaipala. But both his attempts failed and Sabuktigin succeeded in capturing all the territories which lay between Lamghan and Peshawar. Thus, the Hindushahi kingdom failed to check the growing power of the Ghaznavids towards the East. However, two conclusions can be drawn out of this conflict between the two. One, Jaipala was aware of the danger of the rising power of Islam on his border, tried to check its growth in the very beginning and pursued an aggressive policy for the purpose which we find lacking among other Rajput rulers afterwards. The other, that the Rajput rulers were not indifferent to the rising power of Islam in the West, for which they are often blamed; otherwise, they would not have sent their forces to support Jaipala. Sabuktigin died in 997 CE at the age of 56. He declared his younger son Ismail as his successor before his death. But when Ismail ascended the throne, he was challenged by his elder brother, Abdul Qasim Mahmud who succeeded in capturing the throne of Ghazni just after seven months, in 998 CE Mahmud justified his accession, became a powerful ruler, repeatedly attacked India and paved the way of the conquest of India by Islam.

Mahmud was born on November 1, 971 CE. He was educated in Islamic theology and jurisprudence. He had participated in a number of battles during the reign of his father. After ascending the throne, Mahmud first consolidated his position in Herat, Balkh and Bust and, then conquered Khurasan. In 999 CE, he secured recognition from the Caliph of Baghdad, Al Qadir Billah accepted him as the ruler of Afghanistan and Khurasan and bestowed him the titles of *Amin-ul-Millat* and *Yamin-ud-Daulah*. Mahmud Ghaznavi was the first Muslim ruler to be credited with the title of 'Sultan'. It is said that Mahmud, at the time of his investiture, took an oath to invade India every year.

3.3.1 Causes of the Invasions of Mahmud Ghaznavi

Mahmud was a great conqueror. He led 17 expeditions into India from 1000 CE to 1027 CE. Various reasons have been attributed by historians which resulted in repeated attacks by Mahmud on India.

1. Mahmud desired to establish the glory of Islam in India. Professor Muhammad Habib has opposed this view. He opined that Mahmud did not possess religious zeal; he was not a fanatic; he was not prepared to follow the advice of Ulema; he was purely a man of this world; and his barbaric deeds, instead of raising the prestige of Islam, destroyed its image before the world. However, Jafar, Nazim and Havell supports this view. Jafar opined that he attacked Hindu temples not because of his religious zeal but because of his desire to acquire their wealth. Nazim contends that if he troubled the Hindu kings and looted their wealth, he repeated the same story with the Muslim rulers of Central Asia. Prof. Havell has expressed the view that he could loot the holy land of Baghdad the same way as he looted Indian cities if he could get wealth from there. Thus, these historians have maintained that the primary motive of the invasions of Mahmud was economic and not religious. According to them, Mahmud desired to acquire the wealth of India. However, Utbi, the court historian of Mahmud, described the attacks of Mahmud in India as *Jihads* (holy wars) to spread Islam and destroy idolatry. Viewed from the circumstances of that age and the religious zeal of the Turks, who were new converts to Islam, it is possible also. Besides, Mahmud not only looted the wealth of Hindu temples but destroyed them and the images of Hindu gods. Therefore, it is mostly accepted that one of the aims of Mahmud was the propagation of Islam and establishing its glory in India.

2. Another aim of Mahmud was to plunder the wealth of India. No historian has contradicted this view. Mahmud needed a lot of money to raise the army for the expansion of a vast Central Asian empire. He desired wealth for the sake of wealth. Therefore, the wealth of India was alluring for him and he repeated his attacks to acquire more and more wealth from India.

3. Apart from these, Mahmud had a political objective too. The Ghaznavids and the Hindushahis were fighting against each other since the reign of Alptigin and the Hindushahi rulers had attacked Ghazni thrice. It was necessary for Mahmud to destroy this aggressive and powerful neighbor. Therefore, he himself pursued an aggressive policy against it. The success against the Hindushahi kingdom encouraged him to penetrate deeper into India.

4. Similar to the other great rulers of his age, Mahmud also desired to acquire fame by his conquests and victories and that also was one reason of his attacks on India. Thus, his attack on Hindu temples served both the purposes—acquisition of wealth and fame as an idol breaker.

3.3.2 Conditions of India at the Time of Invasion of Mahmud Ghaznavi

Politically, India was divided into a number of states. There were many kingdoms which constantly fought against each other for fame and expansion of their territories. Many of them were quite extensive and powerful but, because of their internal conflicts, none of them could utilize its complete resources, nor could they UNITE themselves against Mahmud which was their primary weakness. Multan and Sindh constituted the two Muslim states of India. In the North-West was the Hindushahi kingdom whose contemporary ruler was Jaipala. Kashmir was also an independent state and it had family relations with the Hindushahis. The Pratiharas ruled over Kannauj and Rajyapala was the ruler. Mahipala I ruled over Bengal but his kingdom was weak. There were independent

kingdoms in Gujarat, Malwa and Bundelkhand as well. In the South, the later Chalukyas and the Cholas had their powerful kingdoms.

Socially, the four-fold division of the Hindu society had created sharp differences between Units of the society and therefore, had weakened it. Apart from the traditional four castes, there was a large Unit of the people called *Antyaja*. The hunters, the weavers, the fishermen, the shoe-makers and the people engaged in similar professions belonged to this Unit. Their position was lower than that of the Sudras. Yet lower in social status were Hadis, Doms, Chandalas, Bagatu etc. who were engaged in the work of maintaining cleanliness but were forced to live outside cities and villages. They were out-castes and untouchables. Even Vaisyas were not allowed to study the religious texts. According to Al Beruni if anyone dared to attempt it, his tongue was cut off. Thus, the position of the lower castes, including the Vaisyas had been lowered very much and the caste-system had become very rigid as well. Such a state of affairs had divided the society into a number of different antagonistic groups. The position of woman too had deteriorated much and she was regarded simply as an article of pleasure and enjoyment for man. Child marriages, polygamy among males and the practice of Sati among women of higher castes were becoming quite widespread, while widow remarriage were not allowed. All this had weakened the Hindu society. That is why Islam could get here a large number of converts.

Religion and morality also deteriorated. Both Hinduism and Buddhism suffered from ignorance and corruption. The people, particularly the rich and upper classes, engaged themselves in corrupt practices, lost the true spirit of religion or, rather, made it an instrument for the fulfilment of their worldly desires. The temples and the Buddhist monasteries became centers of corruption. The practice of keeping *Devadasis* in the temples was also became a mode of corruption. Even educational institutions did not remain free from corruption.

The prevalent corruption in social and religious institutions was both a cause and the result of the corruption prevailing in the Indian society in general. Probably, the common people were yet free from that. But corruption in the educated and ruling classes was sufficient to weaken the country. Such a society lacked the desire and the capacity to resist a strong invader.

The worsening society and religion led to deterioration in culture also. The literature and the fine arts also suffered. The temples of Puri and Khajuraho and the books like the *Kutini-Matama* and the *Samaya-Matraka* (the biography of a prostitute) characterize the taste of the people of that time.

The Hindus did not try to improve their arms and the methods of warfare. They heavily depended on their elephants. Sword was still their principal weapon and their policy was yet defensive. They neither cared to build forts in the North-West nor adopted any other means to defend their frontiers. Thus, India was also weak, militarily.

Politically, socially and militarily India was weak at the time of Ghaznavid invasions. One of the primary cause of the weakness of the Indians was that they did not try to know, understand and learn from what was happening in the religious and cultural fields. Therefore, they became ignorant and also developed a false pride. Al Biruni's statement helps us in understanding the contemporary attitude of the Indians about themselves. He wrote, "The Hindus believed that there is no country like theirs, no nation like theirs, no king like theirs, no religion like theirs, no science like theirs." Such attitude was the denial of progress. He also wrote, "The Hindus did not desire that a thing which has once been polluted should be purified and thus recovered." This attitude showed the narrow vision of the life of the Indians at that time. Thus, by that time, the Indians had lost their

vigor and intelligence. They were not capable of improving themselves nor did they desire to learn from others. However, the one thing that India possessed as yet was its wealth. Its agriculture, industries and trade were in a good condition and it had accumulated wealth which was concentrated in the hands of upper classes and in the temples. The wealth of India was a temptation for a foreign invaders. The wealth of India was like the wealth of a weak person which could tempt any strong man to possess it. Mahmud did the same.

3.3.3 Invasions of Mahmud Ghaznavi

Mahmud Ghaznavi invaded India 17 times. Although, there are no adequate proofs of that, yet, all historians agree that Mahmud attacked India at least twelve times. His first expedition occurred in 1000 CE when he occupied a few frontier fortresses. In 1001 CE, he attacked again. This time Hindushahi king, Jaipala, gave him a battle on 27th November, 1001 near Peshawar but was defeated and taken prisoner. Mahmud advanced as far as the capital city of Waihand and then returned to Ghazni after getting good booty. He released Jaipala after getting 25 elephants and 2,50,000 dinars from him. Jaipala could not bear the disgrace and burnt himself to death on a self-lit pyre. He was succeeded on the throne of Waihind by his son, Anandapala, in 1002 CE.

After the conquest of Siestan (1002-04 CE) Mahmud attacked Bhatiya or Bhatia in 1004 CE. Its ruler Baji Rai of Biji Rai gave a heroic fight but was defeated and he killed himself before his capture by the Muslims. In 1006 CE Mahmud proceeded to attack the Shia kingdom of Multan. The Hindushahi king, Anandapala, refused to give him passage, fought against him near Peshawar, but was defeated and fled. Mahmud captured Multan in 1006 CE. The *karmatia* ruler of Multan, Abdul Fateh Daud, agreed to pay an annual tribute of 20,000 Dirhams. Mahmud left Nawasa Shah (grandson of Jaipala, who had accepted Islam) as governor of his Indian territories and went back to fight the Seljuq-Turks who were threatening his territories from the North. Mahmud, therefore remained busy on his Central Asian frontier for about two years. Daud and Nawasa Shah revolted in his absence and therefore, he came to India in 1008 CE, defeated them both and annexed all the territories including Multan to his empire.

The ever-increasing frequency of Mahmud's invasions made Anandpal, the Hindushahi ruler, extremely anxious about the safety of his state. Hindushahi was the only Hindu state which tried to resist the foreign invaders with the help of other Hindu states. Again, in 1009 CE, its ruler Anandapala sought support from other Hindu states, collected a large army and proceeded towards Peshawar to challenge Mahmud Ghaznavi. Mahmud fought against him near Waihand and defeated him. Mahmud marched as far as Nagarkot and conquered it. Anandapala's defeat reduced the strength and the territories of Hindushahi kingdom. Anandapala was forced to accept a treaty with Mahmud who firmly established his power in Sindh and West Punjab. Anandapala shifted his capital to Nandana in the salt range and tried to build up his lost strength but failed. He was succeeded by his son Trilochanapala after his death in 1012 CE. Mahmud attacked Nandana in 1013 CE and occupied it. Trilochanapala fled to Kashmir and sought the help of its ruler but Mahmud defeated their combined armies. Mahmud did not attack Kashmir though he plundered the places on its border. Trilochanapala retired to the Shiwalik hills, strengthened his position and also took the help of Vidyadhar the Chandela prince of Kalinjar (Bundelkhand), but he was again defeated by Mahmud in 1019 CE. The Hindushahi kingdom was now reduced to the status of a small jagir. Between 1021-1022 CE, Trilochanapala was assassinated by some of his own selfish men and was succeeded by his son, Bhimapala who outlived his father by six years without claiming any royal title. He died as a petty chief in 1026 CE, and with him ended the once mighty Hindushahi kingdom of North-Western India.

Mahmud had defeated the ruler of Narayanpur in 1009 CE and plundered its wealth. In 1014 CE, he attacked Thanesar, defeated Rama, the chief of Dera and then looted Thanesar. All the temples and the images of Thanesar were destroyed, while the principal deity of Chakraswami temple was taken to Ghazni and placed in a public square for desecration. In 1018 CE, Mahmud proceeded to attack Ganga-Yamuna Doab. He first attacked and looted Mathura. The city of Mathura was a beautiful city and a sacred religious place of the Hindus having a thousand temples. Mahmud desecrated about one thousand temples in Mathura and its neighbourhood. Mahmud described its main temple in his Memoirs. He wrote, "If anyone should undertake to build a fabric like that he would expend thereon one lakh packets of a thousand Dinar, and would not complete it in 200 years, and with the assistance of the most ingenious architects." There were a number of huge idols of gold and silver which were studded with costly pearls and diamonds. Mahmud looted the city for twenty days, broke up all the idols and destroyed all the temples. He got enormous booty from Mathura. From Mathura, Mahmud marched to Kannauj. He encountered resistance from the Hindus at a few places but defeated them. Rajyapala, the Pratihara ruler of Kannauj fled and left his capital at the mercy of Mahmud. He looted the city and then destroyed it. He invaded a few more places and then went back to Ghazni.

After the return of Mahmud, Ganda (Vidyadhar) in collaboration with the ruler of Gwalior, put Rajyapala to death for having brought dishonor to the country by his act of cowardice. In 1019 CE, Mahmud returned to India with the purpose of punishing Vidyadhar. He defeated the Hindushahi ruler, Trilochanapala on the way and reached the border of Bundelkhand during 1020-21 CE. Vidyadhar faced him with a huge army but, became suspicious of treachery on the part of his colleagues and fled at night, leaving behind immense baggage and armory which fell into the hands of the invaders. Mahmud, who had lost his courage at the sight of large army of the Chandelas, felt happy. He ravaged the territories of Vidyadhar and then left, next year, he came again. On the way, he forced the ruler of Gwalior to submit and then reached the fort of Kalinjar. The siege of the fort lasted for a long time. Vidyadhar agreed to give Mahmud 300 elephants as tribute and, in return, received the right of governing fifteen fortresses from him.

The most outstanding invasion of Mahmud was directed against the Somnath temple (1025-26 CE) situated in the sea-coast in the extreme South of Kathiawar. He had the two-fold objective of acquiring its wealth and winning fame and glory as an idol-breaker among his co-religionists. This beautiful and famous temple received offerings in different forms from lakhs of devotees daily and had a permanent income from the resources of ten thousand villages. It possessed enormous wealth. Its Shiva-linga had a canopy studded with numerous costly jewels and diamonds. The chain attached to one of its bells weighed 200 maunds of gold, one thousand Brahmanas were appointed to perform the worship of the linga and 350 males and females were employed to sing and dance before the deity. The temple of Somnath was wonderful but the pride of their priests was unique who claimed that Mahmud could do no harm to their deity. The Hindus of Gujrat were fed on the mistaken belief that the deities of Northern India had fallen victims to the Turks because they had lost patronage and sympathies of Somnath, the greatest of the Gods. Mahmud proceeded through Multan, reached the capital city of Anhilwara which was left by its ruler Bhima I without offering resistance and reached the temple of Somnath in 1025 CE. The devotees of the temple offered him resistance about 50,000 of the defenders fell fighting. The victory was followed by the sack of the temple as well as the town and general slaughter of people. He returned with a huge booty. He was troubled on the way by his Hindu guides who led his army to a dreary part of the desert. But, ultimately, he reached Ghazni safely with his booty.

Mahmud came back to India for the last time in 1026-27 CE on a pUNITive expedition against the Jats who had obstructed his path on his return journey from Somnath. The Jats were severely punished. Mahmud looted their property, killed all males and enslaved their women and children.

Thus, Mahmud repeatedly attacked India. He never suffered defeated here. He took from India whatever he could and destroyed the rest. Besides engaging himself in loot and plunder, he annexed Afghanistan, Punjab, Sindh and Multan to his empire. Mahmud died in 1030 CE after a brief illness at the age of 59.

3.3.4 Estimate of Mahmud's Character and Achievements

Mahmud was a great conqueror, courageous soldier and a successful commander. He was one of the greatest military generals the world has ever possessed. He had leadership qualities and knew how to utilize his resources and circumstances in the best possible way. He was a good judge of human nature and assigned work and responsibility to others according to their capability. His army consisted of the people of different nationalities like the Arabs, the Turks, the Afghans and even Hindus. Yet, it became a unified powerful force under his command. Thus Mahmud possessed many virtues. Mahmud was equally ambitious as well. He always attempted to win glory and extend his empire. He had inherited only the provinces of Ghazni and Khurasan from his father. He converted this small inheritance into a mighty empire which extended from Iraq and the Caspian Sea in the West to the river Ganges in the East and which was certainly, more extensive than the empire of Caliph of Baghdad at that time. It would be wrong to say that Mahmud had succeeded only against the weak and divided Hindu rulers. He had achieved the similar success against his enemies in Iran and Central Asia. Therefore, Mahmud ranks among the greatest commanders and empire-builders of Asia.

Mahmud was no barbarian at home. He was an educated and cultured person. He was a patron of scholarship and fine arts. He gathered at his court scholars of repute. They included Al Beruni, Utbi, Farabi, Baihaki, the Iranian poet Ujari, Tusi, Unsuri, Asjadi, Farrukhi, Firdausi and others. Of course, each of them was a capable person but there is no doubt that Mahmud's patronage had certainly helped them in enhancing their capabilities. Mahmud established a university, a good library and a museum which stored invaluable trophies of war and laid beautiful gardens and parks in Ghazni. He also patronized the artists. He invited all sort of artists from all parts of his empire, even from foreign countries, and engaged them in beautifying Ghazni. He constructed magnificent palaces, mosques, tombs and other buildings in Ghazni. During his rule, Ghazni became not only a beautiful city of the East but also the centre of Islamic scholarship, fine arts and culture. Mahmud was a just ruler. He killed his nephew with his own hands when he found him guilty of keeping sexual relations with the wife of another person. He forced prince Masud to present himself in the court and accept the judgment because the prince had failed to pay back the debt of a trader. Many similar stories are known about the sense of justice of Mahmud.

Mahmud was successful in maintaining peace and order, protect trade and agriculture and safeguard the honor and property of his subjects within the boundaries of his empire. Mahmud was a fanatical Sunni Musalman and, what to say of Hindus, he was intolerant even to the Shias. Several historians like Muhammad Habib have tried to exonerate him of this charge. But we should also keep in view the opinions expressed by contemporary historians. Al Beruni had criticized his bigoted religious acts. The contemporary Muslims regarded him as the champion of Islam and he was titled as **Ghazi** (slayer of infidels) and the idol breaker. The Caliph honored him after his

successful loot and plunder of the temple of Somnath. The contemporary Islamic world recognized Mahmud as the destroyer of the infidels and the one who established the glory of Islam at faraway places like India. It has been upheld by many scholars that Mahmud destroyed Hindu idols and temples, primarily because of economic reasons. Undoubtedly, one of his reason was definitely economic. But equally rational is the view, which was expressed by his contemporaries, that Mahmud engaged himself in these acts because of his religious zeal. He desired to acquire wealth or, rather, loved it but, simultaneously, spent it also generously. He had agreed to pay Firdausi, his court poet, a golden dinar for every verse composed by him. But when Firdausi presented before him the *Shahnama* which consisted of one thousand verses, he offered him one thousand dinars of silver, which Firdausi refused. Of course, he sent one thousand dinars of gold to him afterwards but, by then, Firdausi had died. Professor Brown has commented, "Mahmud tried to acquire wealth by every possible means. Besides that, there was nothing wrong in his character."

But Mahmud was not a great statesman, nor a great ruler. He failed to evolve an efficient administrative hierarchy to run the government. He did little beyond giving his dominions peace and order. There was no police force to protect the life and property of his subjects. He failed to form a stable empire. His empire existed only during his own life time. The empire crumbled down to pieces after his death. He, thus, failed to establish his empire on certain permanent institutions. Lane-Poole wrote, "Mahmud was a great soldier and possessed tremendous courage and the untiring mental and physical capacity. But, he was not a constructive and far-sighted statesman. We find no laws, institutions or administrative system whose foundations were laid down by him." He did nothing to consolidate his Indian conquests as well. Thus, Mahmud was, certainly, not a good administrator. He showed no interest in public welfare or nation-building activities. His autocratic and extremely self-willed behavior did not allow freedom of expression and action to his ministers and the ruling elite.

Yet, Mahmud was a great Muslim ruler. The Muslim chroniclers regarded Mahmud as one of their greatest kings. In fact, in the history of Islam he was the first ruler who justly deserved the title of Sultan. He ranks among the great rulers of Central Asia. Professor Muhammad Habib writes of him, "Mahmud's pre-eminence among his contemporaries was due to his ability and not due to his character." Mahmud established a vast empire, brought peace and prosperity within its boundaries, helped in its cultural progress and established the glory of Islam at distant places. Ghazni became the seat of power of Islam and the centre of its progress in culture including education, scholarship and fine arts. It was all due to the success and achievements of Mahmud.

However, Mahmud was a fanatical Sunni Muslim in the history of India, a barbaric foreign bandit, a plunderer and cruel destroyer of fine arts. In fact, Mahmud was the ruler of Ghazni and not of India. The Punjab, Sindh and Multan, which formed parts of his empire, served the purpose of bases for his invasions deeper into India. He did not care to administer them well. While penetrating deep into India, he simply desired loot, plunder and conversion. In his every invasion, wherever he went, he looted whatever he could, destroyed what he could not, took along with him the wealth of Hindu temples, forced lakhs of people to accept Islam otherwise killed them, took thousands of beautiful women to Ghazni while thousands others were dishonored here, burnt hundreds of villages and beautiful cities and destroyed fine pieces of arts. Thus, to the Indians of his days Mahmud was a veritable devil incarnate.

3.3.5 Impact of Mahmud's Invasion on India

It has been suggested by several scholars that the invasions of Mahmud left no permanent impact on India. He came like a great storm and destroyed everything and then passed off. The Indians soon forgot his raids and atrocities and rebuilt their temples, idols and cities. Of course, the Indians forgot his invasions and, therefore, paid a heavy price later on. But, it would be inappropriate to accept that Mahmud left no permanent mark on Indians and Indian history. Mahmud shook the entire economic and military strength of the Indians and also their morale to resist Muslim invaders. The Hindushahis, the heroic defenders of Panjab and the North-Western frontier perished; Khyber pass, the Gateway of India, was lost to the foreigners forever. The political division and the disUNITY of the country was exposed. Mahmud never met a serious challenge in India and his constant success against the Indians created fear and a pessimistic attitude among the Indians that the Turks were invincible. This fear persisted for a very long time. The inclusion of Panjab, Multan and Sindh in the Ghaznavid Empire made easier the advance of later Turk invaders in India. Muhammad of Ghur first entered into India to snatch away these places from his enemy Ghaznavid ruler. It paved the way for the conquest of India by the Turks. Dr D.C. Ganguly writes: "The inclusion of the Panjab and Afghanistan in the kingdom of Ghazni made the Islamic conquest of India comparatively easy process. It was no longer a question of whether, but when, that mighty flood would overwhelm the country as a whole." Indian civilization was fatally wounded and left bleeding. India witnessed a dreadful holocaust.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 Who laid the foundation of Ghaznavid Dynasty?
- Q.2 Which Indian king was defeated by Sabuktigin?
- Q.3 How many times Jaipala did attack Ghazni?
- Q.4 When was Mahmud Ghaznavi born?
- Q.5 When Mahmud Ghaznavi did ascend the throne of India?
- Q.6 How many times Mahmud Ghaznavi did invade India?
- Q.7 Who was the first Muslim ruler to be credited with the title of 'Sultan'?
- Q.8 When did Mahmud Ghaznavi make his first attack on India?
- Q.9 Name the court historian of Mahmud who described his attacks on India as *Jihad*?
- Q.10 Who was Anandapala?
- Q.11 The principal deity of which famous temple of Thanesar was taken to Ghazni by Mahmud Ghaznavi and placed in Public Square for desecration?
- Q.12 Who was the ruler of Kannauj at the time of Mahmud Ghaznavi's invasion of India?
- Q.13 When Mahmud Ghaznavi did invaded Somnath temple?
- Q.14 Who wrote the text *Shahnama*?
- Q.15 Which mountain pass was known as the Gateway of India?

3.4 Summary

- The Yamini or Ghaznavid Dynasty was founded by Sabuktigin. It ruled over large parts of Iran, Afghanistan, Transoxiana and the North-West Indian subcontinent from 977 to 1186 CE.
- The Hindushahi kingdom failed to check the growing power of the Ghaznavids towards the East.
- Mahmud Ghaznavi captured the throne of Ghazni in 998 CE. He repeatedly attacked India and paved the way of the conquest of India by Islam.
- Mahmud led 17 expeditions into India from 1000 CE to 1027 CE.
- Scholars are divided in their opinion on the motives of Mahmud Ghaznavi's invasion on India. Some opine that he desired to establish the glory of Islam. Others forwarded the view that his aim was to plunder the wealth of India. Some others opined had Mahmud had political objective too.
- At the time of invasion of Mahmud, India was divided into a number of kingdoms and their rulers were constantly fighting with each other. Socially and militarily India was weak at the time of Ghaznavid invasions.
- Mahmud attacked India repeatedly. He was never defeated here. He took from India whatever he could and destroyed the rest. Besides engaging in loot and plunder he annexed Afghanistan, Panjab, Sindh and Multan to his empire.
- The most famous and outstanding invasion of Mahmud was directed against the Somnath temple in Gujrat.
- Mahmud's invasions shook the entire political and economic fabric of Northern and Western India. The powerful rulers of these regions were defeated, humiliated or liquidated resulting in the disintegration of their states.
- Mahmud was a great conqueror but not a great empire-builder and administrator.

3.5 Glossary

Antyaja: The last born or the low born.

Amin-ul-Millat: Protector of the Muslims.

Devadasi: It is a name given to a girl dedicated to a deity in a temple for worship and service of the deity for the rest of her life.

Mameluk: Slave officer

Yamin-ud-Daulah: The right hand man of the Empire (of the *Caliph*).

3.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise -1

Ans.1 Sabuktigin

Ans.2 Jaipala

- Ans.3 Twice
Ans.4 November 1, 971 CE
Ans.5 998 CE
Ans.6 17 times
Ans.7 Mahmud Ghaznavi
Ans.8 1000 CE
Ans.9 Utbi
Ans.10 He was the Hindushahi ruler of India at the time of the invasion of Mahmud Ghaznavi.
Ans.11 Chakraswami temple
Ans.12 Rajyapala
Ans.13 1025 CE
Ans.14 Firdausi
Ans.15 Khyber Pass

3.7 Suggested Readings

1. C.E Bosworth, 1963, *"The Ghaznavids 884-1040"*, Edinburgh University Press
2. Habib, Mohammad, 1965, *"Sultan Mahmud of Ghaznin"*, S. Chand & Co.
3. Satish Chandra, 2004, *"Medieval India: From Sultanate to the Mughals" Part I: Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526)* Revised Edition. New Delhi.
4. Sunil Kumar, 2007, *"The Emergence of the Delhi Sultanate, 1192-1286"* Permanent Black.
5. Peter Jackson, 1999, *"The Delhi Sultanate: A Political and Military History"* Cambridge University Press.

3.8 Terminal Questions

1. Briefly discuss Ghaznavid Dynasty.
2. Make an assessment of the condition of India at the time of invasions of Mahmud of Ghazni.
3. Describe the causes and impact of Mahmud Ghaznavi's repeated invasions on India.
4. Give a brief account of the invasions of Mahmud Ghaznavi on India.
5. Give the assessment of Mahmud's character and achievements.

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UNIT- 4

THE GHORIDS IN THE NORTH-WEST

Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Objectives
- 4.3 Ghori Dynasty
 - 4.3.1 The Causes of the Invasions of Muhammad Ghori on India
 - 4.3.2 Condition of India at the Time of Invasions of Muhammad Ghori
 - 4.3.3 Campaigns of Muhammad Ghori in India
 - 4.3.4 Character Estimate of Muhammad Ghori
 - 4.3.5 Causes of the Success of Turks and Defeat of Rajputs
 - 4.3.6 Impact of Turkish Conquest of India

Self-Check Exercise -1

- 4.4 Summary
- 4.5 Glossary
- 4.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 4.7 Suggested Readings
- 4.8 Terminal Questions

4.1 Introduction

After the death of Mahmud Ghaznavi, the Ghaznavid Empire disintegrated quickly under his weak successors. The Seljuk Turks deprived them of Central Asian possessions while, within Afghanistan, they faced the most serious challenge from the **Ghorids** or **Ghuris**. There ensued a long struggle between the ruling houses of Ghazni and Ghur for the dominance of Afghanistan. Ultimately the Ghurs captured Ghazni from the hands of the weak Ghaznavids.

4.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Know about the Ghorid Dynasty,
- Explain the causes of invasions of Muhammad Ghori on India,
- Understand the condition of India at the time of invasion of Muhammad Ghori,
- Describe the campaigns of Muhammad Ghori in India,
- Form an estimate of Muhammad Ghori,

- Examine the causes of the defeat of Rajputs against the Turks in the 11th and 12th centuries.
- Analyze the impact of the Turkish conquest of India.

4.3 Ghurid Dynasty

Ghur is located at a high altitude of more than 10,000 feet between Ghazni and Herat. Some historians described the Ghur dynasty as Afghans but now this view is not accepted. The family was Turk, known as **Shansbani**, and originally belonged to Persia. Primarily, the district of Ghur was agricultural but it was well known in Central Asia for its good horses and steel also which were the most effective means of warfare during those days. Ghur maintained its independence till the beginning of the 11th century. It was conquered and made feudatory by Mahmud Ghaznavi in 1009 CE. However, with the decline of the Ghaznavids, the rulers of Ghur began to assert themselves and in the beginning of the 12th century became virtually not only independent but started contending for power against the Ghaznavids. There ensued a long struggle between the ruling houses of Ghazni and Ghur for the dominance of Afghanistan which ultimately, resulted in the destruction of the Ghaznavids. Ala-ud-din Husain of Ghur succeeded in completely devastating the city of Ghazni and earned the nickname of *Jahan Soz*—‘the world burner’ who plundered the town and set fire to it. It gave a death blow to the power and prestige of the Ghaznavids. Ala-ud-din was succeeded by his son, Saif-ud-din who in turn was succeeded by his cousin Ghiyas-ud-din. Ghiyas-ud-din sent his brother **Shihab-ud-din** alias **Muiz-ud-din Muhammad** to conquer Ghazni. Muhammad conquered Ghazni in 1173-74 CE. He received appointment as governor of Ghazni and was permitted by Ghiyasuddin to govern and expand his dominions as he pleased. This was the very Muhammad who attacked India in the 12th century and succeeded in establishing his empire in India. While his elder brother attempted to extend his empire towards the West and came in conflict with the Khwarizm Shah of Persia, Muhammad tried to extend the empire towards the East. Muhammad Ghori thus became virtually an independent ruler, albeit he continued to show loyalty and allegiance to his elder brother during his lifetime and struck coins and read *khutba* in his name.

4.3.1 The Causes of the Invasions of Muhammad Ghori on India

After consolidating his hold over the kingdom of Ghazni, Muhammad Ghori directed his attention towards the conquest of India. Like Mahmud Ghaznavi, he also led many expeditions over a long period of 30 years. He attacked India due to several reasons. Historians have accepted the following reasons among them.

- (i) Muhammad Ghori was an ambitious ruler. Like all great rulers of his age he wanted to extend his empire for power and glory. He decided to conquer India for the same purpose.
- (ii) The royal families of Ghur and Ghazni were hereditary enemies and, by that time, the Ghaznavids still ruled in Punjab. Muhammad Ghori after the capture of Ghazni wanted to annex Punjab as well to his kingdom so that he could finish the remaining strength of his hereditary enemy and also provide security to its kingdom from towards the East.
- (iii) The ambition of the Ghur dynasty of extending their power towards the West was challenged and checked by the rising power of the Khwarizm dynasty of Persia. Therefore, the next alternative before the Ghurides was to proceed towards the East viz., towards India. Besides, the responsibility of extending the power of the Ghurides towards the West was on the shoulders of Ghiyas-ud-din. Therefore, Muhammad himself decided to conquer India.

(iv) Loot and plunder was definitely not the aim of Muhammad Ghorī although he took care to acquire enough gold and silver as booty or tribute from the defeated chiefs. It helped him in raising a strong army for the defence of his Afghan dominions against the onslaught of Khwarizm Shahs.

4.3.2 Condition of India at the Time of Invasions of Muhammad Ghorī

Almost 148 years had elapsed after the last invasion of Mahmud Ghaznavi in 1027 CE. Muhammad's Ghorī's first attack on India took place in 1175 CE. But, there was not a single remarkable change in the condition of India except changes in the ruling dynasties and territories of their kingdoms. Politically, India was divided into a number of kingdoms, both in the North and the South. Many of them were very large and powerful enough to meet the challenge of a foreign invader but their constant fighting against each other for glory and power was their primary weakness because it did not allow them either to UNITE themselves even in the hour of their greatest danger against a foreign enemy or left them free to utilize complete resources against him. At that time, Sindh and Multan were ruled by two independent Shia Muslim rulers while Punjab was in the hands of Khusrav Shah, the last Ghaznavid ruler. He was not a powerful ruler. He had failed to achieve any success in India. Rather, the Chauhana ruler of Delhi had succeeded in snatching away certain places from him. Gujarat and Kathiawar were ruled by the Chalukyas with their capital at Anhilwara. The Chalukyas had lost much of their power by fighting against the Chauhanas of Delhi and Ajmer. At that time, Mularaja II was their ruler. Delhi and Ajmer were ruled by the Chauhanas. Prithviraja III was the ruler at that time. He was a capable commander and an ambitious ruler. He had successfully fought against his neighbouring kingdoms. Therefore, he had provoked the jealousy of all of them. He had defeated and disgraced the Chalukyas of Gujarat, captured Mahoba from the Chandela ruler Paramaladeva and, by eloping with the daughter of king Jayachandra of Kannauj, had incited his permanent enmity. Undoubtedly Prithviraja III was a chivalrous and daring ruler but he lacked farsightedness and diplomatic shrewdness. Therefore, he failed to receive any support from any of his powerful neighbours in his struggle against Muhammad Ghorī. The Gahadavalas ruled over Kannauj. Their empire was most extensive in North India at that time and was ruled by Jayachandra at that time. Chandelas ruled in Bundelkhand while the Palas and the Senas ruled in Bengal. The South was similarly divided politically and was totally indifferent to the fate of north India.

There was no change in Indian society as compared to the conditions of the 11th century except that a large Unit of Muslims had peacefully settled in many parts of India. These small colonies of the Muslims were not effective in any way directly in the Indian politics but were certainly useful indirectly as any Muslim invader could get some sympathy and, at times, certain useful information from these colonists. Except this, India had not changed itself socially, culturally or militarily since the days of the invasions of Mahmud Ghaznavi.

4.3.3 Invasions of Muhammad Ghorī on India

A novelty regarding Muhammad Ghorī's expeditions was that he did not use the Khyber Pass as the route for making an entrance into India as had been done by Mahmud Ghaznavi. Instead he used the Gomāl pass, located to the West of Dera Ismail Khan which he considered to be safer and shorter route. Probably it was because of two reasons. Firstly, the Khyber Pass was well defended by the Ghaznavid rulers of Lahore and secondly Muhammad Ghorī intended to avoid a direct clash with the Ghaznavids.

Muhammad Ghorī first attacked Multan in 1175 CE and conquered it easily from the *Karmatia* ruler. Next he annexed Uch and lower Sindh to his territories. He brought the conquered

territories under his effective military control and established an efficient civil administration there. In 1178 CE, Muhammad Ghori attacked Gujarat. The Chalukya ruler, Mularaja II faced him near Mount Abu and gave him a crushing defeat. This was the first defeat of Muhammad Ghori in India. Afterwards, he had to revise his plans and make an all-out effort to conquer Panjab from the Ghaznavids. He occupied Peshawar in 1179 CE, attacked Lahore after two years and received huge presents from the last Ghaznavid ruler, Khusrav Shah. He conquered Sialkot in 1185 CE and attacked Lahore again in 1186 CE. He imprisoned Khusrav Shah by treachery and occupied the entire territories of Panjab. Later on, Khusrav Shah was murdered in 1192 CE.

After the capture of Panjab, the boundaries of the kingdoms of Muhammad Ghori and Prithviraja III, the Chauhana ruler of Delhi and Ajmer, touched each other. In 1189 CE, Muhammad attacked and captured Bhatinda (Tabarhind). He was planning to go back when he received the news of the advance of Prithviraja Chauhan against him with a view to recapture Bhatinda. Muhammad Ghori proceeded forward to face him. The enemies met each other on the battlefield of Tarain. There is a controversy regarding the location of the site of the battle. A.B.M Habibullah agrees with Alexander Cunningham's identification of the place with a village called Torvan, situated between Bhatinda and Sirsa. According to Firishta Tarain was also known as Taraori; accordingly Elphinstone located it between Karnal and Thanesar. Tarain was 80 miles from Delhi, and the first battle of Tarain took place in 1190-91 CE. Muhammad Ghori suffered a crushing defeat in this battle.

The *Hammir-Mahakavya* describes that Muhammad Ghori was taken prisoner by Prithviraja Chauhan but left free with grace. But this view is not accepted by historians. Muhammad was wounded and taken to a place of safety by a Khalji noble. The Muslim army was routed and the battle was completely won over by the Rajputs. Prithviraja, thereafter, attacked the fort of Bhatinda but could capture it only after 13 months. It is a sad commentary on the poor military organization and defective war strategy of the Rajputs that they took a very long time to recapture their own fort from the hands of the Turks who had conquered it from the former in a single sweep a short-while ago.

Muhammad Ghori could not forget his defeat the battle of Tarain. Prithviraja III had not only humiliated him but had also blocked his way to conquer India. Muhammad Ghori prepared himself well. According to Firishta, he was so overwhelmed with a sense of grief and humiliation that he would neither eat nor drink. He spent day and night in preparation to fight Prithviraja Chauhan. He collected a strong force of one hundred and twenty thousand men and then proceeded towards India to avenge his defeat.

After the capture of Bhatinda, Muhammad Ghori again marched to Tarain. Though Prithviraja III came with a large army to face him but was decisively defeated. He tried to flee but was taken prisoner. According to Professor Hasan Nizami, he was taken to Ajmer and he accepted the overlordship of Muhammad Ghori, but when found guilty of a conspiracy against Muhammad Ghori, was sentenced to death. Hence the second battle of Tarain, fought in 1192 CE, proved to be one of the decisive battles of Indian history. It settled the future course of Indian history. As Dr D.C. Ganguly writes: "The defeat of Prithviraja in the second battle of Tarain not only destroyed the imperial power of the Chahamanas (Chauhanas), but also brought disaster on the whole of Hindustan." The battle opened the way for the conquest of India by the Muslims. Ajmer and Delhi both were captured by Muhammad Ghori which paved the way for his further conquests in India. Also, the battle definitely weakened the morale of other Rajput rulers to resist the Muslim invader. Muhammad Ghori deputed his brilliant slave general Qutub-ud-din Aibak to take the charge of

army occupation and himself returned to Ghazni. Aibak consolidated the Indian conquests of Muhammad Ghori, suppressed the revolts of the Chauhanas at Ajmer, made Delhi the capital of Muslim kingdom in India in 1193 CE and captured Meerut. He then laid siege to Baran (Bulandshahar) but met with stiff resistance. About this time, Aibak was recalled to Ghazni by his master. He stayed in Ghazni for about 6 months and then returned to Delhi after receiving special instructions from Muhammad Ghori regarding their future line of action. Baran and Koil (Aligarh) were captured by Aibak in 1194 CE

Muhammad Ghori came back to India in 1194 CE with a well-equipped force. This time his target was the kingdom of Kannauj. Jayachandra, the ruler of Kannauj, had enmity with Prithviraja III and therefore, had not helped him against the Turks. Now, he too had to face Muhammad alone. The battle between Muhammad Ghori and Jayachandra took place near Chandawar on the river Yamuna, between Etawah and Kannauj. The Rajputs were defeated and Jayachandra was killed in the battle. Muhammad Ghori proceeded as far as Banaras and occupied all the important places of the kingdom of Kannauj. Now, there remained no other powerful kingdom in north India to resist Muhammad's armies.

Muhammad Ghori went back to Ghazni, again leaving Aibak who consolidated his fresh conquests and suppressed a number of revolts which took place at Ajmer, Aligarh, etc. Muhammad came back to India in 1195 CE. This time he conquered Bayana and attacked Gwalior. Pratihara chief, Sulakshanapal accepted the suzerainty of Muhammad Ghori and peace was granted to him. Ghori assigned the command of the territories between Rajputana and Doab to Baha-ud-din Tughril and went back. Tughril captured the fort of Gwalior in his absence.

Muhammad Ghori could not come back to India for some next years and the responsibility of consolidating his conquests in India rested on his governors here, particularly on Aibak. A serious revolt in Rajasthan was suppressed by Aibak after much difficulty. Thereafter, Aibak attacked Gujarat and plundered its capital Anhilwara, Aibak also conquered Badaun, Banaras and Chandawar in 1197 CE which were lost to the Turks and, thus, consolidated the conquest of Kannauj. One of the most important conquests of Aibak was that of Bundelkhand. The Chandela ruler, Paramaladeva, was now the only independent Rajput ruler in Central India and the fort of Kalinjar was considered to be impregnable. Aibak attacked it in 1202-1203 CE. Paramaladeva died during this period of fighting but the Chandelas fought under the leadership of his minister, Ajayadeva. But, ultimately, the Chandelas had to leave the fort, which was occupied by Aibak who occupied Mahoba and Khajuraho as well.

A petty noble named Ikhtiyar-ud-din Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khalji attempted the conquest of Bengal and Bihar. To his surprise, Khalji found that nobody tried to oppose him anywhere. That enhanced his ambitions. He went on increasing his resources and his soldiers. In 1202-1203 CE, he attacked Odantapuri and plundered the Buddhist monastery there. Next, he sacked and destroyed Nalanda and Vikramasila as well and put thousands of Buddhists to sword. Lakshamana Sena, the ruler of Bengal, took no steps to check him so far and, ultimately, paid the price for his neglect. Ikhtiyar-ud-din attacked Nadia, the capital of Pala ruler of Bengal, in 1204-1205 CE. He moved so swiftly that he left the bulk of the army much behind himself and reached the palace-gates with only 18 horsemen. Lakshmana Sena felt that the Turks had made a surprise attack and fled out of fear. In the meantime, the Turkish army also reached there and Ikhtiyar-ud-din plundered Nadia. East Bengal remained with Lakshmana Sena, while South-West Bengal was occupied by Ikhtiyar-ud-din for Muhammad Ghori. He established his headquarters at Lakhnauati. Ikhtiyar-ud-din also attempted to conquer Tibet also but the expedition failed miserably. Before his death, he had

brought Bihar and a large part of Bengal under Turkish control which was not even imagined by Muhammad Ghori or Aibak.

When Muhammad Ghori's nobles were expanding and consolidating his empire in India, he himself was busy fighting against Khwarizm Shah of Persia. Muhammad Ghori's elder brother, Ghiyas-ud-din had died in 1202 CE and therefore Muhammad had become the ruler of the entire Ghur Empire. Ghiyas-ud-din had always fought against the Khwarizmians. Muhammad pursued the similar policy. But, he was severely defeated by them in 1205 CE at the Battle of Andhkhud. This defeat of Muhammad Ghori gave a setback to his reputation in India as well and it was rumoured that he had been killed. It led to revolts in different parts of India. In the North-West, the Khokars attempted to capture Lahore. Muhammad came to India in 1205 CE and fought a battle against Khokars between the Jhelum and Chenab rivers. The Khokars fought fiercely but were defeated and punished harshly. After setting right the affairs at Lahore, Muhammad Ghori returned to Ghazni. On his return journey, he was stabbed to death on March 15, 1206 CE at **Dhamyak** on the banks of the river Indus by the party of Khokhar dare-devils, while he was engaged in the evening prayers. The body of Muhammad Ghori was carried to Ghazni and buried there.

4.3.4 Character Estimate of Muhammad Ghori

While making an assessment of the character and achievements of Muhammad Ghori, one is usually tempted to compare him with those of Mahmud Ghaznavi which sometimes unreasonably diminishes his importance. But, the status of Muhammad Ghori in Indian history, even while comparing him with Mahmud Ghaznavi, is undisputable. As a general Muhammad Ghori was no match for Mahmud Ghaznavi. Mahmud was a born military commander. He was successful in all his campaigns in India and he had been equally successful in Central Asia. Mahmud Ghaznavi, thus, established an extensive and powerful empire and rightly deserved to be the first Sultan of the Islamic world. Mahmud Ghaznavi remained unbeaten during his life-time. Muhammad Ghori was badly defeated by Mularaja, Prithviraja Chauhan and Khwarizm. However, the greatness of Muhammad Ghori was that none of those defeats could dampen his spirit or check his ambition. He learned from his every failure, realised his weaknesses, and removed them and finally attained success. Muhammad Ghori did not inspire awe but confidence among his generals and extracted their collective wisdom in the search of his clear cut imperialist ideals. He gave full credit to the lieutenants for their achievements and did not eclipse their stature by the imposition of his own personality cult.

The successes and conquests of Muhammad Ghori brought about more permanent results than the conquests of Mahmud Ghaznavi. Professor K.A. Nizami writes. "This hero of three stupendous defeats-Andhkhud, Tarain and Anhilwara", as Professor Habib calls him, "has to his credit the establishment of one of the greatest empires of the Middle Ages, and in this he definitely rises above Mahmud of Ghazni". Muhammad Ghori made a correct estimate of the decadent political structure of India and visualized the establishment of a Turkish Empire here by all means. Of course, the conquest of North India was not easy. Muhammad Ghori met with resistance everywhere and was twice defeated by the Rajputs. Yet, he did not give up his goal. Mahmud Ghaznavi was never defeated, though he attacked India more times than Muhammad Ghori. Yet, he did not think of establishing his empire here and confined his vision simply to plunder the wealth of India. Thus, Muhammad Ghori possessed a higher ideal as compared to Mahmud Ghaznavi. Muhammad Ghori also gave proof of his political farsightedness in dealing with different Rajput rulers. He ensured that the Rajputs should, in no way, be able to raise a common resistance to him and therefore, tried to attain the sympathy or support of a few of them. It is because of this reason

he did not annex Delhi and Ajmer to his territories just after the Second battle of Tarain. Instead, he handed over the administration of Delhi to the son of Govindaraja and that of Ajmer to the son of Prithviraja Chauhan. It was Aibak who annexed them afterwards. Muhammad Ghori neither changed the status of those Hindu chiefs who accepted his suzerainty nor interfered in their administration. He simply set up military posts all over the place and garrisoned them with Turkish troops in order to consolidate his hold over the conquered territories. This aided him in consolidating the Turkish power in India. Muhammad Ghori was a good judge of human nature. He could select the best men for his service, give them responsibility according to their capability and get the best results out of their efforts. Qutubuddin Aibak, Tajuddin Yalduz and Malik Bahauddin Tughril who proved themselves fairly capable and were mainly responsible for his successes in India, were trained by Muhammad Ghori. Professor A.B.M. Habibullah writes, "If he failed to found a dynasty, he yet trained up a band of men who were to prove more loyal to his ideals and better fitted to maintain his empire."

Muhammad Ghori was successful mainly due to his own strength of character. He possessed a higher ideal from which he refused to diverge even after his initial failures in India and his defeat by Khwarizm Shah. Muhammad Ghori planned his attacks and conquests beforehand, changed them whenever necessary, removed his weaknesses when known and did not take unnecessary risks in battles and politics. When he suffered a setback at Anhilwara, he changed his course of attack on India and once defeated at the battle of Tarain, he came again with comprehensive preparation and even changed his military strategies. As a military commander, he kept his eyes upon all his campaigns. When he was fighting the Khokars in India he had not lost touch with his campaigns in Central Asia. It was because of this reason that he was ultimately successful in his military campaigns. Muhammad Ghori was the real founder of Turkish rule in India and therein lay his greatest achievement and greatness.

Muhammad Ghori could hardly find any time to look after the administration of his territories in India. Virtually, he remained the ruler of Ghazni and Ghur. The task of administering his Indian conquests was mostly left to Qutubuddin Aibak. Muhammad Ghori patronised many scholars like Fakhruddin Razi and Nizami Uruzi. However, his greatest achievement was the establishment of the Turkish Empire in India which added a fresh UNIT to the history of India.

4.3.5 Causes of the Success of Turks and Defeat of Rajputs

Arnold Toynbee, while examining the circumstances leading to the fall of the great civilizations, put forward the view that no 'foreign invasion' had ever been the cause of their collapse; 'it simply gave the *coup d'grace*. The decadent political structure, the outdated military organization, the stagnant Indian structure, the society with its inherent socio-religious defects and economic imbalance which created a gulf between the masses and the socio-political leadership, have been earlier in this UNIT. These carried the seeds of decay of the pre-muslim Indian society and its Rajput leadership. It was plagued, mainly, by the self-destructive characteristics—the neglect of a sound political-cum-military machinery of collective self-defense, the lack of feeling of overall national consciousness and mutual warfare. Unsurprisingly, it stood a very poor chance of survival in the struggle against the Turkish invaders.

The Turkish invaders, on the other hand, exhibited superiority over their Indian opponents in many respects. They had better military organization, discipline and consistency. They invariably followed one leader and fully realized the value of UNITY of command. Their leaders were well aware of the latest techniques of warfare, and they took keen interest in updating their knowledge in

this respect. The Turkish invaders were good archers who depended mainly on the use of efficient and well-disciplined cavalry against the Rajput infantry. They used their strategies wisely; they resorted to sham fights, laid ambushes, made surprise attacks, kept reserve armies and employed all means, fair or foul, to win the war. They fought as criminals. They were aware of the fact that they had to fight in a foreign land; therefore, if defeated, they might not be able to return alive to their country.

The Turkish invaders were full of religious zeal. They were inspired by the ideal of bringing glory to Islam. They thought that if successful in the holy war (*jihad*), this world would lie at their feet; otherwise they would attain martyrdom in their death and would attain paradise (*jannat*). Thus, the invaders fought for a cause while the Rajputs had nothing better than clan or class interests to defend.

There is no doubt that love for loot and plunder was a great material incentive to the Turkish invaders to fight stubbornly. They impartially distributed the spoils among themselves and their leaders on established principles. They received promotions and rewards from their leaders for their outstanding performance in the war. Naturally, every Muslim soldier, who participated in the expedition, had his personal career and fortune at stake. No high office, not even that of the Sultan or supreme commander of the forces was beyond the reach of a really capable soldier. Even from the ranks of their slaves, they produced, highly capable men like Qutub-ud-din Aibek and Bakhtiyar Khalji, without whose contributions it was not possible for Muhammad Ghori to conquer the whole of Northern India during his life-time. Attracted by the fabled wealth of India and the love of adventure, thousands of the Muslim youth from Central Asia joined the Turkish armies as *ghazis* who brought their own horses and weapons of war with them; on the other hand, the military resources of the Rajput chiefs were confined to their own principalities, whose scopes were sometimes not greater than those of a modern Indian district. The army organization of the Rajputs was based on worn out conceptions. The Indians did not try to improve their weapons, tactics and other equipments. The Turkish commanders could afford to exercise qualitative control over the selection of their soldiers whereas the Rajput princes were satisfied with the addition to their numbers alone.

The Indians had to pay heavily not only for their faults but also for their virtues of character. The Rajputs observed certain Hindu traditions of warfare and did not mind whether they were able to win the battle or not. It was against their morality to mix poison in water, to attack suddenly or from behind the enemy, to destroy agricultural fields in order to check the supply of the enemy or adopt such methods to win the battle. The Rajputs were generous and merciful to their enemies. A Rajput would seldom attack his enemy when the latter was without adequate armament, or injured or fallen on the ground; he would rather give him a fair chance to settle the scores between the parties. A Rajput knew how to fight and die a chivalrous death whereas the sole aim of a Turkish soldier was to win by hook or by crook. The principle non-violence had made the Indians humane and peace-loving. They showed non-aggressive, rather non-defensive attitude even in the face of the unprincipled invaders and thus fell an easy prey to their aggression. The 11th and 12th centuries presented the last phase of the declining ancient Indian civilization and culture, during which Toynbee's formula of **Beat-Rally-Rout** played its full circle. During this period, the uncreative political leadership of the Rajputs was faced by a periodic challenge which it repeatedly failed to meet. The Rajput polity of Northern India suffered a serious setback at the first holocaust (Invasions of Mahmud Ghaznavi) from which it never fully recovered; and at the next crisis (viz., Muhammad Ghori's invasions), it went to pieces forever. The failure of their political and military structure was

followed quickly by the disintegration and decay of ancient Indian civilization. Toynbee describes this consequence as due to the 'nemesis of creativity'. According to him, the Rajput 'leadership had lost its claim to the mimesis of the society at large'; 'nevertheless, it insisted on imposing its will on the society'. It manifested 'the most fateful occurrence' in the life-history of the Indian civilization because the Rajputs represented merely 'the dominant minority' who had ceased to be creative in their outlook, were 'hardened into some self-stultifying idolatry-the 'worship of the ghost of the defunct polity'. They crumbled down to the dust before the Turkish invaders owing to their 'sin of pride'.¹

4.3.6 Impact of Turkish Conquest of India

The triumph of the Turks against the Rajputs led to the establishment of Turkish rule in North India. It affected the fortunes of India in a number of ways. The Turks attempted to establish a strong centralized government and, hence, attempted to overthrow feudalism in India. Sultans such as Iltutmish, Alauddin Khalji and Ghiyasuddin largely succeeded in it. They also succeeded in setting up a uniform system of administration as well in North India.

According to J.N. Sarkar "India forewent its aloofness during the rule of the Turks." India had lost its contact with the outside world during the so-called Rajput age. It revived its contact with the Asian and African countries during the Turkish rule.

Professor A.B.M Habibullah has opined that the conquest of North India by the Turks created an **urban revolution**. The Turkish rulers permitted every person to live within cities without any discrimination on grounds of class, caste or religion. Therefore, all categories of people-rulers, labourers, educated ones, traders, the Brahmanas, the Vaishyas, the Sudras etc. lived together in cities and all of these, in their own way, helped in building and developing cities.

Contacts with the outside world, administrative UNITY, growth of cities, coinage system, etc. aided the growth of trade and industries which increased the prosperity of India.

During Turkish rule, Persian was accepted as the court language. Therefore, both the Hindus and the Muslims studied it which helped in integrating the culture of both.

The Turkish rule attacked the caste system of the Hindus. Although, the caste system could not be abolished among the Hindus, yet caste-distinctions and untouchability suffered serious setbacks and lower castes got the protection of the state.

The Turks improved the military organization and fighting strategies of the Indians. The feudal organization of the army was disposed off, centralized armies were raised, cavalry organization was emphasized, arms were improved, people of all castes and creeds were recruited in the army and the mobility of the army was increased. All these changes enhanced the efficiency of the Indian army and it came on par with the best armies in Asia. It was because of this reason that Alauddin Khalji could successfully repulse all Mongol invasions.

The Turkish rule brought Islam and Hinduism together in India which helped in the growth of Indo-Muslim culture. Both the Hindus and the Muslims contributed to the formation of that culture which created a society in India that was different from the past.

Self-Check Exercise-1

¹ J.L Mehta, 2010, "*Advanced Study in the History of Medieval India (Volume-I: 1000-1526 CE)*", Sterling Publishers Private Limited, New Delhi, pp.82-5

- Q.1 Where is Ghur located?
- Q.2 Name the ruler of Ghur who earned the nickname of *Jahan Soz*.
- Q.3 Who challenged the ambition of Ghur dynasty of extending the power towards the West?
- Q.4 When Muhammad Ghori did first attacked India?
- Q.5 Who was the ruler of Gujarat at the time of the invasion of Muhammad Ghori on India?
- Q.6 When Muhammad Ghori did attack Gujarat?
- Q.7 When and between whom was the first battle of Tarain fought?
- Q.8 Who won the second battle of Tarain?
- Q.9 When and between whom was the battle of Chandawar fought?
- Q.10 Name the petty noble of Muhammad Ghori who carried out the conquest of Bengal and Bihar.
- Q.11 When and where did Muhammad Ghori die?
- Q.12 Name any two scholars patronized by Muhammad Ghori.
- Q.13 What was Urban Revolution?

4.4 Summary

- Shihabuddin Muhammad Ghori was the real founder of the Turkish rule in Northern India. He belonged to the ruling house of Ghur in Afghanistan.
- Ghur was located between Ghazni and Herat.
- In a long struggle between the ruling houses of Ghazni and Ghor for the dominance of Afghanistan, Ghor emerged victorious.
- Muhammad Ghori captured Ghazni in 1173-74 CE and was appointed as governor of Ghazni.
- Muhammad Ghori was an ambitious ruler. He directed his attention towards India. He first attacked Multan in 1175 CE.
- At the time of the invasion of Muhammad Ghori, India was divided into a number of kingdoms both in the North and South.
- Muhammad Ghori used Gomal Pass as the route for making an entrance into India.
- He first attacked Multan in 1175 CE and conquered it. In 1178 CE, he attacked Gujarat and was defeated by Mularaja II. He occupied Peshawar in 1179 CE, Sialkot in 1185 CE, Lahore in 1186 CE, and Bhatinda in 1189 CE.
- In the first battle of Tarain fought in 1191 CE, Muhammad Ghori was defeated by Prithviraja Chauhan, the ruler of Delhi and Ajmer.
- Muhammad Ghori defeated Prithviraja Chauhan in the second battle of Tarain in 1192 CE. He captured Ajmer and Delhi.

- Muhammad Ghori deputed his brilliant slave general Qutubuddin Aibak to take the charge of army occupation and himself returned to Ghazni.
- Aibak consolidated the Indian conquests of Muhammad Ghori and carried out further conquests.
- Muhammad Ghori defeated King Jayachandra of Kannauj in the battle of Chandawar in 1194 CE.
- A petty noble named Ikhtiyar-ud-din Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khalji attempted the conquest of Bengal and Bihar.
- Muhammad Ghori was killed on March 15, 1206 CE at Dharmyak on his return to Ghazni.
- As a general Muhammad Ghori was no match for Mahmud Ghaznavi. Mahmud was a born military commander.
- Muhammad Ghori possessed a higher ideal as compared to Mahmud Ghaznavi. Muhammad Ghori also gave proof of his political farsightedness in dealing with different Rajput rulers.
- The Turkish invaders exhibited superiority over their Indian opponents in many respects. They had better military organization, discipline and consistency.
- Their leaders were well aware of the latest techniques of warfare, and they took keen interest in updating their knowledge in this respect.
- The Rajputs observed certain Hindu traditions of warfare and did not mind whether they were able to win the battle or not.
- The triumph of the Turks against the Rajputs led to the establishment of Turkish rule in North India. It affected the fortunes of India in a number of ways.

4.5 Glossary

Coup d'grace: An action or event that serves as the culmination of a bad or deteriorating situation.

Ghazi: A devoted Muslim who has taken a vow to fight the infidels.

Holocaust: A situation where a great many things are destroyed and a great many people die.

Jihad: A holy war against the infidels by Muslims.

4.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

Ans.1 Ghur is located between Ghazni and Herat.

Ans.2 Ala-ud-din Husain

Ans.3 Khwarizm dynasty of Persia

Ans.4 1175 CE

Ans.5 Mularaja II

Ans.6 1178 CE

Ans.7 The first battle of Tarain was fought in 1191 CE between Muhammad Ghori and Prithviraj Chauhan.

Ans.8 Muhammad Ghori

Ans.9 The battle of Chandawar was fought in 1194 CE between Muhammad Ghori and King Jayachandra of Kannauj.

Ans.10 Ikhtiyar-ud-din Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khalji

Ans.11 Muhammad Ghori died on March 15, 1206 CE at Dhamyakh

Ans.12 Fakhr-ud-din Razi and Nizami Uruzi

Ans.13 The Turkish rulers permitted every person to live within cities without any discrimination on grounds of class, caste or religion. It is termed as Urban Revolution

4.7 Suggested Readings

1. Dashratha Sharma, 1959, "*Early Chauhan Dynasties*", S. Chand / Motilal Banarsidass.
2. Kaushik Roy, 2016, "*Military Manpower, Armies and Warfare in South Asia*", Routledge.
3. Meenakshi Jain, ed., 2011, "*The India They Saw*", Vol. 2. Ocean Books Ltd.
4. Rima Hooja, 2006, "*A history of Rajasthan*", Rupa & Co.
5. Satish Chandra, 2006, "*Medieval India: From Sultanat to the Mughals (1206–1526)*", Vol. Part One, Har-Anand Publications.
6. Satish Chandra, 2007, "*History of Medieval India: 800-1700*", Orient Longman.

4.8 Terminal Questions

1. Write a short note on the following:-
 - (a) Ghurid Dynasty
 - (b) Causes of invasion of Muhammad Ghori on India
2. Describe the condition of India at the time of invasions of Muhammad Ghori.
3. Give an account of the invasions of Muhammad Ghori on India.
4. Make a comparative estimate of the character and personality of Mahmud Ghaznavi and Muhammad Ghori.
5. Discuss the causes of the defeat of the Rajputs against the Turks in the 11th and 12th centuries.
6. Analyze the impact of Turkish conquest of India.

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UNIT-5

FOUNDATION AND CONSOLIDATION OF DELHI SULTANATE- MAMLUK RULERS

Structure

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Objectives
- 5.3 Mamluk Rulers
 - 5.3.1 Qutubuddin Aibak (1206-1210 CE)
 - 5.3.2 Shamsuddin Iltutmish (1211-1236 CE)
 - 5.3.3 Razia Sultan (1236-1240 CE)
 - 5.3.4 Ghiyasuddin Balban (1266-1286 CE)

Self-Check Exercise-1

- 5.4 Summary
- 5.5 Glossary
- 5.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 5.7 Suggested Readings
- 5.8 Terminal Questions

5.1 Introduction

The rulers who ruled over the destinies of Delhi Sultanate from 1206 CE to 1290 CE are popularly known as rulers of one dynasty called the **Mamluk Dynasty** or **Slave Dynasty**. It produced nine rulers. But neither had they belonged to one dynasty nor was any one of them a slave when he or she occupied the throne of Delhi. In fact, three dynasties ruled over Delhi during this period. Qutubuddin founded the **Qutbi dynasty**, Iltutmish founded the **First Ilbari** or **Shamsi Dynasty** and Balban founded the **Second Ilbari Dynasty**. Each of them had ceased to be a slave before they became Sultans and, except Qutubuddin all others had obtained their formal manumission (freedom from slavery) long before their accession. Therefore, it is more appropriate to call them early Turk sultans or the *Mamluk* sultans of Delhi.

5.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Know about the career and achievements of Qutubuddin Aibek,
- Form an estimate of the character and achievements of Shamsuddin Iltutmish,
- Learn about Razia Sultan,
- Analyze the character and achievements of Sultan Ghiyasuddin Balban.

5.3 Mamluk Rulers

5.3.1 Qutubuddin Aibek (1206-1210 CE)

Qutubuddin Aibek was a brave, energetic and capable commander. He rendered a yeoman's service to his master in the conquest of Northern India and founded the first independent Turkish dynasty.

Early Life and Career

Born of Turkish parents, sold as slave while still a boy, Qutubuddin had a chequered career. Muhammad Ghori was his second master. Aibek was first sold to the Qazi of Nishapur, and then he was purchased by Muhammad Ghori who was impressed by him. Aibek's rise was unusually rapid. His first important promotion was the *amir-i-akhur*.

After the second battle of Tarain in 1192 CE, Qutubuddin Aibek was entrusted with the charge of his master's Indian dominion. Much of the credit of the Ghoriid conquests in India should go to Aibek. He saved Ajmer from two uprisings. He played an important role in the defeat of Jayachandra of Kannauj. Besides, Qutubuddin Aibek captured Koil (Aligarh), Ranthambhor (1195 CE), Badaun (1197-98 CE) and Kanauj (1198-99 CE), and Kalinjar, Mahoba and Khajuraho (1202-03 CE). He also occupied Delhi and made it the capital of the newly established Turkish Empire.

Another lieutenant of Muhammad Ghori was Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khalji who brought Bihar and Bengal within the Turkish dominion in a short span of time. But as the services rendered by Aibek were rated higher, it was he who was formally invested with viceregal powers and promoted to the rank of a *malik* in 1206 CE. The death of Muhammad Ghori marked only a change of status for Aibek who lost no time in exploiting the situation in his favor. He marched to Lahore and formally assumed power as a sovereign of the Ghoriid Empire on June 25, 1206.

Qutubuddin Aibek as Sultan

The death of Muhammad Ghori removed the support of a powerful protector and involved Qutubuddin Aibek in the intricate web of Central Asian politics. The Ghoriid Empire broke up into warring fragments. Ghiyasuddin Mahmud succeeded in establishing his rule in Ghur. Tajuddin Yalduz, another slave of Muhammad Ghori, laid claims to his master's Indian possessions. The internal situation in Northern India was also disturbing. Pre-occupied with these affairs, Aibek could not deal effectively with the Rajputs who lately were quite active in recovering their lost political authority. Kalinjar had been recovered by the Chandelas, the Gahadwalas under Harishchandra reoccupied Farrukhabad and Badaun, while Gwalior seems to have been lost to the Pratiharas.

In 1210 CE when Aibek died of injuries sustained from a fall from his horse while playing *chaugan*, the Delhi sultanate lacked political stability and had no effective administration. Aibek

had never bothered to take up concrete steps in this direction. He was mainly interested just to keep things going.

Estimate of Qutubuddin Aibek

Aibek was a brave soldier and a competent military general, whose contribution in extending the Turkish Empire was unique. Besides it is to be noted that his early training in Nishapur equipped him with refined literary tastes as is evident from his patronage of scholars like Hasan Nizami and Fakhre Mudabbir. His generosity was proverbial and earned him the title "*lakh baksh*" (giver of lakhs). As his reign was too short and the difficulties he faced were too many, he does not seem to have made a significant contribution in evolving a solid administrative structure of the Delhi Sultanate. But there is no doubt that he managed the show. Abul Fazl is all praise for Aibek and sums up his contribution in the following words "He achieved things, good and great".

5.3.2 Shamsuddin Iltutmish (1211-1236 CE)

On the death of Aibek, the Turkish faction at Lahore supported Aibek's son Aram Shah (there is a good deal of controversy whether he was actually the son of Qutubuddin Aibek or not) while the nobles at Delhi, led by Ismail, who occupied the post of *amir-i-dad* (an important functionary of judicial department), invited Iltutmish to ascend the throne. At that time Iltutmish was the governor of Badaun. He marched towards Delhi. But before entering the capital he met the army of Aram Shah. He easily defeated Aram Shah, whose rule lasted only for about eight months (1210-1211 CE) and was of no significance.

Early Life and Career of Iltutmish

Shamsuddin Iltutmish was born of Turkish parents of the Ilbari tribe of Central Asia. He was handsome and intelligent and his father loved him very much. He excited the jealousy of his half-brothers who deceitfully sold him to a slave-trader while he was yet a child. After passing through many hands, Iltutmish was finally purchased by Qutubuddin Aibak. Iltutmish proved his worth and rose to higher positions by his own merit. He got promotions one after another till he became *amir-i-shikar* (the master of the hunt). Then he was sent as in-charge of the fort of Gwalior. After that he got the governorship of the iqtas (provinces) of Gwalior and Baran (Bulandshahr). He was married to the daughter of Qutubuddin and, finally, appointed as governor of the iqta of Badaun. While fighting against the Khokhars in 1205-06 CE, Muhammad Ghori was deeply impressed with his valor that he advised Aibak to free him from slavery which was subsequently done. After the death of Aibak, the citizens of Delhi felt that the infant Turkish Empire in India required the services of a capable ruler than that of incompetent and unpopular Aram Shah. Therefore, Sipahsalar Amir Ali took the consent of the citizens and Turkish nobles of Delhi and invited Iltutmish to come to Delhi. Iltutmish assumed the reign of government, defeated Aram Shah and, thus, became the ruler of Delhi in 1211 CE.

Real Founder of the Delhi Sultanate

Iltutmish was the real founder of the Delhi Sultanate. He made Delhi his capital instead of Lahore and proved to be a very strong and capable ruler who enjoyed a long reign of 26 years. He strengthened the foundations of the infant Turkish state in Northern India by saving it from internal forces of disintegration and external dangers. The centre of political significance shifted from Kannauj to Delhi 1211 CE, which came to occupy a premier position as the capital of India. Delhi continued to enjoy this privileged status throughout the medieval period for over 500 years.

Difficulties and Achievements of Iltutmish

(i) Rival Turkish Nobles- The throne of Delhi was not a 'bed of roses' for Iltutmish. The death of Aibek had plunged the Delhi Sultanate into confusion. The weak, and also brief rule of Aram Shah had stimulated the disruptive and rebellious tendencies among the Turkish nobles; it endangered the disintegration of the newly-founded Turkish state in India. In spite of his victory over Aram Shah and the popular support of the Turkish nobles of Delhi, Iltutmish's accession to the throne did not go unopposed. The governor of Uchh (Sind) and Multan, Nasiruddin Qubacha, captured Lahore, Bhatinda and even Sursuti as well and declared his independence. Ali Mardan Khalji, who had succeeded to the governorship of Bihar and Bengal on the death of Bhakhtiyar Khalji in 1206 CE, also stopped sending the tribute to Delhi. Tajuddin Yaldoz (the father-in-law of Qutubuddin Aibek), now the sultan of Ghazni, attempted to assert his political dominance over Iltutmish by sending him the *chhatra* (royal canopy) and a *durbash* (baton) at the time of his accession to the throne. As a shrewd diplomat, Iltutmish accepted them and, thus, pretended to recognize his suzerainty but he never permitted Yaldoz to encroach upon his Indian possessions.

(ii) Defeat of Tajuddin Yaldoz (1215-16 CE) - Yaldoz claimed overlordship over Iltutmish and asked him to send military help. Iltutmish marched against him to settle his score finally with him. Between 1215 and 1216 CE, Iltutmish gave a crushing defeat to Yaldoz in an open battle at Tarain and imprisoned him. He was first sent to Badaun and killed later on. Iltutmish's gain was two-fold. One was that he had killed the most dangerous rival to his power and, the other, was that it led to the final break with Ghazni. Hence onwards, Delhi Sultanate became an independent state in fact if not legally so far.

(iii) Defeat of Nasiruddin Qubacha (1217 CE) - After the defeat of Yaldoz at the hands of Iltutmish, Nasiruddin Qubacha once again occupied Lahore. When he was challenged by Iltutmish at the head of a large army, he, however, retreated towards Multan. Iltutmish chased him and defeated him at Mansura, on the banks of the river Chenab. However, Iltutmish refrained from marching upon Sind due to his anxiety to defend the North-West frontier in the face of the rapidly deteriorating political situation in Central Asia. Therefore, Qubacha continued to rule over Sind almost as an independent ruler till his death in 1227 CE.

(iv) Mongols on the North-West Frontier (1220-24 CE) - The Mongol threat was also averted by Iltutmish's tact and diplomacy. The Mongols came in hot pursuit of Jalaluddin Mankbarani, the Crown Prince of Khwarazm, who sought refuge in India. This placed Iltutmish on the horns of a dilemma. To help Jalaluddin Mankbarani meant to incur the wrath of Chengiz Khan. And this would have been suicidal for the infant Turkish Empire. To refuse aid bluntly to a fugitive, who had become a hero in the Islamic world, would have alienated the Muslim sentiments. But Iltutmish keeping in view alone the interest of the Turkish Empire followed dilatory tactics which discouraged Jalaluddin Mankbarani who left India in 1224 CE. Close on his heels departed the Mongols who had no immediate design for the conquest of India. It is also to be noted that Chengiz Khan died in 1227. Thus, Iltutmish saved his kingdom from the Mongol invasion and also from the ill effects of the politics of Central Asia.

(v) Re-conquest of Multan and Sind (1227-28 CE) - After the aversion of the threat of Mongols, Iltutmish launched an offensive against Nasiruddin Qubacha from two sides-Lahore and Delhi. Multan and Uchh were captured and Qubacha was besieged in the fort of Bhakkar on the bank of the Indus. Surrounded from all sides by the enemy and totally exhausted, Qubacha made his last bid to escape by plunging into the Indus river, and was drowned. The sumra ruler of Debal principality

hastened to acknowledge the suzerainty of Iltutmish soon after. Both Multan and Uchh were occupied by Iltutmish.

(vi) Conquest of Bihar and Bengal – After the death of Qutubuddin Aibek, Ali Mardan had declared him independent and, therefore, the province of Bengal was lost by the Delhi Sultanate. Therefore, Iltutmish turned his attention towards Bengal, which had been a constant source of trouble to Delhi. Ali Mardan having been murdered in 1211 CE was succeeded by Husamuddin Iwaz Khalji, who assumed full sovereign powers. He assumed the title of Ghiyasuddin and proved to be a very successful ruler. It took three campaigns before Bengal could be subjugated and the authority of the central government re-established in this rebellious province. In 1225 CE, the Sultan, led a successful expedition and Bihar was subsequently annexed. Iltutmish forced Iwaz to pay an indemnity and accept the over lordship of Delhi. When Iwaz tried to assert his independence once again Nasiruddin Mahmud, the eldest son of Iltutmish, was assigned the task to suppress the rebellious chief. Nasiruddin Mahmud defeated and killed Iwaz. He conquered Lakhnauti in 1226 CE. The last campaign was necessitated by a fresh outbreak following the sudden death of Nasiruddin Mahmud. Iltutmish led an army in person. He decisively defeated the rebels. Thus, Iltutmish once again brought the eastern region consisting of the provinces of Bihar and Bengal under the control of Delhi. With the purpose of bringing the region under his effective control, Iltutmish appointed two separate governors, one for Bengal and the other for Bihar.

(vii) War against the Rajputs - The Rajputs presented another problem with which Iltutmish had to grapple. They were making a fresh bid to throw off the yoke of Turkish rule. The security of the Turkish political ascendancy in India demanded the subjugation of the insurgent Rajputs and the recovery of the territories lost to them. Iltutmish achieved this methodically. Ranthambhor was captured from Chauhans in 1226 CE. The victory over Ranthambhor was followed by Nagor next year i.e., 1227 CE. Gwalior was also brought under the possession of the Delhi Sultanate in 1231 CE. The campaigns in Rajputana were rounded off by the sack of Bhilsa and Ujjain (1234-35 CE). The Gangetic valley was also pacified, and the Turkish rule was re-established by force in Awadh and the Doab.

Iltutmish attempted to bring the khokars under his subjugation in 1235 CE. Exhausted by continuous warfare, Iltutmish fell sick, returned to Delhi and breathed his last in April 1236 CE. He was buried in Delhi.

(vii) Administration of Iltutmish - Though the Turkish rule was established in North India after the second battle of Tarain (1192 CE), no concrete steps were taken to gear up the existing administrative machinery. Muhammad Ghori had no time to spare for this task, and whatever he initiated was not sufficient enough to provide stability to his newly founded empire. Personally he was available in India only for launching military campaigns. The burden of running the administration was left to the slave-officers. After his death when Qutubuddin Aibek came at the helm of the affairs but there was no appreciable change in the situation. It was the arrival of Iltutmish that for the first time the Turkish state thought of understanding the administrative problems with some seriousness.

Though, in the beginning, Iltutmish took some time to settle himself, but once he strengthened his position he was not prepared to lower the authority of his office. He believed in upholding the status and dignity of the Sultan. He was not prepared to compromise sovereignty. Therefore, first of all he cleared from his path all those opponents who renounced his sovereignty and tried to get rid of him. Once he got of his arch rivals he turned to more concrete measures. As a

Sultan he knew that single-handedly he could not perform his task. Therefore, he built around him a group of loyal and trustworthy slaves called *Turkan-i-Chihalgani* (Forty Turkish Slave Officers). They were not only used in conquering the new territories but were assigned the administrative tasks also. It was some sort of a mini but powerful machinery at the personal command of the Sultan.

We know that with the establishment of the Turkish mile the empire was divided into many iqtas or the administrative-cum-revenue UNITs. These were not of a uniform size. Some Iqtas were quite extensive while the others were small. Those who were assigned the iqtas were known as the muqtai. The muqtai were entrusted with the task of keeping law and order and to collect taxes. Though not much is known about the actual working of Iqtadari system during the reign of Iltutmish, but whatever evidence is available indicates that the system continued to operate more or less smoothly.

The medieval historians have shown great appreciation for Iltutmish's care for rendering justice. Long after his death the people remembered his justice. Ibn Battuta, who visited India in the reign of Muhammad bin Tughlaq, records that Iltutmish fixed two statutes of lions on the gate of imperial palace. Hanging chains were attached with them and on the other end of the chains a bell was fixed. As soon as an aggrieved person reached the spot he pulled the chain which made the bell ringing. This act was sufficient to draw the attention of the relevant authorities to the person concerned. However, this practice of pulling the chain was usually confined to night alone. But during the day time aggrieved person used the coloured garment for catching the attention of the concerned authorities. Besides, Iltutmish saw to it that *amiri-i-dads* were appointed in almost all the important towns of his empire to dispense justice. At the central level there was the chief Qazi who passed judgment on the appeals coming from the lower courts. However, in all important matters relating to justice Iltutmish could directly intervene and pronounce his judgement.

Iltutmish made a place for himself in monetary system also. It was during his reign that introduction of the *tanka* (silver coin) and the *jital* (copper coin) took place. Commenting on Iltutmish's performance in this field Nelson Wright remarks:

"The reign of Iltutmish stands out as a landmark in the coinage of Delhi..... Iltutmish was a great moneyer. That he established the silver *tanka* and the billion *jital* on a firm footing was in itself a remarkable achievement."

Estimate of Iltutmish

Iltutmish was not a very good administrator; he created no civil institutions. His was a military dictatorship like that of Aibek but with the difference that all the power was concentrated in his own hands. Iltutmish laid the foundation of an absolute monarchy of the Turks in Northern India. He himself appointed central ministers and regional military governors; the *wazir* (prime minister), *sadr-i-jahan* (head of the ecclesiastical affairs) and the chief *qazi* held office during his pleasure, and were responsible to him directly. He did not allow the Turkish nobility to interfere in the state affairs beyond certain limits. The dissatisfied and disobedient *Muizzi* (nobles of Muhammad Ghori) or *Qutbi* (nobles of Qutubuddin Aibek) officers were gradually downgraded or eliminated. Iltutmish created an entirely new class of the ruling elite which comprised his own Turkish slave officers, headed by their forty powerful military leaders-nick-named the *Chalisa* (*chihalgani* or *chehalgan*). They held charge of the iqtas, and wielded great influence at the court.

Iltutmish secured a deed of investiture from the Abbasid Caliph Al-Mustansir Billah of Baghdad in February 1229 CE, who bestowed the titles of the 'Sultan of Hindustan' and the 'deputy of the leader of the faithful' (*nasir amir ul momnin*). This gave Iltutmish legal claim over Delhi Sultanate as a distinct entity, independent of Ghazni. It also strengthened his position and ensured the succession of his descendants to the throne. All those who had previously labelled him as the usurper to the throne and cast accusations on his rule were silenced. Iltutmish was thus the first legal sovereign of the Indian Turks and real founder of the sultanate of Delhi. The investiture ceremony was celebrated in Delhi with great rejoicings.

Iltutmish reinforced the forces of law and order in the state, allowed the local administrative bodies to function as before and administered even-handed justice according to the Islamic standards of those days. He introduced a purely Arabic currency of gold and silver.

Though orthodox Sunni Muslim and religious minded person, Iltutmish was not a fanatic. He persecuted the Ismaili Shias of Delhi and his treatment towards the Hindus was harsh but not cruel. He had destroyed the Hindu temples at Bhilsa and Ujjain but he did not resort to idol-breaking. He adopted a policy of moderation towards the Hindus as a measure of political expediency and tried to win their cooperation in running the administration.

Iltutmish was a patron of art and learning. All scholars, members of the ruling families and capable persons who fled from Central Asia and other Islamic states because of Mongol invasions were provided shelter at the court of Iltutmish. Amir Khusrau's father was one of them. The contemporary scholars such as Minhaj-us-Siraj and Taj-ud-din adorned his court. Iltutmish extended liberal patronage to them and enriched the cultural life of the ruling elite. He completed the construction of Qutub Minar and enjoyed his association with the Sufi saints of the day.

Iltutmish was a courageous soldier and an experienced military commander. He was foresighted man. He unified the Turkish leadership under one central authority and saved the infant Turkish kingdom from disintegration. He protected it from the fury of the Mongols and gave a legal and independent status to it in the comity of the Islamic states. He was an empire-builder who endeavoured to accomplish the unfinished task of Qutubuddin Aibek in laying the foundations of the Delhi Sultanate.

5.3.3 Razia Sultan (1236-1240 CE)

After the death of Iltutmish, conflict arose between the Sultan and his slave nobles (the Forty) for power, which culminated in the murder of four sultans and the fifth, reduced to the position of a puppet of Balban. The nobles were divided into two groups - the Turkish nobles and the *Taziqs*. The former called them as *Sultani* and formed a group of Forty called *Turkan-i-Chihalgani*. They first eliminated the rivals, the *Taziqs* and tried to capture power from the weak successors of Iltutmish. The latter's son Rukn-ud-din Firuz was imprisoned and killed and in his place Raziya, his sister was enthroned. But she soon came into conflict with her Turkish nobles because she wanted to assert her power. The governors of Badaun, Multan, Lahore marched towards Delhi and besieged it. But she acted diplomatically. She sowed the seeds of dissension among the rivals and broke the confederacy. She concentrated power in her own hands, made fresh appointments, raised her loyal nobles to higher posts and even donned the male attire. She left the purdah and went for hunting. But the *Chalisa* could not put up with her overbearing attitude and independence and so conspired against her. Kabir Khan, the Governor of Lahore, revolted in 1241 CE. Soon Malik Altunia, the governor of Bhatinda, revolted. When Raziya was in the thick of her fight with Bhatinda, the nobles conspired against her and imprisoned her and raised her brother,

Bahram, to the throne. Now Malik Altunia of Bhatinda came to her rescue, got her released and married her. They together marched to Delhi but were defeated and forced to flee. Later, they were killed in 1240 CE.

Some scholars think that Raziya's greatest enemy was her sex. Iltutmish, who nominated her as his successor overlooking the claims of his grown-up sons, soon changed his idea of making her the Sultan. It is quite probable that he came to understand that the people were not in favour of saddling a woman with administrative responsibilities. This is further strengthened by the fact that there was no rebellion in her favour when her brother, Rukn-ud-din, succeeded Iltutmish as Sultan. Raziya herself understood the limitations imposed on her by her sex while discharging her governmental duties. After becoming the Sultan, Raziya found that the purdah system prevented her from transacting governmental functions freely. The curtain hung between her and the members of the court, stood in the way of her direct participation in administrative work. So she started dressing herself as a man and publicly appeared in the court. Seated on elephant back, she rode along the streets of Delhi. She was lifted to the back of the horse by an Abyssinian slave named Jamaluddin Yaqut who was appointed by Razia as *amir-i-akhur*. All these had irritated the feelings of the people. So they rose in revolt against her and overthrew her.

However, this theory is not acceptable. There was no rule in those times that a woman should not rule the country. Women exercised governmental function in some of the Islamic countries of those times. The Islamic law did not oppose the rule of a woman. The real reason for her fall was the disappointment caused to the nobles by Raziya's intention to be the ruler not only in name but also in fact. The nobles placed her on throne thinking that she, being a woman, would assign all powers to them. But when she tried to assert her power, they revolted against her. The struggle between Raziya and the Turkish slave nobles was not so much a struggle between man and woman but a struggle for power.

After removing Raziya, the nobles placed Muizuddin Bahram Shah on the throne and later Alauddin Masud. Both were worthless and incompetent. During the six years of their rule, the country passed through a series of disorders and confusion. The Mongol invasions added to the miseries of Hindustan. The Mongols now entered into the heart of the Punjab and captured Lahore. They even marched upto Uchh. In 1246 CE, the crown passed into the hands of Nasiruddin Mahmud. Pious as he was, he spent his leisure hours in copying the Quran. A great patron of learning, he gave a high post to Minhaj-us-Siraj, the author of the historical work, *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* which was dedicated to Nasiruddin Mahmud. But lacking in interest for administration he entrusted all powers to Ghiyasuddin Balban, his minister and father-in-law. When Nasiruddin died in 1266 CE without leaving a male heir, Balban ascended the throne with the help of the nobles. Thus came to an end the dynasty of Iltutmish.

5.3.4 Ghiyasuddin Balban (1266-1286 CE)

Ghiyasuddin Balban laid down the foundation of a new dynasty called the **Balbani Dynasty** although he was intimately related with the dynasty of Iltutmish as both Sultan Masud Shah and Sultan Nasiruddin were his sons-in-law and his own son Bughra Khan was married to the daughter of Sultan Nasiruddin by his another wife.

Early Career

Dr A.L. Srivastava believes that Balban was an Ilbari Turk whose father was a Khan of 10,000 families. His original name was **Bahauddin**. Balban was taken prisoner in his early youth

and sold as a slave in Baghdad by the Mongols. His master Khwaja Jamaluddin brought him to Delhi where he was purchased by Iltutmish in 1233 CE and, after sometime, promoted to the rank of *Khassadar*. Raziya appointed him to the post of *amir-i-shikar*. However, Balban proved unfaithful and became a party to oust Raziya from the throne. Bahram Shah gave him the jagir of Rewari and Masud Shah assigned him the jagir of Hansi. Wazir Abu Bakr appointed him *amir-i-hajib* and from that position he got the opportunity to consolidate his position among 'the forty'. He conspired against Masud Shah and was primarily responsible to put up Nasiruddin on the throne. In 1249 CE, he married his daughter to Sultan Nasiruddin, got the post of *naib-i-mamlakat* and also the title of *Ulugh Khan*. During the reign of Nasiruddin, Balban practically enjoyed all the powers of the state except for a brief interval of about a year. By ability, tact and diplomacy, Balban, certainly, had become the first among the powerful Turkish nobility. Therefore, after the death of Nasiruddin in 1265 CE, he ascended the throne of Delhi without any opposition.

His Difficulties

Though Balban had ruled for nearly 20 years during the reign of Sultan Nasiruddin, yet there were many difficulties which he had to face when he himself became the Sultan. The primary necessity of the state as well as that of Balban was to regain the lost prestige of the Sultan. After Iltutmish's death, his Turkish slave-nobles attempted to capture the throne and succeeded in its efforts. One after another, the successors of Iltutmish gave way to the rising power of the nobles and therefore, the prestige of the Crown was lost. It was Balban who had captured the ruling power. Thus, the power and prestige of the Sultan was completely lost. Balban himself had contributed towards it. But when he became the Sultan himself he realised the necessity of restoring the power of the Crown. He, therefore, felt the necessity of breaking the power of the nobility and creating awe and terror among the general population.

Another difficulty that Balban faced was providing security to the Delhi Sultanate and consolidating it further. All other problems were connected with it. In the North-West, it was absolutely necessary to check the growing power of the Mongols. In the East, Bengal had become independent and it was necessary to bring it under the control of the Delhi Sultanate so that other provinces were not encouraged to follow its example. The Hindus were revolting against the Delhi Sultanate in Doab, Malwa, Bundelkhand and Rajasthan and it was necessary to stop them from making further inroads. The Meos in Mewat and the Hindus in Katehar were revolting within the territories of the Delhi Sultanate and even the capital was not safe from their terror so that the Western gate of Delhi was always closed after the afternoon prayer. All this needed Sultan's immediate attention.

Balban's Achievements

As a shrewd and practical statesman, Balban gave up the policy of extension of the empire. He concentrated on restoring peace and order within the existing territory of his kingdom and bringing it under his effective control. Therefore, he emphasized on consolidation of the territories of the Delhi Sultanate.

(i) Balban's Theory of Kingship and Restoration of the Prestige of the Sultan -

Balban was the first Sultan of Delhi who expressed a clear and strong opinion concerning the powers of the Sultan. Professor K.A. Nizami believed that it was necessary for restoring not only the dignity of the Sultan and eliminating the possibility of conflict with the nobility but also due to inferiority complex and guilty conscience. Balban wanted to impress upon his nobles that he

got the throne because of Divine will and not by the poisoned cup or the assassin's dagger. Primarily, Balban highlighted two points regarding his theory of kingship. Firstly, he gave currency to the epithet *Zil-i-Ilahi*, the Shadow of God for himself and secondly, it was necessary for the Sultan to be a despot. He expressed that Kingship was the vice-regency of God on earth (*niyabat-i-khudai*) and it was next only to prophethood. He ruled by 'divine sanction' and was not answerable to any worldly authority for the discharge of his power and functions as sovereign. He believed that Kingship was the embodiment of despotism. On another occasion he declared that it was the King's super-human awe and status which could ensure the people's obedience.

Balban brought these ideas in practice. He claimed descent from the mythical Turkish hero, Afrasiyab. He gave up drinking having wine and pleasure parties. He believed that the king was above everyone in status and in grandeur. It was for this reason that he never moved freely with ordinary people. He never expressed unusual joy or sorrow in public. Even when he was informed of the death of his eldest son, Muhammad he remained unmoved and carried on the routine administration though in his private apartment he wept bitterly. He never came to the court without complete regal dress and no one could have ever seen him talking humorously or laughing. He framed certain rules for court-behaviour and enforced them strictly.

Balban organized a grand *darbar* on the Persian model. He introduced the practices of *Sijda* or prostration and *Paibos* or kissing the feet of the Sultan, appointed tall and fearsome guards who were to stand round the Sultan's person with naked swords and, except high nobles, ordered the rest to remain standing in the court. His courtiers put on prescribed costumes and drinking of wine was prohibited for them. Nobody could smile or laugh in the court. The yearly festival of *Nauroz* was celebrated in his court with great pomp and show. The foreigners were simply stunned by the glamour of his court. Whenever Balban used to go outside the palace, his tall and muscular Turkish slaves, in rich attire and heavily armed, with drawn-out swords marched with him shouting '*Bismillah-Bismillah*'. All these measures helped in restoring the prestige of the Sultan and added glamour to his personality. Besides, Balban gave shelter to all foreign scholars and nobles and named their residences in the name of their country or family because of which he was regarded as the protector of Muslim culture. This gave him a respectable position even in foreign countries of the Muslim world.

Balban discriminated between the high-born and the low-born people; the former were given were further given unequal treatment on racial considerations. Balban suffered from inferiority complex which tempted him to assume a haughty and aggressive behaviour against the commoners.

(ii) Liquidation of 'The Forty'- Even when Balban worked as the Prime Minister of Sultan Nasiruddin, he attempted to break up the power of the group of 'the forty' as he regarded it necessary to restore the powers of the Sultan. By the time Balban ascended the throne, most of these nobles had either died by themselves or were destroyed by Balban. The rest who remained were now killed or deprived of power. The governor of Badaun, Malik Baqbaq, who had beaten one of his slaves to death, was flogged publicly, demoted and disgraced. Another influential noble and the governor of Avadh, Haibat Khan was whipped publicly with 500 stripes and then delivered to the widow of the slave whom he had murdered while he was drunk. The same way Amin Khan, governor of Avadh was hanged at the gate of the city of Ayodhya when he failed to suppress the revolt of Tughril Khan of Bengal. Another member of the forty' and cousin of Balban, Sher Khan was poisoned as Balban became jealous of his ability and suspicious of his ambition. Thus, Balban, a member of the *Chalisa* himself brought about the destruction of that group.

(iii) The Administration and the Spy system - The administrative system of Balban was half-military and half-civil. All his officers were supposed to perform both administrative and military duties. Balban himself kept control over the entire administration. There was no post of *naib* during his reign and the position of the *wazir* too had become quite insignificant. Balban himself supervised the appointment of all officers and was particular that only people of noble birth were appointed to higher posts. Balban was successful in providing peace and justice to his subjects.

Balban owed his success largely due to an efficient organization of his spy-system. He set up a network of newswriters and spies (*Barids*) throughout his dominions to watch the activities of his governors, military and civil officers and even that of his own sons. Balban appointed them himself and they received fat salaries. They were expected to provide every important information to the Sultan and were severely punished if they failed to submit correct and prompt reports to the Sultan about the wrongful activities of the nobility. Every spy had direct access to the Sultan though none met him in the court. Balban's spy-system struck terror in the hearts of the government employees, strengthened the hold of the central government over them and helped the Sultan in the establishment of an absolute monarchy.

(iv) The Suppression of Revolts: Balban took instant measures to provide security to the city of Delhi. The forests around Delhi were cleared, four forts were built on the four corners of Delhi and ferocious Afghan troops were placed in them. The robbers and freebooters around Delhi were constantly attacked and killed brutally. Within a year, Delhi became free from the menace of those people who had made the life of the citizens unsafe in the capital. Next year, Balban suppressed the revolts in Doab and Oudh. He divided the area into several military commands, established military check-posts at several places, cleared the forests and pursued the rebellious people from one place to another. His measures succeeded and peace was restored in these areas. Next, Balban adopted semi-barbaric measures to strike terror among the people in Katehar. Even innocent women and children were not spared. He ordered his soldiers to slay the entire male population, burn their fields and villages and take women and children to slavery. The people of Katehar never rose in revolt against the Sultan. Balban also constructed roads, cleared the forests and made arrangements for the safety of the travellers. All these measures ensured peace within his kingdom.

(v) The Conquest of Bengal- Bengal was lost to the Delhi Sultanate during the reign of Sultan Nasiruddin. Balban appointed Tughril Khan as governor of Bengal. But Tughril Khan declared himself independent in 1279 CE and assumed the title of Sultan Mughisuddin. The rebellion gave a rude shock to Balban's authority. It was the first revolt of a slave-noble and had it been allowed to succeed. Balban immediately ordered Amin Khan, governor of Oudh, to bring him to knees. Amin Khan, however, was defeated and he was executed by Balban. The next two succeeding expeditions, also met with a similar fate. Balban was infuriated by this. He himself proceeded towards Bengal with a huge army. He added his strength further by additional troops of Avadh and reached Bengal with his son, Bughra Khan. Tughril Khan fled away from Lakhnauti. Balban pursued him and ultimately, succeeded in killing him at Jainagar (Orissa). Balban then returned to Lakhnauti and wreak vengeance on all the friends, supporters and relatives of Tughril. Balban appointed his son Bughra Khan as governor of Bengal and advised him to remain loyal to the Delhi Sultanate.

(vi) Defence of North-West Frontier- When Balban became the sultan, his cousin Sher Khan was in-charge of the North-Western frontier. He was a great warrior who had terrorized the Mongols and the Khokars. He defended the region from the Mongol inroads with ability and courage. On his death in 1270 CE, the provinces of Lahore, Multan and Uchh were placed under the charge of Balban's son Muhammad. Balban created a second line of defence under the command of his

second son Bughra Khan who was given charge of the *iqtas* of Sunam, Samana and Dipalpur. Balban himself stayed in the capital as far as possible and personally supervised the defence arrangements made against the Mongol penetration in this region. A special force of 30,000 well-equipped cavalry was kept in reserve exclusively to reinforce the border contingents. On the whole, Balban's policy to checkmate the Mongol menace was defensive in nature; he did not attempt to liberate the whole of North-Western region from them.

In 1285, the Mongol leader Timur Khan of Afghanistan launched a major attack on the Punjab. Prince Muhammad gave him a bold fight but lost his life in the combat, and the towns of Lahore and Dipalpur were plundered by the marauders. The provinces of Multan and Uchh were protected from the Mongol menace by the royal troops under the command of Muhammad's son Kai Khusrau. Balban nominated Kai Khusrav as his heir and could not survive the shock of the untimely death of his son and died a broken-hearted man about the middle of 1287 CE.

Estimate of Balban

Balban was one of the greatest Sultans of Delhi Sultanate. He was a great warrior, administrator and statesman. He established an absolute monarchy and consolidated the Turkish rule in Northern India. He did not launch unnecessary wars of expansion but kept a firm hold over the territorial heritage of his illustrious master Iltutmish. Together, they laid the foundations of Turkish rule in Delhi. Balban protected the Delhi Sultanate from internal disorders and external danger from the Mongols; he re-established perfect law and order in his territories and suppressed the insubordinate officials and anti-social elements by following the policy of **Blood and Iron**. He not only advocated the theory of divine rights of kingship but also possessed a high sense of the sovereign's duty. He was an extremely conscientious and hardworking man. He administered even-handed justice to the public and showed no mercy even to his relatives if found guilty. His punishments were rather excessive and cruel which struck terror in the hearts of the people. Balban was a strict disciplinarian who demanded abject submission and loyalty from the nobility and never tolerated any negligence in the administrative affairs on the part of the government employees. He was a great patron of learning; an assembly of scholars, saints and poets, including Amir Khusrau adorned his court. He presented an ideal moral character and encouraged his children and nobles to do likewise. He was a devout Muslim and spent his leisure in the company of the saints and scholars. He was very respectful towards the *ulema* though he did not permit them to interfere in state affairs. Balban won the goodwill of the Central Asian fugitives by granting them asylum and huge privy purses and made himself famous in the distant lands.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 What does the term *Mamluk* signify?
- Q.2 Name the ruler from the Ilbari dynasty who died of injuries while playing *Chaugan* (Polo) at Lahore?
- Q.3 Which ruler of Delhi Sultanate was called as *Lakh Baksh*?
- Q.4 What do you mean by *Turkan-i-Chihalgani*?
- Q.5 Who completed the construction of Qutub Minar?
- Q.6 Who was the first Muslim woman to rule over Delhi?
- Q.7 Who authored the historical work *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*?

- Q.8 Name the Sultan of Delhi who destroyed the Group of Forty (*Chalisa*)?
- Q.9 Which Mamluk ruler called himself *niyabat-i-khudai* or the Deputy of God?
- Q.10 Which ruler of Mamluk Dynasty adopted the policy of “Blood and Iron”?
- Q.11 Name the famous poet who adorned the court of Balban.

5.4 Summary

- The rulers who ruled over the destinies of Delhi Sultanate from 1206 CE to 1290 CE are popularly known as rulers of one dynasty called the **Mamluk Dynasty** or **Slave Dynasty**.
- Qutubuddin Aibek founded the first independent Turkish dynasty. He died in 1210 CE while playing *Chaugan* (Horse Polo).
- Iltutmish ascended the throne of Delhi Sultanate in 1211 CE. He belonged to the Ilbari tribe of Central Asia. He was the real founder of Delhi Sultanate.
- Iltutmish made Delhi his capital instead of Lahore. He successfully suppressed his rival Turkish nobles. He averted the Mongol threat by his tact and diplomacy.
- He created the group of forty Turkish slave officers known as *Chalisa* or *Turkan-i-Chihalgani*.
- He initiated the Iqta system and introduced the silver *tanka* and copper *jital* coins during his reign.
- Iltutmish died in 1236 CE and was buried in Delhi.
- Razia Sultan was the first Muslim woman ruler of Delhi Sultanate. She was killed in 1240 CE.
- Balban was the first Sultan of Delhi who expressed a clear and strong opinion concerning the powers of the Sultan.
- Primarily, Balban highlighted two points regarding his theory of kingship. Firstly, he gave currency to the epithet *Zil-i-Ilahi*, the Shadow of God for himself and secondly, it was necessary for the Sultan to be a despot.
- Balban organized a grand *darbar* on the Persian model. He introduced the practices of *Sijda* or prostration and *Paibos* or kissing the feet of the Sultan.
- Balban liquidated the *Turkan-i-Chihalgani* created by Iltutmish. He re-established perfect law and order in his territories and suppressed the insubordinate officials and anti-social elements by following the policy of Blood and Iron.

5.5 Glossary

Amir-i-akhur: Master of stables.

Amir-i-hajib: Officer in charge of the royal court, Lord Chamberlain.

Amir-i-shikar: Officer in charge of the royal hunt.

Chaugan: Polo, a game resembling hockey but played on horseback.

Khassadar: Personal attendant.

Naib: Deputy, a representative.

Tazik: a member of a people of Iranian stock living in Afghanistan

Ulema: A Muslim scholar, theologian.

5.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

Ans.1 Slave born to free parents.

Ans.2 Qutubuddin Aibek

Ans.3 Iltutmish

Ans.4 A group of forty Turkish slave officers.

Ans.5 Iltutmish

Ans.6 Razia Sultan

Ans.7 Minhaj-us-Siraj

Ans.8 Balban

Ans.9 Balban

Ans.10 Balban

Ans.11 Amir Khusrau

5.7 Suggested Readings

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4. Sailendra Sen, 2013, *"A Textbook of Medieval Indian History"*, Primus Books.
5. Satish Chandra, 2007, *"A History of Medieval India"*, Orient BlackSwan

5.8 Terminal Questions

1. "Qutubuddin Aibek was the founder of the Turkish rule in India." How far do you agree with this view?
2. Assess the contribution of Iltutmish in laying down the foundation of the Delhi Sultanate.
3. Describe the achievements of Iltutmish. Why is he regarded as the founder of the Muslim rule in India?
4. "Sultan Raziya failed because she was a woman." How far do you agree with this view?
5. Describe the theory of kingship upheld by Ghiyasuddin Balban.
6. Describe the career and achievements of Balban.
7. Write an explanatory note on *Turkan-i-Chihalgani*.

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UNIT-6

KHALJI IMPERIALISM

Structure

- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Objectives
- 6.3 Khalji Revolution
 - 6.3.1 Jalaluddin Firuz Shah Khalji (1290-1296 CE)
 - 6.3.2 Alauddin Khalji (1296-1316 CE)
 - 6.3.3 Conquests and Expansion
 - 6.3.4 Administrative Regulations
 - 6.3.5 Economic Regulations
 - 6.3.6 Significance and Implications of Khalji Imperialism

Self-Check Exercise-1

- 6.4 Summary
- 6.5 Glossary
- 6.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 6.7 Suggested Readings
- 6.8 Terminal Questions

6.1 Introduction

Balban's grandson Kaiqubad (1287-1290 CE) was established on the throne by Fakruddin, the kotwal of Delhi, who assumed high political authority during the last days of Balban. But Kaiqubad was killed by the Khalji family, which saw the end of the Mamluk dynasty and the beginning of the Khalji Dynasty at the throne of Delhi. The Khaljis served under the Ilbari dynasty of Delhi. Malik Firuz (later on Jalaluddin Khalji) was the founder of the Khalji Dynasty who was originally the *Ariz-i-Mumalik* appointed by Kaiqubad during the days of the decline of the Ilbari Dynasty.

6.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to

- Understand the Khalji Revolution,

- Asses the character and personality of Jalauddin Firuz Shah Khalji,
- Know about the military achievements of Alauddin Khalji,
- Examine the administrative regulations of Alauddin Khalji.
- Analyze the economic regulations of Alauddin Khalji.

6.3 Khalji Revolution

The Khaljis ruled from 1290 CE to 1320 CE. Barani does not consider them as Turks. The most acceptable view is that they were also Turks. As they lived in a place called Khalj in Afghanistan for a long period they had imbibed the customs and manners of the Afghans. They, therefore, appeared to be more Afghan than Turk.

The replacement of Balban's dynasty by Jalaluddin Khalji in 1290 CE is described as the **Khalji revolution**. This revolution is important in many ways. The Khaljis were not Ilbari Turks who regarded all others as inferior and therefore unfit to rule the country. They were not nobles. Therefore, their rise to power marked the rejection of the principle that ordinary man could not assume royal power. Till now the Sultans of Delhi owed their positions to heredity, election by nobles or election by the people. The Khaljis got into the possession of the throne of Delhi through a military coup. So they decided to defend it with military force. Thus was established a militarist rule in the country. The Khalji revolution was responsible for the announcement of a new theory of kingship about which we shall study later in detail. Alauddin Khalji declared that what he considered good for the people he would do and that he would not care whether his act was in conformity with Islamic law or not. The Khalji revolution was followed by the introduction of a system of price-control. It was during the time of the Khaljis that the Muslim forces crossed the Vindhya and conducted a successful expedition into the South. It was under them that the Turkish imperialism reached its zenith. They were the people who prevented the establishment of the Mongol rule in India. There was a great outburst of cultural activity under the Khaljis.

6.3.1 Jalaluddin Firuz Shah Khalji

The founder of the Khalji house, Jalaluddin, was an old man of 70 at the time of his accession to the throne. He was a man of mild disposition. He was a very lenient and kind-hearted ruler. On account of his manner of seizing the Delhi throne, he became unpopular. So he had to adopt a policy of appeasement. He offered positions to Turks and non-Turks. He treated his people with prudence and pardoned all the offenders with a warning. One of his nobles, Ahmad Chap, warned him to give up his conciliatory policy, but the Sultan did not pay any heed to the advice. Fortunately, there were no foreign invasions during the major part of his reign. Those who were pardoned never rose in rebellion against him, except Kishlu Khan, Balban's nephew and the governor of Kara. Kishlu Khan rebelled against the Sultan; he was defeated and taken captive at Badaun. But he and his followers were later released with a warning.

In 1292 CE, Jalaluddin defeated a Mongol raid under Halaku Khan, but allowed them to go back. Some of the Mongols were permitted to settle near Delhi. They became converts to Islam and came to be known as '**Neo-Mussalmans**'.

The Sultan invaded Ranthambhor in 1292 CE and Malwa in 1293 CE. Another act for which the Sultan has been criticized was his cruel treatment of a Darvesh, Sidi Maula, who was suspected of claiming the throne of Delhi and the Sultan got him trampled by an elephant.

6.3.2 Alauddin Khalji (1296-1316 CE)

The original name of Alauddin Khalji was **Ali Gurshap**. He was a nephew of Jalaluddin Firuz Shah Khalji. He was born in 1266 CE and brought up by his uncle because of the untimely death of his father. He did not receive proper education but grew up to be a brilliant warrior who, unlike his uncle, proved to be extremely ambitious, aggressive and selfish by nature. He was married to the daughter of Jalaluddin Khalji.

6.3.3 Conquests and Expansion

Alauddin Khalji had been entrusted with the governorship of Kara and Allahabad by Jalaluddin Khalji. As the Sultan was aged, he sent his son-in-law, Alauddin, to lead an expedition to Malwa. Alauddin reduced Malwa to submission, but without taking permission of the Sultan, he proceeded against the Devagiri in Deccan which was then under the rule of Ramachandradeva who was encountered in a surprise attack. Alauddin plundered the riches of Devagiri and He sent the message of his victory and returned to Kara. He sent a message of his victory and induced the Sultan to greet him at Kara. When the aged Sultan came hurriedly to Kara to receive Alauddin, the latter treacherously murdered the Sultan and seized the crown of Delhi in 1296 CE. Soon he won over the nobles by lavishly distributing gold and presents among them. To make his position secure, he arranged for the murder of the late Sultan's followers and relatives.

Turkish imperialism reached its zenith under Alauddin Khalji who may be called the first Turkish Empire builder in India. Alauddin was one of the most ambitious rulers of India. Alauddin was one of the most ambitious rulers of India. He, emulating the example of Alexander, the Great, wanted to conquer the whole world. Ala-ul-mulk, his honest courtier, advised him to subdue the independent Hindu states outside the borders of the Sultanate first before embarking on a scheme of world conquest. Understanding the soundness of the advice given by Ala-ul-mulk, Alauddin organized a series of expeditions without waiting for any plausible cause or pretext. His conquests may be studied under two heads - Conquest of North India and conquest of South India.

Conquest of North India

1. **Conquest of Gujarat (1299 CE)** - The first province against which Alauddin took up arms was Gujarat. It was ruled by a Rajput prince named Karnadeva. In 1297 CE, Alauddin sent an expedition under Nusrat Khan and Zafar Khan who captured Anhilwara and looted the country. Karna Deva fled to Devagiri with his daughter, Devala Devi. The Sultan's general captured the queen, Kamaladevi, who subsequently became the Sultan's favorite queen. During this expedition a handsome slave named, Malik Kafur was purchased for one thousand dinars. He came to be called as **Hazar Dinari**. Later, Kafur became the Sultan's greatest general.
2. **Conquest of Ranthambhor (1301 CE)** - In 1299 CE, Alauddin dispatched an expedition to Ranthambhor which was under the rule of Hamir Deva. This king had given refuge to a few discontented New-Muslims. The first expedition against the fortress was a failure. So Alauddin marched in person and captured the famous fortress in 1302 CE. Hamir Deva lost his life.
3. **Conquest of Chitor (1303 CE)** – Alauddin Khalji, next turned his attention against Mewar which was ruled by the Guhilot Rajputs. Mewar had the advantage of being situated in a mountainous region and had resisted all invasions. In 1303 CE, Alauddin led an expedition

against Chitor. According to tradition, Alauddin undertook the expedition on account of his glamour towards Padmini, the most beautiful queen of Rana Ratan Singh of Mewar, whose hands he desired to secure. Chitor the "Proud City" and capital of Mewar was besieged. But the Rajput soldiers led by leaders like Gora and Badal gave stiff resistance. But Sultan's army won a victory. Padmini and other Rajput women observed the rite of *Jauhar* and saved their honour. Chitor was taken in 1303 CE. The Sultan's eldest son, Khizr Khan was made the Governor of Chitor. However, Alauddin won a deserted city. We get a graphic and woeful account of the siege in Col.Tod's "Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan".

4. **Conquest of Malwa (1305 CE)** - In 1305 CE, Ain-ul-mulk Multani was asked to proceed to Jalor and Ujjain with a view to capture Malwa. Raja Harananda fought valiantly against the forces of Ain-ul-mulk. But he was overpowered and his territories including Ujjain, Mandu, Dhara and Chanderi were occupied by the Sultan's army.
5. **Annexation of Siwana (1308 CE)** - In about 1308 CE, Alauddin Khalji made preparations for the conquest of Marwar. Siwana was besieged. Sataldeva, the ruler of Siwana, put up a stiff resistance. The siege lasted for a long time. To force the Rajputs to surrender, the Sultan cut off the water supply to the fort. Finding their position precarious, the Rajput women performed *Jauhar* and their menfolk came out to fight till they died. Sataldeva fell fighting. Siwana was annexed to the Delhi Sultanate.
6. **Conquest of Jalor (1311 CE)** – Alauddin sent Ain-ul-mulk to subdue Kanhar Deva, the ruler of Jalor. Ain-ul-mulk, great in diplomacy as in war, persuaded the Jalor chief to acknowledge the Khalji suzerainty and to go with him to the Delhi court. At Delhi he could not tolerate Alauddin's boast and so fled back to Jalor. This gave Alauddin a pretext to besiege Jalor. A prolonged war ensued. The Rajputs, as usual, displayed their valor. But owing to the treachery of Bika Dahiya, the Khalji forces gained entry into the fort. Kanhar Deva and his men were killed. The woman performed *Jauhar*. The fort and the Kingdom were occupied by Alauddin in 1311 CE.

Thus, the conquest of North India was completed. Alauddin's empire extended over the whole of north India except Kashmir, Nepal, Assam and a part of North-Western Punjab.

7. **Mongol Raids** - Alauddin had to deal with the recurring Mongol in raids which threatened not only the Punjab, Multan and Sind but also the very capital of the Empire. The earlier Mongol invaders were interested only in the wealth of India. They had no intention of founding their state in India. Now their aim was to establish their rule in India. The Mongols, therefore, became a serious menace to the Khalji imperialism. The Delhi Sultanate was fortunate to have a right man at the top at the right moment. Alauddin is credited with having repelled more than a dozen Mongol invasions. The first Mongol invasion occurred in 1296 CE. Zafar Khan, an able commander, was sent against them. He defeated them near Jalandar and killed nearly 20,000 Mongols. The second invasion took place in 1297 CE. The Mongols had captured Sivistan. Once again, Zafar Khan, displaying great valor, defeated the Mongols and recovered Sivistan. The next invasion took place in 1299 CE. Dava Khan sent an army of 2, 00,000 men under the command of his son Qutlugh Khwaja. As the aim of the Mongols this time was to conquer Delhi, not to plunder India, they marched to the neighborhood of Delhi without molesting the people on their way. Alauddin fixed his camp at Kili. The fate of the Delhi Sultanate depended on the outcome of the battle to be fought

with the Mongols. The advance guard of the army led by Zafar Khan defeated the enemy and pursued him relentlessly. The Khalji imperialism was given a new lease of life.

The next important invasion took place in 1303 CE. The Mongol army consisting of 1, 20,000 cavalrymen was led by Targhi. Marching towards Delhi, it encamped near the capital city. Alauddin was forced to take shelter in the fortress of Siri where he was besieged for two months. The Mongols plundered the neighborhood of Delhi and carried their raids into the streets of Delhi. As the Mongols were not experienced in the art of capturing town by a regular siege, they could not press home the advantages they had gained by the conduct of Alauddin. After three months of campaigning, they withdrew.

The ease with which the Mongols had reached Delhi without much difficulty made Alauddin realize the need for taking effective measures to protect the frontier. He repaired the old forts in Punjab, Multan and Sind and built new ones. The forts were garrisoned with powerful troops. An additional army was posted to guard the frontier. A special governor of the frontier region called the Warden of the Marches was appointed. In spite of these measures, the Mongols continued to invade India. A Mongol army led by Ali Beg was defeated. It was during this operation that Ghazi Malik, the founder of the Tughluq dynasty came to the forefront. Ghazi Malik defeated another Mongol army led by Kabak. The last Mongol raid occurred in 1307-1308 CE. Iqbalmand was the leader of the Mongol army at that time. After this, Alauddin was free, from the Mongol menace.

The significance of the Mongol invasions lies in the fact that they prevented the Delhi Sultan from focusing all his attention to the conquest of all parts of North India and to the consolidation of the conquests he had made. Further, the need to guard the North-West frontier effectively compelled the Sultan to give more powers to the governors of frontier provinces. As a result, these governors became powerful enough to seize the throne of Delhi. The founders of the Khalji and Tughluq dynasties were the governors of the frontier provinces before they became the Sultans. The recurring Mongol raids made the Sultan to depend on the nobles for support against the Mongols. As a result, the strength of the central government was very much reduced. Further, the Mongol raids necessitated certain steps to raise the strength of the army most important of these was the price-control system.

Conquest of South India

Alauddin's imperialistic instinct is manifested in the campaigns organized in the Deccan and further South. He was the first Sultan of Delhi to cross the Vindhya mountains and to attempt to subjugate South India. Apart from his desire to establish the suzerainty of the Delhi Sultanate over the South Indian potentates, there were other causes for his Southern expeditions. Alauddin wanted to take possession of the fabulous wealth of South India. He had under his control a large army consisting of 4, 75,000 men. By this time he had established his rule over most of North India. There was none who had the courage to challenge him. Delhi was completely saved from Mongol menace. The power of the nobles was reduced. A strong government was established at Delhi. Moreover, the Deccan and the farther South India were ruled by four families-the Yadavas, the Kakatiyas, the Hoysalas and the Pandyas. There was no UNITY among them. They fought against each other for territorial gains among them. In the Pandya kingdom, civil war was raging. All these had created the proper atmosphere for pursuing his imperial policy in the Deccan.

- 1. Conquest of Devagiri (1306 CE)** – The first of the South Indian states to be attacked was Devagiri. Before his accession, Alauddin conducted a raid into Devagiri and took rich booty

from there. Now, he found a pretext for a second expedition against Devagiri. Its ruler, Ramachandradeva, had given shelter to Karnadeva and his daughter Devala Devi. Moreover, the ruler of Devagiri had not paid annual tribute for three years. Besides, these objectives, Alauddin had the motive of capturing Devala Devi, the daughter of Karnadeva who was at the Yadava capital. In 1306 CE Alauddin sent his trusted and able general Malik Kafur who proceeded against Devagiri and met with success. He captured Devala Devi and sent her to Delhi where she was married to Khizr Khan, the eldest son of the Sultan. Ramachandradeva was permitted to rule his kingdom as the Sultan's vassal. He had to pay tribute to the Sultan.

2. **Conquest of Warangal (1309 CE)** - Then came the turn of Warangal which was ruled by Prataparudradeva of the Kakatiya family. The object of the Sultan in undertaking expedition was to secure the treasure of the Kakatiya Kingdom. In 1309 CE, Malik Kafur marched against Prataparudradeva and laid siege to the strong fortress of Warangal. He forced Prataparudradeva to submit. He returned to Delhi in 1310 CE with vast booty including elephants, horses and jewels. One thousand camels were used to take the treasure to Delhi. Prataparudradeva consented to pay annual tribute.
3. **Conquest of Hoysala kingdom (1310 CE)** – As Alauddin was bent upon bringing the whole of South India under his suzerainty, he sent Malik Kafur in 1310 CE against the Hoysala ruler, Vira Ballala III. The Hoysala king was surprised by the sudden incursion of the Muslim army and could not defend his capital, Dwarasamudra (modern Halebid). Malik Kafur plundered the city and the temples. Vira Ballala I paid an enormous indemnity and became a subordinate ruler. The subjugation of the Hoysala Kingdom was followed by the sack of the Pandyan capital, Madurai. Disputed succession between Sundara Pandya and his brother Vira Pandya gave him an opportunity. Exiled from Madurai, Sundara Pandya appealed to Malik Kafur for help. The latter agreed and reached Madurai in 1311 CE. The Pandyan King fled, Madurai was plundered. Later Malik Kafur advanced Southwards as far as Rameswaram. He returned to Delhi in 1311 CE. Laden with immense booty consisting of 612 elephants, 20,000 horses, and 96,000 maunds of gold and large jewelry.
4. **The second attack on Devagiri (1312 CE)** - In about 1312 CE, Alauddin sent one more expedition to Devagiri. Ramachandradeva died and was succeeded by his son who refused to pay tribute. It served as a pretext for sending an expedition against Devagiri. In the battle that followed Shankaradeva lost his life. By 1312 CE, Alauddin had become the master of the whole of the Deccan and South India and received recognition of his authority by the rulers. Though his Deccan campaigns were no more than mere raids, they paved the way for the establishment of the imperialism of Delhi over the Deccan and farther South.

6.3.4 Administrative Regulations

1. **Theory of Kingship** - Alauddin was not a mere soldier. He was a great statesman too. His theory of kingship bears testimony to the administrative genius. Let us now examine the salient features of his theory of Kingship.

One of the duties of the Muslim rulers was to spread Islam. They conquered lands for this purpose. The Delhi Sultanate was also founded for this reason. But for various reasons not all the people under the Sultanate could be converted to Islam. The majority of the people were non-Muslims. The Sultans therefore could not do anything that would go against the interests of the majority. For this reason some of the Sultans did not allow religion to dominate politics. Among them was Alauddin Khalji.

Alauddin's theory of kingship is reflected in his conversation with Maulana Mughis-ud-din, the *Qazi* of Bayana. In this conversation four questions were raised. The first one concerned the Hindus. Alauddin imposed on the Hindus heavy taxes which reduced them to such a miserable state that they could not indulge in the ordinary luxuries like betel-chewing.

Many women of Hindu chiefs had to hire out their services in Muslim houses. Alauddin wanted to know whether his action in letting off the Hindus by taxing them heavily without killing them for not embracing Islam was in conformity with the injunctions of the *Quran* and the *Hadis*. As Mughis-ud-din belonged to one school of Muslim theologians who favoured the idea of allowing Hindus to practice their religion on payment of *Jizya*, he replied that the Sultan's action was in conformity with the Quran. The second question concerned the punishments the Sultan had given to the Muslim officials who defrauded the state by their corrupt practices. The Qazi told the Sultan that the officials were partners of the state. The state treasury belonged to them as much as it belonged to the Sultan. Any misappropriation of state funds could not be regarded as theft. The Sultan was acting against the Islamic law by inflicting cruel punishments for misappropriation of state funds.

The third question was about the wealth he bought from Devagiri before he became the Sultan. Alauddin wanted to know whether he was justified in keeping the entire wealth for himself. The Qazi told him that this wealth was obtained not by his ability alone. The strength of the Islamic army was largely responsible for his success. Therefore, he must hand over the whole treasure to the state as per Islamic law.

The last question was with reference to his action in treating state treasury for his personal use and for the use of his family. The *Qazi* said that the Sultan following the example of the pious Calipha (*Khalifas*) could take for himself the salary he gave to a soldier or as a via media he could take the salary of the highest officer in the country or something more. If he took anything more he would have to answer for it on the Day of Judgement.

After listening to the replies of *Qazi* Mughis-ud-din, Alauddin said that he was an illiterate man; he did not know what was contained in the Quran, but he was a Muslim and so were his ancestors. He proceeded to tell them that during rebellions thousands of people die. So he was bound to take steps to prevent them. People were inclined to do wrong things without any kind of fear. They committed adultery. They stole property belonging to others. They took salaries from the state, but did not maintain the horses and equipment for which they were paid. They drank too much. The only way to stamp these evils known to him was to give severe punishments. He continued to say that all these were done in public interest. He was not bothered whether they were in agreement with the Quran or not. He did not bother about the punishment that would be given to him on the Day of Judgement. Further he said that so far as government policy was concerned his will should prevail whether it was in conformity with Quran or not. It was his responsibility to determine the state policy. Others had no right to interfere with his policy. People's welfare rather than Islamic law should guide the Sultan's action. Through this theory of kingship, Alauddin dismissed the right of the *Ulemas* to determine the policy of the state. Thus he established the supremacy of the Sultan in matters relating to administration.

This does not mean that he established a secular state. Throughout his life he remained faithful to Islam. He treated the Hindus much more severely than the Muslims. He never hesitated to take the *Ulemas* into his confidence in dealing with the Hindus. What he was

interested in was not the well-being of the Hindus who formed the majority but his personal interests.

Dr.K.S Lal writes, “In a word, like Louis XIV of France, Alauddin regarded himself to be all in all in the state.” During the reign of Alauddin the centralization of administration was complete and despotism touched its peak.

2. **Regulations against the Nobles** – Alauddin's theory of kingship had protected his autocracy against the *ulemas*. But there was another quarter from where his autocracy was challenged and that was the nobility. The nobility challenged his power most often than not by organizing rebellions. After making a study of the causes of these rebellions, Alauddin took as many as four important measures to keep the nobles under check. In the first place, he ordered the resumption of lands given to nobles, officials and others as state grants, state rewards or gifts. Alauddin decided to pay his officials cash salaries in lieu of state grants or jagirs. This step was taken to see that the people did not come to possess more than what they required for their subsistence. Alauddin thought that the general prosperity of the people made them think of rebellions. As a result of this measure, except in the case of a few people, no one could find any gold in the houses of his subjects.

Alauddin then came with an order prohibiting the manufacture, sale and use of liquor. He himself set an example by giving up drink by smashing the wine cups and by emptying the wine barrels in the streets of Delhi. The use of wine in feasts and social get-togethers was declared a penal offense. Exemplary punishments were inflicted on those who disobeyed the law. Alauddin prevented the nobles from developing intimacy with each other. Gambling was also forbidden. No one was allowed to go to the house of another noble without his permission. Marriages between noble families could be arranged only with the approval of the Sultan. Alauddin thought that one of the causes of the rebellions was his disregard of the affairs of the state. That was because he had no adequate information about them. To overcome this sorry state of affair he created a net-work of spies. Three agencies functioned in the country to pass on to the Sultan the happenings in the different parts of the empire.

3. **Revenue Regulations** - At the time of his accession, the Sultanate was divided into two parts for the purpose of the collection of land revenue. In one part, the work of revenue collection was given to the *ranas*, *rawats* and the *rais*. These chiefs collected land revenue from the people under their control. As they were to send military assistance to the Sultan, they collected a large amount from the peasants. The other part was known as the *khalsa*. The task of collecting land revenue in these areas was given to village chiefs called as *muqaddam*, *khot*, or *chaudhri*. They paid the state a stipulated amount and the state did not interfere in their affairs so long as this amount was paid. The government was not interested in the welfare of the peasants.

Alauddin's revenue reforms related to the second category of lands. The reason behind his reforms was the luxurious life led by the village chiefs who became prosperous on account of the shifting of their tax-burden on the peasants. Their prosperity made them arrogant. They did not respect the revenue officials. Even when they were summoned they did not go to the revenue offices.

To rectify this state of affairs, Alauddin introduced two measures. Every one possessing land was required to pay taxes. Before assessing the tax liability, Alauddin ordered the measurement of all lands. Half of the produce was fixed as the land revenue to be paid by all

from the village chief down to the *balahar*. Alauddin preferred the payment of tax in kind though the tax-payers were free to pay either in cash or in kind. He abolished *khoti* which the peasants had been paying to the village chiefs all these years. As a result of these measures, the corrupt practices which crept into the collection of *kharaj* were brought to an end. The evil practice of shifting the tax-burden by the well-to-do Unit to the poorer Unit of the society was ended. The *khots* could no longer lead an extravagant life. Even the ordinary peasants, suffered. As 50 per cent of the produce was collected as tax, they could not lead a comfortable life.

The second regulation dealt with the grazing land. Grazing land was delimited. The grazing tax was fixed according to the number of animals giving milk in the possession of a villager. No one was exempted from the payment of this tax.

As a result of these two measures, the state established direct contact with the peasants. This had resulted in great deal of corruption. But Alauddin dealt with such officials very severely. The government took every possible step to collect the land revenue fully. Those who did not pay were bound with chains and kept in that state for many years. Many were put into prison. Many were beaten. In view of all these many were reluctant to join the revenue department. People were not prepared to give their daughters in marriage to men working in the revenue department. But one great result was that corruption disappeared almost fully.

4. **Military Regulations-** Alauddin realized that army was one of the two pillars of the state, the other being the administrative set-up. So he personally recruited the soldiers to his army. He ordered the payment of salary to his soldiers from the state treasury. Each soldier was to get 234 tankas which he must use for maintaining one horse. Seventy-four tankas were given additionally, if the soldier maintained one more horse. Alauddin knew that what he gave by way of salary was not enough to lead a comfortable life. So he introduced the price-control system to enable the soldiers to lead a comfortable life with a moderate salary. In order to prevent any corruption, he insisted on every soldier registering his name with the war Department. . All details about the soldier (*Chehra*) and his horse were recorded at that time in the register maintained for that purpose: Alauddin introduced the system of branding (*dagh*) horses. All these measures enabled him to prevent the maintenance of horses of inferior quality and using the same horse by many soldiers at the time of periodical review.

Alauddin was the first Sultan of Delhi to maintain a standing army consisting of 4,75,000 horsemen. The army was divided on the Turkish method. Ten horsemen formed a UNIT under *sarkhail*. Over ten *sarkhails* there was one *sipahsalar*. Over ten *sipahsalars*, there was one *amir*. Over ten *amirs* there was one *malik* and over ten *maliks* there was one *khan*.

Alauddin realised the importance of forts in the defence of the country. So he ordered the repair of old ones and construction of new ones. Each fort was placed under an able *kotwal* and was provided with adequate food and weapons of war.

Impact of Alauddin's Administrative Regulations

As a result of Alauddin's administrative regulations, the prestige of the Sultan increased. A centralised autocracy was established. The influence of the *ulemas* on state administration was practically removed. A powerful standing army was created to lend support to the Khalji militarism. This army had enabled the Sultan not only to ward-off the Mongol danger but also to conquer and plunder many parts of India. The size of the Sultanate was enlarged. Its treasury was replenished.

The revenue reforms had helped the state to tide over the financial difficulties with great ease. The people, the Muslims and the Hindus alike suffered. The high taxation reduced the peasants to utter poverty. The village chiefs could not afford the ordinary luxuries like wearing costly dress, riding on horse-back, betel-chewing, etc. The Muslim nobility suffered much. They could not hold social gatherings or enter into matrimonial alliances without the permission of the king. But certain evils like drinking were kept under check. People were now more disciplined. Crimes decreased. There was not much corruption.

6.3.5 Economic Regulations

We have seen earlier the regulations relating to land revenue. But the most important of his economic regulations was the **price-control system**. According to some, the price-control system was brought into being to promote the well-being of the people and thereby win the support of the people for his rule. This view is not acceptable. Having known that the basic cause of frequent outbreak of rebellions was the general prosperity of the people, Alauddin took every possible step to reduce the people to poverty. That being the case it is highly doubtful whether he had brought into existence the price-control system for enabling the people to lead a comfortable life. Further the Khalji rule was a militarism. For such a government what was required was the support of an army, not public support. So there was no need for cajoling the people through his market regulations. Others think that the price-control system was purely a military measure. Alauddin was forced to maintain a big army to deal with the recurring Mongol raids. The revenue which was collected was found to be insufficient for maintaining a huge army. Alauddin has to devise a system by which he could raise the size of the army without increasing the financial allotment made for maintaining the army. For that purpose, he decided to fix the salary of a soldier at 234 tankas. As he found that, that salary would not be enough to enable the soldier to maintain his horse, buy equipment and at the same time to lead a comfortable life, he decided to control the prices of articles required by the soldiers.

The prices of articles were fixed in the presence of the Sultan on the basis of the cost of production (*bar award*). After fixing the prices, Alauddin organized the grain market (*Shahna-i-mandi*) for selling the articles at the prices fixed. The grain market functioned under the supervision of the superintendent of the grain market. The state collected its revenue in kind from the grown lands and raised the stock of grain. No one was allowed to purchase grain from the cultivators, except those merchants who were authorised to do so. All merchants in Delhi were required to register themselves in the office of the superintendent of the grain market. The state advanced money to those merchants who did not possess enough capital of their own. These merchants were to bring the food grains to Delhi at the appropriate time and sell them to the people at rates fixed.

A special officer was appointed to determine the quality of grains sold in the markets. Steps were taken to ensure that no attempt was made by the merchants to sell an under-weighted commodity. All kinds of speculation and black marketing were severely punished. Hoarding of grain and other commodities was viewed with seriousness. In times of famine people purchasing more quantity of grain than what they required were punished. A system of rationing was adopted for proper distribution of the available grain.

Alauddin passed regulations controlling the cloth market (*Sera-i-Adl*). Besides cloth, a number of manufactured articles were also sold in this market. The prices of cloth and other articles were fixed on the basis of the cost of production. Alauddin advanced money to the merchants to bring the goods to the *Sera-i-Adl* from different parts. To prevent people from buying articles at

lower price in the *Sera-i-Adl* and selling them at a higher price outside Delhi, Alauddin ordered the consumers to indicate the kind of articles they required together with the quantity as well as their income. After examining all these the official would determine the amount of articles one was entitled to buy. Costly items were sold only to those who obtained special permits.

A horse market was also set up. Alauddin sought to eliminate the horse-merchants. The horse brokers were screened and honest brokers alone were retained under stern state supervision. These regulations were applied to the slave-market and cattle-market also.

Alauddin sent his price schedules to the *Diwan-i-Riyasat* which in turn sent them to the market superintendents. It was the duty of the market superintendents to find out whether the articles were sold at the prices mentioned in the schedule. The market superintendents were vested enormous powers. They could even flog the merchants for the violation of the regulations. Alauddin used to send his slaves to go to the market and buy certain articles to find out whether they were properly weighed. If a merchant was found guilty of under-weighting, the same amount of flesh was cut-off from his body.

Impact of Alauddin's Economic Regulations

The price-control system of Alauddin Khalji affected trade. The merchants were unable to realise sufficient profits. The severe punishments given to erring merchants made many to stop their business. Agriculture suffered. The peasants were unable to take home the surplus produce even after paying 50 per cent of their produce as land revenue. They were compelled to sell their grain at a low price to the merchants who were permitted to purchase grain. So many had lost interest in agriculture. The fact that articles were sold at cheap rates in Delhi made many to migrate to Delhi. Among them were learned men and excellent craftsmen. As a result the fame of Delhi increased. The people of Delhi were happy. They were prepared to follow the rules prescribed by the state. They became more disciplined. Hence crimes decreased. This had benefited the state much.

Alauddin's military strength had increased on account of the price-control system. The increased strength of the army enabled the Sultan to free the Sultanate from the Mongol menace, to keep under control the Hindu chiefs and to lead successful expeditions into South India. The South Indian expeditions enabled the Sultan to replenish the treasury. The autocracy of Alauddin also went unchallenged because it gave the people, at least the citizens of Delhi, a comfortable living. One question remains to be answered whether the price-control system was enforced throughout the state or in Delhi only? According to some scholars it was in operation only in Delhi. Others think that it was in operation throughout the empire of the Delhi Sultan. With the limited resources no Sultan, however able he might be, could have enforced the regulations throughout the country. So it is reasonable to assume that the price-control system operated only in Delhi. Even so, Alauddin deserves credit for successfully enforcing his price-control system.

6.3.6 Significance and Implications of Khalji Imperialism

The imperial policy of Alauddin helped him to bring the whole of Rajasthan under his control. But this had caused him enormous difficulties. Alauddin was able to capture the Rajput posts only after a terrible battle each time. He was therefore much irritated and he showed his anger by killing thousands of innocent people. The *Jauhar* performed by the Rajput women took a heavy toll of lives. Many Rajput flowers withered away during this struggle. So far as Alauddin was concerned he could not rule his newly won dominions with peace of mind. The Rajputs were making efforts to regain the lands they had lost. Khizr Khan, who was appointed governor of Chitor

returned to Delhi unable to withstand the difficulties posed by the Rajputs. Jalor soon became free. The Muslim rule in Ramthambhor became shaky.

Of the Rajput states he had conquered, Alauddin tried to annex only a few. Even in those cases, his efforts ended in failure. Many of the Rajput states were not brought under the regulations of the imperial Government. The Rajput chiefs who went to his court and offered presents to him were allowed to go scot free. In some cases where he replaced the Rajput rulers by his officials, he gave strict instructions to his officials that they should not interfere in the social life of the Rajputs and that they should not interfere in the affairs of the rawats so long as they paid their dues regularly. All these show that he did not undertake the conquest of Rajput states solely with imperialistic aim. It is quite likely that his intention was to show his strength and thereby keep the Rajputs under his control.

The imperialist policy towards the Rajputs had cost Alauddin much. But it had certainly raised his military prestige. It gave him an opportunity to demonstrate the strength of his army. Above all, it inspired him with zeal to bring the whole of north India under the control of Delhi.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 Who was the founder of Khalji Dynasty?
- Q.2 What is Khalji Revolution?
- Q.3 Which Khalji ruler was very lenient and kind-hearted?
- Q.4 Who were Neo-Mussalmans?
- Q.5 Who was known by the epithet Hazar Dinari?
- Q.6 When Alauddin Khalji did captured Chitor?
- Q.7 Who saved India from Mongols?
- Q.8 Name the first South Indian state attacked by the forces of Alauddin Khalji?
- Q.9 What was the rate of land revenue during the time of Alauddin Khalji?
- Q.10 Who was the first sultan of Delhi to have a permanent standing army?
- Q.11 Which Delhi ruler is known for economic reforms?

6.4 Summary

- The Khalji Dynasty ruled from 1290 CE to 1320 CE.
- The replacement of Balban's dynasty by Jalaluddin Khalji in 1290 CE is described as the Khalji revolution.
- Malik Firuz (later on Jalaluddin Khalji) was the founder of the Khalji Dynasty.
- The original name of Alauddin Khalji was Ali Gurshap. He was a nephew of Jalaluddin Firuz Shah Khalji.
- Alauddin Khalji was entrusted with the governorship of Kara and Allahabad by Jalaluddin Khalji.
- Alauddin Khalji murdered Jalaluddin Khalji and seized the crown of Delhi in 1296 E.

- Turkish imperialism reached its zenith under Alauddin Khalji who may be called as the first Turkish Empire builder in India.
- Alauddin Khalji captured Gujrat, Ramthambhor, Chitor, Malwa, Siwana, and Jalor in North India. He successfully repelled the Mongol attacks on India.
- Alauddin Khalji was the first Sultan of Delhi to cross the Vindhya Mountains and to attempt to subjugate South India.
- Alauddin's commander Malik Kafur carried out the expedition of South India and conquered Devagiri, Warangal and Hoysala.
- Alauddin's Deccan campaigns paved the way for the establishment of the imperialism of Delhi over the Deccan and farther South.
- Although, Alauddin Khalji was not an innovator in the field of administration yet he took personal interest in the administrative affairs and made the government click. His was an autocratic rule.
- Alauddin issued many administrative regulations. His theory of kingship had protected his autocracy against the *ulemas*. He took measures to keep the nobles under check.
- Alauddin also issued revenue regulations by which the state established direct contact with the peasants. He issued military regulations and was the first Sultan of Delhi to maintain a permanent standing army.
- The most important economic regulations of Alauddin Khalji was the Price control system.

6.5 Glossary

Jauhar: It was the prerogative for Rajput women. It could be performed before or without knowing whether their husband was defeated in battle. It was also done in groups, where several Rajput women immolated themselves at once.

Muqaddam: It is an Arabic title, adopted in other Islamic cultures, for any of various civil or religious officials.

Khot: A village headman.

Qazi: It is the magistrate or judge of a sharia court, who also exercises extrajudicial functions, such as mediation, guardianship over orphans and minors, and supervision and auditing of public works.

Shahna: Officer in charge of a town or market.

Tanka: Silver coin of the Sultanate.

6.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

Ans.1 Malik Firuz (Jalaluddin Khalji)

Ans.2 The replacement of Balban's dynasty by Jalaluddin Khalji in 1290 CE is described as the Khalji revolution.

Ans.3 Jalaluddin Khalji

Ans.4 Some of the Mongols were permitted to settle near Delhi. They became converts to Islam and came to be known as 'Neo-Mussalmans'.

Ans.5 Malik Kafur

Ans.6 1303 CE

Ans.7 Alauddin Khalji

Ans.8 Devagiri

Ans.9 50 percent of the produce

Ans.10 Alauddin Khalji

Ans.11 Ans.Alauddin Khalji

6.7 Suggested Readings

1. Abraham Eraly, 2015, *"The Age of Wrath: A History of Delhi Sultanate"*, Penguin Books
2. Ashirbadi Lal Srivastava, 1966, *"The History of India, 1000 A.D-1707 A.D"*, Shiva Lala Agarwala.
3. Kishori Saran Lal, 1950, *"History of the Khaljis (1290-1320)"* Allahabad: The Indian Press.
4. Peter Jackson, 2003, *"The Delhi Sultanate: A Political and Military History"*, Cambridge University Press.
5. Radhey Shyam Chaurasia, 2002, *"History of Medieval India: From 1000 A.D to 1707 A.D"*, Atlantic.

6.8 Terminal Questions

1. What do you understand by the term Khalji Revolution?
2. Write a short note on Sultan Jalaluddin Firuz Shah Khalji.
3. Discuss the conquests and expansion under Alauddin Khalji.
4. Describe the Deccan policy of Sultan Alauddin Khalji.
5. What measures were taken by Alauddin Khalji against the Mongol inroads? Explain its significance.
6. What measures were adopted by Alauddin Khalji to suppress the revolt of his nobles? How far was he successful?
7. Explain the administrative regulations of Alauddin Khalji.
8. Describe the revenue and military reforms of Alauddin Khalji.
9. Give an account of the market reforms of Alauddin Khalji.

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UNIT-7

THE TUGHLAQS

Structure

7.1 Introduction

7.2 Objectives

7.3 The Tughlaqs

7.3.1 Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq Shah (1320-1325 CE)

7.3.2 Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq (1325-1351 CE)

7.3.3 Firuz Shah Tughlaq (1351-1388 CE)

Self-Check Exercise-1

7.4 Summary

7.5 Glossary

7.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

7.7 Suggested Readings

7.8 Terminal Questions

7.1 Introduction

After the demise of Alauddin Khalji in 1316 CE, the Delhi Sultanate was plunged into confusion. Malik Kafur sat on the throne for a few days, only to be overthrown by Qutubuddin Mubarak Shah. During this period, rebellions broke out in Devagiri, but were harshly suppressed. Qutubuddin Mubarak Shah was soon murdered and Khusrav Shah ascended the throne. However, he too did not last long as some dissatisfied officers; led by Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq defeated and killed him in a battle. Thus only four years after the death of Alauddin, the Khalji dynasty came to an end and power passed into the hands of the Tughlaqs. The founder of the Tughlaq dynasty was Ghazi Malik who ascended the throne as Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq in 1320 CE.

7.2 Objectives

After studying this UNIT, you will be able to:

- Identify the domestic and foreign policy of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq,
- Examine the visionary schemes of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq and expansion of Delhi Sultanate under his rule,
- Understand the domestic and foreign policy of Firuz Shah Tughlaq.

7.3 The Tughlaqs

7.3.1 Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq Shah (1320-1325 CE)

Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq was a man of humble origin. Tughlaqs were also called Qaraunah Turks as Marco Polo tells us that this name was given to them because they were the sons of the Indian mothers by Tartar fathers. Ghiyasuddin was ordinary trooper but rose to a position of importance by dint of his ability and hard labor. He was appointed as the governor of Punjab in 1305 CE with his headquarters at Dipalpur. He was entrusted with the responsibility of the protection of the North-West frontier from the Mongols. It is said that he encountered the invaders on 29 occasions and defeated them. Hence he was called **Malik-ul-Ghazi**. Towards the end of Alauddin's reign he became one of the few powerful Turkish nobles in the kingdom. He retained his position during the reign of Qutbuddin Mubarak. On his accession to the throne, Khusrav attempted to placate him and conformed him in the governorship of the Punjab, but he and his son, Jauna had their own ambition. This, together with Ghazi Malik's racial and religious orthodoxy encouraged him to organize the opposition to Khusrav Shah, who was eventually defeated and killed. Ghazi Malik ascended the throne on September 8, 1320 CE, under the title of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq Shah Ghazi. He was the first Sultan of Delhi to add the word *Ghazi* (slayer of the infidel) after his name.

Domestic Policy

The first work of the new Sultan was to conciliate the nobles and the people. He did not take steps against the nobles who sided with Khusrav and confirmed all important officers in their posts. He dealt strictly with the confirmed partisans of the later regime who were dismissed from their offices and deprived of their lands. He restored the lands of those who had been deprived of them by Alauddin Khalji. He tried to recover the state exchequer which had been squandered by Khusrav. Large sums of money had been given away by Khusrav to the leading Shaikhs of Delhi.

Ghiyasuddin followed the policy of promoting agriculture and protecting the cultivators. He ordered that the land revenue of any iqta should not be enhanced beyond one-tenth and one-eleventh in a year. He issued the guidelines that the enhancement should be gradual and should be spread over a number of years. He relinquished the practice of survey of land as it did not work well in the hands of his officers, and as it required an elaborate and technical staff. Instead, the Sultan ordered that the land revenue should be assessed by the collectors in person i.e., *Ghalla-bakshi* or *Batai* and *Nasq* or *Kankut* system. The revenue collectors were not to be paid a commission on the sum collected by them, but by grants of land which were exempted from taxation. They were also permitted to charge a nominal fee from the cultivators. Ghiyasuddin believed that the cultivators should not be driven into despair and rebellion by an excessive demand of revenue and that the best method of increasing the revenue was the extension of cultivation not the enhancement of the demand. This policy yielded good results. Much waste land was reclaimed and the area under cultivation was increased. Many ruined villages were repopulated, canals, and wells were dug for irrigation and gardens laid out.

Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq carried out a number of public welfare activities. He made attempts to improve the means of communication. The roads were cleared and building of forts, bridges and canals were undertaken. He perfected the postal system. He reformed the department of justice

which had fallen into decay during the reign of weak rulers. He prohibited the use of torture in the recovery of state debts. However, this form of punishment continued to be given to thieves, revenue defaulters, or to those who embezzled state money. Ghiyasuddin's treatment of the Hindus was not admirable. He retained some of the restrictions imposed on them by Alauddin Khalji. He ordered that the Hindus should not be permitted to accumulate wealth. They were therefore left with as much fruit of their labor as was necessary for them to live in moderate comfort.

In his personal life, Ghiyasuddin was an orthodox Sunni Muslim. He was devoted to Islam and was punctual in observing its rites. He ascended the throne as a champion of orthodox Islam. Therefore, it was natural for him to behave like a fanatic. He forbade the manufacture and sale of liquor and attempted to enforce the ordinances of his religion on the Muslim Unit of his subjects. Perhaps he was not very much of an oppressor of other faiths, but he did indulge in temple destruction and image breaking during his campaigns.

Foreign Policy

Ghiyasuddin proved himself more aggressive imperialist than even Alauddin Khalji. His foreign policy was directed towards reducing to submission those states which had renounced their allegiance to Delhi during the weak reign of Khusrav. Telangana claimed his first attention. In 1321 CE he sent his son, Jauna Khan alias Ulugh Khan to subdue Prataprudra Deva, the Kakatiya ruler of Warangal who had repudiated his vassalage to the Sultan. Ulugh Khan besieged Warangal and so harassed the ruler that he sued for peace and agreed to pay the annual tribute. Ulugh Khan wanted him to submit without any prior condition and therefore rejected the peace offer. Prataprudra Deva immediately grew desperate and cut the lines of communication of besiegers so that news from Delhi ceased to come. At the same time rumor was spread that Ghiyasuddin had died at Delhi. On the advice of some of his friends, such as, Ubaid the poet, the prince raised the siege and started for Delhi in order to be there in time to obtain possession of the throne. He was much harassed on the way by the ruler and the people of Telangana. Therefore, the first Southern expedition of the prince proved to be a failure.

When Jauna Khan reached Devagiri he came to know that the news of his father's death was false. So he traveled quickly to Delhi and begged the mercy of Sultan for the mistake that he had committed. Ghiyasuddin pardoned him, but his associates and the Sultan's enemies were killed. The prince was again sent to Warangal in 1323 CE. On the way he conquered Bidar and several other forts to see that his lines of communication remained safe so as to ensure a regular flow of news from Delhi. This time the siege was prosecuted with such vigor that Prataprudra Deva and his family and nobles fell into the hands of victors. Prataprudra Deva was sent to Delhi as prisoner. Telangana was occupied and was divided into districts which were allotted to Turkish nobles and officers. The capital city of Warangal was named Sultanpur and the kingdom of Telangana was annexed to the territories of Delhi Sultanate.

While returning to Delhi from Telangana prince Jauna undertook a raid into the kingdom of Utkala in Orrisa, where he captured fifty elephants besides other valuable articles. He returned to Delhi laden with rich spoils and treasure from Telangana and Utkala.

In Bengal there was a quarrel for the throne among the three brothers, Ghiyasuddin, Shihabuddin and Nasiruddin. Ghiyasuddin, who was governor of East Bengal, overthrew Shihabuddin and occupied Lakhnauti, the capital of Bengal, in 1319 CE. Their third brother Nasiruddin, who too was keen to rule over Bengal, sought the help of Sultan Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq to capture the throne. The Sultan welcomed this opportunity and proceeded in person towards

Bengal. On the way at Tirhut, he was joined by Nasiruddin and the Sultan dispatched one of his capable Officers, Zafar khan, to Lakhanauti. Ghiyasuddin of Bengal was defeated and taken a prisoner. Nasiruddin was reinstated on the throne of West Bengal as a vassal ruler of Delhi. East Bengal was annexed to Delhi. After arrangement the Sultan returned with large booty. According to Ismai, on his way back from Bengal Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq attacked Raja Hari Singh Deva of Tirhut (Mithila) as the loyalty of this Hindu ruler was doubtful. He reduced him to submission and proceeded to Delhi.

7.3.2 Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq (1325-1351 CE)

Fakhruddin Muhammad Jauna Khan, the eldest son of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq sat upon the throne of Delhi under the title of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq in 1325 CE. Historians have varied opinion regarding the death of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq. According to some scholars he died of an accident because of the sudden fall of lightning whereas the contemporary chroniclers, Ibn Batuta and Isami blamed the prince for the death of the Sultan. Prince Jauna Khan had a wooden pavilion erected for the Sultan's reception in Afghanpur (a village six miles to South-East of Delhi) when the Sultan returned from Bengal. As the Sultan and few of his followers were dining, the platform collapsed and the Sultan was killed under the building. The sudden death of Sultan Ghiyasuddin paved the way for Jauna Khan to succeed him. Thus there are sufficient reasons to believe that Sultan's death might be the result of a deep rooted conspiracy. Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq distributed silver and gold among the people at the time of his coronation to win them to his side. And there was no revolution or opposition by the people or nobles. He had firm belief in his ability and wisdom and thought that he would do better as a ruler than any of his predecessors. He is remembered as a ruler who implemented a number of visionary schemes. However these schemes failed and earned him only the unhappiness of the people. That is why, Muhammad is often called an ill-starred idealist. It was his personality that was responsible for the failure of his projects.

Domestic Policy: Reform Schemes

As regards to domestic policy, Muhamad-bin-Tughlaq began to look into the details of administration from the very beginning of his reign. After assuming the throne, he issued a number of ordinances for the improvement of the administration of revenue. The first ordinance was for the compilation of a register of the revenue and expenditure of the provinces of his kingdom. He directed the governors of the provinces to send to the capital all relevant records and other materials for its compilation. He attempted certain innovations in different fields of administration. He undertook numerous visionary schemes like the transfer of capital, the token currency and the taxation in Doab. We will discuss all these one by one.

- 1. Transfer of Capital (1326-27 CE)** - The first grand project, conceived by Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq was the shifting of the capital from Delhi to Devagiri, which was renamed Daulatabad. Muhammad wanted to locate his capital at a central place to enable him to control the provinces in the South. Further, he wanted to ensure that the Mongols, did not reach the capital quite easily. He thought that Devagiri lying far away from the North-West frontier of the state could not be reached as quickly as Delhi could be reached. The Sultan at first wanted to shift only the government offices. But when he came to know of the murmurings of the people concerned he ordered the wholesale shifting of the population as a pUNITive measure. Some scholars say that the Sultan wanted to make Devagiri the headquarters of the Muslim culture by converting it into a Muslim settlement. There is no doubt that the shifting of the capital was thought of primarily as an administrative measure.

It is interesting to note that Muhammad took great efforts to make travel from Delhi to Devagiri comfortable. He made provision for the distribution of food and allocation for the newcomers at the cost of the state. He bestowed great care in recreating Devagiri as Daulatabad. The city was divided into many quarters and he gave each one of the classes of people one quarter for living. Each quarter was provided with a mosque, a market, a common bath, etc. When he decided to shift the capital back to Delhi, he showed the people the same consideration.

Some scholars are of the opinion that Daulatabad was intended to be a second administrative centre and not as a capital. Whatever it is, the fact remains that this administrative measure destroyed the confidence of the people in Muhammad and developed in them a great hatred towards him as it caused great sufferings to them. The state had wasted public money on this measure. Many died unable to bear the hardships involved in travel from and to Delhi. The population and the grandeur of Delhi were adversely affected. But it is wrong to say that Delhi was completely destroyed. All the people of Delhi did not leave the city for the new capital. Even after shifting the capital, the Sultan appears to have taken up the construction of new buildings there. We cannot be blind to one good effect produced by this measure that the Sultan might not have visualized. It helped to remove the obstacles which separated the North and the South. It paved the way for the rapid spread of Islamic religion and culture into the South.

2. **Introduction of Token Currency (1330-32 CE)** – The introduction of token currency was the second unprecedented scheme launched by Muhammad. At the time of his accession, the people were using gold, silver and copper coins. Muhammad issued bronze coins and ordered that they should be used in place of the silver coins. He also said that they should bear the same value as the silver coin. The bronze coin is described as the token currency. Barani says that the token currency was made of copper. The token coins contained inscriptions in both Arabic and Persian. The inscriptions were made in the clearest and the most intelligible form. They were issued in the name of God. Though the issuing of token coins was known to the people outside India, they were issued for the first time in India by Muhammad.

The token coins were issued so as to enable him to use the silver available in the treasury for meeting the cost of his expeditions against foreign countries. Some scholars are of the opinion that they were introduced to replenish the treasury which had become empty on account of his unbounded generosity. The theory that the empty treasury prompted him to introduce token currency cannot hold water. For, we are told that he had issued silver and gold coins in place of token coins when he came to know that his experiment had failed. The real reason was the acute shortage of silver which was at that time a worldwide phenomenon. Muhammad was unable to procure enough silver to meet the requirements of his newly founded mints. Further, his military activities and shifting of the capital had resulted in huge expenditure. To compensate the loss on these accounts he issued the token currency.

But this scheme also failed. Muhammad did not take adequate measures to prevent counterfeiting of the token coins. Certain scholars however point out that he did take precautionary steps. If it failed, in spite of this, it was due to the people, not due to the Sultan. The people did not care to test the genuineness of the token coins presented to them. Whatever it is, there is no denying the fact that the country was flooded with counterfeit coins. People lost their confidence in them as well as their ruler who issued them. Many

revolts were organized on account of this. Trade suffered. When the Sultan came to know that his monetary experiment had failed, he ordered that silver and gold coins were to be given in return for the token coins surrendered to the treasury. It so happened that even counterfeit coins were exchanged in return for silver and gold coins. This measure had drained from the treasury what little silver and gold that were left in it.

3. **Khurasan Expedition (1332-33 CE)** - Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq was not satisfied with his vast Indian possessions. He had the visions of universal conquest. So he made preparations for conquering Khurasan which was then ruled by Abu Sayyid, the Mongol Emperor of Persia. An opportunity to invade Khurasan came when some of the amirs of Khurasan came to Delhi and sought his help against the Mongols and the Egyptians. According to Barani, a large army consisting of 370,000 cavalymen was mobilized. The soldiers were paid cash salaries and iqtas. Muhammad entered into alliances with foreign princes to win their support. But all these preparations became useless as the Sultan Muhammad must have realized during this period the difficulties of leading his army beyond the Hindu Kush. As he had already spent a huge sum of money in raising a big army he was left with no money at the end of the year to pursue his plan further. As this army was not used for any military purpose during that period, Muhammad did not have the means of knowing its effectiveness. So he began to lose his confidence in its strength. He was also informed that Abu Sayyid was able to win the support of the ruler of Egypt in case of attack from India. The abandonment of the proposed Khurasan expedition had cost Muhammad enormously. The disbandment of the army created the problem of unemployment in the country. The high hopes of the people to win laurels outside India were dashed to the ground and they became disappointed. The project as such was mooted with good intention. Any ruler in Muhammad's position would have thought of such an enterprise with imperialistic design. But it failed because he did not understand the difficulties involved in this project before making preparations for it.
4. **Qarachil Expedition (1333-34 CE)** - Though the Khurasanian expedition was abandoned, the idea of the establishment of the authority of the Delhi Sultan outside India did not altogether disappear from Muhammad's mind. Having come to know of the fabulous wealth of China, he wanted to bring it under his control. As a first step he thought of conquering Qarachil (which lay between India and China in the Himalayan region) so that the passage for horses and soldiers and the march of the army might be rendered easy. Qarachil lay at a distance of ten day's journey from Delhi. A few other reasons are given. The Chinese were trying to establish their rule in the Himalayan territories held by the Rajputs. The Sultan wanted to prevent this. Some of the Rajput states of this region gave shelter to the rebels of the Sultan. Some 80,000 to 100,000 cavalymen besides numberless foot-soldiers were sent to conquer Qarachil. The Sultan's forces reached Tibet. But soon they had to retrace their steps on account of rains and pestilence. As they were returning, their enemies threw on them boulders and succeeded in taking a heavy toll of their lives. Only a few about out of this huge army reached Delhi alive. This expedition had ruined the prestige of the Sultan beyond recovery. The strength of the army was very much affected. People were encouraged to revolt against the Sultan. As a result, many parts of the Delhi Sultanate became free. However, the expedition had helped the Sultan to establish his hold over the Himalayan tracts. The hill tribes agreed to send tributes to him every year.

5. **Taxation in Doab (1333-34 CE)** – The failure of the above mentioned four major schemes had a disastrous effect on the finances of the state. The royal treasury was almost emptied. Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq was compelled to think of new ways and means for increasing the revenues of the state. So he launched the fifth and the last major project pertaining to the enhancement of taxation in the Doab. According to Barani, this measure was introduced not only to replenish the treasury but also to punish the people of the Doab where the rebels were quite active. The frequent rebellions which broke out in the Doab were attributed to the general prosperity of the people. Muhammad thought that he could keep them under control by ending their prosperity through increased taxation. Such a line of thinking was not new. Alauddin Khalji had followed a similar policy. We do not know the quantum of increase in the land revenue. It is certain that the increase might not have been unbearable. But importantly the time chosen was inopportune. A terrible famine was ravaging that area about that time. The Sultan, not knowing this, ordered his officials to collect the revenue at all cost. Unable to pay the tax many abandoned their lands and retired into the forests. Agriculture suffered. The people of Delhi could not get corn. This had forced the Sultan to send his men into the forests to bring the cultivators back to their land and force them to cultivate. The peasants were hunted down like animals by the Sultan's men. After some time the Sultan came to know of the prevalence of famine conditions in the Doab area. He immediately ordered the digging of wells and granting of but as the relief measures came too late, they failed to produce the desired results. The increased taxation caused untold sufferings to the people. Many perished. Agriculture suffered. The Sultan's lack of patience was responsible for the failure of a well-intentioned scheme.
6. **Creation of Agriculture Department** – The next experiment of Mohammad-bin- Tughlaq was the creation of the department of agriculture called as **Diwan-i-Amir-Kohi**. The purpose of setting up of this department was to bring the uncultivated land under cultivation by giving direct financial support from the state treasury. For this objective, a large tract of land, sixty miles square in area, was first chosen. The land was cultivated and different crops were sown. The government spent over 70 lakhs on the scheme in two years' time. The land was distributed among those who were in the need of it and a large staff of officers and guards was appointed to look after it. But the experiment proved to be unsuccessful. Firstly, the piece of land chosen for the experiment was unfertile. Secondly, the experiment was altogether new with no precedent and therefore required great attention from the Sultan himself which he could not give. Thirdly, three years were insufficient to yield any concrete result. Fourthly, the money allocated for the purpose was badly spent, part of it was embezzled by corrupt officials and a part was spent by the people on their personal needs. Therefore, the experiment which was one of the best in the history of the revenue administration in the country had to be abandoned.

Expansion of Empire

Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq followed the footsteps of his father. Whatever territories he conquered, he annexed them to the Delhi Sultanate and thus, extended its territories to the extent which no other Sultan of Delhi had even attempted. According to Isami, the Sultan conquered Peshawar and Kalanor after the return of the Mongols.

1. **Plan to conquer Khurasan and Iraq** - During the early years of his reign, Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq planned to conquer Khurasan and Iraq. The unstable political condition of Central Asia and the instigation of those nobles who had fled from Persia and Iraq and gathered at

his court inspired the Sultan to undertake this project. The Sultan raised a huge army of 3, 70,000 soldiers for this purpose and paid it one year's salary in advance. But very soon the conditions in Persia and Central Asia changed and the Sultan realized the futility of his scheme. Therefore, he abandoned the scheme and the army was disbanded.

2. **Conquest of Nagarkot (1337 CE)** – The fort of Nagarkot was in Kangra district in Punjab. No Muslim ruler had conquered it by then and it was in the hands of a Hindu king. Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq conquered it though he restored it back to its ruler after his acceptance of suzerainty of Delhi.
3. **Expedition to Qarachil (1337-38 CE)** – Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq thought of conquering Qarachil for several reasons discussed earlier in this UNIT. Some 80,000 to 100, 000 cavalymen besides numberless foot-soldiers were sent to conquer Qarachil. The Sultan's forces reached Tibet. But soon they had to retrace their steps on account of rains and pestilence. As they were returning, their enemies threw on them boulders and succeeded in taking a heavy toll of their lives. Only a few about out of this huge army reached Delhi alive. However, the expedition had helped the Sultan to establish his hold over the Himalayan tracts. The hill tribes agreed to send tributes to him every year.
4. **Conquest of South India**–Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq made fresh annexations in the South. He got this opportunity due to the revolt of Bhauddin Gurshasp who was a cousin of the Sultan and acted as governor of Sagar near Gulbarga. He revolted but was defeated in 1327 CE. He sought shelter with the Hindu king of Kampili. The rulers of Kampili had been feudatories to the rulers of Devagiri but the state had asserted its independence after the capture of Devagiri by the Delhi Sultanate. The then ruler, Kampili Deva, who gave shelter to Gurshasp died fighting against the forces of Delhi. However, before his death, he had managed to send Gurshasp under the protection of Ballal III, ruler of the Hoysala kingdom. Kampili was annexed to the Delhi Sultanate. Ballal III was not able to protect Gurshasp and was defeated. He handed over Gurshasp to the Sultan and accepted his suzerainty. A large part of his territory was annexed to the Delhi Sultanate. Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq captured Kondhana from Nag Nayak. It was in the vicinity of Devagiri. Thus, the Sultan conquered greater part of South India and annexed it to the Delhi Sultanate.
5. **Rajasthan** – Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq failed to get any success in Rajasthan. On the contrary, Jayja, son of Maldeo was forced to leave Mewar and it was occupied by Rana Hammir Dev who succeeded in defeating an army sent by Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq against him. Afterwards the Sultan did not interfere much in the affairs of Rajasthan and that helped in the rise of the state of Mewar.

An Estimate

Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq is the most tragic personality among the Delhi Sultans. He was one of the greatest rulers of early medieval India although his character and performance have been the subject of controversy. His subjects misunderstood him, the bureaucracy could not comprehend his policies and programs and the contemporary chroniclers failed to correctly assess the achievements and failures of his reign. The modern historians have equally been mistaken in the critical analysis of his character and achievements. Several contradictory opinions have often been propagated on the subject. No other ruler of early medieval India has aroused so much discussion concerning his policy and character's as Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq.

Muhammad left nothing to be desired from the point of view of academic and intellectual attainments. A scholar as well as a capable soldier, he was an enthusiastic and ambitious man of high moral character. The people expected great things from him and he, in turn, being a man of ideals, wanted to bring about radical changes in the administration and expand his empire. However, all the virtues of his character and qualities of head and heart were of no advantage since he suffered from the lack of common sense.

Partly an idealist and partly a visionary, Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq was a stubborn autocrat who seldom cared to take counsel or follow the advice offered by his ministers. Overconfident of his capabilities, he formulated abstract schemes which he executed in haste without considering the advantages and disadvantages of their implications. In spite of his best intentions, some of his visionary schemes failed simply because these were either executed badly or found to be impracticable. He proved to be a most impractical man. He was very adamant; once an idea got into his head, he pursued it irrespective of the consequences; and being hot-tempered, he got irritated over trifles and inflicted severe punishments on those who failed to comply. He 'lacked discretion' and 'cool judgment' and 'knew no moderation'; he definitely displayed divergent traits of character at one and the same time, and has rightly been described as a 'mixture of opposites'. He was, therefore, his own enemy. He failed miserably as a ruler and administrator. He came to be hated and scorned by his subjects; nevertheless, he held out against the rebels and political opponents fearlessly and obstinately till the bitter end. He died in harness and, in his death, redeemed his 'honor' and dignity as one of the greatest despotic rulers of the period under consideration. He was by far the greatest of all the Sultans of the Tughlaq dynasty. The Delhi Sultanate reached the maximum territorial as well as political dimensions during his reign. He was the lord paramount of India. In rejecting him, the Indians also rejected the integrity of the central authority and political UNITY of the country, and reverted to the feudal pattern of the 'dark age'. Various schemes of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq carried the fundamentals of modernity and national integration although he failed to convince his people of their significance, and himself lacked the skill to implement them for the benefit of society. His period of rule is a sad commentary on the well-intentioned but incompetent monarch, and corrupt, selfish and short-sighted bureaucracy who were called upon to rule the unimaginative and backward masses.

7.3.3 Firuz Shah Tughlaq (1351-1388 CE)

Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq died of sickness in Thatta (near Sind) on March 20, 1351 CE. He left no male issue nor did he nominate a successor. So he was succeeded by his cousin brother Firuz Shah Tughlaq as the Sultan of Delhi. He has been called the ideal monarch. He is particularly noted for his administrative reforms and public welfare activities. He treated his subjects kindly. The public utilities that he created were not a monopoly of the ruling class. The welfare of his Muslim subjects was the watchword of the new administration of Firuz Shah. However, the Sultan has been criticized for his religious policy. Since he was born of a lady who had been Hindu in her early life, so he thought it necessary to show that he was also a Muslim like the ones who were born of parents of pure Turkish lineage. It is for this reason that he became a religious bigot.

Domestic Policy

Firuz Shah Tughlaq paid attention primarily towards domestic affairs. During the last years of the reign of Muhammad Tughlaq, the administration had disrupted, the subjects were mostly dissatisfied, the conservative group among the Muslims was discontented with the religious policy

of the Sultan and, worst of all, was the breakdown of economy. All these problems needed attention. Firuz Shah Tughlaq concentrated his efforts to improve these matters.

- 1. Public Welfare Activities** - The real sphere of Firuz Shah Tughlaq's genius was his capacity for construction, the putting up of buildings and the digging of canals. Firuz claims to have repaired and renewed the buildings of past kings and great amirs. He says that he had given this repair work precedence over his own constructions. The following were the buildings he had repaired - the Jami Mosque of Old Delhi, the Qutb-Minar, the Shamsi Tank, the Ala-i-Tank, the Madrasa of Iltutmish and the Jahan Panah. During his time the Qutb-Minar was struck by lightning, Firuz repaired it and made it better than before. He also raised it higher than before. The Shamsi Tank was put out of use by some dishonest people who had filled up the channels which brought water to it. Firuz ordered these channels to be reopened. The Ala-i-Tank had become dry by this time. It was filled up with earth and became dry. People carried on agriculture within it. They had also dug wells in it and sold the water. Firuz ordered the tank to be dug up again. The Jahan Panah was begun by Muhammad Tughlaq and was completed by Firuz Shah.

Firuz repaired a number of mausoleums, He repaired the mausoleum of Iltutmish and provided it with sandalwood doors. He put up better pillars to support the dome. He made pucca the floor of the mausoleum. A staircase of carved stone leading to the dome and pillars of mortar supporting the four towers were built. The mausoleum of Alauddin was fitted with doors of sandalwood. Firuz repaired the wall of the room for keeping water and the Western wall of the mosque within the madrasa attached to the mausoleum and the floor were repaired. Darul Aman, the mausoleum of Firuz's masters, was provided with sandalwood doors. A high dome was built over the tomb of Nizam-ud-din Auliya. Firuz also confirmed the old grants made to these and other mausoleums and made new grants wherever necessary. Barani refers to three constructions of Firuz in Delhi - the Jami Masjid, the Madrasa-i-Firuz Shahi by the side of the Hauz-i-Alai and a palace or a khangah above the Siri Dam. Barani also says that in addition, the Hisar (fort) of Fatehabad between Hansi and Sarsati was completed and the foundations of the fort of Firuzabad were laid in his time. Firuz also constructed or repaired a number of sarais, hospitals, bridges, etc. Malik Ghazi Sahana chief architect of the state.

Firuz constructed a number of canals. In 1355 CE, he dug a canal from the Sutlej to Jahbaz; a distance of forty-eight karohs (about 158 kilometres). In 1356 CE, he dug a canal from the Jumuna in the precincts of Mandal (Mandari) and Sirmur. After causing the water of seven more canals to fall into it, he took it to Hansi and from there to Arasani and further on to a place where he built Hisar-Firuzah. He constructed a large tank near the royal palace and filled it with water from this canal. A third canal was dug from the Ghaghar by the fort of Sirsati (Sirsuti) and took it to Harni Kara (Hirani-Khera) where he constructed a fort called Firuzabad. Another canal was dug from the Jumuna at Budhai (Budhni) to Hisar-Firuzah. It flowed into the tank there. It was also taken further. Firuz employed skilled engineers to superintend the canals and to examine and report on them during the rainy season. Building the main canal was the work of the state. But the minors, feeders, etc., which took the water to the fields were constructed and maintained by the state officers. However, the cost of construction and maintenance of the minors, feeders, etc., was borne by the assignees or the peasants. Traces of his canal system still remain. He also sank 150 wells for irrigation purposes and for the use of travelers. He constructed 50 dams across

rivers to promote irrigation. Firuz had a love for building new cities. He is said to have founded 300 towns. The important towns he established were Fatehabad, Hissar, Firuzpur, Jaunpur and Firuzabad.

The greatest achievement of Firuz in the sphere of construction was the city of Firuzabad in Delhi. The village of Kawin on the Jumuna was chosen for building the palace. The city when completed extended for five karohs (about 16 kilometres) from Indpat town to Firuz Shah's residential fort. There were eight jami mosques. Today the kotla of Firuz in New Delhi and his residential fort on the ridge are the sole remnants of his great capital. Firuz was very much interested in gardening. He is said to have laid out 1200 new gardens near Delhi and restored thirty old gardens of Alauddin. Firuz also shifted two inscribed monoliths of Asoka to Delhi one from a village near Khizrabad and the other from Meerut.

2. **Administration** – Firuz's innate talents in the field of administration helped him to restore calm and peace. There was all round improvement in administration. He was humane in his approach to problems confronting the state. He restored some of the old systems like the Jagir system and also at the same time tried to avoid the administrative blunders committed during the previous reign. He was not a warmonger and did not divert the financial resources of the state towards military spending. This had contributed to the strengthening of the financial position of the government. When Firuz was enthroned the state was in deep economic crisis and the people were in distress. He strengthened the kingdom by improving the economic condition of the people with the help of efficient ministers like Maqbul Khan.

However, Firuz administration suffered from certain serious lapses. One of them was that he employed a large number of slaves who were purchased by him. There were about 50,000 slaves working in his palace. Since these slaves were employed as forced labor they did not faithfully discharge their work and it resulted in disloyalty. Secondly, the Sultan revived the Jagir System which led to the concentration of property in the hands of the officers which posed a threat to the state on account of the officers being very rich and the state having no hold over them.

3. **Revenue System** - Firuz imposed those taxes on his subjects which had the sanction of the holy Quran. He also liberalized the taxation system and made lighter the tax-burden. These included *Zakat*, *Khams* and *Kharaj*. *Zakat* was alms. *Khams* was one-fifth of the booty. *Kharaj* was one-tenth of the produce. He retained the *Jiziya* tax on the Hindus. He was receptive to the plight of the agriculturists and canceled all the tax arrears and loans of the agriculturists. The revenue department maintained detailed records of the amount of revenue collected and details of land valuation. This was done with the help of a number of local officers on the basis of scheduled rates and actual land survey. The irrigation system was improved during his reign. A number of canals and reservoirs were constructed which helped to bring a large extent of land under cultivation. On account of this, the peasants grew rich and were happy. The standard of living of the people also increased and they had plenty of property, including gold. There were as many as 36 factories functioning in the state. The state revenue increased even though the octroi duty was abolished.
4. **Religious Policy** - Firuz Shah Tughlaq was a pious Sunni Muslim. According to some scholars he was tolerant towards the Hindus and other religious sects. The following facts are given in support of this view. In the first place, he did not destroy the Hindu temples and idols even when he conquered the Hindu kingdoms. Secondly, we have evidence to show

that he held a golden umbrella over the idol of Jwalamukhi. Thirdly, he ordered the translation of Sanskrit works found in the Kangra library into Persian.

However, we have enough evidence to show that he was a bigot. In his autobiography *Futuh-i-Firuz Shahi*, the Sultan gives a clear impression that he regarded himself the ruler of Muslims only. He divided mankind into two groups - Muslims and non-Muslims and regarded the former alone as his special concern. His liberalism was directed only towards the Muslims. When he abolished torture, he said that he did not want to spill the Muslim blood. He offered financial assistance only to unmarried Muslim girls. It is quite clear that his government was run for the benefit of the Muslims. Further, he considered it to be his duty to suppress irreligion and took pride in that he worked diligently until things objectionable to religion (orthodox Muslim religion) were set aside. He took pride in destroying new temples and in killing those Hindus who seduced others into error. He constructed mosques on the ruins of the Hindu temples. He burnt their holy books. He prohibited public worship of idols as it tended to pervert Muslim women. A Brahmana was burnt to death for this offence.

Firuz Shah Tughlaq followed a more oppressive policy towards the Hindus than his predecessors in two respects. Firstly, he imposed the hated *Jaziya* tax upon the Brahmanas who were never required to pay it before. Secondly, he adopted all sorts of measures to induce the Hindus to embrace Islam. He not only relieved such Hindus from the payment of *Jaziya* but also loaded them with rich presents and honors. This is perhaps the first recorded instance, after the establishment of the Muslim rule in India, of the state itself becoming a proselytizing agency.

The expedition against Jajnagar (Orissa) was undertaken with two motives of killing the infidels and destroying their temples. Firuz is said to have proceeded to Puri, destroyed the temple and disfigured and desecrated the idol of Jagannath. Other idols in Orissa were dug out and laid in front of the mosques along the path of the Sunnis. When Firuz invaded Nagarkót, he desecrated the famous temple of Jwalamukhi in Kangra. It is said that he broke the idol into fragments and mixed them with the flesh of cows and hung them in nosebags around the necks of the Brahmanas and sent the principal idol to Medina as a trophy. All these clearly show that Firuz was the greatest bigot of this age and the fore-runner of Sikandar Lodi and Aurangzeb in this regard. Nilakanta Sastri observes that his reign stood out for the most thorough-going Islamic reaction before the days of Aurangzeb.

Firuz was intolerant towards the *Shias*, the *Sufis*, *Munhidans* and *Ibahatiyans*, i.e., the Ismaili group of Shias and other Muslim sects. He seized and burnt the treatises and books of the Shiahs and punished them severely for their religious beliefs. Firuz Shah, orthodox in his beliefs and practices, was a sharp contrast to his predecessors who showed no respect to the Muslim divines. He paid great deference to the *ulemas* and holy men in court. The influence of the Muslim divines on the government was revived. No wonder he became very popular with the orthodox Muslims.

The religious policy of Firuz Shah Tughlaq was reactionary in principle and did positive harm to the state in practice. The Hindus who constituted the majority became certainly disloyal to the state. In a way, his religious policy also contributed in bringing about the downfall of the Tughlaq Dynasty.

5. **Humanitarian measures** – Firuz Shah Tughlaq distributed a large amount of wealth and land among saints and other religious people. He established an employment bureau that arranged for the employment of unemployed people. He established a separate department called **Diwan-i-Khairat** (Department of Charity) which cared for orphans and widows and arranged marriages of poor Muslim girls. He also established a charitable hospital called **Dar-ul-Shafa** near Delhi.
6. **Justice** - Firuz's administration of justice was based on Islamic laws. He restored the privileges of the qazis. There was a chief qazi at the capital and other qazis in provincial towns. He also held his own court for administering justice and was in favour of mild punishment. He abolished the practice of torturing the guilty to extract the truth from them.
7. **Education** – Firuz Shah Tughlaq himself was a scholar and patronized learning. Zia-ud-din Barani and Shams-i-Siraj Afif wrote their works under his patronage. Barani wrote *Fatwah-i-Jahandari*; Afif wrote his *Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi*; and the Sultan wrote his autobiography, *Futuh-i-Firuzshahi*. There was a fine library at the temple of Jwalamukhi which consisted of 1,300 volumes of Sanskrit texts. Some of those texts were translated into Persian by the orders of the Sultan. Firuz established thirty madrasas including three colleges. Teachers were liberally paid by the state and stipends were granted to students. According to Afif, the Sultan spent thirty-six lakhs of tankas as allowance to learned men and Quran-readers. Thus, Firuz encouraged education and learning. However, the literature of his time was influenced by Islamic faith and therefore, suffered from narrow Unitalism.
8. **Slaves** – Firuz Shah Tughlaq was fond of keeping slaves and their number reached to 1, 80,000 during his rule. He established a separate department known as **Diwan-i-Bandagan** under a separate officer to look after their welfare. Every care was taken for education and employment of the slaves. Even the provincial governors were ordered to treat their slaves as their own sons. But, this fondness for slaves of the Sultan went against the interest of the state. It put an unnecessary burden on the treasury and, afterwards, the slaves of Firuz interfered in affairs of the state which also contributed towards the downfall of Tughlaq dynasty.

Foreign Policy

Firuz Shah Tughlaq made no great attempt to recover the lost provinces of the Empire. On the other hand he did not deal effectively with the rebels when they started extending their frontiers at the expense of the Sultanate. Firuz, primarily, did not pursue the policy of extension of the empire but followed the policy of consolidation. Thus, his foreign policy remained weak. No significant conquests were made during his reign.

1. **Bengal** – When Haji Ilyas of Bengal ravaged the territories of the empire, Firuz marched from Delhi and laid siege to Ikhdala. The Delhi army was victorious, though the fort still remained in the hands of Ilyas. Yet Firuz returned to Delhi without annexing Bengal. According to some, the wailings of the women in the besieged fort made him retreat. Others attribute it to the commencement of the rains. Whatever it is, the incident clearly revealed his weakness. The death of Ilyas provided Firuz with another opportunity to recover Bengal. The fort of Ikhdala provided asylum to the refractory Bengal army. Again the fort was bravely defended. When the rains came, Firuz had to make peace with Sikandar, the son of Ilyas on terms favorable to the latter.

2. **Jajnagar (Orissa)** – On his way back to Delhi from Bengal, Firuz reached Jaunpur and turned back for a raid on the Hindu Kingdom of Jajnagar (Orissa). It was then ruled by King Bhanudeva III. Proceeding through Bihar, Firuz entered Orissa in 1361 CE. Taken by surprise, Bhanudeva III fled away for safety. Delhi army ransacked Cuttack and marched to Puri. The temple of Jagannatha was leveled and the images were desecrated. Finally, Bhanudeva had to purchase peace by meek submission. He promised to send elephants to Delhi as tribute.
3. **Nagarkot** - In 1355 CE, Firuz Shah Tughlaq had to lead an expedition to Nagarkot in Kangra district of Panjab. His main objective was to destroy the temple of Jawalamukhi. The king of Nagarkot surrendered after a siege of six months. He was made to recognize the suzerainty of Delhi. The temple of Jawalmukhi was destroyed.
4. **Sind** - In 1365-67 CE, Firuz conducted a grossly mismanaged campaign in Lower Sind and Thatta against the Jams. But famine, pestilence and difficulties in traversing across the Rann of Cutch inflicted heavy losses to the Delhi army. At the end, the Sindians agreed to pay heavy tribute. Firuz made no attempt to bring the Deccan back under the control of the Delhi Sultanate as he was determined not to make any war against the Muslims.

Some revolts occurred during the reign of Firuz Shah Tughlaq. They were all of minor nature and failed. Thus, Firuz was successful in consolidating the empire which he inherited from Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq. However, he failed to extend it or restore it to its previous boundary.

An Estimate

Contemporary historians like Ziauddin Barani and Shams-i-Siraj Afif praised Firuz Shah Tughlaq as a benevolent and just ruler. Some of the modern historians like Elphinstone described him as Akbar of the Sultanate period and considered him as a capable ruler and successful administrator. But according to Iswari Prasad, Firuz stands no comparison with the great-hearted and broadminded Akbar. Firuz was, of course, a scholar and patron of art and learning. An able administrator, he tried to improve the economic conditions of his people. His revenue reforms, public works, philanthropic activities were his great achievements. He gave his people a reign of comparative peace and progress.

But in certain other ways he accelerated the process of the decline of the Delhi Sultanate. Firuz encouraged corruption. At times he gave money to his soldiers to bribe their officers. Very often he forgave his corrupt officials. He was not laborious and did not apply his personal attention to routine administration. He was obliged to invest his nobles and officials with extensive powers, which, ultimately, went against the larger interests of administration. Thus, he did not organize his administration on sound lines. On the contrary, he weakened it and entrusting it to the gullible and corrupt officers, he contributed largely to the decline of the Sultanate. The Slave System adopted by Firuz added to the draining of the imperial treasury. This also gave greater opportunities to his slaves to interfere in the administration in the evening of his life.

However, the greatest failure of Firuz was his neglect of rearing a strong army to stand by the administration as the bulwark of stability. This led to the loss of prestige of the Sultan and failed to restore the sagging power of the sultan. A strong army was a primary attribute to sovereignty, which Firuz miserably failed to understand. His foreign policy was a failure. He could never recover his hold on the Deccan. The failure of his expeditions weakened the morale of his army.

R.C. Majumdar aptly remarks, "On the whole, in spite of peace and prosperity and contentment that prevailed during the long reign of Firuz Shah no one can possibly doubt that his policy and administrative measures contributed to a large extent to the downfall of the Delhi Sultanate and accelerated the process of decline that had already set in during his predecessor's reign".

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 Who was the founder of Tughlaq Dynasty?
- Q.2 Whom did Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq send to conquer South India?
- Q.3 When Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq did transferred his capital from Delhi to Devagiri?
- Q.4 Name the Sultan of Delhi who introduced the token currency.
- Q.5 When did Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq conduct the Qarachil expedition?
- Q.6 Name the Sultan of Delhi who was known as "ill-starred idealist"?
- Q.7 What was the name of the separate department of agriculture established by Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq?
- Q.8 When Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq did captured Nagarkot?
- Q.9 Which Sultan of Delhi established the new towns of Fatehabad, Hissar, Firuzpur, Jaunpur and Firuzabad?
- Q.10 What was Dar-ul-Shafa established by Firuz Shah Tughlaq?
- Q.11 Name the new department of slaves established by Firuz Shah Tughlaq.
- Q.12 Who created a new department of charity named Diwan-i-Khairat?

7.5 Summary

- Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq was the founder of Tughlaq Dynasty. He was also known as Ghazi Malik. He ascended the throne in 1320 CE.
- The Tughlaqs were also called Qaraunah Turks.
- Ghiyasuddin followed the policy of promoting agriculture and protecting the cultivators.
- He carried out a number of public welfare activities. He made attempts to improve means of communication.
- Ghiyasuddin followed an aggressive foreign policy. He sent his son Jauna Khan for conquering the South Indian state of Warangal. Jauna Khan also raided Utkala in Orissa. East Bengal was also annexed to Delhi.
- Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq became the Sultan of Delhi in 1325 CE. He had a brilliant and progressive mind.
- He introduced a number of new schemes for reforms with best intentions such as transfer of capital, the introduction of token currency, Khurasan and Qarachil expedition, increased

taxation in doab, and establishment of an agriculture department, but unfortunately, all of his schemes failed.

- He displeased his subjects and faced the largest number of revolts of his subjects and nobles. His experiments affected adversely the fortunes of his empire.
- Like his father, Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq pursued the policy of annexation and thus extended his territories to the extent that no other Sultan of Delhi had even attempted.
- Firuz Shah Tughlaq became the Sultan of Delhi Sultanate in 1351 CE. He was a mild ruler, who carried on many reforms and public welfare activities for the Muslims.
- He was very intolerant towards the Hindus and also towards the Shias and other non-Sunni Muslims.
- He totally ignored the majority Unit of the population who became hostile towards the Sultan.
- Firuz was successful in consolidating the empire which he inherited from Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq. However, he failed to extend it or restore it to its previous boundary.

7.6 Glossary

Doab: Fertile land between the two rivers.

Patronage: The support, especially financial, that is given to a person or an organization by a patron.

Ransack: To search a place, making it untidy and causing damage, usually because you are looking for something.

Pestilence: Any fatal disease that spreads quickly and kills a large number of people.

Token Currency: Money of regular government issue (such as paper currency or coins) having a greater face value than intrinsic value.

7.7 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

- | | |
|-------|----------------------|
| Ans.1 | Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq |
| Ans.2 | His son Jauna Khan |
| Ans.3 | In 1326-27 CE |
| Ans.4 | Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq |
| Ans.5 | 1333-34 CE |
| Ans.6 | Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq |
| Ans.7 | Diwan-i-Amir-Kohi |
| Ans.8 | 1337 CE |
| Ans.9 | Firuz Shah Tughlaq |

Ans.10 A free hospital

Ans.11 Diwan-i-Bandagan

Ans.12 Firuz Shah Tughlaq

7.8 Suggested Readings

1. Anil Chandra Banerjee, 1983, "*A New History of Medieval India*", Delhi: S Chand & Company.
2. Manazir Ahmend, 1978, "*Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq, 1351–1388 A.D*", Allahabad: Chugh Publications.
3. R.C Majumdar, & K. M. Munshi, 1990, "*The Delhi Sultanate*", Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.
4. Satish Chandra, 2007, "*History of Medieval India: 800-1700*", Orient Longman.
5. Satish Chandra, 2007, "*Medieval India; From Sultanat to the Mughals*", Har Anand Publications.

7.9 Terminal Questions

1. Who was Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq? Discuss his domestic policies.
2. Examine the foreign policy of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq.
3. Critically analyze the various visionary schemes of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq. Why is he called a mixture of opposites?
4. Discuss the foreign policy of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq.
5. Analyze the personality and character of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq with reference to his so-called mad schemes.
6. Describe the benevolent measures/public welfare activities taken up by Firuz Shah Tughlaq.
7. "Firuz Shah Tughlaq was a religious fanatic". Critically analyze the statement.
8. Write a short note on the foreign policy of Firuz Shah Tughlaq.
9. How far was Firuz Shah Tughlaq responsible for the downfall of the Delhi Sultanate?

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UNIT-8

THE RISE OF MONGOLS

Structure

- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 Objectives
- 8.3 Central Asia
 - 8.3.1 Pastoral Nomadism
 - 8.3.2 The Mongols
 - 8.3.3 Mongol Policy of Delhi Sultans
 - 8.3.4 Causes of the Failure of Mongol Invasions
 - 8.3.5 Effects of Mongol Invasions

Self-Check Exercise-1

- 8.4 Summary
- 8.5 Glossary
- 8.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 8.7 Suggested Readings
- 8.8 Terminal Questions

8.1 Introduction

The rise of Mongols and their rapid conquests and expansion over Central Asia and the adjoining regions between the 10th and the 13th centuries marks the beginning of a significant period in history. The destruction caused by the Mongols left behind a trail of blood and gruesome massacre wherever their advance was resisted. Its consequences for India were direct, profound and far-reaching.

For the Delhi Sultans, control over Kabul-Ghazni-Qandahar line flanked by the Hindukush, was vital not only for stabilizing the scientific frontier but also for the fact that it connected India with the major silk-route passing from China through Central Asia and Persia. However, the developments in Central and West-Asia did not allow the newly founded Turkish state to do the job. The situation arising out due to the Mongol attacks compelled the Delhi Sultans to take comfort along the Chenab, while the cis-Sutiej region became the cock-pit of confrontations. Thus, the "Indus remained only the cultural boundary of India," and for all practical purposes the line of control was confined to the West of the Indus only.

8.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the rise of Mongols in Central Asia,
- Know about the conquests and expansion of Mongols,
- Analyze the Mongol policies of the Sultans of Delhi,
- Examine the causes of the failure of Mongol invasions of India,
- Understand the effects of the invasions of Mongols on India.

8.3 Central Asia

Let us first form a mental picture of the regions comprising Central Asia and acquaint ourselves with some of their outstanding features of this region. "Central Asia" is a loose geographical term that denotes the huge and varied territory bounded in the South by a vast chain of mountains of which the Himalayas form a part. Its Northern limits may be placed around the Ural Mountains; the Western along the Aral and Caspian Seas; and the eastern somewhere between the lakes Balkash and Baikal, perhaps around the river Irtysh.

The region of Central Asia is an extraordinary mosaic of mountains, deserts, oases, steppes and river valleys. The foothills and the valleys contain oases. Beyond the deserts are the Eurasian steppes-those limitless expanses of arid and patchy vegetation. Towards the North and East the Steppes once again disappear into the great Siberian desert. The steppes were very important in determining the course of history of Central Asia and indeed of the world. The environment of steppe could support only nomadic life.

However, the oases were the UNITing points of settled existence. The history of civilized commUNITies in Central Asia goes back to a few thousand years. Periods of peace, occasionally broken by barbarians churning on the periphery, led to the extension of irrigation works and agriculture. Towns came into existence with the growth of trade and handicrafts. Together these led to flourishing garden kingdoms and states. The oases were thus real counterpoints to the mass of deserts and steppes. Due to them Central Asia could emerge as the centerpiece in a commercial highway connecting the far-flung civilizations of India, China, Mesopotamia, and Europe.

Central Asia was composed of distinct micro-regions or territorial UNITS that owe their identity to a peculiar mix of geography and history. Transoxiana is the region build up by the rivers Oxus and Jaxartes. Both flow into the inland Aral Sea and are the two most important Central Asian Rivers. The Arabs, who conquered Transoxiana in the 8th century CE, called it **Mawaraunnahr**, literally meaning "that which is beyond the river". Along the middle of the Oxus-Jaxartes basin flows the Zarafshan River, after whose ancient name **soghd** and the region came to be known as

Soghdiana. Samarkand and Bukhara, the two most famous towns of Central Asia are located within this tract.

Khwarizm (modern khiva) is located in the South of the Aral Sea. A large centralized state arose here as early as the 7th or 6th century BCE. Khwarizm became part of the vast Kushan Empire at the end of the first century CE, which included the Hindukush and encompassed the whole of North India within its fold. Cultural contacts between India and Central Asia were greatly strengthened as a result.

The land-locked region of Khurasan is located to the West of Transoxiana. Its rivers peter out into lakes and swamps. But there are excellent pastures around its oases. These have persistently attracted nomads to descend into its valleys from across the steep mountains that extend out into Central Asia from the Eurasian steppes. "Because of such movements of people, Khurasan inevitably became a cockpit...." The Arabs used it as a foundation to conquer Central Asia. To the East of the Jaxartes lies Farghana—the ancestral home of Babur, the first Mughal ruler of India.

8.3.1 Pastoral Nomadism

The Mongols were the product of deserts and steppes that surround Central Asia. More precisely, they descended from the mass of nomads who roamed in the area of the Altai mountains, South of Lake Baikal—regions that are now part of outer Mongolia. Their civilization is based on tribal organization and ownership of herds of cattle, sheep and horses. Furthermore, the tribes often possessed camels, mules and asses. The animals supplied most of the essential needs of the nomad in the way of food, clothing and shelter.

Pastoral nomadism was governed by the urge for the search for grazing lands. This kept the nomads constantly on the move, from one place to another, with their flocks and herds. In the absence of agriculture and fixed habitation, the nomads were least attached to the land. When the tribes camped, each tent or household was allotted a piece of land for its exclusive use. After the resources were exhausted there, the tribes migrated in search of new pastures.

Thus, mobility was central to the nomadic society, and the horse was its most outstanding asset. One description of pastoral nomads rightly characterizes them as a people whose country was the back of a horse. In consequence, among the Mongols, for instance, no offence was greater than stealing a horse. It invited execution.

Horsemanship accompanied with skill in archery made the nomads a formidable fighting force. In the 13th century, the Mongols brought the art to perfection. They could rain arrows in every direction—forward, rear, and sideways—with deadly accuracy galloping at full speed. Opportunities for testing and strengthening these skills were provided in plenty by the steppe environment where struggle over grazing lands were normal occurrences. Periodically, these turned into large-scale bloody battles.

8.3.2 The Mongols

In the early decades of the 13th century, the Mongols invaded Asia and Europe. By the close of the 13th century, the Mongol empire covered a vast portion of the known world: China, Manchuria, Korea, North Vietnam, Tibet. Turkestan, Afghanistan, Iran, Mesopotamia, Southern Russia and Siberia.

Before rising to world dominion, the Mongols resided in the steppe region North of China and East of Lake Baikal. The sudden rise of Mongols to power seems to fall in line with an old pattern characteristic of the steppes. Long periods of internal conflicts between groups of nomads

would throw up a leader of outstanding ability who after levelling out differences between the warring hordes UNITE them into a powerful coalition.

Chengiz Khan and the Steppe Aristocracy

Chengiz Khan built the Mongols into an incredible striking force. He was born of a powerful Mongol chief and was also known as Chingiz or Chengiz Khan or Temuchin as he was originally called. After 30 years of a bitter struggle within the steppes, Temuchin eventually emerged as the outstanding leader of the Mongols. During this time he developed his skill both as a warrior and a canny tactician who excelled in dividing and dodging his enemies

UNITs of the Mongol army were put under command of generals drawn from it. Military mobilisation reached its zenith under Chengiz Khan. Using a deep-rooted nomadic tradition, he enrolled all adult males into **mingghan**, literally "UNITs of ten thousand". The mingghan in turn were divided into smaller UNITs of ten and hundred. Ten mingghans constituted a **tuman** and these were deployed for large-scale operations. Each of these UNITs was placed under the command of a seasoned general. The authority of the commander extended over the soldiers and their families. Thus, administrative control and military mobilization were parts of a single mechanism.

Conquests and Expansion

Chengiz Khan first endeavoured to bring the pastoral tribes of the Eastern steppes under his control. He ruled over a vast confederacy of Mongol, Turkic and Manchurian tribes. He was the head of all their kubitki (tents) and his family held the conquered/hordes in patrimony. At a **kurultai** held in 1208 CE, Temuchin was declared "**Qaghan of all Mongolia**" and received the title of Chengiz Khan.

After the Mongols were consolidated internally, they Mongols burst out of the confines of Mongolia. At the end of a series of annual campaigns beginning in 1211 CE, they penetrated the Great Wall of China and captured Peking. Later on, they moved to Transoxiana and Khurasan which formed the dominions of the Khwarizm Shah. The Khwarizm Empire could not withstand the Mongol siege-craft which used battering rams, flame-emitting machines (using naphtha), mangonels or catapults (manjaniq), etc. The Mongols caught hold of Bukhara and Samarqand in 1220 CE. A witness reporting on the state of Bukhara said: "They came, they sacked, they burnt, they slew, they plundered, they departed."

The Mongols were able to complete the annexation of Transoxiana and Khurasan in only three years from 1219 to 1222 CE. Chengiz Khan died in 1225 CE. By that time entire Northern China had been annexed. The empire was divided among his sons. In 1229 CE, his third son, Ogedei, was declared the Great Khan. The second son, Chaghtai, received Turkestan, and Tolui, the youngest, got the Mongolian homeland.

Hulagu Khan, one of the successors of Chengiz Khan, attacked the Abbasid capital Baghdad in 1258 CE. It perished in blood and flame. According to an estimate, some 800,000 were savagely murdered. The Abbasid Caliphate himself met a violent end.

Finally, four great empires came into shape out of the Mongol conquests: The Golden Horde controlled the Volga Steppe land and Southern Russia; the Ilkhans ruled Afghanistan and Iran; the Chaghtai Empire which included most of Central Asia, and the empire of Kublai Khan which controlled over China and neighbouring territories. These empires lasted till the 15th century.

8.3.3 Mongol Policy of Delhi Sultans

During the period of Delhi Sultanate, the Mongols threatened the security of India from towards the North-West and attempted to penetrate deep into the Indian Territory. The Mongols made themselves the greatest power under the leadership of Chengiz Khan at the beginning of the 13th century.

Mongols and the Mameluk Sultans

The Delhi Sultanate was threatened, first, by a looming invasion of Mongols under Chengiz Khan himself when Sultan Iltutmish had hardly consolidated his position in Punjab. Chengiz Khan had destroyed the Khwarizmi Empire. Its Prince, Jalaluddin Mangbarni fled to India. Chengiz Khan chased the fugitive Prince up to the bank of the river Indus but when the Prince crossed to the other side he waited there and watched the attitude of the Delhi Sultan. Jalaluddin sought shelter and assistance from Sultan Iltutmish who was in a dilemma. He finally decided not to annoy the mighty foe Chengiz Khan. He put to death the envoy of Jalaluddin and declined to provide shelter to the Prince sending a diplomatic reply that the climate of Delhi would not suit him. That diplomatic move of Iltutmish saved him from the wrath of Chengiz Khan. Chengiz Khan appreciated this wise move of Iltutmish and turned back after leaving the task of capturing Jalaluddin to his officers. Jalaluddin too realized the futility of fighting against Iltutmish and therefore, withdrew towards lower Sind. Thus, the infant Turkish kingdom in India was saved from the wrath of the Mongols who would have certainly destroyed it.

Raziya Sultan also followed the policy of not annoying the Mongols like her father. Jalaluddin had left Hasan Karlugh as the governor of Ghazni and Baniyan. He was seriously pressed by the Mongols and therefore, sought the support of Raziya against them. Raziya declined to help him and, thus, saved her kingdom from the onslaught of the Mongols. After the fall of Raziya, the understanding between the Delhi Sultanate and the Mongols came to an end. In 1241 CE, the Mongols, under the command of Bahadur Tair, crossed the river Indus and besieged Lahore. They returned after plundering it. They attacked Multan under the command of Sali Bahadur, in 1247 CE and got an indemnity of one lakh dinars from its governor. Then he attacked Lahore and forced its governor also to pay indemnity and accept his tutelage. The Mongols attacked Punjab and its neighboring territory during the reign of Sultan Nasiruddin several times. They gradually seized Multan, Sindh and West Punjab. Sultan Nasiruddin and his Prime Minister Balban avoided hostilities against the Mongols and tried to befriend them. They even exchanged envoys with the Mongol chief, Hulagu Khan.

When Balban became the Sultan of Delhi, he took some effective steps against the Mongols. He recovered Multan, Sindh and Lahore were from the hands of the Mongols. During the early years of Balban's reign, his cousin Sher Khan was appointed as the warden of the North-West frontiers. Professor Habibullah and Dr. A.L. Srivastava have described Sher Khan as a great warrior who had terrorized the Mongols. However, K.A. Nizami does not agree with them. He contends that Minhaj-us-Siraj has not mentioned a single battle that was fought by Sher Khan against the Mongols. Instead, he described that Sher Khan had agreed to serve the Mongols. Balban, therefore, desired to shift him from the North-West and gave him a jagir near Delhi. Sher Khan did not take up his new assignment. As a result, Balban got him poisoned. Whichever view might be correct but the fact remains that the invasions of the Mongols did not take place during the early period of Balban's reign or, perhaps they were repelled.

Balban went to Lahore in 1270 CE and ordered the construction of strong forts on the frontier. A series of strong forts were constructed there and strong armies were kept therein. After a

few years, the North-West frontier was divided into two parts for defense purposes. Multan, Sindh and Lahore were placed under the charge of Prince Muhammad Khan while the province of Sunam and Samana was handed over to Prince Bughra Khan. However, when Bughra Khan was appointed governor of Bengal, then the entire responsibility of defending the frontier fell on the shoulder of Prince Muhammad. Balban's defence measures proved successful. The Mongols failed to penetrate deeper into India. When the Mongols attacked the territory of Delhi in 1279 CE, Prince Muhammad defeated them and forced them to withdraw. In 1285 A.D., the Mongols, under Timur Khan of Afghanistan launched a major attack on Panjab. Prince Muhammad gave him a bold fight but lost his life in the battle and the town of Lahore and Dipalpur were plundered by the Mongols. However, the provinces of Multan and Uchh were protected from the Mongol fury. Thus, the Mongols failed to break the defense measures of Balban and retreated. Next, Prince Kaiqubad was appointed the warden of the North-Western frontier. Kaiqubad was not capable, yet two attacks of the Mongols which took place during his time were repelled. When Kaiqubad became the Sultan, he appointed Jalaluddin Khalji to look after the defenses of the North-West who was successful in repulsing some minor attacks of the Mongols. Thus, the Mongols failed to advance further in the territory of the Delhi Sultanate. However, this was a limited success. Balban also could not dare to extend his influence beyond Lahore. Besides, the Mongol danger greatly affected the domestic and foreign policy of Balban. He had to keep a strong army in the North-West and at Delhi at an enormous cost and also abstain from pursuing an imperialistic policy.

Thus, the Mongol attacks during the period of rule of the Mameluk Sultans failed in affecting the fortunes of the Delhi Sultanate adversely. It was both because of the successful diplomacy of its early rulers and the stringent defense measures of Sultan Balban during the later period. Yet, another reason was that the power of the Mongols was weakened by the defeat of their leader, Hulagu Khan in Egypt. Moreover, during this period, the Mongols had confined their activities merely to plunder. But, on the other hand, the Mameluk rulers also did not dare to dislodge the Mongols from the North-West. The territory West of the river Beas remained occupied by the Mongols.

Mongols and the Khalji Sultans

The first and the only Mongol invasion during the reign of Jalaluddin Khalji occurred in 1292 CE. The Mongols, under the command of a grandson of Hulagu Khan, Abdullah attacked Punjab and reached near Sanam. According to Barani, the Mongols were defeated by Sultan Jalaluddin. But it was not so. The Sultan was successful in defeating an advance guard of the Mongols and in capturing some of their officers. However, he never dared to face the main army of the Mongols and tried for peace. The Mongols agreed to withdraw. However, Ulghu, a descendant of Chengiz Khan, accepted Islam with his 4000 followers and decided to stay in India. They were called '**New Musalmans**' and settled in the suburbs of Delhi. Sultan Jalaluddin also married one of his daughters to Ulghu.

The Mongols threatened the security of India during the reign of Alauddin Khalji. Ghazni and Kabul formed their powerful bases to attack India and they had advanced as far as Sind and Punjab. During the reign of Alauddin, their attacks were more severe as compared to earlier ones. Besides, they had a different purpose now. Earlier, they had attacked India mainly to gain booty and extend their sphere of influence. But now they attacked India with the purpose of either extending their empire or avenging their defeat and disgrace. Therefore, they endangered the security of not only Punjab but also Ganga-Yamuna Doab. The Khokhars and the Afghan tribes also used to join them because of the temptation of booty. However, there was one saving grace for Alauddin. From

among the different branches of the Mongols, India was attacked either by the Il-Khans of Persia or by the Chaghatais of Transoxiana at that time. But these two ruling dynasties of the Mongols contended against each other for the expansion of their empires not only in Central Asia but also in India and therefore, failed to unite their strength.

The first Mongol invasion during the reign of Alauddin Khalji occurred in 1297-98 CE. Dava Khan, the ruler of Transoxiana, sent an army of one lakh Mongols under the command of Kadar to attack India. They entered Punjab and started plundering the nearby places of Lahore. Alauddin sent an army under Zafar Khan and Ulugh Khan which defeated the Mongols near Jullundhar and nearly 20,000 Mongols were slaughtered in the battle. A number of Mongol officers were taken prisoners who were killed afterward and their captured women and children were sent to Delhi as slaves. Again in 1299 CE, the Mongols attacked under the command of Saldi, brother of Dava Khan, and occupied Sehwan. Alauddin sent Zafar Khan against the Mongols who recovered Sehwan from them and imprisoned a large number of Mongols including Saldi and his brother. Towards the close of 1299 CE, Dava Khan sent a strong army of two lakh horses under the command of his son, Qutlugh Khwaja to avenge the defeat. This time the Mongols were determined to fight against Alauddin. The battle took place on the plain of Kili near Delhi in which Alauddin emerged victorious primarily, because of the valor of Zafar Khan who broke the left flank of the Mongols by his fierce attack. He chased the escaping Mongols for eighteen kos but, while returning, he was ambushed and killed by them. However, the Mongols had tested the strength of the Alauddin army. So they decided to retreat and withdrew. The fourth Mongol invasion took place in 1303 CE. Around 1, 20,000 Mongol horsemen under the command of Targhi moved so swiftly that provincial governors could not get time to reach Delhi to help the Sultan. Alauddin was not in a position to face the Mongols in an open battle. He retired to the fort of Siri and took up defensive position. The Mongols plundered the environs of Delhi and besieged the fort for two months. But as they were unaware of the art of siege-warfare they failed to capture the fort and withdrew.

The invasion of Targhi awakened Alauddin to the necessity of frontier defense. He made Siri his capital, strengthened its fortifications, repaired the fort of Delhi and those in the North-West, constructed some new ones there kept standing armies in them, kept a separate and permanent army for the defense of the North-West, appointed a separate governor for the same and increased the number and efficiency of his army.

In 1305 CE, the Mongols attacked again under the command of Ali Beg and Tartaq. Targhi also joined them in the way. However, the Mongols were comprehensively defeated. In 1308 E, the Mongols attacked again to take revenge for the defeat of Ali Beg and Tartaq. Alauddin's generals Ghazi Malik and Malik Kafur defeated the Mongols so crushingly that they fled away.

According to Zia-ud-din Barani, the Mongol invasions occurred even after 1308 CE. But Isami and Amir Khusrav regarded the invasion of 1308 CE as their last invasion. Dr. K.S. Lal and Dr. S. Roy have agreed with Barani while Dr. A.L. Srivastava has opined that the last Mongol invasion took place in 1307-8 CE.

Thus, Alauddin's reign witnessed most fierce invasions of the Mongols. Yet, he succeeded in repulsing them all. Therefore, the Mongols did not dare to attack India during the last years of his reign. According to Barani and Firishta, Ghazi Malik Tughluq, who was appointed governor of the North-West Frontier in 1305 CE, even attacked Kabul, Ghazni, Kandhar and plundered the territories of the Mongols there. This aggressive policy of Ghazi Malik broke up the capacity of the Mongols to invade India.

The Last Phase of Mongol Attacks

The Mongols made some feeble attempts to plunder India even after Alauddin Khalji's reign. One such attempt was made during the reign of Sultan Ghiyasuddin Tughluq in 1324 CE. However, they were badly defeated by the Sultan and many of their leaders were brought to Delhi as captives and then put to death.

The Mongols attacked only once during the reign of Sultan Muhammad-bin-Tughluq. The Chaghatai Chief, Alauddin Tarmashirin of Transoxiana attacked India in 1327 CE at the head of a powerful army. Dr. M. Hussain believes that Tarmashirin was defeated by Amir Ghoban near Ghazni in 1328 CE and therefore, came to India as a refugee. Muhammad gave him five thousand dinars by way of help and then Tarmashirin returned. But this argument of Dr. Hussain has not been accepted by the majority of modern historians. They all agree that the Mongols came as aggressors and ravaged the country from Multan and Lahore to the vicinity of Delhi. However, these historians also differ as to how Muhammad dealt with them. According to Isami, the Mongols were defeated by Sultan's army near Meerut and forced to retreat. Sir Wolseley Haig also accepted this version. Firishta differed with Isami and opines that the Sultan gave the Mongols huge presents and, thus, bribed them to turn back. Dr. A.L Srivastava and Dr Iswari Prasad have supported the viewpoint of Firishta. Considering the fact that the Mongols could reach the vicinity of Delhi without any resistance and turned back without fighting a battle, their contention seems to be more correct. It showed the weakness of the Sultan and also his neglect towards the defense of his North-West frontier. However, he took preventive measures to safeguard his North-West frontier after the return of the Mongols. According to Isami the Sultan occupied Peshawar and Kalanaur in Punjab and made arrangement for their defense.

Later, during the second half of the 14th century, the Sultanate of Delhi remained free from the Mongol menace. The Mongols in Central Asia embraced Islam. Amir Timur also broke up the remaining power of the Mongols in Central Asia, Afghanistan and other regions and succeeded in establishing a powerful empire with its capital at Samarqand. Therefore, there existed no Mongol chief to attack India.

8.3.4 Causes of the Failure of Mongol Invasions

The Mongols proved to be unsuccessful in capturing permanently even a part of the territory of the Delhi Sultanate. Their only success was in the North-West region of India and that too mostly remained confined to plunder. A number of factors were responsible for the failure of Mongol invasions in India. Chengiz Khan, the founder of the Mongol empire and the ablest Mongolian chief, did not attack India. He returned from the banks of the river Indus on his own otherwise he could destroy the Delhi Sultanate with one single powerful stroke. After the death of Chengiz Khan the Mongol chiefs in Central Asia revolted against their chiefs in China and carved out independent kingdoms for themselves. It weakened the power of the Mongols. The attacks of the Mongols in India were not carried out by their great Khans of Mongolia and China but by the Il-Khans of Persia or the Chaghatais of Transoxiana who were weak and had fewer resources. Besides, both these ruling dynasties were competing each other for power which further reduced their strength and did not leave anyone of them capable enough to gain success in a distant place like India. Thus, the Mongols had lost their mobility and fighting vigor. They had also started bringing their families with them to the battlefield which must have also adversely affected their fighting strength. Besides, the severest attacks of the Mongols occurred in India under the rule of most capable military commander organizer of the army at Delhi, viz., Alauddin Khalji. Undoubtedly, Alauddin Khalji

and his powerful permanent standing army were responsible for the failure of Mongol invasions against India.

8.3.5 Effects of Mongol Invasions

The Mongol invasions of India had sweeping effects. It affected the domestic and foreign policy of the Delhi Sultans. Some portions of Indian Territory were temporarily lost by the Delhi Sultans. The political frontiers of India receded from the base of the Hindukush to the banks of the river Ravi or Beas in the North and the lower course of the river Indus in the South. Most of Sind and the region between the Ravi and the Indus were under the control of the Mongols. The Mongol invasions also impeded the process of expansion and consolidation of the Delhi Sultanate. The danger from Mongol invasions did not leave the Sultans any time to conquer other parts of India. The rulers of Malwa and Rajputana continued to challenge the Sultans of Delhi. Hindu resistance in the Doab could not be successfully liquidated in spite of many efforts.

Another effect of Mongol invasions was the weakening of the central authority. The Delhi Sultans had to depend upon the nobles to fight against the Mongols and as a result they could not afford to take action against them. The Sultans were aware that their very existence may be threatened if they decided to take action against those who alone could be expected to support them. Although it was realized that the Iqtadari system resulted in strengthening the hands of the nobles, yet it was not abolished due to fear of opposition from the nobles. The Sultans were forced to give adequate power to their commanders who were appointed to guard the frontiers against the Mongols. It is noteworthy that the two dynasties of the Delhi Sultanate, viz., Khalji and Tughlaq, were founded by military officials who were Wardens of the Western Marches. As the nobles were very strong, the authority of the Central Government was bound to be weak.

The Mongol invasions also affected the administrative set up of the Delhi Sultans. The threat of the Mongols was always there. All the efforts of the Sultans were to protect their kingdom from their attacks. It is not surprising that the administrative set up of the Sultans was to be such which could bear the Mongol's threat. Consequently, the military aspect of the administration was given foremost attention and its civil aspect was practically neglected. The administration of Sultans retained the form of military occupation rather than that of a settled Government. Before Alauddin Khalji introduced his land-revenue system, there was no revenue organization worth the name. The task of collecting revenue was left to the free will of the individual officers who either used local agencies like the village headmen or resorted to punitive measures. As the Delhi Sultans faced a continued military emergency, they were not able to devote themselves to the problem of civil administration whose success alone could ensure the welfare of the people.

The Mongol invasions had very unhappy consequences in the economic field too. The Mongols isolated India from the rest of Central Asia. They obstructed the traditional overland trade routes. A lot of money had to be collected to fight against the Mongols and that could be had by more and more taxes on the people. This must have affected adversely the conditions of the people. The market reforms of Alauddin Khalji imposed an additional burden on the peasantry as they were compelled to sell their commodities at a very low cost.

However, the Mongol invasion also benefitted India. The Mongols conquered Afghanistan and Iran and thereby isolating the Sultans of Delhi from the rest of the Muslim world. As a consequence, the Sultans of Delhi could not depend on any help from the Muslims in other parts of the world. As a result, they were forced to think in terms of India alone. They did not treat their Indian possessions as colonies. They were compelled to make India their homeland and ultimately they absorbed and adopted the Indian traditions. Their political and cultural outlook and also their institutions became more and more Indianised.

Thus, the Mongol invasions contributed to the slow but gradual process of Indianisation of the alien Muslim conquerors of India. Another advantage which India derived from the Mongol invasions was that art and culture developed under the Sultans of Delhi. The Mongols had destroyed all the important centres of Islamic culture and learning. Delhi was the only place that could give refuge to all those who wanted scope for the development of their talents. As a result many saints, scholars, artists and artisans, famous for their achievements in varied fields, flocked to Delhi and Delhi became one of the largest cities of the world. Ziauddin Barani has rightly pointed out that Delhi became the equal of Baghdad and the rival of Cairo and Constantinople.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 What does the term Central Asia denote?
- Q.2 What was the most outstanding asset of nomadic society?
- Q.3 Who founded the Mongol Empire?
- Q.4 Where did the Mongols resided before rising to the world dominion?
- Q.5 Who built the Mongols into an incredible striking force?
- Q.6 Who was the ruler of India at the time of the invasion of Chengiz Khan?
- Q.7 Who was Jalauddin Mangbarni?
- Q.8 Which Sultan of Delhi recovered Multan, Sindh and Lahore from the hands of the Mongols?
- Q.9 Which ruler of Delhi Sultanate was killed by the Mongols?
- Q.10 When did the first and the only Mongol invasion occur during the reign of Jalaluddin Khalji?
- Q.11 Which Delhi Sultan defeated Mongols?
- Q.12 Who were New Musalmans?

8.4 Summary

- "Central Asia" is a loose geographical term that denotes the huge and varied territory bounded in the South by a vast chain of mountains of which the Himalayas form a part.
- The region of Central Asia is an extraordinary mosaic of mountains, deserts, oases, steppes and river valleys.
- Central Asia was also composed of distinct micro-regions or territorial UNITS that owe their identity to a peculiar mix of geography and history.
- The Mongols descended from the mass of nomads who roamed in the area of the Altai Mountains, South of Lake Baikal-regions that are now part of Outer Mongolia.

- Search for grazing lands kept the nomads constantly on the move with their flocks and herds. Horse was their most outstanding asset.
- The Mongols invaded Asia and Europe in the early decades of the 13th century.
- Chengiz Khan built the Mongols into an incredible striking force. He was born of a powerful Mongol chief and was also known as Chingiz or Chengiz Khan or Temuchin as he was originally called.
- After the Mongols were consolidated internally, they burst out of the confines of Mongolia. They were able to complete the annexation of Transoxiana and Khurasan in only three years from 1219 to 1222 CE.
- Chengiz Khan died in 1225 CE. By that time entire Northern China had been annexed.
- During the period of Delhi Sultanate, the Mongols launched a number of invasions on India from 1221 CE to 1327 CE.
- The infant Turkish kingdom in India was saved from the wrath of the Mongols by the diplomacy of Iltutmish. Raziya Sultan also followed the policy of not annoying the Mongols like her father.
- When Balban became the Sultan of Delhi, he took some effective steps against the Mongols. He recovered Multan, Sindh and Lahore from the hands of the Mongols.
- Mongol attacks during the period of rule of the Mameluk Sultans failed in affecting the fortunes of the Delhi Sultanate adversely.
- The first and the only Mongol invasion during the reign of Jalaluddin Khalji occurred in 1292 CE.
- The Mongols threatened the security of India during the reign of Alauddin Khalji. His reign witnessed most fierce invasions of the Mongols. Yet, he succeeded in repulsing them all.
- The Mongols made some feeble attempts to plunder India even after Alauddin Khalji's reign.
- The Mongols made some feeble attempts to plunder India even after Alauddin Khalji's reign.
- The Mongols proved to be unsuccessful in capturing permanently even a part of the territory of the Delhi Sultanate. Their only success was in the North-West region of India and that too mostly remained confined to plunder.
- A number of factors were responsible for the failure of Mongol invasions on India. Alauddin Khalji and his powerful permanent standing army was responsible for the failure of Mongol invasions against India.
- The Mongol invasions of India had sweeping effects. It affected the domestic and foreign policy of the Delhi Sultans.

8.5 Glossary

Kurultai: An assembly of nomad chiefs.

Landlocked region: A geographical region which has no access to the sea.

Nomad: Groups of people who do not have a settled habitation.

Oases: Fertile islands of cultivation surrounded by desert.

Steppes: A large area of land with grass but few trees.

Transoxiana: Land beyond the river Oxus.

8.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

Ans.1 It is a loose geographical term that denotes the huge and varied territory bounded in the South by a vast chain of mountains of which the Himalayas form a part.

Ans.2 Horse

Ans.3 Chengiz Khan

Ans.4 They resided in the steppe region North of China and East of Lake Baikal.

Ans.5 Chengiz Khan

Ans.6 Iluttmish

Ans.7 Jalaluddin Mangbarani was the son of the Shah of Khwarizm. While escaping from the Mongols he sought shelter from Iluttmish which he declined.

Ans.8 Balban

Ans.9 Prince Muhammad Khan, the son of Balban, died in a battle against the Mongols in 1285 CE.

Ans.10 1292 CE

Ans.11 Alauddin Khalji

Ans.12 Ulghu Khan, a descendant of Chengiz Khan and many of his supporters embraced Islam, came to be known as New Musalmans.

8.7 Suggested Readings

1. Hugh Kennedy, 2002, "*Mongols, Huns & Vikings*", London: Cassell.
2. Kaushik Roy, 2003, "*Warfare in Pre-British India-1500 BCE to 1740CE*", Routledge.
3. René Grousset, 1970, "*The Empire of the Steppes: A History of Central Asia*", Rutgers University Press.
4. R.P Lister, 2000, "*Genghis Khan*", Lanham, Maryland: Cooper Square Press.
5. Stanley Stewart, 2001, "*In the Empire of Genghis Khan: A Journey among Nomads*", London, England: Harper Collins.
6. Stephen Turnbull, 2003, "*Genghis Khan & the Mongol Conquests 1190–1400*", Oxford, England: Osprey Publishing.

8.8 Terminal Questions

1. Give the main geographical features of Central Asia.
2. Name some of the micro-regions of Central Asia giving their geographical extent.
3. Write in brief the main features of nomadic life of the people in Central Asia.
4. How Chengiz Khan rose to power?
5. Discuss the North-Western Frontier policy of the Sultans of Delhi.
6. What measures were taken by the rulers of Delhi Sultanate to check the invasions of the Mongols and how far they were successful?
7. Describe the Mongol problem under Alauddin Khalji.
8. What were the causes of the failure of Mongol invasions on India?
9. Analyze the impact of the invasions of Mongols on India.

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UNIT-9

DECCAN POLICY OF ALAUDDIN KHAJI AND MUHAMMAD-BIN-TUGHLAQ

Structure

- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Objectives
- 9.3 Deccan Policy of Alauddin Khalji
 - 9.3.1 Conquest of Devagiri
 - 9.3.2 Conquest Telangana
 - 9.3.3 Conquest of Hoysala Kingdom
 - 9.3.4 Conquest of the Pandya Kingdom
 - 9.3.5 The Second Attack on Devagiri
 - 9.3.6 Nature of Alauddin Khalji's Deccan Policy
 - 9.3.7 Effects of Alauddin Khalji's Deccan Policy
 - 9.3.8 Causes of Success of Malik Kafur in the South

Self-Check Exercise-1

- 9.4 Deccan Policy of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq
 - 9.4.1 Siege of Warangal
 - 9.4.2 Rebellion in Mabbar

Self-Check Exercise-2

- 9.5 Summary
- 9.6 Glossary
- 9.7 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 9.8 Suggested Readings
- 9.9 Terminal Questions

9.1 Introduction

By 1307 CE, the tide of Mongol aggression had been fully checked and almost the entire Northern India had been conquered. There were great military achievements but Sultan Alauddin

Khalji was still keen to expand his empire further. Therefore, he directed his attention toward the conquest of Deccan. There must have been both political and economic motives behind the campaigns of Alauddin and his lieutenants in the South. Alauddin followed the policy of non-annexation in the South

Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq's father Ghiyasuddin had annexed Telangana and a large part of the Malabar Coast (Pandyan Kingdom). Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq made fresh annexations in the South. He conquered a greater part of South India and annexed it to the Delhi Sultanate.

9.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Analyze the Deccan policy of Alauddin Khalji,
- Examine the Deccan policy of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq.

9.3 Deccan Policy of Alauddin Khalji

After some years in the beginning of the 14th century CE, Alauddin Khalji was free from the fear of Mongol attacks, had conquered the North, brought peace to his empire and possessed a large and strong army. He, then, decided to conquer South India. At that time, there were four prosperous and strong states in the South. In the South-West of Vindhya was the kingdom of Devagiri which was ruled by the Yadava king Ramchandra Deva and its capital was Devagiri (modern Maharashtra). Towards the South-East was the Kakatiya kingdom of Telangana. It was ruled by Prataprudra Deva II who had his headquarters at Warangal. Towards the South-West of Telangana was the Hoysala kingdom. Its ruler was Vir Ballala III and its capital was Dwarasamudra. In the far south was the Pandya kingdom. Its capital was Madura. At the time of Muslim invasion, the two brothers Sundara Pandya and Vira Pandya were contesting against each other for the throne.

Dr. K.S. Lal has opined that the desire for glory and wealth which had always been the source of inspiration for all the conquerors also inspired Alauddin Khalji to attack the states of the Deccan one after another. However, his primary aim was to acquire the wealth of the Deccan by every means. However, the majority of historians have expressed that there were two-fold objectives of Alauddin in attacking the kingdoms of the South. The South was not plundered until now by the Muslim invaders and therefore, possessed enormous wealth. Regarding the Pandya kingdom of the Deccan, Marco Polo wrote thus: "When a king dies nobody dares to take anything out of his treasury and they believe that as our father collected wealth we should collect it the same way. Therefore, the wealth of the state treasury has increased and enormous wealth has accumulated there." Alauddin Khalji had plundered Devagiri once before he became the Sultan and therefore, had some idea of the accumulated wealth of South India. Therefore, one of his aims was to plunder the wealth of South. His other aim was to compel its rulers to accept his suzerainty and get annual tribute from them which would be a regular source of wealth for him and would also increase his prestige in India. Dr. U.N. Dey has highlighted his second aim. He writes: "Alauddin was following a calculated policy of reducing the kingdoms of the Deccan and the South as tributary states which would accept his suzerainty, pay annual tribute and act in all manners as his subordinates." Apart from that Alauddin Khalji was a practical statesman. He was aware that it was difficult or rather impossible to keep the South under his direct rule for long. Therefore, he never desired to annex the South within his empire. On the contrary, he tried to keep good relations with those rulers of the South who accepted his suzerainty and agreed to pay annual tribute. Ramachandra Deva and Vir Ballala visited Delhi a number of times and the Sultan treated them well. Dr. S. Roy writes: "What

he aspired to in the South was not the annexation of new territory, but huge tribute from the Hindu kings with a mere acknowledgment of his overlordship.” He sent his army to the South many times to achieve this objective. Malik Kafur who was purchased as a slave during the victory of Gujrat served him well in this purpose. The credit of subduing the South actually went to him.

The first attack on Telangana in 1303 CE failed miserably. Prataprudra Deva forced the Muslim army which was sent to attack Telangana under Fakhruddin Juna and Malik Chhajju to retreat in disorder. After that Alauddin failed to pay any attention onwards the South for some years.

9.3.1 Conquest of Devagiri

Alauddin’s extensive economic reforms and maintenance of a large permanent standing army and bureaucracy had increased the demand for gold and silver. Thus, the desire to secure the precious metals from the South, therefore, became a dire necessity to replenish the state exchequer and lubricate the war machine. Devagiri to Alauddin was a gateway to the treasure-trove of the legendary ‘fort thieves’ and the Sultan was keen to possess it by playing the role of *Ali Baba*. To all these factors were added a couple of plausible excuses, Ramchandra Deva, the ruler of Devagiri had failed to remit the tribute to Alauddin Khalji as per the terms of the agreement made in 1296 CE. It was believed that his son, Shankar Deva, was responsible for this non-payment. Alauddin was not prepared to tolerate the loss of yearly revenue. Besides this, Raja Karan Deva of Gujarat had found shelter with Ramchandra Deva of Devagiri and was made the independent ruler of Baglan region. His daughter Deval Devi was with him. Kamla Devi, now the *Malika-i-Jahan* of Alauddin Khalji, desired that her only living daughter Deval Devi be brought to Delhi. Alauddin assigned this task to his *naib* Malik Kafur.

Malik Kafur led an attack on Devagiri in 1308 CE with 30,000 soldiers. He was assisted by Ainul Mulk and Alp Khan, the governors of Malwa and Gujrat respectively. Raja Karna Deva was defeated and turned out of Ellichpur. His daughter Deval Devi fell into the hands of Alp Khan’s soldiers. She was taken to Delhi and married to Prince Khizr Khan, the eldest son of Alauddin after a few years.

Malik Kafur reached Devagiri and defeated Ramchandra Deva in a battle. Shankar Deva fled away while Ramchandra Deva sued for peace. Kafur got a large booty in elephants and treasures and carried Ramchandra Deva with his to Delhi. Alauddin Khalji accorded him exceptionally generous treatment and gave him the title of *Rai Rayan* (king of kings). He was allowed to return to his capital and was assigned the principality of Navsari. Ramchandra Deva became a feudatory friend of Alauddin and later on he helped Mailk Kafur in his conquest of the South. Dr. S. Roy writes: "Indeed Devagiri served the base for Khalji militant operations in the Deccan and the Far South."

9.3.2 Conquest of Telangana

Alauddin Khalji had not forgotten the failure and disgrace of his earlier attack on Telangana. He decided to avenge his defeat and sent Malik Kafur to attack Telangana in November 1309 CE. The imperial army under Malik Kafur marched through Devagiri. Ramchandra Deva rendered every type of assistance to it. Malik Kafur then proceeded towards Telangana. He conquered Sirbar on the way and reached the capital city, Warangal in January 1310 CE. The capital was well defended by two round walls, the outer one being that of earth and the inner one that of stone, and also by two moats filled with water between the two walls. However, Prataprudra Deva could not defend himself for long and sued for peace. He accepted the suzerainty of Alauddin, agreed to pay annual tribute and gave 100 elephants, 7000 horses and the immense treasure of gold, silver and jewels of

incalculable value; it included the famous diamond **Koh-i-Noor**, ‘unparalleled in the whole world’ . Kafur agreed to the terms and returned to Delhi on June 11, 1310 CE laden with enormous booty.

9.3.3 Conquest of Hoysala Kingdom

Flushed with the joy of an easy victory at Warangal, Alauddin Khalji became impatient to spread his imperial sway over the entire South India without much loss of time. In November 1310 CE, Alauddin directed Malik Kafur to attack the far South in. More enthusiastic than his master, Kafur reached Devagiri in February 1311 CE, where he again received all the facilities for his forward march from Ramchandra Deva. Kafur then proceeded towards Dwarasamudra, the capital of Hoysala kingdom. At that time, King Vir Ballala III had gone to attack the Pandya kingdom. Realizing the danger to his capital, Vir Ballala returned at once. Vir Pandya also send him army as well to support him. However, Vir Ballala agreed for peace after some combats. He accepted Alauddin’s suzerainty, agreed to pay annual tribute and gave elephants, horses and all his wealth to Kafur. He personally met Kafur and promised to guide him in his attack on Pandya kingdom.

9.3.4 Conquest of the Pandya Kingdom

After the death of Kulashekhara, the Pandya ruler of Madura, there was a fratricidal war between the two Pandya princes Sundara Pandya and Vira Pandya in the far South. Sundara Pandya was defeated by his brother. He fled away and sought help in getting the throne either from Alauddin or Malik Kafur. However, Dr. B.P. Saxena, has denied this fact. He maintains that Kafur struck against both brothers. Kafur proceeded towards Madura, the Pandya capital. Vira Pandya fled away and Kafur thoroughly sacked it. Kafur pursued Vira Pandya to several places but failed to capture him. According to Amir Khusrau, Kafur went as far as Rameshwaram, destroyed its famous temple and raised a mosque in its place in honor of the victory of Islam. However, Isami and Barani are silent about it. In October 1311 CE, Malik Kafur returned to Delhi with enormous booty which he had amassed both from the Pandya and the Hoysala kingdom. Vira Ballala also accompanied him to Delhi where he was kindly received by Alauddin and was allowed to return to his kingdom.

9.3.5 The second attack on Devagiri

Ramchandra Deva died in 1312 CE and was succeeded by his eldest son Shankara Deva. He stopped the payment of annual tribute to Delhi and tended to behave as an independent ruler. Prataprudra Deva, the ruler of Telangana also requested Alauddin to send his representative to the South to collect the annual tribute. *Malika-i-Jahan*, wife of Alauddin and her brother Alp Khan were intriguing against Malik Kafur at Delhi and therefore, Kafur himself desired to proceed to Deccan. Consequently, Alauddin sent Kafur again to attack Devagiri in 1313 CE. Kafur defeated and killed Shankar Deva in the battle. Devagiri was now annexed to the Delhi Sultanate. Alauddin recalled Kafur to Delhi in 1315 CE.

Alauddin's Southern conquest was neither complete nor permanent. The kingdom of Devagiri and Hoysala certainly remained loyal to him but the attitude of Prataprudra Deva never remained above suspicion while Vira Pandya never accepted his suzerainty. The Hindus in the South were certainly defeated but not completely routed and always tried to free themselves from the yoke of Delhi.

Yet, Alauddin's policy towards the South succeeded. He succeeded in fulfilling his objectives. Alauddin was the first Sultan of Delhi who dared to attack South India and succeeded. All states of the South were humbled and except one, all were compelled to accept his suzerainty and pay annual tribute to him. Though the Hindus offered stiff resistance to Muslims at several

places, the Muslims were ultimately successful. It proved that the Muslims were superior to the Hindus in warfare and their leader Malik Kafur was certainly a most capable general. Yassaf wrote: "This brilliant achievement of Kafur in the Deccan eclipsed the victories of Mahmud of Ghazni in Hindustan." Besides Kafur took enormous booty from the South and, thus, fulfilled Alauddin's objective of accumulating wealth of South.

9.3.6 Nature of Alauddin Khalji's Deccan Policy

Alauddin Khalji's Deccan policy proved to be very successful. His imperialism had two facets. In Northern India, he resorted to the annexation of territories and establishment of direct civil administration. On the other hand, he thoroughly exploited the South for procuring its fabulous wealth and was contented by the acceptance of suzerainty of the Hindu rulers. He, thus, avoided responsibility for the direct civil administration of the distant territories, nor did he come into clash with the people in general, who were left to deal with their own regional rulers, good or bad. In those days, the means of communication and transport were very poor; therefore, outright annexation of the far-flung lands might have created untold difficulties for the imperial government or led to rebellions or disaffection among the people at large. Alauddin Khalji saved himself from all these dangers. For the purpose of receiving regular tribute and maintaining his hold over the local rulers, he treated them with courtesy and generosity. Ramachandra Deva was so completely won over that he became his loyal agent in the Deccan and helped him in his further conquest of the South. The Sultan similarly won the confidence of Vir Ballala III by showering gifts and honors on him.

9.3.7 Effects of Alauddin Khalji's Deccan Policy

Regarding effects of Alauddin Khalji's Deccan policy, it has been expressed that it aided the growth of Muslim culture there as a large number of people accepted Islam as their religion. The opinion is correct to much extent. But another opinion has also been forwarded concerning it. It has also been said that it created a reaction against the Muslims and Islam among the Hindus of the Deccan. Referring to it, Dr. R.C Majumdar writes: "They (the Hindus), at that time, had no other alternative except to surrender before the mighty power of the invader but resentment was deeply entrenched in their hearts which, finally, found its political expression in the form of establishment of the Vijayanagara empire."

9.3.8 Causes of Success of Malik Kafur in the South

The causes of the success of Malik Kafur against the Southern Hindu states were similar to the causes of the success of the Turks in the North India. At that time there were four powerful states in the South and each of them was fighting against each other for power and glory. There is only one instance of mutual help among them viz., when Vira Pandya sent military help to Vira Ballala. Instead of UNITing against a common enemy, they helped him against each other. When Alauddin had attacked Devagiri in 1296 CE, prince Shankar Deva had gone to fight against the Hoysala kingdom with the major part of the army of Devagiri state; when Kafur attacked the Hoysala kingdom, Vira Ballala had gone to attack the Pandya state, and, when Kafur attacked the Pandya state, he was supported by Sundar Pandya against his brother Vira Pandya. Similarly, Ramachandra Deva of Devagiri supported Kafur against both the Telangana and the Hoysala states and the Hoysala ruler, Vira Ballala helped Kafur against Vira Pandya, ruler of Pandya state. Thus, the Southern states had learnt nothing from the destruction of the Rajput states of North India. They rather repeated the follies of the Rajput rulers of the North. They failed to realize the consequences of the Muslim conquest of India. They failed to keep a good spy-system, failed to organize proper

defense of the frontiers, and failed to improve their arms and military tactics. They simply fought defensive battles from inside their forts and left the fate of their kingdom and its people on one decisive battle. Except Vira Pandya, rulers such as Ramchandra Deva, Prataprudra Deva and Vira Ballala were taken by surprise by Kafur and they prepared themselves for battle when the enemy had reached at the gates of their capital. The lure of wealth and the emotional UNITY and social equality provided by Islam were also significant factors for the success of the Muslims. Apart from this, Alauddin Khalji's efficient army and the capability of Malik Kafur as a military commander were certainly, responsible for the success of the Muslims. Undoubtedly, the army which had successfully repulsed the invasions of the Mongols was very much superior in arms, organization, experience and military tactics than the armies of rulers of the South. Expressing his views on Alauddin Khalji's army, Dr. K.S. Lal has remarked: "The mobility of his cavalry was staggering; it had almost annihilated the distance between Delhi and Devagiri." Besides, Malik Kafur proved to be the most capable general of his age and the credit for the conquest of the South mostly goes to him.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 Which Sultan of Delhi invaded Deccan for the first time?
- Q.2 Who was the ruler of Devagiri at the time of Alauddin Khalji's invasion?
- Q.3 When Alauddin Khalji did invaded Devagiri?
- Q.4 Under whose command did Alauddin Khalji send his army to attack Devagiri?
- Q.5 What was the title given to Ramchandra Deva by Alauddin Khalji?
- Q.6 When Malik Kafur did attack Telangana?
- Q.7 Who was the ruler of Telangana at the time of the invasion of Alauddin Khalji?
- Q.8 In which conquest Alauddin Khalji acquire the famous Koh-i-Noor?
- Q.9 Name the capital of the Hoysala kingdom.
- Q.10 When did Malik Kafur invade Pandyan Kingdom?

9.4 Deccan Policy of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq

The regions of the Deccan which were conquered by the Khaljis had stopped paying tribute and were proclaiming independent status.

9.4.1 Siege of Warangal

In 1323 CE, the Delhi Sultanate ruler Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq sent an army led by his son Jauna Khan, now entitled Ulugh Khan (later Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq) to the Kakatiya capital Warangal, after the Kakatiya ruler Prataparudra refused to make tribute payments and repudiated his vassalage to the Sultan. Ulugh Khan's first siege of Warangal proved to be unsuccessful because of a rebellion resulting from a false rumor about Ghiyasuddin's death in Delhi. The Muslim chroniclers blame a man named Ubaid for this failure, although their accounts vary about the exact cause. According to Isami (1349 CE), Ulugh Khan plundered the Kakatiya territory on his way to Warangal. He besieged the fort of Warangal for six months, but could not breach it. When Ghiyasuddin expressed his annoyance at the siege operations in letters from Delhi, Ulugh Khan consulted his astrologer Ubaid. The astrologer predicted that the

fort would fall on a specific day, and offered to be executed if his prediction failed. However, the defenders did not show any sign of submission on that day, and therefore, Ubaid formulated a plan to save himself. He spread a false rumour of the death of Sultan Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq in Delhi, and that Khalji sympathisers had revolted in Delhi. He also told the soldiers that Ulugh Khan had decided to kill the chief amirs of the Delhi army in Warangal, because he suspected them of being Khalji sympathisers. This created a panic in the camp, and a Unit of the army rebelled and withdrew from Warangal.

According to Ziauddin Barani, at one point, Ulugh Khan was on the verge of victory, and Prataparudra offered to negotiate a truce. However, Ulugh Khan refused the offer, as he was determined to annex Warangal. Meanwhile, the postal system connecting Ulugh Khan's army to Delhi broke down. Amid this confusion, Ulugh Khan's associates Ubaid and Shaikhzada of Damascus spread the false rumour. The rest of Barani's account is similar to that of Isami.

According to the Moroccan traveller Ibn Battuta, it was Ulugh Khan who asked Ubaid to spread the false rumour, because he wanted to seize the throne of Delhi from his father. He had hoped that the army chiefs would support him after learning about Ghiyasuddin's death. However, this plan backfired, when the army chiefs rebelled and planned to kill him instead. He managed to escape to Delhi with help from the loyal chief Malik Timur. Once in Delhi, Ulugh Khan falsely accused Ubaid and other amirs of the conspiracy. Ghiyasuddin accepted these allegations and punished the amirs. The genuineness of Ibn Battuta's account is doubtful, because it contradicts the Indian chronicles, and because he wrote it from memory several years later, after returning to Morocco.

Thus, it is accepted that Ulugh Khan's first attack on Warangal proved to be a failure. Taking advantage of the situation, the Kakatiya army stormed the invaders' camp, and plundered it. Ulugh Khan had to flee, and the Kakatiya army pursued him till Kotagiri, where Abu Riza rescued him. He ultimately retreated to Devagiri.

Prataparudra Deva's victory made him complacent. He believed that he had achieved a decisive victory, and that the Delhi army would not return to Warangal. He organized a feast to celebrate his victory, and exhausted the fort's granary. He also allowed his soldiers to take leave from the military service, and return to agriculture and farming.

When Ghiyasuddin came to know about the failure of the siege, he severely punished the rebels. He then sent reinforcements to Devagiri, and instructed Ulugh Khan to launch a fresh attack on Warangal. Within four months of his retreat, Ulugh Khan marched to Telangana again, this time capturing enemy forts on the way to Warangal to ensure a regular flow of news from Delhi. The prince captured Bidar. Then, he marched to Bodhan, and captured it after a 3-4 day siege. The defending governor and his companions embraced Islam to save their lives.

Subsequently, Ulugh Khan marched to Warangal, where he first besieged and captured the outer mud fort, and then surrounded the inner citadel. The siege lasted for five months. The shortage of provisions in the fort may have compelled Prataparudra Deva to surrender. After he opened the gates of the fort, the invaders ransacked and plundered the houses and destroyed the public buildings. The famous Swayambhudeva Temple was demolished after plundering of its wealth and valuables. He then enslaved many people who would later serve in both Delhi and Warangal for the Sultan and well as his governors and nobles.

Ulugh Khan sent Prataparudra Deva and his family members to Delhi, accompanied by a contingent led by his lieutenants Qadir Khan and Khawaja Haji. Prataparudra Deva seems to have committed suicide on the banks of the Narmada River en route to Delhi. The capital city of Warangal was named Sultanpur and annexed to the Delhi Sultanate under direct imperial administration.

9.4.2 Rebellion in Mabbar

During the reign of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq, there was a serious rebellion in Mabbar (modern Coromandal in Tamilnadu) in 1334-35 CE. The Sultan marched to the South to suppress the rebellion. While he was encamped at Bidar, there was an outbreak of bubonic plague in which took a heavy toll of the soldiers. Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq himself was taken ill, and retreated to Devagiri (Daultabad). Rumors spread of the Sultan's death, and soon the entire South, including Mabbar, Dwarsamudra, and Warangal were lost to the Delhi Sultanate. Thus, the purpose of keeping Daultabad as a second capital disappeared. It was around this time, i.e. between 1335-37 CE, that the Sultan permitted the people at Daultabad to return to Delhi.

Thus, the Mabbar rebellion constitutes a watershed in the history of the Delhi Sultanate. It indicates the decline and slow disintegration of the mighty Turkish Empire of the early medieval India.

Analysis of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq's Deccan Policy

Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq ruled from 1325 to 1351 CE. He was familiar with the problems of the South and in order to deal with them, he ordered for the shifting of capital, but unfortunately, his project failed which affected his powers and prestige adversely. The Sultan was not able to establish his control over the Southern provinces due to long distances and the Hindu rulers of the South made a union of their own in order to defeat the Muslim Sultan.

The *Amiran-i-Sadah* of the South also revolted against the Sultan. Despite his best efforts the Sultan could not achieve success against the rebels of the South. Consequently, confusion and corruption went on increasing in the South. It also affected the realization of taxes adversely and weakened the administration of Delhi Sultanate. Hence, one by one the kingdoms of the South started becoming independent. The most prominent among them were the kingdoms of Vijaynagar and Bahmani. In fact, his Deccan policy proved very harmful and it also gave rise to revolts in the North.

Self-Check Exercise-2

- Q.1 When Ulugh Khan did attacked Warangal?
- Q.2 Which rebellion constitutes a watershed in the history of Delhi Sultanate?

9.5 Summary

- After Alauddin Khalji had conquered the North India and was free from the fear of Mongol attacks, he decided to conquer South India.
- Devagiri, Telangana, Hoysala and Pandya were the four prosperous and powerful state of the South.
- Alauddin's primary aim was to acquire the wealth of South India.
- The first attack of Alauddin on Telangana in 1303 CE failed miserably.

- In November 1309 CE, Alauddin sent Malik Kafur to attack Telangana which at that time was ruled by Prataprudra Deva. Kafur was successful and returned to Delhi with enormous booty.
- In 1311 CE, Malik Kafur was sent by Alauddin Khalji to attack the Hoysala kingdom ruled by Vir Ballala III who was defeated by Kafur.
- Malik Kafur also conquered the Pandyan Kingdom. He again attacked Devagiri in 1313CE as its ruler Shankara Deva refused to pay the annual tribute to Delhi and declared himself independent. Kafur defeated Shankara Deva and annexed Devagiri to Delhi Sultanate.
- Alauddin Khalji was the first Sultan of Delhi who dared to attack South India and succeeded.
- Alauddin Khalji thoroughly exploited the South for procuring its fabulous wealth and was contended by the acceptance of suzerainty of the Hindu rulers.
- He did not annex the conquered kingdoms of the South as he thought that administration of far-flung areas would be unmanageable due poor means of transportation and communication in those days.
- Ala-ud-din's Deccan policy never led to a permanent subservience of the Deccan Kingdoms.
- Some scholars believe that Alauddin's Deccan Policy aided the growth of Muslim culture there as a large number of people accepted Islam as their religion. However, it has also been said that it created a reaction against the Muslims and Islam among the Hindus of the Deccan.
- The causes of the success of Malik Kafur against the Southern Hindu states were similar to the causes of the success of the Turks in the North India.
- During the reign of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq, there was a serious rebellion in Mabhar (modern Coromandal in Tamilnadu) in 1334-35 CE. It indicated the decline and slow disintegration of the mighty Turkish Empire of the early medieval India.
- One by one the kingdoms of the South started becoming independent. The most prominent among them were the kingdoms of Vijaynagar and Bahmani.

9.6 Glossary

Amir: Commander, the third highest official grade.

Amiran-i-Sadah: Administrative heads of hundred villages.

Booty: Things that are taken by thieves or captured by soldiers in a war.

Koh-i-Noor: Something that is or is felt to be the best of its kind especially, a large and valuable diamond.

Naib: Deputy or representative authority.

9.7 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

Ans.1 Alauddin Khalji

- Ans.2 Yadava King, Ramchandra Deva
 Ans.3 1308 CE
 Ans.4 Malik Kafur
 Ans.5 *Rai Rayan*
 Ans.6 1309 CE
 Ans.7 Prataprudra Deva
 Ans.8 Conquest of Telangana
 Ans.9 Dwarasamudra
 Ans.10 1311 CE

Self-Check Exercise-2

- Ans.1 1323 CE
 Ans.2 Mabar rebellion

9.8 Suggested Readings

1. Farooqui Salma Ahmed, 2011, “*A Comprehensive History of Medieval India: Twelfth to the Mid-Eighteenth Century*”, Pearson Education India.
2. Mohammad Habib, 1981, “*Politics and Society During the Early Medieval Period*”, People's Publishing House.
3. R. C. Majumdar, 1960, “*The History and Culture of the Indian People: The Delhi Sultanate*” Vol. VI (Second ed.). Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.
4. Vincent A Smith, 1919, “*The Oxford History of India: From the Earliest Times to the End of 1911*”, at Google Books, Oxford University Press

9.9 Terminal Questions

1. What were the motives behind the Deccan Policy of Sultan Alauddin Khalji?
2. Describe Alauddin Khalji’s conquest of the Deccan.
3. Analyze the nature of Alauddin Khalji’s Deccan Policy.
4. Write a short note on the effects of Alauddin Khalji’s Deccan Policy.
5. What were the causes of the success of Malik Kafur in the South?
6. Discuss the Deccan Policy of Sultan Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq.
7. Critically analyze the Deccan Policy of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq.

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SECTION-II
UNIT-10
THE REGIONAL POWERS

Structure

- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 Objectives
- 10.3 Characteristic Features of Regional States
 - 10.3.1 Kashmir
 - 10.3.2 Malwa
 - 10.3.3 Jaunpur
 - 10.3.4 Rajputana
 - 10.3.5 Gujarat

Self-Check Exercise-1

- 10.4 Summary
- 10.5 Glossary
- 10.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 10.7 Suggested Readings
- 10.8 Terminal Questions

10.1 Introduction

The Delhi Sultanate was transformed into a mighty Indian empire by the conquest of a number of regional kingdoms and feudal estates from 1206 to 1335 CE. However, from 1335 to 1400 CE these regional kingdoms posed a severe threat to the already weakened Delhi Sultanate and with their emergence began the process of the rapid disintegration of the Sultanate. During the 13th-15th centuries, there was the emergence of two types of kingdoms: i) those whose rise and development were independent of the Sultanate such as the kingdoms of Assam, Odisha, and Kashmir; and ii) those who owed their existence to the Sultanate like Bengal, Malwa, Jaunpur and Gujarat. Rajputana and Sindh, though all the time falling prey to the Sultanate and at times even formed part of it were able to retain their regional characteristics. All these kingdoms were usually in perpetual warfare with each other. The nobles, chiefs or rajas and local aristocracy played vital roles in these conflicts. Thus, some of these regional powers were the result of the decline of the Delhi Sultanate while the development of others was independent. Kashmir developed independently of the Sultanate while Gujarat was the outcome of its decline.

10.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Examine the characteristic features of the regional states of Kashmir, Malwa, Jaunpur, Rajputana and Gujarat

10.3 Characteristic Features of Regional States

A few special characteristic features of the 15th century India are noteworthy. A majority of the regional and provincial states were ruled by Muslim monarchs. The Sultanate as an Islamic state had declined but not so the political dominance of Muslims in the Indian subcontinent. Almost all the provinces gave rise to powerful Muslim states. Islam was firmly rooted in Indian soil. Islamic culture was gradually intermingling with the Hindu culture and had become acceptable to Indian society in general.

Many of the 15th century rulers of provincial and regional kingdoms, whether Hindus or Muslims, were enlightened and benevolent monarchs who worked for the welfare and happiness of their subjects and enjoyed their goodwill. They were great patrons of scholars and artists and helped in the socio-cultural, moral and material advancement of society.

It is generally believed that the ‘antipathy’ that existed during the Sultanate period between the Hindu and the Muslim states aggravated the conflicts and clashes during the 13-15th century. Schwartzberg, however, has rightly pointed out, we find more frequent and violent struggles between the Muslim-Muslim and Hindu-Hindu rulers rather than between Hindu-Muslim rulers.

The notable characteristic feature of the 13-15th century polity, was ‘vertical’ penetration rather than the ‘horizontal’ one, i.e. horizontally the area under their control was smaller compared to the Sultanate but within their area of influence they ‘vertically’ penetrated deep into the rural areas. Under the regional rulers, the maximum area lay outside their effective control; even where they exercised a good degree of control, there, too, they often faced some troubles. Based on this, we can divide their domain into three types: i) Where land revenue was extracted from the peasants directly through revenue officials, the state’s influence and control was of a high order. ii) Areas where revenue was collected through local chiefs, and the state’s control was still good enough. iii) Areas where the states were satisfied with the tribute only, here, the degree of control was minimal. This relationship had a direct bearing on the relations of regional rulers with the nobles, tributary chiefs or rajas and local aristocracy (the so-called zamindars, muqaddams, etc.).

10.3.1 Kashmir

The valley of Kashmir did not fall within the sphere of the influence of the Delhi Sultanate. Suhadeva established a united state of Kashmir in 1301 CE yet, he was threatened by foreign enemies. In 1320 CE, he was compelled to leave Kashmir which was occupied by Rinchana, the son of a Western Tibetan chief. Rinchana appointed one Muslim person, Shah Mirza to educate his wife and children. Rinchana was succeeded by Udayana Deva who died in 1338 CE. As his sons were minor, his wife, Kotta looked after the administration. But, by then, Shah Mir had become quite powerful. He imprisoned queen Kotta and her sons in 1339 CE and ascended the throne with the title of *Shamsuddin Shah* and became the first Muslim ruler of Kashmir.

Shamsuddin died after three years and was succeeded by his eldest son Jamshed. However, Jamshed was ousted within some months by his brother Alauddin who ruled for nearly twelve years. After him, his brother Shihabuddin ascended the throne and ruled for nineteen years. Shihabuddin followed a policy of plundering the neighboring states. In the West, he attacked up to Peshawar and, in the South, up to the river Satluj. However, he maintained friendly relations with the ruler of Tibet. He was a tolerant ruler and Kashmir prospered during his reign. After his death, his brother Qutbuddin ascended the throne. Qutbuddin died in 1389 CE, and was succeeded by his infant son, Sikandar Shah (1389-1413 CE). He was the ruler of Kashmir at the time of the invasion of Delhi by Amir Timur. The reign of Sikandar Shah marked a turning point in the history of Kashmir from social and religious point of view. Until now, the Muslim rulers of Kashmir had followed the policy of tolerance towards their Hindu subjects who constituted the majority of the populace. However, Sikandar Shah proved to be a religious bigot. He attempted mass conversion of the Hindus to Islam. He was particularly oppressive to Brahmins. The majority of the Hindus accepted Islam. Amongst the rest, many committed suicide and some fled away from Kashmir. Sikandar destroyed the Hindu temples and their images in such a large number that his co-religionists gave him the title of *Butshikan* (destroyer of idols). Jonaraja wrote: "The king forgot his kingly duties and took a delight day and night, in breaking images. He broke the images of Martanda, Vishaya, Isana, Chakravart and Tripuresvara... There was no city, no town, no village, no wood where Suha the Turushka left the temples of gods unbroken." Sikandar died in 1413 CE and was succeeded by his son, Ali Shah (1416-20 CE). His chief minister, Suhail Bhatta, continued the policy of persecuting the Hindus and completed the work which was started by Sikandar.

In 1420 CE, younger brother of Ali Shah, Shah Khan deposed him and ascended the throne with the title of Zainul Abidin. He was the greatest ruler of Kashmir and some historians have compared him with Mughal ruler, Akbar because of his liberal religious policy towards the Hindus. He has been called '**Akbar of Kashmir**'. He was the most enlightened and popular monarch of Kashmir who enjoyed a long reign of 49 years from 1420 to 1470 CE. He extended his empire. He conquered Gandhara, Sindhu, Madra, Rajapuri, Ladakh, Leh, etc. and defeated the ruler of Jammu also while assisting the Khokkar chief, Jasrath. However, he became popular primarily on his peaceful activities. During his reign, Kashmir achieved both material and cultural progress. He himself was well-cultured and learned. He was well-versed in Persian, Sanskrit, Tibetan and other languages. Many Arabic and Persian works were translated into the local language and the *Mahabharata* and the *Rajatarangini* were translated into Persian during his reign. He respected the religious sentiments of the Hindus and provided them religious freedom, encouraged those who had fled away from Kashmir to return, allowed the Hindus to build up their temples and images, banned the slaughter of cows and rewarded the Brahmins for their meritorious works. He abolished a number of taxes including much-hated *jizya* from the Hindus, forced traders to sell their goods on reasonable prices, established peace and order, and provided indiscriminating justice to his subjects and patronized literature and fine arts like music and painting. Zainul Abidin enjoyed fame even in foreign countries. He maintained cordial relations with the rulers of Delhi, Gujarat, Gwalior, Mecca, Egypt, Khurasan etc. He died in 1470 CE.

Zainul Abidin was succeeded by his son Haji Khan who assumed the title of Haidar Shah. He was an intolerant and incompetent ruler. However, he died within one year. He was succeeded by his son Hasan Shah. He pursued a tolerant religious policy but could not keep control over his nobles and the kingdom began to disintegrate during his reign. Yet, Kashmir remained an independent kingdom during the period of the Delhi Sultanate. Afterwards, it was conquered by the Mughal ruler, Akbar in 1585 CE.

10.3.2 Malwa

The decline of Delhi Sultanate paved the way for the emergence of the independent kingdom of Malwa. Alauddin Khalji was the first to conquer and annex the kingdom of Malwa to the Delhi Sultanate in 1305 CE. It remained a part of it till the reign of later Tughlaqs. Dilawar Khan Ghorī who was appointed governor of Malwa by Firuz Shah Tughlaq in 1390 CE made himself an independent ruler in 1401 CE without assuming the royal title. He died in 1405 CE. His son and successor Alp Khan assumed the title of Hoshang Shah. He was a great warrior who fought many battles against the neighboring chiefs. Hoshang Shah was once defeated and captured by Muzaffar Shah, ruler of Gujarat, but was left free and sent to suppress the revolt of Malwa. Hoshang Shah used that opportunity and succeeded in regaining control over the throne of Malwa. He built up Mandu and made it his capital. He fought a number of battles against Ahmad Shah, the ruler of Gujarat who had succeeded Muzaffar Shah. But no tangible result came out of those battles. He was unable to capture Gwalior. However, he captured Kalpi and successfully plundered the Hindu states of Orissa. Hoshang Shah was an ambitious ruler and engaged himself constantly in wars of conquest. However, he failed to expand the territory of his kingdom because there existed equally powerful states in his neighborhood. He died in 1435 CE. He was succeeded by his son Ghazni Khan under the title of Muhammad Shah. He, however, proved himself incompetent. During his brief reign of one year, the court of Malwa became a hotbed of intrigues leading to disastrous results. The chaos climaxed in his murder in 1436 CE by his crafty *wazir* Mahmud Khan Khalji. Thus came the end of the Ghorid rule itself.

Mahmud Khan assumed the title of Mahmud Shah and laid the foundation of Khalji dynasty in Malwa. He ruled for 33 years between 1436 to 1469 CE and proved himself the ablest ruler of Malwa. He fought against the rulers of Gujarat, Delhi, Bahmani and Mewar. He expanded his kingdom and got approval of his title of Sultan from the Khalifa of Egypt. He was a just and successful ruler though he was a bigot and followed an intolerant religious policy towards the Hindus. He died in 1469 CE.

Mahmud Shah was succeeded by his son Ghiyasuddin who mostly pursued a policy of peace with his neighbors and enjoyed the pleasures of life. However, he invaded Mewar twice but failed. He allowed the ruler of Gujarat to capture Champaner. He was a bigot and even surpassed his father in certain respects. Probably, his son Nasiruddin got him poisoned and sat on the throne in 1500 CE. Nasiruddin Shah was a despot. He died in 1511 CE and was succeeded by his younger son, Azam Humayun who assumed the title of Mahmud Shah II. He was an inefficient and incapable ruler. A famous Rajput chief, Medini Rao of Chander exercised great influence in the internal politics of Malwa and for sometimes even acted as the Prime Minister of the state. The Sultan sought the help of Muzaffar II, the ruler of Gujarat against Medini Rai but was unsuccessful in his attempt because, Medini Rai, in turn, got the support of Rana Sanga, the ruler of Mewar. Malwa was conquered by Sultan Bahadur Shah of Gujrat in 1531 CE. The Mughal emperor Akbar annexed both Malwa and Gujarat to his empire afterwards.

10.3.3 Jaunpur

The city of Jaunpur is situated on the river Gomti and is thirty-four miles away from Banaras towards the North-West. It was founded by Firuz Shah Tughlaq during his return march from the second Bengal expedition in 1359-60 CE in the memory of his cousin Jauna Khan (Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq). In 1494 CE, Sultan Mahmud Tughlaq sent Malik Sarvar Khwaja-i-Jahan to Jaunpur to administer the territories from Kannauj to Bihar, with the title of **Sultan-us-Sharq—Lord of the**

East. He was a slave of Sultan Muhammad, son of Firuz Shah Tughlaq. He had a humble origin but rose to the position of wazir by his own merit. In 1394 CE, he was sent to suppress the revolt in Doab. He not only suppressed that revolt but, taking advantage of the invasion of Timur, occupied the entire territory extending from Aligarh in the east to Tirhut in the West and acted as an independent ruler.

Malik Sarvar died in 1399 CE and was succeeded by his adopted son who assumed the title of Sultan Mubarak Shah. Mubarak Shah issued his own coins and had the *khutba* read in his name. The wazir of Sultan Mahmud Tughlaq, Mallu Iqbal Khan, attempted to conquer Jaunpur but failed. Mubarak Shah died in 1402 CE.

Mubarak was succeeded by his younger brother Ibrahim Shah (1402-36 CE) who proved to be the greatest ruler of the dynasty. The kingdom of Jaunpur and Delhi were perpetually at warfare with each other during his reign as both desired to expand itself at the cost of other. Ibrahim Shah fought not only against Mahmud Tughlaq but also against the Sayyid rulers Khizr Khan and Mubarak Shah. However, no result came out of their conflict. Ibrahim Shah tried to capture Bengal but failed. His reign, however, was remarkable from the point of view of progress in the cultural field. He was a patron of art, architecture, education and learning. His reign was a period of prosperity as well. During his reign, Jaunpur became a notable center of learning and culture in Northern India. He patronized scholars and books like the *Hashiah-i-Hindi*, the *Bahr-ul-Mawwaj*, the *Fatwa-i-Ibrahim Shahi* and the *Irshad* were written during his reign. He beautified his capital Jaunpur by the construction of magnificent buildings, gardens and educational institutions as a result of which the town became a great centre of Islamic culture and learning, and earned the title of **‘Shiraz of the East’**. A new school of architecture, Janupuri or Sharqi School of Architecture, came into existence during his reign. He died in 1440 CE.

Ibrahim Shah was succeeded on the throne of Jaunpur by his son, Mahmud Shah (1436-57 CE). Mahmud Shah captured the fort of Chunar but his efforts to capture Kalpi failed. During his reign there ensued a long and protracted struggle between Delhi and Jaunpur for political supremacy. On the death of Mahmud Shah, his eldest son Muhammad Shah became the ruler of Jaunpur. He also fought against Bahlul Lodi but with no useful result. His brother Husain Shah killed him. Husain Shah entered into a life and death struggle against Bahlul Lodi and was eventually defeated. He fled away to South Bihar in 1479 CE and the state of Jaunpur was annexed to the Delhi Sultanate by Bahlul Lodi. During the rule of Sikandar Lodi, Husain Shah was compelled to seek shelter in Bengal and there he finished his life under the protection of the king of Bengal. Thus, the kingdom of Jaunpur which had become an independent state out of the ruins of the Delhi Sultanate once more became its integral part after 75 years.

10.3.4 Rajputana

The credit for the conquest of Rajputana goes to Alauddin Khalji. The fall of Ranthambhor and Chitor forced the other Rajput chiefs of the region to acknowledge the suzerainty of Delhi, although, the Rajputs did not reconcile themselves to the loss of independence and started a counter-offensive against the victors. Within two years after Alauddin’s death, Chitor was liberated by the Sisodia Rajputs from the Turkish rule. It signaled a general uprising in the region against the Delhi Sultanate which led to the emergence of many new Rajput kingdoms. Mewar and Marwar were the most prominent among them.

Mewar

At the time of attack of Alauddin Khalji in 1303 CE, Rana Ratan Singh, a member of the elder branch of the Guhilots family ruled at Mewar. However, Lakshman Singh, a member of the junior branch of the Guhilots, viz., the Sisodia was placed on the throne during the course of the battle. Lakshman Singh died fighting with his seven sons while defending the fort of Chitor. Only one of his sons, Ajay Singh was allowed to escape himself by flight. Ajay Singh passed his life in hiding. When he died in 1314 CE his title passed over to the worthy son of his elder brother, Rana Hammir (1318-64 CE) who proved himself the real founder of the state of Mewar under the Sisodias. Hammir tried to recover Chitor from the hands of Alauddin Khalji but was unsuccessful. However, Prince Khizr Khan was forced to leave Chitor and a Rajput noble, Maldeo was appointed governor in his place. But Hammir persisted in his efforts and, probably, during the later period of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq, succeeded in recovering Chitor from the Delhi Sultanate. Hammir ruled for 64 years and his praiseworthy achievement was the independence of Mewar. His son and successor Kshetra Singh (1364-82 CE) was also a capable ruler and extended his kingdom; he lost his life in a family feud. Kshetra Singh was succeeded by his eldest son Laksha Singh or Lakha at a fairly advanced age. He further enhanced the power and prestige of Mewar by marrying himself with the Rathor princess of Marwar. Lakha died in 1420 CE and was succeeded by his son, Mokal who captured Marwar with the help of his maternal uncle Ranamalla and also the Muslim principality of Nagour. Mokal was murdered in 1433 CE by his two relatives while he had gone on an expedition to fight against the ruler of Gujarat.

The murder of Mokal led to the division of Rajput chiefs among themselves. At that very time, the rulers of Malwa and Gujarat attacked Mewar. Ranamalla came to the rescue of Mewar at that difficult time. Ranamalla placed his grand-nephew, Rana Kumbha (1433-68 CE) on the throne, curbed the internal revolts and forced the invading armies of Gujarat and Malwa to withdraw. However, Ranamalla incited the jealousy and suspicion of certain Sisodia chiefs who murdered him in 1438 CE. This created enmity between Mewar and Marwar. Thus, the early years of the reign of Rana Kumbha were full of troubles. But Rana Kumbha proved to be a great warrior who waged successful wars against the neighboring Rajput states as well as the Sultans of Malwa and Gujarat. He transformed Mewar into a premier state of Central India. As a memory to his victory against Malwa, he constructed the famous *Kirtistambha* or *Vijayastambha*—‘**The Tower of Victory**’ at Chittor in 1448 CE. He beautified Chitor by the construction of public buildings, parks and socio-cultural institutions. He built the city of Kumbhalgarh, strengthened the fortification of Chitor and built 32 forts among 84 forts of Mewar. He was a great scholar and patron of education and learning. He was proficient in the Vedas, Smritis, Mimamsa, Upanishads, grammar and politics. He wrote a commentary on *Gita Govinda* of Jayadeva and four dramas in four local languages. He ranks among the most important rulers of medieval Indian history. The Rathor Rajputs constantly fought against him and the rulers of Malwa and Gujarat made joint efforts to defeat him. Yet, Kumbha succeeded against them all and expanded his kingdom. He lived long and was murdered by his son, Udaya in 1473 CE who had become impatient to occupy the throne.

Udaya, who captured the throne of his father, was not allowed to rule for long because of the resistance of the nobles. The throne was soon occupied by his younger brother, Rayamalla (1473-1509 CE). He fought against his own rebellious chiefs, hill-tribes and rulers of Malwa. Yet, he succeeded. During later years of his reign, his sons fought against each other to capture the throne which made him insane and he died in that state of mind. His eldest son, Prithviraja was poisoned,

the second son Jaymal had died fighting in a duel while the third son Jaya Singh was not accepted as ruler by the nobles. The nobles called his illustrious son Sangram Singh who had gone to Malwa after quarreling with his brother to become the ruler. Rana Sangram Singh *alias* Rana Sanga (1509-1528 CE) proved himself an ambitious and war-like ruler. His life was full of struggles. He wore 80 scars of wounds on his body which had shed each one of its legs, eyes and arms in the warfare. He either conquered all the states of Rajasthan or befriended them. He inflicted a crushing defeat on the ruler of Malwa. His greatest ambition in life was to conquer Delhi and establish Hindu rule over the whole of Northern India. It resulted in the Battle of Khanua against Babur on March 13, 1527 CE. He lost the battle and retreated to Chitor where he died a broken-hearted man two years later. The power of Mewar diminished afterwards and, ultimately, it accepted the suzerainty of the Mughal ruler, Jahangir.

Marwar

Marwar (modern Jodhpur) was ruled by Rathor Rajputs who were the descendants of Rashtrakutas. Rana Chunda (1394-1421 CE) founded the state of Marwar and made Jodhpur its capital. Chunda fought hard against the neighboring Muslim and Rajput states to maintain the existence of his state. He extended his influence by marrying his daughter with Lakha, who was advanced in age but one of the prominent rulers of Mewar. The eldest son of Chunda was Ranamalla who left the state against the wish of his father. Therefore, Chunda was succeeded by Kanha and he, in turn, was succeeded by his younger brother Sata. Sata was practically blind. Therefore, Ranamalla, who had been at Mewar so far, attacked Marwar and occupied the throne for himself. Ranamalla helped Rana Kumbha of Mewar in early years of his reign, grew very influential but was, then, murdered by the nobles of Mewar. It resulted in constant fighting between the state of Mewar and Marwar. The son of Ranamalla, Rana Jodha was able to escape from Mewar but Marwar was captured by the Sisodias. Jodha continued to resist the Sisodias and, finally, Rana Kumbha agreed for peace with him as he was fighting against the Muslim rulers of Gujarat and Malwa. Therefore, Jodha captured Marwar. He built a new township with a fort, named after him as Jodhpur, which became the capital city of Marwar. He secured peace, prosperity and honor for his people during his long reign of 59 years (1438-1488 CE). Jodha had 17 sons. His sons established semi-independent kingdoms at Satal, Merta, and Bikaner during his life-time and when he died in 1488 CE, they fought amongst themselves for the throne. One of his sons, Satal occupied the throne with the consent of the nobles. Satal died shortly and was succeeded by Suja. However, his brother Bika refused to submit to him and founded the independent state of Bikaner in 1464 CE. Merta also became independent nearly the same time. Thus, Marwar got the opportunity to rise as an important state of Rajasthan after the decline of the state of Mewar. The Rajputs of Marwar confronted the armies of Sher Shah during the reign of Rana Maldeo. However, during the reign of Mughal emperor Akbar at Delhi, Marwar accepted his suzerainty.

10.3.5 Gujarat

The Chalukya hold continued over Gujarat throughout the 13th century in spite of the establishment of Delhi Sultanate. In 1299 CE, Alauddin Khalji's generals Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan succeeded in overthrowing Raja Karna Baghella, the Chalukya King and thus laid the foundation of the Sultanate rule in Gujarat. It remained a province of the Delhi Sultanate till 1401 CE when governor Zafar Khan, son of a Hindu convert, declared himself as an independent Sultan of Gujarat. He assumed the title of Muzaffar Shah in 1401 CE. He defeated Sultan Hoshang of Malwa and occupied his capital, Dhar, though restored his kingdom to him afterwards. Muzaffar died in 1411 CE

Muzaffar was succeeded by his grandson Ahmad Shah (1411-42 CE) who proved a very capable and successful ruler. He fought against the neighboring rulers of Rajasthan, Malwa and South India. He established his headquarters at a new township, named after him as Ahmadabad and made it his capital. He was succeeded by his eldest son Muhammad Shah II who died in 1451 CE. Muhammad Shah II, in turn, was succeeded by Qutbuddin Ahmad Shah and Daud Khan. The last two rulers proved themselves incompetent. While Qutbuddin ruled between 1451 and 1458 CE, the reign of Daud Khan was limited only to some days. In 1458 CE the nobles deposed Daud Khan and chose Fath Khan, son of Muhammad II, to be the ruler. Fath Khan assumed the title of Abu-i-Fath Mahmud and is famous in history as **Mahmud Begarha**.

Mahmud Begarha ruled from 1458 to 1511 CE and has been regarded as the greatest and most powerful Sultan of Gujarat. He fought a number of battles. He suppressed those nobles who wanted to place his brother, Hasan Khan on the throne and defeated those Hindu Chiefs who challenged his authority. He supported the Bahmani kingdom against Malwa and his maternal grandfather Jam Nanda against his rebellious Hindu subjects. However, his best success was capture of the forts of Girnar and Champaner. This success brought him the nickname Begarha. The Portuguese built a factory at Diu during his reign. Mahmud took steps to check the power of the Portuguese in the Indian seas. Mahmud raised Gujarat to the status of one of the powerful states of Northern India. Besides, Gujarat prospered during his reign and progress was achieved in the field of literature and fine arts. However, Mahmud, was a bigoted Sunni Muslim and pursued an intolerant religious policy towards his Hindu subjects. He was succeeded by his son Khalil Khan who assumed the title of Muzaffar Shah II. He supported Mahmud Khalji, the ruler of Malwa against his wazir Medini Rai and succeeded in restoring his authority in Mandu though Chanderi remained with Medini Rai. He fought hard against the ruler of Mewar, Rana Sanga who was supporting Medini Rai and other Rajput rulers against Muslim rulers. But he did not succeed against the Rana. He died in 1526 CE. He was succeeded by Sikandar and Mahmud II respectively. Both of them proved incompetent and could rule only for some months. Then, in July 1526 CE, Bahadur Shah became the Sultan and his period of rule marked the zenith of the power of the state of Gujarat. He conquered Malwa in 1531 CE and plundered Chitor, the capital of Mewar. However, the Mughal emperor Humayun proved his greatest enemy. Humayun once succeeded in capturing the entire Gujarat. Bahadur Shah fell victim to the treachery of the Portuguese who drowned him in the sea in February 1537 CE. His successors, though weak and incapable, continued to rule over Gujarat and it was finally conquered by the Mughal ruler Akbar in 1572 CE.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 Name the historian who has pointed out that there were more frequent and violent struggles between the Muslim-Muslim and Hindu-Hindu rulers rather than between Hindu-Muslim rulers?
- Q.2 Who established the united state of Kashmir in 1301 CE?
- Q.3 Who established Muslim rule in Kashmir?
- Q.4 Which ruler is known as Akbar of Kashmir?
- Q.5 Which Sultan of Delhi founded the city of Jaunpur?
- Q.6 Which city was called as 'Shiraz of the East'?
- Q.7 Who was Rana Hammir?

Q.8 Who constructed the famous *Kirtistambha* or *Vijaystambha*—‘The Tower of Victory’ at Chittor in 1448 CE?

Q.9 Who founded the state of Marwar and made Jodhpur its capital?

Q.10 Who is considered as the greatest Sultan of Gujarat?

10.4 Summary

- In the 15th century India, majority of the regional and provincial states were ruled by Muslim monarchs.
- Schwartzberg has pointed out that there were more frequent and violent struggles between the Muslim-Muslim and Hindu-Hindu rulers rather than between Hindu-Muslim rulers during 13th to 15th century.
- The notable characteristic feature of the 13-15th century polity, was ‘vertical’ penetration rather than the ‘horizontal’ one.
- The independent kingdoms of Kashmir, Malwa, Jaunpur, Rajputana and Gujarat emerged as a result of the decline of Delhi Sultanate.
- During the 13th to 15th century, Kashmir as an independent state developed outside the Sultanate.
- The reign of Sikandar Shah marked a turning point in the history of Kashmir from social and religious point of view. He was known as *Butshikan* (destroyer of idols)
- The relations of the rulers of Kashmir with the Delhi Sultanate remained cordial except during Bahlol Lodi’s reign.
- Zainul Abidin, the ruler of Kashmir was known as the ‘Akbar of Kashmir’.
- Dilawar Khan Ghori who was appointed governor of Malwa by Firuz Shah Tughlaq in 1390 CE made himself an independent ruler in 1401 CE.
- Hoshang Shah of Malwa was a great warrior who fought many battles against the neighboring chiefs.
- Mahmud Shah and laid the foundation of Khalji dynasty in Malwa.
- The city of Jaunpur was founded by Firuz Shah Tughlaq in memory of his cousin Jauna Khan.
- Malik Sarvar was given the title of ‘Sultan-us-Sharq’-Lord of the East.
- Jaunpur earned the title of ‘Shiraz of the East’.
- Mewar and Marwar were the most prominent new Rajput Kingdoms.
- Rana Hammir ruled Mewar for 64 years and his praiseworthy achievement was the independence of Mewar.
- Rana Kumbha of Mewar proved to be a great warrior who waged successful wars against the neighboring Rajput states as well as the Sultans of Malwa and Gujarat.

- As a memory to his victory against Malwa, Rana Kumbha constructed the famous *Kirtistambha* or *Vijaystambha*—‘The Tower of Victory’ at Chittor in 1448 CE.
- Rana Sangram Singh *alias* Rana Sanga was another ambitious and war-like ruler of Mewar.
- Marwar (modern Jodhpur) was ruled by Rathor Rajputs. Rana Chunda (1394-1421 CE) founded the state of Marwar and made Jodhpur its capital.
- Mahmud Begarha ruled from 1458 to 1511 CE and has been regarded as the greatest and most powerful Sultan of Gujarat.

10.5 Glossary

Bigot: A person with very strong, unreasonable beliefs or opinions and who will not listen to or accept a different opinion.

Khutba: *A sermon preached by an imam in a mosque at the time of the Friday noon prayer.*

Mimansa: It is a Sanskrit word that means "reflection" or "critical investigation." It is one of the six systems (darshans) of Indian philosophy.

Muqaddam: A village headman during the Sultanate period.

10.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Ans.1 Schwartzberg
- Ans.2 Suhadeva
- Ans.3 Shamsuddin Shah
- Ans.4 Zainul Abidin
- Ans.5 Firuz Shah Tughlaq
- Ans.6 Jaunpur
- Ans.7 Rana Hammir was the King of Mewar who ruled from 1318 to 1364 CE.
- Ans.8 Rana Kumbha
- Ans.9 Rana Chunda
- Ans.10 Mahmud Begarha

10.7 Suggested Readings

1. Mian Muhammad Saeed, 1972, “*The Sharqi Sultanate of Jaunpur: A Political and Cultural History*”, Karachi: University of Karachi.
2. Mohammad Habib and K.A. Nizami, 1982, “*Comprehensive History of India*”, Vol. V, New Delhi: People’s Publishing House, Reprint.
3. Mohibul Hasan, 2005, “*Kashmir under the Sultans*”, New Delhi: Aakar Books, Reprint.
4. M.S Naravane, 1999, “*The Rajputs of Rajputana: A Glimpse of Medieval Rajasthan*”, APH Publishing

5. S.A.I Tirmizi, 1968, "*Some Aspects of Medieval Gujarat*", Munshiram Manoharlal
6. U.N Day, 1965, "*Medieval Malwa: A Political and Cultural History, 1401-1562*", Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal.

10.8 Terminal Questions

1. Discuss the characteristic features of the regional states in 15th century India.
2. Write about the achievements of Zainul Abidin. Why is he called the Akbar of Kashmir?
3. List the achievements of Hoshang Shah of Malwa.
4. Why Jaunpur is called as the 'Shiraz of the East'?
5. Discuss briefly the emergence of Rana Kumbha's power.
6. Write a short note on the state of Marwar in Rajputana.
7. Elaborate on the achievements of Mahmud Begarha of Gujarat.
8. Critically examine relations of Gujarat with Malwa rulers.

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UNIT-11

THE BAHMANI KINGDOM

Structure

- 11.1 Introduction
- 11.2 Objectives
- 11.3 Establishment and Consolidation of Bahmani Kingdom
 - 11.3.1 Administration
 - 11.3.2 Conflict between *Afaqis* and *Dakhinis*

Self-Check Exercise -1

- 11.4 Summary
- 11.5 Glossary
- 11.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 11.7 Suggested Readings
- 11.8 Terminal Questions

11.1 Introduction

The decline of Delhi Sultanate as an all-India power, which started during the later part of the reign of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq (1325-1351 CE) gave rise to two mighty states in South India—the Bahmani kingdom and the empire of Vijayanagar. The ruling dynasty of Bahmani kingdom was provided by the Muslim ruling elite of the former Delhi Sultanate. It was the first independent Muslim kingdom of the Deccan. The kingdom was founded in 1347 CE by **Alauddin Bahman Shah**. It later split into five successor states that were collectively known as the Deccan Sultanates.

11.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the establishment and consolidation of Bahmani Kingdom,
- Know about the administration of Bahmani Kingdom,
- Examine the conflict between the *Afaqis* and the *Dakhinis*.

11.3 Establishment and Consolidation of Bahmani Kingdom

The year 1335 CE marks the beginning of countrywide disorders and general upsurge against the unpopular rule of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq. The foreign Muslim nobles in the Deccan—*Amiran-i-Sadah*, revolted against Sultan Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq. They acquired control over the provincial capital and made Ismail Makh, as their Sultan. Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq was unable to

suppress the revolt. Ismail voluntarily resigned in favor of a more enterprising noble Hasan as Sultan. Hasan ascended the throne at Gulbarga assumed the title of **Abul Muzaffar Alauddin Bahman Shah** on August 3, 1347 CE and, thus, laid down the foundation of the independent Bahmani kingdom. Firishta wrote that in his early life Hasan was a servant of a Brahmin named Gangu, a famous Brahmin astrologer of Delhi, and therefore, assumed the title of Bahman Shah as a mark of respect to his previous master and benefactor. But Bahman Shah himself claimed descent from the famous Persian hero Bahman, son of Isfandiyar. It remained a powerful state of the South and possessed a large part of it for nearly two hundred years. It produced 18 Sultans whose rule lasted 180 years from 1347 CE to 1527 CE.

Bahman Shah (1347-58 CE) proved to be a capable and ambitious ruler. He made Gulbarga his capital. He expanded his territories and, thus, succeeded in making it a powerful state during his own lifetime. The Bahmani kingdom extended from the Wainganga river in the North to the river Krishna in the South, and from Daultabad in the West to Bhongir in the East. Bahman Shah was a good administrator. He divided his kingdom into four provinces, called *tarafs* whose capitals were Gulbarga, Daultabad, Berar, and Bidar. Each province was assigned to an amir, called *tarafdar*, who received a jagir in lieu of his service. The administration was based on feudal principles; the provincial governors recruited their own armies and rendered service to the center in time of need. He died in 1358 CE.

Alauddin Bahman Shah was succeeded by his son, **Muhammad Shah I** (1358-75 CE). He laid the foundation of a comprehensive administrative system with the help of his Prime Minister Saifuddin Ghorī. He established civil departments, each of which was headed by a separate minister. Apart from the Prime Minister known as *Wazir* or *Wakil*, there were *amir-i-jumla*—the finance minister, *wazir-i-ashraf*—the foreign minister, and *sadar-i-jahan*—head of the ecclesiastical and judicial departments. *Nazir* was the deputy finance minister while a deputy minister called *Peshwa*, was attached to the office of the Prime Minister. In big towns Kotwal was appointed, who was the head of the police department and responsible for the maintenance of law and order. Muhammad Shah entered into a deadly conflict with the Hindu states of Warangal and Vijayanagar which were established in the South-East and the South-West of his state respectively during his father's reign. The ruler of Warangal, Kapaya Nayaka and Bukka, the ruler of Vijayanagara, probably made an understanding between each other and claimed the fort of Kaulas and Krishna-Tungabhadra-doab respectively. Muhammad disproved their claim and fought against both of them. He was more successful against Kapaya Nayaka and snatched away the fort of Golconda from him which was accepted the boundary line between the two. He reached an understanding with Bukka as well by which it was agreed that none would kill the prisoners of war and unarmed subjects of each other. He fought against the Muslim states of Malwa, Khandesh and Gujarat for territorial expansion. He died in 1375 CE.

Muhammad Shah I was succeeded by his son **Alauddin Mujahid** (1375-78 CE). He ruled only for three years and made unsuccessful bids to encroach upon the kingdom of Vijayanagar. During his ruling period, the nobility was divided into two ruling factions, the foreigners and the *Dakhinis*. He gave liberal patronage to the foreign immigrants, particularly, the Persians and the Turks, due to which the native Muslim nobles became jealous. The rivalry between these two factions of the nobility became very acute in the years to come and proved disastrous to the interests of the state.

While returning from one of his campaigns Alauddin Mujahid was murdered by his cousin Daud. But Daud was murdered by Mujahid's partisans within a month of his accession to the throne.

and then his brother **Muhammad II** (1378-97 CE), a grandson of Hasan, was raised to the throne. During this period of internal strife in Bahmani kingdom, Vijayanagar occupied a part of its Western coast. Yet, Muhammad II did not fight against Vijayanagar. He entered into friendly relations with Vijayanagar and devoted much of his time for the welfare and prosperity of his subjects. He was a scholarly king, patronized scholars, opened educational institutions and pursued a peaceful policy. He built mosques and *darghas* for the Muslim saints, and encouraged conversions to Islam. He adopted extensive famine-relief measures to help his subjects during the time of drought.

Muhammad II died in 1397 CE and was succeeded by **Ghiyasuddin** and **Shamsuddin** respectively who ruled only for short durations. Shamsuddin was deposed by **Tajuddin Firuz Shah** who became king and ruled from 1397 to 1422 CE. He was a man of sociable habits; he was fond of the company of the learned and the holy. He revived conflict with the kingdom of Vijayanagar. Tajuddin fought against Vijayanagar thrice. He was successful twice but received crushing defeat third time which reduced his respect. He was an enlightened ruler. He constructed the new city of Firuzabad and improved the ports of Chaul and Dabhol. He was deposed by his brother, **Ahmad Shah** in 1422 CE who then became the king.

Ahmad Shah (1422-1435 CE) conquered Warangal, plundered part of the Vijayanagar kingdom and successfully attacked Malwa. However, he was unsuccessful against Gujarat. He transferred his capital from Gulbarga to the newly-constructed town called **Bidar** in 1425 CE and remained there till the close of his reign. The quarrels between the foreign and Indian Muslim nobles which became one of the primary reasons of the weakness of the Bahmani kingdom began during his reign.

Ahmad Shah's son **Alauddin II** (1435-57 CE), succeeded him after his death. He brought to submission the Hindu kingdom of Konkan, married the daughter of the Hindu king of Sangameshwar, failed the attack of Khandesh and fought against Vijayanagar. He was succeeded by his son **Humayun Shah** (1457-61 CE) who was a tyrant and was known as *zalim*. It is said that once he ordered his rebel brother Hasan to be thrown before a tiger in an enclosure who killed and devoured him in the presence of the Sultan. To his good fortune, Humayun had secured the services of a very capable Prime Minister Mahmud Gawan, entitled Khwaja-i-Jahan, who maintained peace and order in the state. Firishta says that Humayun, in a state of drunkenness, was murdered by one of his servants in 1461 CE. He was succeeded by his minor son, **Nizam Shah**. Her mother, Maqdum-i-Jahan formed a regency council consisting of herself, Mahmud Gawan and Khwaja Jahan Turk to look after the administration. The rulers of Malwa and Orissa attacked the Bahmani kingdom during his reign but failed to achieve anything. The boy-king died in 1463 CE and was succeeded by his brother, **Muhammad III** (1463-82 CE). He indulged in excessive drinking and sensual pleasures. The queen mother had become suspicious towards Khwaja Jahan Turk who was now murdered. Mahmud Gawan was then appointed the *Wakil-us-Sultanate* (*wazir*) of the kingdom. Mahmud Gawan was a Persian who came to the Bahmani kingdom as a trader. He proved to be the ablest *wazir* of the Bahmani kingdom. He defeated the Hindu ruler of Konkan, captured the fort of Khalna from the king of Sangameshwar, looted part of the Vijayanagar kingdom and snatched away a part of Goa from it. He also conquered the forts of Rajamundry and Kondavir and successfully plundered the state of Orissa. Besides a successful commander Mahmud Gawan was an administrator *par excellence*. He carried out extensive reforms in the field of administration and imparted freshness and vigor to the whole establishment. He reinforced the central government and raised the number of provinces from four to eight. He tried to eradicate the Jagirdari-system. He

paid proper attention to the training and discipline of the soldiers and, thus, strengthened the Bahmani kingdom militarily. With the objective of increasing the economic resources of the state, he introduced the system of measurement of land and collected revenue directly from the peasants. Mahmud Gawan was a loyal and devoted servant of the state who was popular among the people and enjoyed confidence of the nobility; although his success provoked jealousy among the Indian Muslim nobles who succeeded in getting death warrants for him from the king while he was drunk. He was then put to death on April 5, 1481 CE. His death spread a wave of dismay and resentment throughout the kingdom. The conspirators were exposed later on and the Sultan wreaked severe punishments on them. Muhammad III wept and cried over his thoughtless action in having broken the pillar of the state, and died a grief-stricken man in March 22, 1482 CE.

Mahmud Gawan was a successful man. He served three Bahmani rulers with distinction and enhanced the power and prestige of the kingdom. He himself was a scholar and patron of education and learning. He enjoyed the company of saints and scholars. He established a magnificent college and a library at Bidar. He wrote himself two texts-*Rauzat-ul-Insha* and *Diwan-i-Asra*. However, he was a religious fanatic who suffered. The conflict between the foreign Muslim nobles and the Indian Muslim nobles became further sharp after his death which, ultimately, led to the disintegration of the Bahmani kingdom. Muhammad Shah III died in 1482 CE

Muhammad Shah III was succeeded by his 12 years old son, **Mahmud Shah** (1482-1518 CE). Since he was a minor, the real power of the state passed into the hands of Malik Naib, Hasan Nizam-ul-mulk. The foreign Muslim nobles (*pardesis*) were dissatisfied due to the execution of Mahmud Gawan and therefore, refused to obey the new king. The foreign Muslim nobles consisted of the Turks, the Mughals, the Persians and the Arabs while the Indian Muslim nobles had Abyssinians on their side. The two groups fought against each other primarily not because of racial differences but to capture the power of the state. Also, they were divided on religious ground. While the foreign Muslims were mostly Shias, the Indian Muslims were Sunnis. The foreign Muslims had come to the Bahmani kingdom in large number, gained strength and formed a distinct party. The Indian Muslim and the Abyssinians grew jealous of their growing power in the state and combined themselves against them. Therefore, the court of the Bahmani kingdom was sharply divided into two powerful rival groups which were determined to destroy each other. The weakness of later Bahmani rulers gave encouragement to these groups. Mahmud Shah who was a minor failed to check their conflict. Malik Naib fled away for the safety of his life but the governor of Bidar killed him. The Indian Muslims, in turn, attacked the palace and tried to capture the Sultan but they failed and were killed in large numbers. Mahmud Shah felt so disappointed because of these quarrels that he left the administration in the hands of one Turk noble, Qasim Barid. The provincial governors, however, refused to accept the power of Qasim Barid and asserted their independence. First, Malik Ahmad Nizam-ul-mulk, son of the murdered Naib Malik, declined to obey the orders of the state and established his independent rule in 1490 CE at Ahmadnagar. His example was followed by Adil Khan at Bijapur and Imad-ul- mulk at Berar. Thus within a couple of years, the outlying provinces of the state were cut off from Bidar which was reduced to a small principality. The Bahmani kingdom was divided and its provincial governors became independent rulers though none of them assumed the title of Sultan during the reign of Sultan Mahmud. Their only bond was *jihad* (holy war) every year against the idolaters of Vijayanagar. With the death of Sultan Mahmud died in 1518 CE, the Bahmani kingdom virtually came to an end. He was succeeded by four weak rulers successively who remained puppets in the hands of their all-powerful ministers, Qasim 'Barinul Mamalik' and later his son Amir Ali Barid. The last king of Bahmani dynasty, Kalimullah was deposed by his wazir Amir Ali Barid in 1527 CE who laid the foundation of Barid Shahi Dynasty of Bidar. The

Bahmani dynasty and its kingdom came to an end with his death in 1538 CE. The Bahmani kingdom was split into five independent principalities, namely, the Adil Shahi of Bijapur, the Qutb Shahi of Golkunda, the Nizam Shahi of Ahmadnagar, the Barid Shahi of Bidar and the Imad Shahi of Berar.

These five Muslim states of the South fought against each other but their primary enemy remained the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagara. Ahmadnagar conquered Berar in 1574 CE and Bijapur annexed Bidar in 1618-19 CE. The Mughal emperor Akbar occupied part of Ahmadnagar during his reign and the rest of it was conquered by Shah Jahan. The states of Bijapur and Golkunda were finally annexed by Aurangzeb.

11.3.1 Administration

The Bahmani rulers accepted Abbasid Caliphs as their overlord though, in fact, they were independent rulers and behaved accordingly. The first ruler of the kingdom, Alauddin Bahman Shah could not find much time to look after the administration as he mostly remained busy in wars. Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq had divided his territories in the Deccan into four provinces. Bahman Shah kept that arrangement as it was excepted that he appointed his own officers everywhere. As already mentioned earlier in this UNIT, Muhammad Shah I divided the kingdom into four *tarafs* (provinces) whose capitals were Daultabad, Berar, Bidar and Gulbarga respectively. Provincial governors known as *Tarafدارs* with extensive administrative and military powers were appointed in each of these provinces. *Tarafدار* collected revenue from his province, organized the provincial army and appointed all civil and military officers of his province. Sometimes *Tarafدارs* were appointed ministers of the king as well. When the kingdom expanded and Mahmud Gawan worked as Prime Minister, the number of provinces was raised from four to eight. Mahmud Gawan tried to restrict the powers of provincial governors and, for that purpose, fixed some land as the land of the Sultan in each province which was managed by the officers of the central government. Provinces or *Tarafs* were divided into *Sarkars* which were divided into *Parganas* for the convenience of administration. Village was the lowest UNIT of the administration.

Sultan was the head of the state who enjoyed all executive, legislative and judicial powers. His powers were unlimited and some of them called themselves the representatives of God on earth. However, in practice, the powers of the Sultan were limited by the powers and advice of powerful ministers and nobles.

The Sultan was assisted by ministers in the administration. The Prime Minister was called *Vakil-us-Sultanate*, the finance minister *Amir-i-Jumla* and the foreign minister *Wazir-i-Asraf*. There were two other ministers called the *Wazir-i-kul* and the *Peshwa* but their responsibilities were not fixed up. Sometimes the provincial *Tarafدارs* were also appointed as ministers. The chief judicial officer, after the Sultan, was called the *Sadr-i-Jahar*. Besides being the judicial officer, he looked after religious affairs and charitable works performed by the state.

The Bahmani kingdom continuously fought against neighboring Hindu states and therefore, had to keep a large standing army. The head of the army, after the Sultan, was called the *Amir-ul-umra*. The Sultan kept his personal bodyguards called the *Khas-i-khel*. The Bahmani kingdom maintained an artillery as well besides the cavalry, the infantry and war-elephants. Shihabuddin Ahmad I introduced the Mansabdari system in the army wherein the military officers were assigned jagirs according to their mansabs or ranks to meet the expenses of the armies raised by them. The civilian officers were also assigned mansabs with a view to fix up their salaries. However, the Jagirdars were required to submit the statement of their income and expenditure to the central

government. The officer incharge of forts, *Qiledars* were also directly responsible to the central government.

Sultans, mansabdars and the nobles enjoyed all kinds of luxuries which was an evidence that the Bahmani kingdom was prosperous. However, no evidence is available regarding condition of ordinary people. Probably, as in other parts of India, the common people led a simple life.

The Bahmani kingdom aided the growth of Muslim culture in South India. Followers of Islam from North India and foreign countries established themselves in the Bahmani kingdom. Various rulers patronized Muslim scholars and religious preachers. Even after the disintegration of the Bahmani kingdom, the rulers of those states which arose on the ruins of it patronized Muslim saints, scholars, artists, etc. and constructed *madarsas* and many other buildings, and, thus, contributed in spreading the Muslim culture in South India. The conflict with Hindu rulers of South India also compelled the rulers of the Bahmani kingdom to provide political and cultural leadership to Islam in the South. Thus, the Bahmani kingdom contributed towards the politics and culture of South India for a long time.

11.3.2 Conflict between *Afaqis* and *Dakhinis*

The influx of foreigners was felt seriously not by the Hindus or the original inhabitants of the land, who carried no weight in the state politics, but by the old Muslim nobility of the Deccan, including the Northern immigrants from Delhi. It were the latter who came to be known as the *dakhinis* (Southerners) in comparison with the foreigners who were called *pardesis* or *afaqis*. *Dakhinis* were the real architects of the kingdom but the large scale employment of the *afaqis* in the highest civil and military offices of the state quickly reduced them to a minority within the ruling elite and bureaucracy of the Bahmani kingdom. It provoked rivalries between the two groups with the result that with the beginning of the reign of Sultan Mujahid Shah, the nobility of the Bahmani kingdom came to be divided into two rival factions, the foreigners and the *dakhinis*. The latter, under force of circumstances began to find their interests more and more with the indigenous inhabitants of the land and made a common cause with the local converts to Islam. From among the foreigners, the *dakhinis* received ready support from the African immigrants and 'the offspring of African fathers and Indian mothers' who did not see eye to eye with the immigrants from the Asian countries. It is believed that the foreigners, who were more aggressive and brutal in the use of force for maintaining their hold over the country, charged the *dakhinis* with cowardice and the quarrels between the rival factions often led to fierce contests and bloody massacres. It is also believed the foreigners were generally Shias while the *dakhinis* were Sunnis, and this added bitterness to their disputes. Like the mutual conflict of Bahmani and Vijayanagar kingdoms, the rivalry between these two factions of the Bahmani nobility became very active in the years to come and proved to be harmful to the interests of the state.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 Who was the founder of Bahmani kingdom?
- Q.2 When was the Bahmani kingdom founded?
- Q.3 Name the early capital of Bahmani Sultanate.
- Q.4 During the reign of which ruler of Bahmani kingdom the capital was shifted to Bidar from Gulbarga?

- Q.5 During the period of which Bahmani Sultan was the nobility divided into two ruling factions, the foreigners and the *dakhinis*?
- Q.6 Which Bahmani Sultan built the city of Firuzabad?
- Q.7 Who was Mahmud Gawan?
- Q.8 Who was the last king of Bahmani dynasty?
- Q.9 How many Sultanates were formed from the disintegration of the Bahmani kingdom?
- Q.10 Who were *afaqis* and *dakhinis*?

11.4 Summary

- The decline of Delhi Sultanate gave rise to the Bahmani kingdom in the South. It was the first independent Muslim kingdom of the Deccan.
- The Bahmani kingdom was founded in 1347 CE by Alauddin Bahman Shah.
- Bahman Shah made Gulbarga as the capital of the Bahmani kingdom. He divided his empire into *tarafs* headed by a *tarafdar*.
- Muhammad Shah I laid the foundation of a comprehensive administrative system. He established civil departments headed by a separate minister. He entered into a deadly conflict with the Hindu states of Warangal and Vijayanagar.
- During the reign of Alauddin Mujahid, the nobility was divided into two ruling factions, the *afaqis* and the *dakhinis*.
- Muhammad II entered into friendly relations with the Vijayanagar empire.
- Tajuddin fought against Vijayanagar thrice. He was successful twice but was defeated third time.
- Ahmad Shah (1422-1435 CE) conquered Warangal, plundered part of the Vijayanagar kingdom and successfully attacked Malwa. He transferred his capital from Gulbarga to Bidar.
- Sultan Humayun Shah was known as Zalim.
- Sultan Muhammad Shah III appointed Mahmud Gawan as his Prime Minister. Mahmud Gawan introduced a number of reforms in the administration. He was a scholar and patron of education and learning. He became a victim of conspiracy and was put to death on April 5, 1481 CE.
- Sultan Mahmud Shah failed to check the conflict between the *afaqis* and the *dakhinis*.
- The Bahmani kingdom was split into five independent principalities, namely, the Adil Shahi of Bijapur, the Qutb Shahi of Golkunda, the Nizam Shahi of Ahmadnagar, the Barid Shahi of Bidar and the Imad Shahi of Berar.
- Muhammad Shah I divided the kingdom into four *tarafs* (provinces). Provincial governors known as *Tarafدارs* with extensive administrative and military powers were appointed in each of these provinces.

- When the kingdom expanded and Mahmud Gawan worked as Prime Minister, the number of provinces was raised from four to eight. Provinces or *Tarafs* were divided into *Sarkars* which were divided into *Parganas* for the convenience of administration. Village was the lowest UNIT of the administration.
- Sultan was the head of the state who enjoyed all executive, legislative and judicial powers. However, in practice, the powers of the Sultan were limited by the powers and advice of powerful ministers and nobles.
- The Bahmani kingdom continuously fought against neighboring Hindu states and therefore, had to keep a large standing army.
- The Bahmani kingdom aided the growth of Muslim culture in South India.
- In the early decades of the foundation of Bahmani kingdom, there arose a conflict among nobles. The nobles were divided as old timers or newcomers or *Dakhinis* and *Afaqis*.
- This division created havoc in the history of the Bahmani kingdom, between 1482-1518 CE, the clash among nobles reached its climax, which led to the disintegration of the Bahmani kingdom.

11.5 Glossary

Amiran-i-Sadah: Administrative heads of hundred villages.

Dargah: The tomb or shrine of a Muslim saint.

Madarsa: An educational institution, a school especially one for higher education.

Pargana: A subdivision of the district for administrative and revenue purposes.

11.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

Ans.1 Alauddin Bahman Shah

Ans.2 1347 CE

Ans.3 Gulbarga

Ans.4 Ahmad Shah

Ans.5 Alauddin Mujahid

Ans.6 Tajuddin Firuz Shah

Ans.7 He was Persian trader who later proved to be the ablest *wazir* of the Bahmani kingdom.

Ans.8 Kalimullah

Ans.9 Five

Ans.10 *Afaqis* were the immigrants from Persia and Central Asia while the *dakhinis* were the group of nobles that consisted of descendants of the early Delhi Sultanate migrants, local converts too Islam, Habshis (Africans) and Marathas.

11.7 Suggested Readings

1. Burjor Avari, 2013, “*Islamic Civilization in South Asia: A History of Muslim Power and Presence in the Indian Subcontinent*”, Routledge.
2. Hermann Kulke & Dietmar Rothermund, 2004, “*A History of India*”, Fourth Edition, Routledge.
3. Josef W. Meri, 2005, “*Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopedia*”, Routledge.
4. Richard M. Eaton, 2005, “*A Social History of the Deccan, 1300-1761: Eight Indian Lives (The New Cambridge History of India)*”, Cambridge University Press, UK.
5. V.D. Mahajan, 1991, “*History of Medieval India*”, Part I, New Delhi: S.Chand.

11.8 Terminal Questions

1. Discuss the contribution of Alauddin Bahman Shah in the establishment of Bahmani kingdom.
2. Give an account of the achievements of Mahmud Gawan.
3. Write short note on the following:
 - (a) Muhammad Shah I
 - (b) Alauddin Mughal
4. Describe the administration of the Bahmani kingdom.
5. Explain the conflict between the *afaqis* and the *dakhinis*.

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UNIT-12

THE VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE

Structure

- 12.1 Introduction
- 12.2 Objectives
- 12.3 Establishment and Consolidation
 - 12.3.1 The Greatness and Achievement
 - 12.3.2 Conflict between Vijayanagar and Bahmani

Self-Check Exercise-1

- 12.4 Summary
- 12.5 Glossary
- 12.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 12.7 Suggested Readings
- 12.8 Terminal Questions

12.1 Introduction

Vijayanagar or “City of Victory” was the name of both a city and an Empire. The Empire was founded in the 14th century. In its prime it stretched from the river Krishna in the North to the extreme South of the peninsula. In 1565 CE, the city was sacked and subsequently deserted. Although it fell into ruin in the 17-18th centuries, it lived on in the memories of people residing in the Krishna-Tungabhadra doab. They remembered it as **Hampi**, a name derived from that of the local mother goddess, Pampadevi. These oral traditions combined with archaeological finds, monuments and inscriptions and other records helped scholars to rediscover the Vijayanagar Empire.

12.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Learn about the establishment and consolidation of the Vijayanagar Empire,
- Know about the greatness and achievement of the Vijayanagar Empire,
- Understand the conflict between the Vijayanagar and the Bahmani Empire.

12.3 Establishment and Consolidation

The foundation of the Vijayanagar kingdom on the South-West coast of India was laid down by two brothers, **Harihara and Bukka**, two of the five sons of Sangama. They were probably kinsmen and revenue officials of Pratap Rudra Deva II, the Kakatiya ruler of Warrangal. When the

kingdom of Warrangal was captured by the Tughlaqs, they shifted to Kampili and joined the service of its local Hindu chieftain. When Sultan Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq conquered Kampili these two brothers were taken captives to Delhi and forced to embrace Islam. Afterwards, when there occurred a revolt in Kampili, Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq sent them there to suppress that revolt. They failed in their attempt because of the resistance of the people of Kampili who were inspired by the spirit of independence. The success of Kapaya Nayaka and Ballala II in liberating the Andhra and Dravida Pradesh inspired the two brothers to champion the cause of liberation of the South from the Turkish domination. One celebrated sage, Vidyaranya of Sringeri encouraged them to accept Hinduism once again and pleaded to his guru, Vidyatirtha, the chief priest of Advaita-matha at Sringeri for it. Vidyatirtha converted them to Hinduism and they decided to liberate their people from the Turkish domination. In 1336 CE, Harihara founded the independent kingdom of Hampi-Hastinavati and was crowned as its first king. On his coronation day, he founded a new habitat at a strategic location, surrounded by hills and forests, on the bank of Tungabhadra river, as a place of protection against the Muslim invaders which was named as **Vijayanagar (Vidyanagara)**. Later on, this very small state grew up as the mighty kingdom of Vijayanagar.

Harihara I ruled from 1336 to 1356 CE. His first capital was **Anegondi** (or **Kampili**) but he shifted it to Vijayanagar after seven years. Harihara I was a capable ruler but he had to struggle hard against his neighbors. Qutlugh Khan, the governor of Devagiri was not happy with establishment of a Hindu state by his side. Even Vir Ballala III, Kapaya Nayak and his friend Prolaya Vema who were leading the independence movement of the Hindus in the South were not friendly to him. Yet, Harihara I succeeded in extending his Empire in the West and the South. While Ballala III was attempting to conquer Madura, Harihara I captured part of his Eastern territory. Later on, when Ballala was murdered in 1342 CE, Harihara I annexed his entire kingdom. He then conquered the state of Kadamba and defeated the Sultan of Madura. Harihara I also took steps to organize the administration on sound lines. He encouraged agriculture and strengthened the fortification of the forts of Badami, Udayagiri and Gooty. His civil administration lasted until the very last days of the Vijayanagar Empire.

Harihara I was succeeded by his brother **Bukka I** (1356-1377 CE). Bukka I centralized the administration, brought provincial governors under his effective control and it was under him that the whole of Tamil Nadu was conquered and annexed to the kingdom of Vijayanagar. He came to an understanding with the ruler of Warangal and then compelled the Bahmani ruler, Muhammad Shah I to hand over Krishna-Tungabhadra-Doab to him. From that time there started the protracted struggle for power in the South between the Vijayanagar and the Bahmani Empires. During the reign of Bukka I, the river Krishna was accepted as the boundary line of the two states. However, the most important conquest of Bukka was that of the Sultanate of Madurai because of which his Empire extended up to Ramesvaram in the extreme South. Thus, Bukka I extended further the territory of that kingdom which he had inherited from Harihara I. Bukka I also proved to be a capable ruler. He claimed to be the protector of Hinduism and assumed the title of *Vedmarga-pratishthapaka* or the establisher of the path of the Vedas. Neither Harihara I nor Bukka I assumed the title of the king. Bukka I pursued a liberal religious policy and all religions were provided equal freedom by the state which remained the settled policy of the Vijayanagar Empire till its extinction. Fresh commentaries were composed on the Vedas and the allied religious texts during his reign. He encouraged Telugu literature and was a patron of Nachana Soma, greatest Telugu poet of the age. Bukka I died in 1377 CE. The Vijayanagar Empire lasted for 230 years and produced three ruling dynasties. The ruling house founded by Harihar I and Bukka I came to be known as the **Sangama Dynasty** after their father Sangama.

Bukka I was succeeded by his son **Harihara II** (1377-1404 CE) who assumed the imperial titles of *Maharajadhiraja* (king of kings) and *Raja Parmeshwara*. He extended his dominions by the conquest of Kanara, Mysore, Trichinopoly, Kanchi, etc. and forced the king of Sri Lanka (Ceylon) to pay him tribute. Bahmani Sultan Mujahid Shah attacked Vijayanagar in 1377 CE but failed to get any success and was murdered while returning from his campaign. Taking advantage of the dissensions in the Bahmani kingdom, Harihara II attacked Konkan and Northern Karnataka and captured the ports of Chaul and Dabhol as well as Goa which made him the master of the entire West coast of the Deccan. Bahmani Sultans, Muhammad Shah II and Firuz Shah respectively tried to capture Krishna-Tungabhadra-Doab from him without any success. Thus, Harihara II extended further the territory of his Empire. He was a successful commander and proved himself equally successful administrator.

When Harihara II died in 1404 CE, there ensued a succession dispute among his sons **Virupaksha I** and **Bukka II**. At first, Virupaksha I crowned himself but was ousted just after a year by his brother Bukka II, who in turn, was overthrown by **Devaraya I** who became the ruler in 1406 CE. Sultan Firuz Shah Bahmani attacked Vijayanagar immediately after his accession to the throne, however, he was defeated and a truce was arranged. Devaraya I reinforced his cavalry and recruited Turkish-archers in it. The last years of the reign of Devaraya I passed on peacefully and Vijayanagar became the center of learning in the South. He died in 1422 CE.

Devaraya I was succeeded by his son **Ramachandra** who ruled only for some months and, in turn, was succeeded by his brother **Vijaya I**. However, he left the administration primarily in the hands of his son Devaraya II, who ascended the throne after his death. He was one of the greatest monarchs of Sangama dynasty. **Devaraya II** (1422-1466 CE) fought against the Bahmani kingdom twice but was unsuccessful. However, he succeeded in defeating the rulers of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh. He also recruited Turkish-archers in his army. Nicolo Conti and Abdur Razaak, the two foreign adventurers, visited Vijayanagar during his reign. Both described Vijayanagar as the most prosperous and powerful state of South India. Devaraya II was succeeded by his brother **Vijaya II** who left the throne after a year in favor of his nephew, **Mallikarjuna** (1446-1465 CE). The states of Orissa and Bahmani attacked Vijayanagar during his reign and Orissa captured the forts of Kondavidu and Udayagiri from it. Mallikarjuna was well versed in astrology and he assumed the titles like '*Gajavettaikkara*'. He was probably, murdered by his cousin, **Virupaksha II** who captured the throne in 1465 CE. He proved to be inefficient. The provincial governors refused to obey him which weakened the Vijayanagar Empire. It resulted in the loss of a part of its territory to Orissa and the capture of Goa, Konkan and Northern Karnataka by the Bahmani kingdom. He was an absolutely worthless king living a life of debauchery and drunkenness. However, the Empire was saved because of the efforts of Saluva Narasimha, the chief of Chandragiri. The incapability of Virupaksha II led to the downfall of his dynasty. He was murdered by one of his sons in 1485 CE who, however, renounced his claim to the throne in favor of his younger brother, Pradha Devaraya. But **Saluva Narasimha** soon dethroned him, captured the throne in 1485 CE and laid down the foundation of the rule of his own dynasty i.e., the **Saluva dynasty**. This event is known as the **First Usurpation**. It replaced the rule of the Sangamas by that of the Saluvas. This dynasty lasted two decades only from 1485 to 1505 CE.

Saluva Narasimha was an able general. He was the first and the last ruler of his dynasty. He recovered most of the territories which had been annexed by the Bahmani Sultans and the Hindu ruler of Orissa. He died in 1490 CE. Before his death he left behind his two minor sons to the care of his trusted general Narasa Nayaka. At first Narasa Nayaka placed one of his sons, **Immadi**

Narasimha on the throne though enjoyed all the powers of the state himself. Narasa Nayaka died in 1503 CE and his son, Vira Narasimha who became regent in his place deposed Immadi Narasimha in 1505 CE and. Now **Vira Narasimha** became the ruler and founded the rule of a new dynasty, the **Taluva dynasty**. This is known as the **Second Usurpation**. As a result, the Saluvas were replaced by the Taluvas.

Vira Narasimha (1505-1509 CE) who ascended the throne by treachery aroused resentment and opposition from many grandees of the state. His authority was defied by some of the provincial governors and the feudatory chiefs. He strengthened his army, made his subjects war-like, concluded a treaty with the Portuguese governor, Almeida for purchasing all the horses imported by him, pursued a liberal policy in administration and foiled invasions of the Bahmani kingdom.

On his death, Vira Narasimha was succeeded by his half-brother, **Krishnadeva Raya** (1509-1529 CE) who was by far the greatest monarch of Vijayanagar. During his reign the Empire reached at the zenith of its power and prosperity. He suppressed the internal revolts with an iron hand and restored law and order within his dominions. By that time, the Bahmani kingdom was divided into five independent kingdoms. Yet, all these five states were the strong enemies of the Vijayanagar Empire. Therefore, his main contest was against those Muslim states which were determined to destroy the Vijayanagar Empire. Sultan Mahmud Shah declared jihad and attacked Vijayanagar in the early years of his reign. However, Krishnadeva Raya not only defeated him but hotly pursued him. Yusuf Adil Khan, the ruler of Bijapur, was killed in the battle and Krishnadeva Raya conquered Krishna-Tungabhadra-Doab, and the forts of Raichur and Bidar. However, he returned Bidar state to Mahmud Shah by which he desired to bring about a division among the five Muslim states. Next, he conquered Warangal and snatched away the forts of Udyagiri and Kondavidu from Orissa. Golkunda and Bijapur also attacked Vijayanagar in turn. Both were defeated. The army of Bijapur was chased and the historic fort of Gulbarga was sacked and demolished by Krishnadeva Raya. However, he returned after placing Muhammad Shah II's eldest son on the throne. Thus, Krishnadeva Raya defeated all his enemies and recaptured all territory and forts of the Vijayanagar Empire which were lost by its earlier rulers. He remained undefeated in the battle. He had friendly relations with the Portuguese who had made their settlements along the Western coast. Albuquerque, the Portuguese governor of Goa, sent a diplomatic-cum-trade mission to Vijayanagar in 1510 CE and secured many concessions from its monarch.

Krishnadeva Raya was an excellent administrator, scholar and patron of fine arts and literature. He utilized the resources of the state for the happiness and welfare of his subjects and adopted a policy of religious toleration towards them. He founded the city of Negallapur, constructed many Gopurams and Mandapas and beautified his capital city, Vijayanagar. Telugu literature made great progress during his reign. The Vijayanagar Empire reached the apex of its glory in peace, order, power, prosperity and learning during his reign. In his autobiography, *Baburnama*, the Mughal emperor, Babur described Krishnadeva Raya as the most powerful ruler of India.

Krishnadeva Raya was succeeded by his brother **Achyuta Raya** (1530-42 CE) who proved to be a weak and incompetent ruler. The central authority weakened during his reign. He was succeeded by his nephew, **Sadasiva Raya** in 1542 CE. He was a puppet in the hands of his Brahmin Prime Minister Ram Raya who was an able but arrogant man. Extremely ambitious and tactless, he tried to create dissensions among five Muslim states which once formed the Bahmani kingdom. For a while, he made them fight with one another. But, ultimately, this policy failed and all these states formed a confederacy against Vijayanagar in the name of Islam. The combined army of Bijapur,

Ahmadnagar, Golkunda and Bidar attacked the mighty army of Vijayanagar and the famous **Battle of Talikota** took place on January 25, 1565 CE. The army of Vijayanagar received a crushing defeat and the invaders completely destroyed the capital city of Vijayanagar. Ram Raya was captured and beheaded and his royal camp was sacked which yielded incalculable treasure, arms, horses and much besides.

The Battle of Talikota crippled the Vijayanagar Empire. Its glory came to an end although the Empire could not be wiped out of existence altogether. Tirumala, the brother of deposed Prime Minister Ram Raya set up his headquarters at **Penugonda** and maintained the existence of the Empire. The mutual jealousy of the victors prevented them to UNITE among themselves once against Vijayanagar. That also helped the efforts of Tirumala. In 1570 CE, **Tirumala** dethroned Sadasiva Raya and captured the throne for himself. Thus, he laid down the foundation of a new dynasty, the **Aravidu dynasty**. Gradually he recovered a part of the kingdom and restored law and order there. Tirumala was succeeded by his son, **Ranga II** who was a successful ruler. He, in turn, was succeeded by his brother, **Venkata II**. The Empire began to disintegrate during his rule. Ranga III was the last important ruler of this dynasty. He failed to keep the provincial governors under his control. Independent kingdoms were established at Mysore, Bednur, Madura, Tanjore etc. and the Vijayanagar Empire reached its end in 1614-15 CE.

12.3.1 The Greatness and Achievement

The Vijayanagar kingdom which flourished between the 13th and the 16th centuries imbibed the tenets of the various forms of art and architecture, literature, prevalent in the diverse regions over which it extended its sway, and in its turn, evolved and developed a new form of culture.

Education and Learning

The rulers of Vijayanagar kingdom were great patrons of education and learning. Their period of rule was marked by the renaissance in Sanskrit-'the language of higher culture' in the South, and Vedic literature. It also witnessed tremendous growth and development of Dravidian languages-Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam. Bukka I took prompt steps to rehabilitate Hindu religious and cultural institutions which had suffered a serious set-back during the Muslim rule. Under his inspiring leadership, Sanskrit scholars, experts in Hindu religion and philosophy, poets and artists flocked to the court of Vijayanagar and initiated the process for the revival of ancient Indian and indigenous education and learning as well as art and architecture. The people assembled from all parts of South India and received patronage from the Vijayanagar court without any regional or sectarian prejudices. Consequently, the scholars and the saints, men of letters and the artists, all worked in perfect harmony with one another to produce the synthetic culture of South India. Indeed that was by far the greatest cultural achievement of the Vijayanagar Empire. A galaxy of Sanskrit scholars, headed by **Sayana**, wrote commentaries on Vedas and some of the Brahmanas and Aranyakas. Bukka I encouraged Telegu literature. He provided protection to a great Telegu poet, **Nachan Soma**. King Devaraya II provided court patronage to 34 poets. Most of the Vijayanagar rulers and other members of the royalty were well-educated and some of them actually made literary contributions.

Krishnadeva Raya was a great scholar of Sanskrit and Tamil language. He was a born poet with love for philosophy as well as music, he attracted the most talented men and women of his age to his court and provided them the best opportunities for the display of their literary and artistic skills; his reign has rightly been known as the '**dawn of a new era in the literary history of South India**'. He is said to have contributed five books in Sanskrit besides the one in Tamil, entitled,

Amuktamalyada. The abundant literature produced in Tamil language during the Vijayanagar Empire was next only to the Sanskrit literature of South India. The religious literature in Tamil was composed by Shaivites, Vaishnavites and the Jain scholars; it comprised translations of ancient scriptures from Sanskrit to Tamil and preparation of commentaries thereon, recasting of the Puranic literature and some works on religious philosophy. Meykandar prepared *Siva Nana Bodam*, a short treatise of a dozen sutras. The *Siva Nana Sittiyar* of Arunandi is regarded as a great classic of Shaiva doctrine in Tamil. Two great scholar-saints of the early 15th century, Svarupananda Desikar and his pupil Tattuvarayar prepared two anthologies on the philosophy of Advaita, entitled *Sivaprakasa Perundirattu* and *Kurundirattu*. The last work on Shaiva philosophy was written by Velliyambala Tambiran with the title *Nana bharana Vilakham*. Tanjai Vanam Kovai of Poyyamoli and Nalavenba of Pugalendi was the secular literature of those times. The *Bharatam* of Villiputturar, composed in 1400 CE is an epic of great merit which tells the whole story of the Mahabharata in 4350 Tamil verses.

The transformation of Telugu as a language of literary merit starts with Nannaya's effort to translate the Mahabharata into it during the reign of Rajaraja Narendra (1019-61 CE). Tikkana (1220-1300 CE), the greatest Telugu poet of his times, resumed the versification of the Mahabharata from where Nannaya had left; somehow he also could not complete the work which received finishing touches from Yerrapragada (1280-1350 CE). Yerrapragada, who became famous as Prabandha Paramesvara, proved his competence as an outstanding scholar and poet who 'begins his work in the style of Nannaya and, gradually, passes into that of Tikkana'. All the translators of the Mahabharata are highly respected by the Telugu scholars of the medieval and modern ages alike. The work of translation and adaptation of Sanskrit scriptures and secular literature into Telugu preoccupied the scholars of that language during the Vijayanagar Empire. Vemana, the author of popular *Sataka verses*, and Virabhadra who versified Kalidasa's *Shakuntala* into Telugu, were some of the other famous scholars of Telugu. More original and standard works in Telugu started coming up with the reign of Krishnadeva Raya whose court adorned, among others, Allasani Peddana who was honoured with the royal title of *Andhrakavita-pitamaha*- 'the Grandfather of Telugu Poetry'. The duration of Vijayanagar Empire constitutes the formative age in the development of Kannada and Malayalam languages also. Madhura was the first Kannada scholar of this age who wrote, in 1385 CE, *Dharma-nathapurana* on the 15th Jain Tirthankara during the reigns of Harihar II and Devaraya I. Palkunki Somanatha wrote numerous books on Virasaivism in Telugu and Kannada languages; and Mallanarya, who adorned the court of Krishnadeva Raya, similarly produced valuable literature in Kannada and Sanskrit. The scholarship in Sanskrit was a precondition for attaining recognition or competence in the Dravidian languages. *Karnataka Sabdanusasana* of Bhattakalanka Deva, composed in 1604 CE, was the most comprehensive grammar of Kannada in 592 Sanskrit sutras with a glossary (*vrutti*) and commentary (*vyakhya*) in the same language. *Unnunili Sandesam*, a poem of the early 14th century, is the first standard literary work in Malayalam. It is based on the model of *Meghduta* of Kalidasa. Nambudiri brahmins introduced a new class of Malayalam literature known as *Chakkiyarkuttu*. Generally, the Puranic stories and other literary traditions of the past formed the themes of this literature. **Rama Panikkar**, has been described by the critics as the '**Chaucer of Malayalam**' composed *Ramayanam Bharatagatha*, *Savitri Mahatmyam*, *Brahmandapuranam* and *Bhagavatam*. Madhava Panikkar translated *Bhagawad Gita* from Sanskrit into Malayalam. The author of *Krishnagatha*, Cherusseri Nambudiri, heralded the literature of modern Malayalam.

Art and Architecture

The South Indian art and architecture, which had reached its zenith in the pre-Muslim period, received cruel treatment at the hands of the armies of Islam led by Alauddin Khalji and his military generals. The preservation and development of all that had remained of Hinduism against the attacks of Islamic invaders was one of the declared objectives of the Vijayanagar Empire. Revival of Brahmanism was the immediate result of the Vijayanagar revolution in the south. Temple building activity and patronage to all the ancient fine arts, including sculpture, painting, music, dancing etc. engaged the total attention of the Vijayanagar court which received enthusiastic cooperation and liberal financial contributions from both rich and the poor. Many temples were renovated; new temples on very elaborate plans were constructed over the ruins of the old. The different schools of ancient architecture of South India pooled their resources to evolve new art forms and architectural plans. The newly constructed temples were generally of massive structure. Among the new additions to the temple architecture may be mentioned as the *kalyanamandapa* or 'ornate pillared pavilion' built in the left corner of the courtyard, varied and most artistic use of the pillars for the extension of buildings and construction of huge audience halls, and profuse ornamentation giving vent to the entire range of ancient Indian sculptural and ornamental forms and painting, etc., 'a thousand pillared mandapa' became an ideal form of the Vijayanagar style of temple architecture. Amongst the stone heaps of the city of Vijayanagar can still be seen a few partially ruined monuments of exquisite beauty which challenged the clubs and hammers of the vandals; they are the **Vitthala** and **Hazara Ram** temples, the Throne Platform and the King's Audience Hall, supported by ten rows of ten pillars each. A majority of the famous temples of modern India, situated to the South of the Tungabhadra were constructed during the Vijayanagar era; the town of Kumbakonam, Kanchipuram, Srirangam, Tadpatri, Vellore and Virinchipuram are adorned with such historic temples which constitute the places of pilgrimage and worship for the millions. The last phase of the Vijayanagar architecture is characterized by the Madura style which continued to flourish even after the fall of the Empire; the specimen temples of this style are found at Madura, Rameshwaram, Srirangam, Jambukevvara, Tiruvalur, Chidambaram, Tinnevely and many other places in the extreme South.

Wealth and Prosperity

It appears that Vijayanagar was the most extensive and richest of all the states of India in the 15th and first half of the 16th century. It owed its prosperity to the growth and development of agriculture and industry, trade and commerce. Abdur Razzak mentions that there were 300 seaports in the Empire which established its commercial contacts with Persia, Arabia, Africa, Archipelago, Burma, China and a number of islands in the Indian Ocean. South India exported cloth, rice indigo, iron, saltpeter, diamonds, sugar, and spices; and received, in return, horses, pearls, copper, china-silk and velvet, etc. Ship-building industry flourished in the coastal towns. The foreign travelers who visited the court of Vijayanagar praised the riches of the Vijayanagar Empire. The vast quantities of gold, diamonds and material wealth possessed by the inhabitants of Vijayanagar was beyond the comprehension or estimation of the foreign travelers. Abdur Razzak refers to the existence of 'chambers with excavations' in the royal treasury of Vijayanagar which had been filled up with molten gold to form one mass, and Domingos Paes mentions that the citizens of Vijayanagar 'high or low, even down to the artificers of the bazar, wear jewels and gift ornaments in their ears and around their necks, arms, wrists and fingers. South India was 'a golden sparrow' of the East during the age of the Vijayanagar Empire and it rightly excited the curiosity and envy of the foreigners who visited its coasts in the 15th and 16th centuries.

12.3.2 Conflict between Vijayanagar and Bahmani Kingdom

The Vijayanagar and the Bahmani kingdoms were constantly at conflicts between each other over the control of Raichur doab which was the land between rivers Krishna and Tungabhadra. This area was fertile and rich in mineral resources. The famous diamond mines of Golconda were situated in the Eastern part of the doab region. The geography of both the kingdoms was such that expansion was possible only across Tungabhadra in the Deccan. Apparently, the battles between the two were inconclusive and the status quo was maintained. Sometimes, Bahmani had an advantage and sometimes, Vijayanagar had an advantage. For example, in 1504 CE, the Bahmani managed to reconquer the Raichur doab. However, with the ascent of Krishnadeva Raya, the Bahmanis lost Raichur, Mudkal, Nalgonda and other inland towns. An important consequence of these wars was that both the kingdoms were so involved amongst themselves that they never realised the increasing power of the Portuguese on the coast of South India. Besides, continuous warfare exhausted the resources of both the states and weakened them. Marathwada region and the deltaic region of Krishna-Godavari were the other areas of conflict. Both regions had fertile areas and important ports that controlled trade with foreign countries. For instance, the fertile area in the Marathwada region was the Konkan belt that also had the port of Goa which was an important area for trade and export and import, especially import of horses from Iraq and Iran. Often, the battles between the kingdoms of Vijayanagar and the Bahmani states are perceived as Hindu-Muslim conflicts. The above explanations show that the struggle was not due to any religious differences. Territorial and economic objectives were the main causes for the war. Despite conflicts between the two states, there were times when they also co-operated with each other. For example, Krishnadeva Raya supported some claimants to power in the Sultanates and took pride in the title “establisher of the Yavana kingdom”. In the same way, the Sultan of Bijapur intervened to resolve succession disputes in Vijayanagar following the death of Krishnadeva Raya. There were also sharing and exchanging ideas, especially in the field of art, literature and architecture.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 was the Sultan of Delhi when the Vijayanagar Empire was founded?
- Q.2 What was another name of Vijayanagar city?
- Q.3 Who laid the foundation of the Vijayanagar kingdom?
- Q.4 When was the Vijayanagar kingdom founded?
- Q.5 How many dynasties ruled the Vijayanagar Empire?
- Q.6 Name the Persian ambassador who visited Vijayanagar Empire in 1443 CE.
- Q.7 When Babur invaded India who was the ruler of Vijayanagar Empire in South India?
- Q.8 Krishnadeva Raya belonged to which dynasty of Vijayanagar Empire?
- Q.9 Who composed the work *Amuktamalyada*?
- Q.10 When was the Battle of Talikota fought?
- Q.11 Name any two temples of Vijayanagar Empire.
- Q.12 What is the land area between Krishna river and Tungabhadra river called?

12.4 Summary

- The Vijayanagar Empire was founded in 1336 CE by Harihara and Bukka.
- The ruling house founded by Harihara I and Bukka I came to be known as the Sangama Dynasty. Anegondi (or Kampili) was the initial capital of the Vijayanagar kingdom.
- Harihara II assumed the titles of Maharajadhiraja and Raja Parmeshwara.
- Devaraya I became the ruler of Vijayanagar in 1406 CE. Sultan Firuz Shah Bahmani attacked Vijayanagar immediately after his accession to the throne, however, he was defeated and a truce was arranged.
- Devaraya II fought against the Bahmani kingdom twice but was unsuccessful. Nicolo Conti and Abdur Razaak, the two foreign adventurers, visited Vijayanagar during his reign.
- Four dynasties namely, Sangama, Saluva, Tuluva and Aravidu ruled the kingdom of Vijayanagar.
- Krishnadeva Raya was the greatest king of the Vijayanagar Empire during whose reign the empire reached the pinnacle of glory. He was successful in all the wars he fought.
- Krishnadeva Raya was an excellent administrator, scholar and patron of fine arts and literature.
- The combined army of Bijapur, Ahmadnagar, Golkunda and Bidar attacked the mighty army of Vijayanagar and the famous Battle of Talikota took place on January 25, 1565 CE. The army of Vijayanagar received a crushing defeat.
- Tirumala shifted the capital of Vijayanagar kingdom to Penugonda. He laid the foundation of the Aravidu dynasty.
- The Vijayanagar kingdom imbibed the tenets of the various forms of art and architecture, literature, prevalent in the diverse regions over which it extended its sway, and in its turn, evolved and developed a new form of culture.
- The rulers of Vijayanagar kingdom were great patrons of education and learning.
- The period of Vijayanagar Empire was marked by the renaissance in Sanskrit language and tremendous growth in Dravidian languages.
- Krishnadeva Raya was a great scholar of Sanskrit and Tamil language. He was a born poet with love for philosophy as well as music.
- Temple building activity and patronage to all the ancient fine arts, including sculpture, painting, music, dancing etc. engaged the total attention of the Vijayanagar court.
- Vijayanagar was the most extensive and richest of all the states of India in the 15th and first half of the 16th century.
- The Vijayanagar and the Bahmani kingdoms were constantly at conflicts between each other over the control of Raichur doab which was the land between rivers Krishna and Tungabhadra.

12.5 Glossary

Debauchery: Excessive indulgence in sex, alcohol, or drugs.

Doab: An alluvial land between converging rivers.

Gopuram: A large pyramidal tower over the entrance gate to a temple precinct.

Grandee: A person of high rank or eminence.

Mandapa: A pillared hall or porch fronting a Hindu temple.

Tirthankara: Twenty-four enlightened spiritual masters of Jainism who are believed to have achieved perfect knowledge through asceticism.

12.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

- | | |
|--------|---------------------------------|
| Ans.1 | Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq |
| Ans.2 | Hampi |
| Ans.3 | Harihara and Bukka |
| Ans.4 | 1336 CE |
| Ans.5 | Four |
| Ans.6 | Abdur Razaak |
| Ans.7 | Krishnadeva Raya |
| Ans.8 | Tuluva dynasty |
| Ans.9 | Krishnadeva Raya |
| Ans.10 | January 25, 1565 CE |
| Ans.11 | Hazara Ram and Vitthala temples |
| Ans.12 | Raichur doab |

12.7 Suggested Readings

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4. Robert Sewell, 2018, “*A Forgotten Empire Vijayanagar: A Contribution to the History of India*”, Alpha Edition.
5. Romila Thapar, 2003, “*The Penguin History of Early India: Vijayanagara*”, Cambridge University Press.

6. S.R Ramanujan, 2019, “*Vijayanagara: The Never To Be Forgotten Empire*”, Notion Press; Ist Edition.

12.8 Terminal Questions

1. Account for the establishment and consolidation of the Vijayanagar Empire.
2. Give an estimate of the achievements of Krishnadeva Raya.
3. Describe the contribution of the rulers of Vijayanagar in the field of education and learning.
4. Give an account of the development of art and architecture in the Vijayanagar Empire.
5. What do you know about the wealth and prosperity of the Vijayanagar kingdom?
6. Discuss the conflict between the Vijayanagar and Bahmani kingdom for the control over Krishna-Godavari delta, Tungabhadra doab and Konkan.

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UNIT-13

TIMUR'S INVASION AND THE DOWNFALL OF THE DELHI SULTANATE

Structure

- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 Objectives
- 13.3 Timur's Invasion on India
 - 13.3.1 Causes of the Downfall of Delhi Sultanate

Self-Check Exercise -1

- 13.4 Summary
- 13.5 Glossary
- 13.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 13.7 Suggested Readings
- 13.8 Terminal Questions

13.1 Introduction

Timur was a great military commander and conqueror of Central Asia. He conquered one kingdom after another. In course of a fight, his one leg got wounded and consequently, he limped for the rest of his life. Thereafter he came to know as **Timur-the-lame**. The Persian called him '**Timur-i-lang**'. He invaded Northern India, attacking the Delhi Sultanate ruled by Sultan Nasir-ud-Din Mahmud Shah Tughlaq of the Tughlaq dynasty. The process of disintegration of Delhi Sultanate began during the reign of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq. Ultimately, by the time of Nasir-ud-Din Mahmud Shah Tughlaq, there remained neither the Tughlaq Empire nor its prestige and power. The disintegration of Delhi Sultanate was completed by the invasion of Timur.

13.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the causes of invasion of Timur on India,
- Examine the impact of Timur's Invasion on India,
- Analyze the causes of the decline and disintegration of the Delhi Sultanate.

13.3 Timur's Invasion on India

Timur was born in the year 1336 CE. At the town of Kech or Shahar-i-Sabz about 40 miles south of Samarqand in Transoxiana. His family belonged to Barlas clan of the Turks and his father Amir Turghay was the master of the small principality of Kech. Timur became the master of the

small principality after the death of his father in 1361 CE. From that year onwards till his death in 1405 CE. Timur engaged himself in warfare and succeeded in establishing a vast empire.

Causes of Timur's Invasion

Timur launched numerous aggressive conquests in Persia, Afghanistan and Mesopotamia. The wealth of India encouraged him to invade this land. The disintegration of the Delhi Kingdom also provided him a suitable opportunity. All the later rulers of the Tughlaq dynasty, who followed Firuz proved to be incompetent, without any ability or strength of character. They were merely puppets in the hands of ambitious nobles who only watched their own interests without caring for the state. All this led to civil wars among the rival claimants to the throne. And thus the vast kingdom built up by the valor, ability and labors of the rulers fell to pieces. The final blow to this already broken kingdom was given by Timur's Invasion in 1398 CE.

It is difficult to ascertain the real objective of the invasion of India by Timur. He was a great military adventurer and was filled with the desire for territories. But being a clever diplomat, he pretended that his main objective of invasion of India was to put down idolatry which was tolerated by the Delhi Sultans. He had no desire of conquering India and ruling over it either directly or indirectly. It is believed that Timur summoned a council of warriors and the ulemas to seek their advice. Shahrukh referred to the vast territories of India and the advantages that were sure to come account of its conquest. Prince Muhammad point to the resources of India and her precious metals, jewels and pearls. He also highlighted the religious aspects of the matter. There were some nobles who highlighted the evil consequences of settling down in India. Thus, Timur is said to have observed thus " My object in the invasion of Hindustan is to lead an expedition against infidels, that according to the law of Muhammad, we may convert the people of the country to a true faith and purify the land itself from the filth of infidelity and polytheism and that we may overthrow their temples and idols and become Ghazis and Mujahids before God". Thus, we can say that he used religion as a pretext to win the support of the nobles and warriors, who were not in favour of his meditated invasion of India.

Initially Timur sent his grandson, Pir Mohammad to do the preliminary work. Pir Mohammad captured Uchh and proceeded towards Multan which was captured after a long siege of six months. Pir Mohammad also overran entire Dipalpur and Pak Pattan and reached the river Sutlej and waited for his grandfather.

Timur left Samarqand in April, 1398 CE, with a large army and reached Talamba, situated seventy miles to the North-East of Multan. He sacked Talamba and massacred its inhabitants. Later on he was joined by Pir Mohammad. During the rest of Indian campaign of Timur, Pir Mohammad commanded the right wing of his army.

The town of Pak Pattan and Dipalpur had incurred the anger of Timur by rising against Pir. Muhammad. The citizens of Pak pattan were flogged, plundered and enslaved. Five hundred citizens of Dipalpur, were massacred to avenge their slaughter of the garrison of Pir Muhammad in that town. Rai Dul Chand, a Bhati Rajput was the ruler of Bhatnir. He offered a tough resistance but eventually surrendered. The assessment and collection of the ransom of Bhatnir incited resistance on the part of the inhabitants and after a general massacre, the city was destroyed.

Timur left Bhatnir in November, 1398 CE and marched through Sirsa and Fatehabad, pursuing and slaughtering the inhabitants. Aharwan was plundered and burnt. About 2000 jats were slaughtered at Tohana. On 29th November, the whole army assembled at Kaithal and marched to

Panipat. On 7th December 1398 CE, the right wing of the army reached North Delhi overlooking the Jamuna and crossed it on 9th December. On 10th December, Timur captured Loni. Nasir-ud-Din Mahmud and Mallu Iqbal collected their troops within the walls of the city. On 12th December, Mallu Iqbal attacked the rear guard of Timur. Two divisions were sent to aid the rear-guard and Mallu was defeated and driven back to Delhi. The only achievement of this venture was a terrible massacre of adult male Hindus. Timur feared that on the day of battle they might, "break their bonds, plunder our tents and join the enemy".

Despite the warnings of astrologers and hesitations of the troops, Timur crossed the Jamuna on 15th December 1398 CE. Mallu Iqbal and Mahmud Shah also led their forces out of Delhi. The Indian army consisted of 10,000 horse, 40,000 foot and 120 elephants. Timur positioned the right wing of his army under Pir Mohammad and Amir Yadgar Barlas, his left wing under Sultan Husain, Prince Khali and Amir Jahan and he himself commanded the centre. The two armies confronted each other outside Delhi and the battle started with loud screams on both sides. The assault was begun by Timur's commanders who separated themselves from the advance guard and moved off to the right and came behind the advance guard of the enemy and fell upon them and scattered them.

Pir Mohammad destroyed the left wing of the enemy and forced it to flee from the battle field. Sultan Mahmud Shah and Mallu Iqbal attacked the central wing and fought bravely but fled away from the battle-field and Timur hoisted his flag on the ramparts of Delhi. The Sayyids, the Qazis the Shaikhs and the Ulemas' of the City waited upon Timur and in response to their requests, he granted pardon to the people of Delhi. However, the license of the soldiery, rigor of the search for fugitives from other towns who were not included in the pardon, and assessment of the ransom led to disturbances. As a result, the bloodshed continued for many days. A large number of persons were captured and enslaved. Artisans were sent to different parts of Timur's Empire. The three towns of Siri, Old Delhi and Jahan Panah were ravaged by Timur.

After halting at Delhi for fifteen days, Timur returned through Firuzabad, stormed Meerut on the way and advancing further north defeated two Hindu armies in the neighbourhood of Haridwar. Marching along the Siwalik Hills, he captured Kangra and sacked Jammu, the inhabitants of those places being slaughtered in large numbers.

Timur handed over the charge of Multan, Lahore and Dipalpur to Khizr Khan Sayyid and reclosed the Indus after imposing on India more misery than had ever before been inflicted by any conqueror in a single invasion. Nature also caused havoc to the people of Delhi at this crucial time and added to their miseries caused by the ravages of bloody wars and devastations. According to Badauni such a famine and pestilence fell upon Delhi that the city was completely ruined, and those of the inhabitants who were left died. Timur, in short, completed the dissolution of the Tughlaq kingdom, the vitality of which had long been affected. The decay of political authority in Delhi encouraged the corrupt nobles and adventurers to indulge more and more in base intrigues. Some of them sided with Nusrat Shah, who had been so long loitering in the Doab, to take possession of Delhi in 1399 CE but he was defeated and expelled from that city by Mallu Iqbal. On returning to Delhi in 1401 CE, Mallu Iqbal invited Sultan Mahmud, who had found shelter at Dhar, to return to Delhi. Sultan Mahmud returned to Delhi. However, he remained as a puppet in the hands of Mallu Iqbal till the latter's death in 1405 CE. Being a weak king, Sultan Mahmud was not able to make proper use of his restored position. He died at Kaithal in 1413 CE and with him the Tughlaq dynasty came to a humiliating end.

Impact of Timur's Invasion

The invasion of Amir Timur had devastating effects on the socio-cultural, political and economic condition of Northern India. Timur descended upon India as 'a scourge of God' and caused untold miseries upon its people. The entire North-Western region, including Delhi and a part of the Doab, was in indescribable disorder and confusion. Delhi was in ruins and almost depopulated. There was the onset of famine and pestilence. The male prisoners were used as beasts of burden to carry the spoils on their heads for their victors to their homelands; a number of them died of hunger and fatigue on the way. Thousands of Indian women were enslaved, dishonoured, and humiliated.

As a result of the extensive destruction of magnificent monuments, libraries and karkhanas the cultural and industrial development of North-Western India came to a halt. The entire region plundered by the invaders was deprived of most of the talented craftsmen, artisans, mechanics and artists who were taken as slaves to Central Asia. Certainly, they constructed public buildings, palaces, forts and mausoleums for their masters and contributed to the industrial and cultural development of Central Asia.

Due to Timur's onslaught, the entire administrative set up of Northern India was thrown out of gear by Timur's attack. The people who escaped death or enslavement were left without adequate protection from the obsolete governmental authority of the land. Political anarchy encouraged thieves, highwaymen and other anti-social elements to create chaos among the helpless people. The socio-economic life of the countryside people had been disturbed, the agricultural production stopped resulting in a shortage of foodstuffs and inflation. Timur left behind famine, disease and misery for the inhabitants of North-Western India. Never before had so much harm been done by any invader to India in a single onslaught.

The Tughlaq Empire was completely dissolved. It was an irony of fate that the grand edifice of the Delhi Sultanate which had been raised by the spirited efforts of the Muhammad Ghori and his brilliant Turkish commanders was razed to the ground mercilessly, two centuries later, by Amir Timur, the greatest Turkish warrior of his times. Delhi, once the metropolis of a large Islamic empire in the subcontinent, and the centre of Islamic culture and civilization to the East of Baghdad, lay in ruins, with its debris, soaked in the blood of its unfortunate citizens. It was not a mere sack of the city by Timur; he robbed the insulted, humiliated and disgraced a magnificent creation of the city of Delhi not only of its wealth but also of honour, dignity and self-respect. Delhi stood downgraded in the estimation of the people and lost its glory and prestige as the imperial capital of India in the future. There was anarchy everywhere in the country. The fear of having disappeared, the warlords of average abilities and narrow any central authority taking its roots in Delhi in the near future regional outlooks, raised their heads and started a scramble for territorial possessions, thus making the confusion worse confounded. Invasion of Timur guaranteed the consolidation and prosperity of two strong kingdoms-Bahmani and Vijayanagar, in the South, although no such political power emerged in Northern and Central India which could fill up the vacuum, created as a result of the decline of the Delhi Sultanate, on an extensive scale. The process of disintegration of the Sultanate into regional states and small principalities which had begun long before, received a boost by the Timur's invasion.

One of the declared objectives of Timur had been to destroy the infidels' of India although his army, like a steam-roller, knocked down all the Indians alike, irrespective of their faith. In fact, Timur insulted India and its people as a whole, and, like Mahmud of Ghazni, did more harm to the

cause of Islam than to the 'infidels' in the subcontinent, it was the Turkish Sultanate of Delhi which was left prostrate and bleeding, beyond all hopes of recovery.

Timur's invasion of India paved the way for Mughal conquest. Babur was a descendant of Timur and he claimed the throne of Delhi partly on account of his descent. In Timur's conquest of the Punjab and Delhi, Babur found a legal and moral justification for his conquest of India.

Dr. K.S Lal opines that in spite of what Timur or his chroniclers have written, he was not clear in his mind why he was undertaking the invasion of India. His was an aimless venture. It was a terrible calamity. The vanquished had lost all and the victor had gained nothing.

13.3.1 Causes of the Downfall of Delhi Sultanate

The downfall of the Delhi Sultanate lay in the logic of history. However, the most distressing part of the story is that its ghost continued to haunt Delhi for so long after the death of Firuz Shah Tughlaq and the invasion of Timur. The Delhi Sultanate reached the maximum expansion and the zenith of its glory during the early part of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq's rule. Its growth and development stopped in the early decades of the 14th century. The first crack in its UNITY appeared in 1335-36 CE when the Sultan failed to suppress the revolt of his governor in Malabar which led to the birth of the first break-away Muslim state in the far South. It signalled the outbreak of revolts in different parts of the huge Turkish Empire. A major part of the Southern peninsula was cut off from Delhi and the rest of the Sultanate was in confusion at the time of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq's death. Firuz Shah Tughlaq failed to stop the deterioration that had set in and, with his death in 1388 CE, the Sultanate ceased to exist except in name. Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq and Firuz Shah Tughlaq were responsible to a considerable extent for the ultimate decline and disintegration of the Sultanate although they were not the only villains of the piece in this matter. Numerous defects and shortcomings were innate in the system itself which were bound to weaken and destabilise the Sultanate sooner or later.

- (i) **Lack of Definite Law of Succession**— An important cause of the downfall of the Delhi Sultanate was the lack of fixed law or properly recognized convention regarding succession to the throne among the Sultans of Delhi. Assumption of the crown depended on the principle of the 'survival of the fittest'. The excessive application of this principle weakened the monarchy in the long run. The assuming of the throne became a great risk even for the best and the most capable of princes. The entire duration of the Sultanate was characterized by the frequent change of rulers and the ruling dynasties. On the whole, the Sultans, comprised a race of cut-throats; the princes and ambitious nobles killed their near and dear ones and liquidated the entire families of their parents, friends and patrons for the attainment of the throne. Such cruel destruction of life and wiping off royal talent at the hands of unprincipled and undeserving murderers and blood-thirsty generals cut at the roots of the Turko-Afghan monarchy by depriving it of the very human source from which it sprang up. The self-seeking nobles belonging to varied races and clans, the slave officers attached to different Sultans, and the princely products of the royal harem, which usually comprised hundreds of women were all involved in this self-destructive game of power-politics.
- (ii) **Weakness in the Army Organization**--The strength and stability of the Sultanate depended on its army organization. The brave Turkish warriors had conquered India with the help of the army; it were they who constituted the backbone of the Sultanate. However, the army establishment of the Sultans was based on feudal principles, in

general, which carried with it all the inherent defects of the system. Alauddin Khalji had raised a strong and well-equipped standing army, paid in cash by the state. However, his successors were unable to follow his example in this regard. The attacking power of the royal army was lost during the reign of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq while its royal defensive teeth were broken by Firuz Shah Tughlaq. He established the system of giving jagirs to the nobles and assignments on revenue to the troopers, offered military service to the old and inept persons for life, and adopted many impractical and unprofessional measures which seriously undermined the discipline and efficiency of the royal army. The army was not modernized.

- (iii) **Autocracy of the Sultans**—The Turkish sultans of Delhi were autocratic and despotic; their government was based on highly centralized despotic principles. Some of the Sultans officially introduced the Islamic Law within their territories, although there was no rule of law in the Sultanate. The word of the Sultan was usually treated as law. Therefore, the strength or success of the government depended upon the personality and character of the Sultan. The successors of Firuz Shah Tughlaq were all weak and failed to acquire a stronghold over the administration and played as merely puppets in the hands of their selfish nobles. Accordingly, the Sultanate was reduced to a petty principality of Delhi within a decade after the death of Firuz Shah Tughlaq.
- (iv) **Police Nature of the State**--Delhi Sultanate was by nature a police state; it was based on force and aggression, and did not enjoy the consent or willing co-operation of its subjects. The Sultans were generally satisfied with the performance of a two-fold function—the maintenance of peace and order and tax collection. Public welfare activities were not considered as a duty of the state though some benevolent Sultans did a lot for the happiness and prosperity of their people and helped in the socio-cultural development of the country. The Delhi Sultans tried to give an Islamic concept to the State; therefore, the majority of its subjects who happened to be non-Muslims, suffered from civil disabilities. Barring a few, most of the Sultans did not attempt to win the goodwill of their Hindu subjects. Consequently, the Hindus usually maintained an attitude of indifference towards the government and did not take much interest in the rise and fall of the ruling dynasties or change in the fortunes of the reigning Sultans. Whenever possible, the defeated Hindu chiefs took up arms against the Sultanate and strove their best to regain their lost independence. Therefore the Sultanate was not based on popular support.
- (v) **Responsibility of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq**—Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq was partly an idealist and partly a visionary, he was a self-willed, stubborn and hot-tempered autocrat who mishandled the State affairs and created a confusion in the political, administrative, economic as well as military fronts. He wasted the vast resources of the state on his wild projects which failed because of their poor execution and impracticability. He earned the hostility of the nobility and the ulema and was hated and scorned by his subjects. He failed to suppress the forces of disruption and weakened the military prowess of the Delhi Sultanate. The vastness of the empire, reached during the first decade of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq's reign, carried the seeds of its own decay. In those days when the means of transport and communication were poorly developed, it was difficult for the government to exercise effective control over the far-flung provinces. It encouraged the governors of these provinces to accumulate the resources in men and material and set

themselves up as independent rulers whenever the sultan was in trouble or the imperial government was caught napping.

- (vi) **Firuz Shah Tughlaq's Responsibility**—Firuz Shah Tughlaq inherited a rapidly disintegrating empire, infested with widespread revolts and disorders. An incompetent general, he had neither the resources nor the determination to get back the lost territories under his control; he was, therefore, content with the Sultanate which had been reduced to the status of a regional kingdom. It was ably administered during the first half of his reign by his capable Prime Minister Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul, after whose death the administration deteriorated rapidly under the Sultan. Restoration of the jagir system, conversion of the nobility into feudal lords, the supremacy of the ulema in the State politics, faulty revenue policy, un-scientific land reforms and recognition of the hereditary principle in the services rendered the administration hollow from within, crippling it beyond all repairs. The weak central government, corrupt civil services and the obsolete military organization encouraged the provincial governors and feudal nobles to challenge the governmental authority and signal the total disruption of the Sultanate. Above all, the excessively long life enjoyed by Firuz Tughlaq did incalculable damage to the interest of his own ruling dynasty. His first two grown-up and capable sons predeceased him, thus leaving the burden of the state upon the shoulders of his younger off- springs, none of whom was experienced or trained enough to hold his own as a monarch. It led to the rise of king-makers among the selfish nobles who used the princes as puppets in their own hands, overwhelmed Delhi into a long-drawn-out civil war, and made a mockery of the crown. Unsurprisingly, immediately after the death of Firuz Shah Tughlaq, the Delhi Sultanate collapsed like a house of cards.
- (vii) **Timur's Invasion of India**--The Sultanate of Delhi was dead before Timur's invasion of India, however, the ghost of it remained. Timur struck a blow at the ghost and made it scream with pain. He trampled Delhi under his feet and proclaimed the death of the Sultanate to the entire Muslim world. It was all set for the establishment of a Timurid empire in India although the hero of the hour was least attracted by it. He left for Samarqand and never bothered to know who ruled over the dead and the dying. Not a single leader could fill the political vacuum created by Timur at Delhi and revive its glorious past and establish his claim as the monarch of India. Delhi was reduced to the status of a small principality that continued to be ruled by petty rulers styled as Sultan. It showed some signs of recovery under the Lodhi Sultans although the tribal monarchy of the Afghans, based on feudal principles and debilitated by the fissiparous and unusual tendencies of its grandees, stood little chance of developing into an all-India power.
- (viii) **Invasion of Babur**--Babar sounded the death knell on the historic battlefield of Panipat in 1526 CE and revived the lost glory of Delhi as the imperial capital of India. He was the founder of the Mughal Empire in India.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 Who ruled India when Timur invaded India?
- Q.2 Which event gave a final blow to the already broken Delhi Sultanate?
- Q.3 Whom did Timur handed over the charge of Multan, Lahore and Diplapur?
- Q.4 Which empire of India was completely dissolved as a result of Timur's invasion?

Q.5 During the rule of which Sultan did Delhi Sultanate reached the maximum expansion and the zenith of its glory?

Q.6 Which Sultan of Delhi established the system of giving jagirs to the nobles and assignments on revenue to the troopers, offered military service to the old and inept persons for life, and adopted many impractical and unprofessional measures?

Q.7 When was the First Battle of Panipat fought?

13.4 Summary

- Timur was a great military commander and conqueror of Central Asia.
- He invaded Northern India, attacking the Delhi Sultanate ruled by Sultan Nasir-ud-Din Mahmud Shah Tughlaq of the Tughlaq dynasty in 1398 CE.
- The disintegration of the Delhi Kingdom also provided him a suitable opportunity.
- All the later rulers of the Tughlaq dynasty, who followed Firuz proved to be incompetent, without any ability or strength of character.
- It is difficult to ascertain the real objective of the invasion of India by Timur.
- Initially Timur sent his grandson, Pir Mohammad to do the preliminary work.
- Timur's invasion gave a death blow to the vanishing Tughlaq Empire.
- The last Sultan, Mahmud Shah was defeated and put to flight with a result the revolts in different parts of the country occurred in quick succession.
- Thus, Timur's attack affected the political, social and economic life of India, particularly of Northern India.
- Timur was successful in his aim of collecting wealth and riches from India. His invasion caused much confusion in India.
- Lack of definite law of succession, weakness in the army organization, autocracy of the Sultans, police nature of the State, the responsibility of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq and Firuz Shah Tughlaq, Timur's invasion of India and Babur's invasions led to the decline of Delhi Sultanate.

13.5 Glossary

Death knell: An event or sign that warns that something will end or be destroyed very soon.

Ghazi: A Muslim fighter against non-Muslims.

Jagir: A grant of the public revenues of a district in Northern India.

Ulema: A body of Muslim scholars who are known as having specialist knowledge of Islamic sacred law and theology.

13.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

Ans.1 Nasir-ud-Din Mahmud Shah

Ans.2 Timur's invasion in 1398 CE

Ans.3 Khizr Khan

Ans.4 Tughlaq Empire

Ans.5 Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq

Ans.6 Firuz Shah Tughlaq

Ans.7 The First Battle of Panipat

Ans.8 1526 CE

13.7 Suggested Readings

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13.8 Terminal Questions

1. Who was Timur? Discuss in brief the invasion of Timur on India.
2. What were the reasons for Timur's invasion of India?
3. Write a brief note on the effects of the invasion of Timur.
4. Analyze the causes of the decline of Delhi Sultanate.
5. How far were Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq and Firuz Shah Tughlaq responsible for the decline of the Delhi Sultanate?

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SECTION-III
UNIT-14
LODI EMPIRE

Structure

14.1 Introduction

14.2 Objectives

14.3 Lodi Empires

Self-Check Exercise -1

14.4 Summary

14.5 Glossary

14.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

14.7 Suggested Readings

14.8 Terminal Questions

14.1 Introduction

The Lodi dynasty (1451-1526 CE) was the last ruling dynasty of the period of the Delhi Sultanate. Bahlul Lodi was the founder of the first Afghan ruling house of Delhi. Sikandar Lodi enhanced its power and prestige and while Ibrahim Lodi was attempted to enhance its strength further. Babur attacked India, defeated Ibrahim Lodi and established the rule of the Mughal dynasty. The history of the rule of 75 years of this dynasty is that of bitter conflicts. For Lodi rulers, it was fight on three fronts. Firstly, they had to fight against the states of Jaunpur, Malwa, Gujarat and Mewar either for the safety of their kingdom or to extend their power and influence. Secondly, Lodis had to wage wars against those nobles and jagirdars of the Delhi Sultanate itself who, taking advantage of the weakness of earlier Sultans, had become virtually semi-independent and paid annual revenue only at the point of sword. Thirdly, the Lodis had to fight hard against their own Afghan nobles. Those very Afghan nobles who were the source of strength of the Lodi rulers proved their enemies. The Afghans possessed certain qualities, e.g. spirit of independence, equality and chivalry. However, these virtues proved harmful to the efforts of the Lodi Sultans for centralization and establishment of a strong monarchy at the center. The worst problem of the Lodi Sultans was the tribal instinct of independence of their Afghan nobles and that was primarily responsible for their downfall. The Afghan nobles were not able to recognize the necessity of a strong centralized state under one leader and therefore, failed to cooperate with their Sultans which, ultimately, gave a favorable opportunity to the Mughal ruler, Babur to attack and conquer India.

14.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the achievements of Bahlul Lodi,
- Examine the events during the reign of Sikandar Shah Lodi,
- Analyze the achievements of Ibrahim Lodi.

14.3 Lodi Empires

Bahlul Lodi (1451-1489 CE)

Sultan Bahlul Lodi, the founder of the Lodi dynasty had a humble beginning. He belonged to the Shahu Khel clan of the Lodis which formed an important branch of the Afghans. His father Malik Kala was killed by his enemies and orphaned Bahlul, known by the pet name of Ballu in his childhood was brought up by his uncle Islam Khan who had taken up service under the first Sayyid ruler, Khizr Khan and had risen to the position of Khan. Bahlul grew up to be a brilliant youth, possessed of ambition and fine qualities of martial leadership. Islam Khan married his daughter with Bahlul and nominated him his successor. After the death of Islam Khan, therefore, Bahlul became the governor of Sirhind. His power and influence went on increasing and, for the timely help which he gave to Sultan Muhammad Shah against the ruler of Malwa, was awarded the title of Khan-i-Jahan and also possession over Punjab. Afterwards, Bahlul, tried to capture Delhi twice but failed. But when all powerful wazir Hamid Khan called him to Delhi, he got his opportunity. Sultan Alauddin Alam Shah had already left for Badaun while Hamid Khan was an imprudent man. Bahlul easily imprisoned Hamid Khan by a strategy and got him killed afterwards. He, then, ascended the throne on April 19, 1451 CE with an apparent consent of Alauddin Alam Shah and assumed the title of Sultan Abul Muzaffar Bahlul Shah Ghazi and had his name proclaimed in the *Khutba*.

Bahlul had to deal with a number of baffling problems. His primary tasks were to regain the lost prestige of the Sultan, to establish the supremacy of the Afghans in the kingdom, to suppress the rebellious nobles and jagirdars, to safeguard his kingdom from jealous neighbors and to consolidate his gains. Indeed, the occupation of Delhi by Bahlul had not increased his territorial possessions significantly but had increased his responsibilities manifold. Bahlul faced all these problems boldly and tactfully. He wanted to please his Afghan nobles who alone could help him in strengthening his position. He gave them extensive jagirs, respected them, called the Afghans from outside India and gave them jagirs and high offices. However, he was equally interested in restoring the prestige of the Sultan. Therefore, he punished disobedient and rebellious nobles and jagirdars. He conducted a number of military expeditions to Mewat, Sambhal, Rapri, Bhogaon, Gwalior, etc. and compelled their chiefs to offer submission and pay annual tribute. He also succeeded in exacting loyalty from his Afghan nobles. Bahlul, certainly, could not follow the ideal of an absolute monarchy and his policy of giving extensive jagirs to the Afghan nobles contributed to the weakness of Lodi Sultans, yet undoubtedly he succeeded in keeping under his control the spirit of independence of the Afghans and in exacting obedience from them. Bahlul gave no opportunity to his Afghan nobles to establish independent states of their own.

The conquest of the state of Jaunpur was one of the remarkable successes of Bahlul Lodi. Mahmud Shah Sharqi, the ruler of Jaunpur, had married a daughter of the Sayyid Sultan, Alauddin Alam Shah. This lady constantly instigated her husband to attack Delhi in for avenging the disgrace of her father. Mahmud Shah regarded himself as the rightful claimant of the throne of Delhi which earlier belonged to his father-in-law. Therefore, he attacked Delhi. At that time Bahlul had gone on an expedition towards Multan. He returned quickly to his capital and then proceeded to face the enemy. Dariya Khan Lodi, the commander of the Sharqi king, left the side of his master before the

battle which reduced the strength of the Sharqi army. Therefore, Bahlul succeeded in defeating Mahmud Shah at Narela near Delhi. Mahmud Shah did not forget this humiliation and attacked Etawah after some time. He again failed to achieve any success and both parties agreed for peace. But no party fulfilled the terms of the treaty and there was a quarrel on the possession of Shamsabad. It also brought no result and the peace was signed again. After some time, Bahlul attacked Jaunpur but without any result. In 1457 CE, Mahmud Shah died. However, his son, Muhammad Shah continued to fight against Bahlul. But Muhammad Shah was soon killed by his brother Husain Shah who now occupied the throne of Jaunpur. Husain Shah also continued the struggle against Bahlul Lodi for many years. Bahlul succeeded twice in capturing Malka-i-Jahan, wife of Husain Shah though sent her back to Jaunpur with honor both times. Ultimately, Husain Shah was defeated and compelled to take refuge in Bihar. Thus, Jaunpur was conquered but Bahlul did not annex it to Delhi; instead he placed his eldest son Barbak Shah on the throne of Jaunpur and retained the separate identity of the kingdom in close association with Delhi, thus creating a fraternity of the two Afghan kingdoms. The conquest of Jaunpur which was more powerful and prosperous as compared to the kingdom of Delhi was the greatest achievement of Bahlul. It proved his military abilities. It added to his resources and raised his prestige among other rulers. The success of Bahlul's enterprise against Jaunpur frightened the chieftains of Dholpur, Kalpi, Bari and Alipur to acknowledge the suzerainty of Delhi.

Bahlul led a successful expedition against Gwalior during the last year of his reign. Its ruler Raja Man Singh gave a present of 80 lakhs of *tankas* and Bahlul returned back. In the way, he was taken ill and died *en route* to Delhi in the middle of July 1489 CE. He was known as a just monarch who ruled over his subjects with moderation.

Sikandar Shah Lodi (1489-1517 CE)

Bahlul had nominated his third son Nizam Khan as his successor. But, after his death, the Afghan nobles pushed forward the claim of his second son, Barbak Shah who was the ruler of Jaunpur at that time or that of Azam Humayun, son of his eldest but deceased son, Khwaja Bayezid. The claim of Nizam Khan was challenged on the ground that his mother was the daughter of a Hindu goldsmith. But eventually, the majority of them favored Nizam Khan who ascended the throne on July 17, 1489 CE with the title of Sikandar Shah.

Achievements

Sikandar Shah justified the nomination of his father and proved himself as his most capable son. He suppressed all claimants to the throne and those nobles as well who had opposed his candidature. Bahlul had annexed only Jaunpur to his kingdom, and Sikandar extended his empire further. Undeniably Bahlul had kept his Afghan nobles under his control but had compromised the position of Sultan with the rights of the nobles but Sikandar Shah destroyed the power of the nobility, finished all rebellious nobles and forced others to obey and respect him as Sultan. He was the most capable, efficient and powerful of all the three Lodi Sultans of Delhi. He shifted his capital in 1504 CE to the village of Agra on the bank of river Jamuna, which was developed into a beautiful town during his rule. He imparted a bit of the royal glory to the court, occupied his seat on an elevated throne and did not allow the old *grandees* of the kingdom to claim equality with him.

First, Sikandar Shah curbed the power of those opponents who could dispute his succession. He forced his uncle Alam Khan to leave his kingdom. Alam Khan fled to Gujarat. Isa Khan, who had opposed Sikandar's succession, was defeated next and he died some days after. His nephew, Azam Humayun, was also defeated and Kalpi was taken away from him. Tatar Khan, governor of

Jhatra and another opponent of his succession, was also defeated though generously allowed to remain in possession of his jagir. Thus, within a year after his succession, Sikandar Lodi destroyed or brought to submission all his opponents and claimants to the throne.

Sikandar asked his elder brother Barbak Shah, the ruler of Jaunpur, to accept his suzerainty so that the empire remained UNITED. But Barbak Shah did not agree to it. Sikandar Shah then defeated Barbak Shah at Kannauj, then pardoned and given back his kingdom in subordination to Agra. However, Barbak Shah proved a failure and could not face even local rebellious jagirdars who were instigated by the previous ruler of Jaunpur, Husain Shah. He fled from his capital. Sikandar crushed the rebellion, again placed Barbak Shah on the throne but, ultimately, finding him incapable, imprisoned him and annexed Jaunpur to Agra.

The rebellions of jagirdars of Jaunpur provided an opportunity to Sikandar Shah to conquer Bihar. Husain Shah sided with those jagirdars who had provided shelter to their leader, Juga. Sikandar Shah asked him to surrender Juga which was declined. He then attacked Husain Shah who fled away to Bihar. In 1494 CE, Husain Shah attacked Sikandar Shah when he was busy in suppressing revolts of the jagirdars of Jaunpur. Again, he was defeated near Banaras and was forced to flee. Sikandar Shah pursued him until he crossed into Bengal where he spent the rest of his life as a pensioner of the ruler of Bengal, Alauddin Husain Shah. Bihar was then annexed to the territory of the Delhi Sultanate. Sikandar Shah attacked Tirhut from Bihar. The Rai of Tirhut accepted his suzerainty without struggling.

Husain Shah was pursued by the army of Delhi up to the border of Bengal. Alauddin Husain Shah did not like the occupation of Bihar by Sikandar Shah but thought it practical to come to terms with the Sultan of Delhi. A treaty was signed between the two by which both parties agreed not to attack each other's territory. Bihar was acknowledged as a part of the Delhi Sultanate and Alauddin Husain Shah agreed not to give shelter to enemies of Sikandar Shah.

The internal dissension in the state of Malwa provided Sikandar Shah an opportunity to interfere in its affairs. However, he restrained himself and interfered least. He helped Sahib Khan, one of the princes of Malwa, in capturing Chanderi and kept him under his control.

Sikandar Shah achieved partial success against the Rajput states. He conquered Dholpur, Mandrail, Utgir, Narwar and Nagaur. He defeated the ruler of Gwalior occasionally but was unable to annex Gwalior to his territory. He established the city of Agra primarily to keep Rajput rulers under his control.

Thus, the conquest of Bihar was the only remarkable success of Sikandar Lodi from the point of view of the expansion of his empire. Sikandar wisely realized the limitations of his resources and therefore, tried to maintain peaceful relations with other neighboring Muslim kingdoms. His policy towards Malwa and Bengal was guided by same considerations.

One serious problem that confronted Sikandar Shah was to keep the independent and rebellious nature of his own Afghan nobles under control. He asked all his governors and officers to submit proper accounts of their income and expenditure and punished the defaulters. He started sitting on the throne and forced his nobles to show formal respect to him in the court and even outside. He framed certain rules which were observed by all his nobles and governors to honor the Sultan, i.e., the governors were directed to receive his firmans six miles ahead of their capitals. While dispensing justice, Sikandar made no distinction between the rich and the poor. He set up an efficient espionage system to keep himself abreast of all the developments within his dominions

which helped him much in keeping his nobles under his control. He posted spies and informers at every important place including the houses of his nobles. His system proved very much efficient and he was so well-informed about everybody and everything significant in the state so that the people believed that the Sultan was aided by supernatural powers. All these measures succeeded and Sikandar Shah was successful in controlling the nobles. However, he was not cruel or discourteous in his treatment towards his nobles.

Sikandar Shah was hard working, generous, just and well-intentioned Sultan. He worked hard from morning till midnight to supervise the administration. He dispensed impartial justice to all his subjects. He encouraged trade and agriculture. He introduced Gaz-i-Sikandari of 32 inches for the measurement of agricultural land. He abolished all internal trade duties. He was provided with a rate-list of all articles everyday so that he could assess the economic condition of common people. He maintained peace and order within his kingdom. All this helped in the economic prosperity of the state. Thus, the reign of Sikandar Shah was that of peace, order, prosperity and progress. The disorder which had prevailed in the Delhi Sultanate after the death of Sultan Firuz Shah was removed by Sikandar Shah.

However, Sikandar Shah behaved as a fanatic in religious matters and was intolerant of other faiths. Contemporary historians described him as a fanatic-king. Nizammuddin Ahmed wrote: "His (Sikandar's) bigotry in Islam was as great that in this regard he went beyond the bounds even of excess." He destroyed Hindu temples, broke their images and raised mosques in their places. He prohibited the Hindus to shave their hairs and take bath in the river Yamuna at Mathura. He encouraged the Hindus for conversion to Islam. It has been expressed in favor of Sikandar that he tried to check certain bad customs of Islam also. He prohibited the processions of *Tazias* at the festival of Muharram. He forbade the visit of Muslim women to the shrines of saints. He ordered the destruction of the mosques at Jaunpur built up by Sharqi rulers though withdrew his orders afterwards on the advice of the Ulema. Among modern historians, Dr. K.S. Lal has also given a reasonable argument in his favor. He writes: "Indeed Indian society was undergoing a change. This change was also due to the teachings of the 15th century socio-religious reformers like Kabir and Nanak. In such an atmosphere a few acts of intolerance on the part of Sikandar Lodi appeared to be so much out of tune with the spirit of the age that they shocked even the Persian chroniclers. The majority of historians blame him for being intolerant towards the majority of his subjects.

However, Sikandar Shah was a successful ruler. In his last days, he went to Bayana and, while returning from there, he was taken ill. He reached Delhi but, then, died on November 21, 1517 CE.

Ibrahim Lodi (1517-1526 CE)

When Sikandar Lodi died, all his sons and important nobles were present in the capital and it was unanimously decided by all to parcel out his territorial possessions into two kingdoms. The eldest son of the Sultan, Ibrahim would be the ruler at Delhi and Agra while his younger brother Jalal Khan was to rule the Eastern and Southern parts of the Sultanate from Kalpi to Jaunpur. Therefore, Ibrahim ascended the throne of Delhi after his father and assumed the title of Shah. Ibrahim Lodi remained the last ruler of the Lodi dynasty. His reign began with the conflict against his brother Jalal Khan; the conquest of Gwalior remained the only significant conquest of his reign; and his conflict with the state of Mewar weakened and dishonored him.

However, the most prominent feature of his reign was his conflict against the Afghan nobility. Of course, it is certain that Babur who defeated him and destroyed the rule of the Lodi

dynasty was a more capable commander and possessed better military resources and therefore, the fate of the Afghans could not be otherwise than what happened to be in the first battle of Panipat, yet this is also a fact that the conflict of Sultan Ibrahim with his nobility was also one of the primary causes of the downfall of the Lodi dynasty.

Achievements

When Ibrahim Lodi ascended the throne of Delhi he accepted his brother, Jalal Khan, as the ruler of Jaunpur. But he changed his mind as soon as Jalal Khan left for Kalpi along with his loyal nobles. He decided to keep the empire intact and therefore, recalled Jalal Khan from Kalpi when he had hardly reached there. He ordered the nobles at Jaunpur and Bihar not to obey Jalal Khan. He also imprisoned his other brothers who were in Delhi. Jalal Khan, in his turn refused to come to Delhi and declared himself the Sultan at Kalpi and crowned himself with the title of Jalaluddin. It led to a civil war between the two brothers in which Jalal Khan was defeated. He found shelter first in Gwalior and then with the Raja of Gonda who imprisoned him and sent him to Ibrahim. He was sent as a captive to Hansi but murdered on the way by the secret orders of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi.

Ibrahim Lodi desired to conquer Gwalior which had challenged the attempts of the previous Sultans of Delhi including Sikandar Lodi and dared to give shelter to Jalal Khan, brother of Ibrahim Lodi. Besides, the then ruler of Gwalior, Vikramajit who had succeeded his father, Man Singh, did not possess the capability like his father and therefore, could be vulnerable. Ibrahim sent a royal army, comprising 30,000 horses and 300 elephants under Azam Humayun Sarwani to attack Gwalior and another army was sent for his support from Agra. Vikramajit put up a brave resistance but failed to defend the fort for long and surrendered. Gwalior was annexed to the Delhi Sultanate. However, Ibrahim liberally granted the jagir of Shamsabad to Vikramajit. It was a great victory for Ibrahim Lodi which made him overconfident of his military prowess.

Encouraged by his success against Gwalior, Ibrahim committed the blunder of challenging Sangram Singh *alias* Rana Sanga of the most powerful and respected state of Mewar and sent a huge army for the conquest of Chitor. He was an ambitious ruler and was increasing his influence on Malwa which was contested by Ibrahim Lodi. Mahmud Khalji II, the ruler of Malwa was feeling helpless against the growing power and influence of his own minister, Medini Rai and had sought help both from the rulers of Gujarat and Delhi. Sikandar Lodi had tried to help him during his reign. Medini Rai, in turn, had received support from Rana Sanga and foiled the attempts of the rulers of Gujarat and Delhi to interfere in the affairs of Malwa. Thus, Rana Sanga had succeeded in extending his influence over Malwa.

Ibrahim Lodi, who himself wanted to bring Malwa under his control, decided to conquer Mewar itself. Rana Sanga had provoked his anger also by capturing some places of the Delhi Sultanate during the period of revolt of Jalal Khan. Ibrahim himself attacked against Rana Sanga. The battle took place at Khatauli near Gwalior in 1517-1518 CE. Rana Sanga lost his left hand and wounded his one leg. Yet, Ibrahim was defeated and had to retreat. In 1518-19 CE, Ibrahim again took up the offensive but was again defeated near Dholpur. Even afterward, Mewar and Delhi fought against each other many times. Mostly the army of Delhi met with reverses. Thus, Ibrahim failed to conquer Mewar. He also lost his prestige and resources. Besides, the Rajputs succeeded in capturing the territory up to Bayana.

Ibrahim came in serious conflict with his Afghan nobility. The rebellion of Jalal Khan had made him suspicious of his nobles while the nobles themselves started doubting his intentions. Ibrahim wanted to keep them under his strict control while the nobles found his attitude overbearing

and unreliable. But the main issue involved in the conflict was the concept of absolute monarchy of the Sultan on the one hand, and on the other hand, the Afghan concept of regarding the Sultan as one among equals. Ibrahim started acting as an absolute despot. Unlike his father who had slowly asserted royal authority without offending the sentiments of Afghan nobles, Ibrahim resolved to centralize all powers by the outright suppression of Afghan nobility. He declared that 'kingship knows no kinship' and treated his nobles only as his subordinates. Sikandar Lodi had been successful in commanding the respect of his nobles and utilizing their strength in the interest of the state. When Ibrahim attempted to destroy the powerful nobles with the purpose of establishing a despotic monarchy, he lost on both grounds. He neither could command their respect nor could utilize their strength in order to strengthen himself or his empire. On the contrary, he forced them to challenge his authority and rise in open revolt. Therefore, Ibrahim wasted his energy and strength of the empire in fighting against his rebellious nobles.

In the initial years of his reign, the division of the empire between the two brothers was agreed upon by Ibrahim in the presence of his nobles. However, he disproved it very soon. It annoyed all those nobles who were in favor of that agreement and had left with Jalal Khan. Ibrahim behaved unkindly with his brothers. While the rebellious prince Jalal Khan was poisoned, the rest of the princes except one, Mahmud, died in prison. Ibrahim further enraged the old nobility by deliberately dishonoring them by reducing their status and raising younger ones to their posts. Miyan Bhua, the aged wazir of Sikander Lodi's times was imprisoned simply because he could not look after affairs of the State very diligently due to his old age. It was so revolting to Afghan nobility that most of them came to the conclusion that the Sultan was not to be trusted. Thus, Ibrahim annoyed a large Unit of the Afghan nobility. The dissatisfaction of the Afghan nobles resulted in open revolt when Azam Humayun Sarwani was thrown in prison. The second son of Azam Humayun, Islam Khan revolted at Kara and was soon joined by two other nobles. One army of the Sultan under Ahmad Khan was defeated by the rebels. The revolt spread the entire area from Kara to Kannauj. The rebels defeated another army sent by Sultan against them. Ibrahim ordered his nobles not to turn back till the revolt were suppressed and, then, he himself led the attack with a large army. The rebels too had collected a large force consisting of 40,000 horsemen and 5,000 elephants. A holy man, Shaikh Raju Bukhari, tried for a peaceful settlement but failed. The rebels demanded the release of Azam Humayun which was declined by the Sultan. It resulted into a fierce battle between the two sides. In the battle 10,000 gallant Afghans fell on both sides. Ibrahim Lodi emerged victorious. Islam Khan was killed while Sayyid Khan Lodi was taken captive along with many other notable Afghan chiefs. Of course, Ibrahim succeeded not only in suppressing this revolt but also in breaking the power of the Afghan nobility but he also paid a heavy price for that. Best of the Afghan soldiers and chiefs were killed in this battle which certainly weakened the power of the Afghans as well as that of the Delhi Sultanate. Ibrahim Lodi had destroyed the very source of the strength of his empire.

Ibrahim became more disrespectful towards his nobles after his success in this battle. He treacherously got murdered Husain Khan Farmuli, the governor of Chanderi. A little earlier, Azam Humayun and Miyan Bhua had died in prison. This murder created widespread indignation and disaffection. Governor of Bihar, Dariya Khan Nuhani and Khan-i-Jahan Lodi rose in rebellion in the East. Dariya Khan Nuhani died shortly afterwards but then his son Bahadur Khan (Bahar Khan) declared himself independent ruler in Bihar and assumed the title of Sultan Muhammad. The governor of Ghazipur, Nasir Khan Nuhani and many other disaffected nobles gathered under the banner of Sultan Muhammad. Sultan Muhammad collected an army of nearly one lakh horsemen and occupied all territory from Bihar to Sambhal. He succeeded in defeating the Delhi army several

times. Ibrahim called Daulat Khan Lodi, governor of Punjab, to his help. Daulat Khan sent his son, Dilawar Khan to Agra to assess the situation. Ibrahim Lodi tried to terrorize Dilawar Khan who then secretly slipped away from Agra and informed his father that Sultan Ibrahim could not be trusted. Therefore, Daulat Khan Lodi, instead of going for the help of Ibrahim invited Babur, the ruler of Kabul, to attack India.

The same time, Alam Khan Lodi, uncle of Ibrahim Lodi who had been in Gujarat so far, also invited Babur to attack India. Babur who himself was anxious to attack India was encouraged by these invitations. He attacked India in 1524 CE as far as Lahore and defeated one army of Delhi which was sent against him. But, then he returned. Daulat Khan who had developed suspicion against Babur now made a common cause with Alam Khan and attacked Delhi in 1525 CE. He was, however, defeated by Ibrahim.

In November 1525 CE, Babur again started on his Indian campaign from Kabul. Daulat Khan, Dilawar Khan and Alam Khan joined him and he easily conquered Punjab. Babur reached the plain of Panipat. Ibrahim also reached there to give him a battle. But, by then, Ibrahim Lodi had reduced much of his strength. The historic (first) battle of Panipat took occurred on April 21, 1526 CE. Ibrahim fought bravely but was defeated and killed on the battlefield. It was the end of the rule of the Lodi dynasty and it was also the end of the history of the Delhi Sultanate. This battle laid the foundation of the Mughal Dynasty in India.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 Which Sultanate rulers were of Afghan origin?
- Q.2 Who was the founder of Lodi dynasty?
- Q.3 Which medieval Sultan has the credit of founding the city of Agra and making it the capital of Delhi Sultanate?
- Q.4 What is Gazz-i-Sikandari?
- Q.5 Who was the last ruler of Lodi dynasty?
- Q.6 When was the battle of Khatauli fought between Ibrahim Lodi and Rana Sanga?
- Q.7 Which battle laid the foundation of Mughal dynasty in India?

14.4 Summary

- The Lodi dynasty (1451-1526 CE) was the last ruling dynasty of the period of the Delhi Sultanate. It was founded by Bahlul Lodi.
- Bahlul had to deal with a number of baffling problems. He faced all these problems boldly and tactfully.
- Bahlul wanted to please his Afghan nobles who alone could help him in strengthening his position.
- The conquest of the state of Jaunpur was one of the remarkable successes of Bahlul Lodi. Bahlul led a successful expedition against Gwalior during the last year of his reign.
- Nizam Khan ascended the throne of Delhi on July 17, 1489 CE with the title of Sikandar Shah.

- Sikandar Shah was the most capable, efficient and powerful of all the three Lodi Sultans of Delhi. He shifted his capital in 1504 CE to the village of Agra.
- The conquest of Bihar was the only remarkable success of Sikandar Lodi from the point of view of the expansion of his empire.
- The reign of Sikandar Shah was that of peace, order, prosperity and progress. Sikandar Shah behaved as a fanatic in religious matters and was intolerant of other faiths.
- Ibrahim Lodi succeeded Sikandar Lodi as the Sultan of Delhi in 1517 CE. He was the last ruler of the Lodi dynasty.
- The most prominent feature of his reign was his conflict against the Afghan nobility.
- Ibrahim lacked political wisdom. He was very ambitious despot and failed to feel the pulse of his nobles.
- As a result, there were conflicts between him and his nobles. This led to his ultimate downfall.
- Ibrahim Lodi was killed in the battle of Panipat in 1526. This paved the way for laying the foundation of the Mughal dynasty by Babur.

14.5 Glossary

Firman: A royal mandate or decree issued by a sovereign in an Islamic state.

Kinship: The relationship between the members of the same family.

Noble: a person who belonged to the highest social class and had a special title

Tazia: A Muslim passion play celebrated by the Shia in Muharram.

14.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Ans.1 Lodis
- Ans.2 Bahlul Lodi
- Ans.3 Sikandar Lodi
- Ans.4 Sikandar Lodi introduced Gaz-i-Sikandari of 32 inches for the measurement of agricultural land.
- Ans.5 Ibrahim Lodi
- Ans.6 1517-18 CE.
- Ans.7 The First Battle of Panipat

14.7 Suggested Readings

1. D.R Sardesai, 2008, "*India-The Definitive History*", Westview Press.
2. Joseph E.Schwartzberg, 1978, "*A Historical Atlas of South Asia*", Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

3. M.H Syed, 2005, “*History of Delhi Sultanate*”, Anmol Publications Pvt Ltd.
4. Rekha Pande, 1997, “*Succession in the Delhi Sultanate*”, Commonwealth Publishers.
5. Sailendra Sen, 2013, “*A Text Book of Medieval Indian History*”, Primus Books.
6. V.D Mahajan, 1991, “*History of Medieval India*”, Part 1, New Delhi: S.Chand.

14.8 Terminal Questions

1. “Bahlul Lodi was the founder of the Lodi dynasty”. Discuss.
2. “Sikandar Lodi was the greatest Lodi Sultan”. Comment on the statement.
3. Briefly discuss the early difficulties of Sikandar Lodi and how he overcame them.
4. Explain Ibrahim Lodi’s conflict with the nobility.
5. Discuss Ibrahim Lodi’s was with the State of Mewar.

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UNIT-15

BABUR-FIRST BATTLE OF PANIPAT AND ESTABLISHMENT OF MUGHAL EMPIRE

Structure

- 15.1 Introduction
- 15.2 Objectives
- 15.3 Advent of Babur
 - 15.3.1 First Battle of Panipat and the Establishment of Mughal Empire
 - 15.3.2 Battle of Khanua (March 17, 1527 CE)
 - 15.3.3 Battle of Ghagra (May 6, 1529 CE)

Self-Check Exercise -1

- 15.4 Summary
- 15.5 Glossary
- 15.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 15.7 Suggested Readings
- 15.8 Terminal Questions

15.1 Introduction

The disintegration of the Delhi Sultanate led to the emergence of various regional powers. Therefore, at the time of the invasion of Babur in 1526 CE, the central power of the Sultanate had considerably weakened and there were a number of independent kingdoms. The Delhi and adjoining regions were under Sultan Ibrahim Lodi. Other Important kingdoms were Gujarat, Malwa, Bengal, Bijapur, Golconda, Ahmednagar, Berar, Mewar and Vijaynagar Empire in the South. Besides, a large number of smaller autonomous chiefs were also ruling in different parts of the country. The Mughals were led by an able military commander and administrator from Central Asia named Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur. His successors were successful in establishing an all India empire gradually.

15.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Know about the career of Babur,
- Understand the causes, events and results of the First Battle of Panipat and the Establishment of Mughal Empire in India.

15.3 Advent of Babur

Babur who laid down the foundation of the Mughal dynasty in India in 1526 CE, belonged to the family of Chaghatai Turks. However, in Indian history, his family has been called the **Mughal**. The Mughal dynasty produced capable rulers, one after another, from Babur to Aurangzeb, provided political UNITY to a large part of India, administered it well, and, thus, brought peace and prosperity within the empire. The Mughals never accepted *Khalifa* as their overlord. They ruled as sovereign emperors. They improved means and methods of warfare and introduced gun-powder artillery in India. They patronized art and literature which led to their growth practically in all fields. Above all, a serious attempt was made to pursue a policy of religious toleration with a view to gain the loyalty and support of the Hindus who constituted the majority in the country. Thus, the Mughals tried and succeeded in finishing several past traditions which had continued during the period of the Delhi Sultanate. Therefore, the history of the Mughals occupies an important place in Indian history.

Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur, the founder of Mughal rule in India, was born on February 14, 1483 CE at Andizhan. The blood of two great conquerors of Asia flowed in his veins. He was the fifth descendant of Timur from the side of his father, Umar Sheikh Mirza and the fourteenth of Chengiz Khan from the side of his mother, Kutlugh Nigar Khanam. He inherited the petty kingdom of Farghana, a small state in Transoxiana, from his father in 1494 CE at the age of eleven in a precarious position when his kingdom was under attack from two sides by his own relatives. However, Babur succeeded in frustrating their attempts. The next ten years proved to be the years of trials in Babur's life. He had to face the challenge of his relatives and also that of internal conspiracies during these years. But more than that, his own ambitions were responsible for his troubled career. Fascinated by the conquests of his ancestor Timur, he longed to capture Samarkand, once the imperial capital of his ancestors. But, he was firmly resisted there mostly by the rising power of the Uzbeks under their leader Shaibani Khan. The first attempt of Babur to conquer Samarkand in July 1496 CE failed. He succeeded in capturing it in 1497 CE but could keep it under his control only for one hundred days. He again captured it in 1501 CE but had to leave it after eight months. These attempts to conquer Samarkand heavily taxed the resources and energy of Babur. During this period, he lost twice even his hereditary kingdom Farghana and had to lead the life of a fugitive. Accompanied by 200 to 300 followers, Babur wandered from place to place, always been haunted by his actual or potential enemies. Very often the fugitives had to pass through uninhabited hilly tracts and barren lands in order to avoid suspicion of the people. But then fortune, ultimately, smiled on Babur and he got an opportunity to interfere in the politics of Kabul where, in 1501 CE, the throne was wrested from a minor boy Abdur Razzaq by an Afghan chief, Muhammad Muqim. However, he was unable to establish effective control over the rebellious nobles and the country was thrown into confusion. Taking advantage of the anarchy that prevailed there, Babur attacked Kabul in 1504 CE and captured it almost without any opposition. He soon captured Ghazni as well and, thus, became the master of Afghanistan without much fighting. In 1507 CE, Babur assumed the imperial title of *Badshah* (Emperor) and, thus, asserted the headship of the Timurids. In the same year he conquered Qandahar as well although it slipped out of his hands soon afterwards. In 1508 CE, Babur was blessed by the birth of his first son Humayun from his third wife Maham Begam.

In 1510 CE, Shaibani Khan Uzbek was defeated and killed in the battle of Marv by the Persian ruler, Shah Ismail. The removal of Shaibani Khan from the political scene once again

aroused Babur's desire to conquer Samarqand. He entered into an alliance with Shah Ismail and succeeded in capturing not only Samarqand but Bukhara and Khurasan as well in 1511 CE. However, Babur's success proved to be short lived. His relations with Shah Ismail were spoiled as he could not enforce Shia sect on his Sunni subjects while his Sunni subjects became dissatisfied with him because they felt that he had become a stooge in the hands of a Shia ruler. The Uzbeks took advantage of it, attacked Samarqand under the command of Ubaidullah Khan, a nephew of Shaibani Khan and occupied it in 1512 CE. Thus Babur lost Samarqand for the third time and returned to Kabul with disappointment. Thereafter, he never thought of reconquering his native land.

15.3.1 First Battle of Panipat and the Establishment of Mughal Empire

Causes

Babur was an ambitious man. He could not remain contented with the kingdom of Kabul for long. He says that from the time he obtained Kabul to his victory at Panipat, "I had never ceased to think of the conquest of Hindustan". He wanted to create an extensive empire. He endeavored to create one in Central Asia and conquered Samarqand. However, the Uzbeks foiled his plans in Central Asia. Therefore, he decided to move towards India. The story of the attack of Timur on India, which he heard from an old lady, inspired him to try his luck here. The politics of West Asia also favored his plan. The Uzbeks and the Persians fought among themselves but failed to subdue each other and thus maintained a balance of power in West Asia. Therefore, none of them was in a position of threatening the position of Babur in Kabul and he could freely engage himself in the task of conquering India.

Babur was a capable man. He had a long experience of fighting against the Turks, the Mongols, the Uzbeks, the Persians and the Afghans. He improved his fighting tactics and arms. From Uzbeks he had learned the novel method of warfare *Tulughma* tactic of warfare by which the attention of the enemy was diverted by first attacking its flanking parties, and thus avoiding direct clash with the main forces. From the Mongols and Afghans he learnt the technique of 'laying ambuscades' according to which the enemy was lured into a trap through false movements and pretended retreat of troops. From his own kinsmen, he had inherited the art of making effective use of mobile cavalry. Babur built up a strong artillery with the help of his two Turkish officers, **Ustad Ali** and **Mustafa**. Besides, Babur possessed qualities like endurance, patience, courage, contempt of death, hopefulness and faith in his destiny which made him a leader of men. Thus, his enhanced power and personal qualities also aspired him to take his chances in India. Babur was not a greedy man. However, like countless earlier invaders from Central Asia, Babur was drawn to India by the lure of its fabulous wealth. India was the land of gold and riches. Babur's ancestor, Timur, had not only carried away a vast treasure and many skilful artisans, who helped him to consolidate his Asian empire and beautify his capital, but also annexed some areas in the Punjab. These areas remained in the possession of Timur's successors for a number of generations. When Babur conquered Afghanistan, he felt that he had legitimate right to these areas.

The weak political situation in North-West India, certainly, tempted Babur to attack India. Ibrahim Lodi, the Afghan ruler of Delhi, was facing revolts from his own kinsmen and nobles. He was opposed by his nobles in Bihar, his uncle Alam Khan Lodi was pretender to the throne of Delhi and the Governor of Punjab, Daulat Khan Lodi was behaving as an independent ruler. Besides, the Afghan rulers of Bengal, Malwa and Gujarat were also his opponents. Thus, the Afghans were divided among themselves and were in no position to unite themselves against a foreign enemy. Lane-Poole wrote: "In the beginning of the 16th century, India was simply a congregation of states

and, therefore, could easily be conquered by an aggressor. In absence of a sovereign power, petty rulers swayed over the land and the writ of the Sultan had no meaning."

In Sindh, Kashmir and Orissa there were independent kingdoms but none of them was powerful. Mewar was the most powerful state of Northern India. It was the most serious threat to the Mughal rule in India. Its ruler Rana Sanga had UNITED all Rajput rulers of Rajputana under him either by wars or by diplomacy. He was trying to weaken not only the neighboring kingdoms of Malwa and Gujarat but was desirous to capture Agra and Delhi from Ibrahim Lodi. But he was not yet completely free from internal dissensions.

Babur mentions that the most powerful of all the Hindu States of India 'in point of territory and army' was the Vijayanagara which was ruled by its most illustrious ruler, Krishnadeva Raya. He was the greatest monarch of the Tuluva Dynasty of Vijayanagara. Besides, there were the kingdoms of the Berar, the Ahmadnagar, the Bijapur, the Golkunda and the Bidar which had sprung up after the division of the Bahmani kingdom. These states fought among themselves as well as against Vijayanagara. Thus, the states of Southern India had neither interest nor the capacity to look after the politics of Northern India.

Thus, there was a lack of political UNITY and stability in India at that time. The different rulers were constantly struggling against each other yet, none of them succeeded in creating a powerful empire which could face the challenge of a foreign invader. Instead, some among them encouraged Babur to attack India. Alam Khan Lodi, an uncle of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi invited Babur to attack India. He sought Babur's support for the acquisition of the throne of Delhi for himself in return for the surrender of the Punjab to the invader. Daulat Khan Lodi invited Babur so that he could keep Punjab for himself. Perhaps, Rana Sanga also assured Babur of his help against Ibrahim Lodi once he entered Punjab. Babur felt encouraged to receive such messages.

Babur attacked India five times. But the first four invasions were more or less exploratory raids. In his first invasion in January, 1519 CE he simply conquered the fortified Indian town of Bajaur, after a brief but bloody fight with its defenders. Preceding further, he occupied Bhera, situated on the banks of river Jhelum without much resistance. He meted out generous treatment to the inhabitants of the town and issued orders to his soldiers not 'to hurt or do harm to the flocks and herds of these people, nor even to their cotton-heads and broken needles'. However, both the places were lost by him as soon as he was back. He again came back to India the same year but turned back from Peshawar. During the course of his third invasion in 1520 CE, he entered Punjab and conquered Sialkot and Sayyidpur. The inhabitants of Sayyidpur (Eminabad) put up a tough resistance, and consequently, received terrible retributions from Babur. At Sayyidpur, Babur got the news of a revolt in Kandahar and cut short his expedition. After settling Kandahar affairs to his full satisfaction, Babur attacked India for the fourth time in 1524 CE and captured territory as far as Lahore and Dipalpur. But he left Punjab under the care of Alam Khan Lodi and Dilawar Khan Lodi, son of Daulat Khan Lodi and returned to Kabul. However, after his departure, Punjab was again captured by Daulat Khan Lodi. It was in 1525 CE that Babur attacked India for the fifth time with a view to conquer it.

Events

A conflict with Ibrahim Lodi was inevitable and Babur prepared for it by marching towards Delhi. Babur stayed at Shahabad for several days, and, from there he sent some persons towards Ibrahim Lodhi's camp to obtain intelligence. A cavalry division, sent by Ibrahim towards Panipat, was also defeated by Babur's men. At Shahabad Babur came to know that Ibrahim Lodhi had come

out of Delhi at the head of one lakh strong army and one thousand elephants; and was advancing slowly towards the Mughal forces 'by a mile or two at a time, and halting two or three days at each station.' Babur also instructed his armies to move steadily towards Delhi, by way of Sirhind and Ambala. He ultimately, selected as a battlefield, the vast space of land between Panipat and the river Jumna. The people of the town and the adjoining villages fled for their lives on the approach of the armies.

Babur got ample time from April 12 to 19, 1526 CE during which he arranged his forces in the battle-array. He personally commanded the 'centre' (*ghul*) of the army which was protected by a long line of 700 wheeled carts, which were previously used by his men for the transport of their baggage. The wheels of the adjoining carts were tied together by ropes made of raw hides and chain, and, in between them, sufficient gap, ranging from sixty to seventy yards in width, was left in order to allow 100 to 150 horsemen to charge through without any trouble. The frontage of the center was cleared of all the obstacles by the felling of the trees, etc. Babur possessed fourteen pieces of heavy field-guns which were carried on huge wooden gun-carriages in pairs; these were mounted in front of the 'center' just behind the chain of carts and were protected by earthen breastworks prepared on wooden planks and provided with wheels for easy movement. His artillery was commanded by two renowned Ottoman master-gunners. Regarding the fielding of artillery, Babur writes that the gun-carriages were connected together in Ottoman fashion but using ropes of raw hide instead of chains. Between every two gun carriages were fixed five or six mantelets (breast-works) behind which the match lockmen were to stand to fire. Babar took five or six days in getting the whole apparatus arranged while on the move towards Panipat. The artillery was supported by an advance guard, consisting of the most efficient mobile cavalry, and commanded by Khusrau Kukuldash and Muhammad Ali Jang-jang. The right wing of the army, under the charge of Humayun and Khwaja Kalan, was hidden from the enemy's view by the town of Panipat; while the left wing, which was commanded by Muhammad Sultan Mirza, and Mahdi Khwaja was posted in the dry bed of the Jumna and protected by a long ditch and palisade of felled trees and thorny bushes. On the extreme right of the right wing was placed the right '*tulughma*' (flanking) party and on the extreme left of the left wing was stationed the left '*tulughma*' party. Behind the battlefield, Babar had kept a reserve force under the charge of Abdul Aziz, the Master of the Horse. Babar had kept, in between the battle-lines, open channels which allowed movement of his envoys to carry his orders from UNIT to UNIT.

Ibrahim Lodi had no idea of the strongly defended position of Babur. His unwieldy army was composed of troops of all descriptions, including the foot, the horsemen and the elephant riders. It was roughly divided into four traditional divisions, the center, the advance guard, the right wing and the left wing; there were no reserves. The advance guard was comprised exclusively of the war elephants. Raja Bikramjit of Gwalior had also brought his army to fight the Mughals as an ally of Ibrahim Lodhi. The two armies faced each other, separated by a distance of about five or six miles; Ibrahim Lodhi seemed to be in no mood to take the initiative. On the night of April 18, Babar sent four or five thousand troopers for a surprise attack (*shub-khoon*) which was a total failure. After skirmishing for seven or eight days on the morning of April 20, Ibrahim Lodhi ordered his army to advance forward for an attack. However, on approaching close to Babur's lines, he found the enemy entrenched, showing no signs of movement, suddenly grew nervous and ordered his army to halt which created confusion in his ranks. His war elephants had already reached within the firing range. Babur's guns opened fire, his flanking parties wheeled round and led a frontal attack on the enemy from the side and rear. Babur's gunners used their guns with good effect from the front. Despite early setbacks, Ibrahim's soldiers fought valiantly but stood no chance of success in the face of

Babur's artillery and superior war tactics. Within two or three hours, about fifteen or sixteen thousand soldiers lay dead along with their leader Ibrahim Lodhi and his ally Raja Bikramjit of Gwalior.

Results

The First Battle of Panipat occupies a place of great importance in the history of medieval India. It gave a crushing blow to the degenerate Turko-Afghan ruling hierarchy sealed the fate of Lodi dynasty in India. It was wiped out of Indian politics. The power of the Afghans was weakened in India though not completely destroyed. Babur soon occupied Delhi and Agra and, thus, laid down the foundation of the rule of the Mughal dynasty in India whose eminent monarchs gradually shed the foreign outlook and played an important role in evolving a new cultural pattern of the Indian society based on harmony and cooperation between Hindus and Muslims. Undoubtedly, the advent of the Mughals gave a serious set-back to the growing power of the Hindu chieftains who were aspiring to reassert their political supremacy on a national level. This decisive battle provided an added importance of the town of Panipat as well. It became an 'uncanny spot which no man dared to pass after dark'. Badaoni writes that long after the battle 'the noise of conflict and shouts of combatants proceeding from that battlefield reach the ears of travelers at night'. In 1588 CE, he had to cross the plain of Panipat on his way from Lahore to Fatehpur Sikri when, as per his statement; 'these terrifying noises reached his ears, and the people who were with him imagined that some enemy was upon them'.²

Causes of Babur's Success

Many reasons contributed to Babur's success. Though Ibrahim Lodi was not lacking in personal valor, being inexperienced, he did not plan his movements carefully. Consequently he "marched without order, halted or returned without method and engaged without foresight" (Babur). On the other hand, Babur was a tried and resourceful commander. His soldiers were seasoned and disciplined. His superior generalship, *tulughma* tactics and use of artillery found no match on the side of the enemy. Babur combined his cavalry scientifically with his artillery. This accounts for the decisive victory of Babur even though he was fighting against a numerically superior army. Ibrahim's war elephants and vast numbers of soldiers ultimately proved to be a source of weakness rather than strength. Then there was disUNITY among the rulers of India. The Afghans, the ruling race were hopelessly divided. They failed to present a UNITED front. Nor did the Hindu rajas realized the need for supporting the Afghans against the Mughal invader. Babur was left as master of Delhi and Agra but not of the entire empire. Various Afghan leaders took up arms from different centers subsequently - Sambhal, Bayana, Mewat, Dholpur, Gwalior, Rupa, Etawa and Kalpi.

Babur was unintentionally helped by two factors: (i) Some important Afghan Amirs like Shaikh Bayasid and Muhammad Khan Lohani surrendered to Babur on their own accord. (ii) Babur was ably assisted by Humayun who conquered Sambhal, the Drab, Jaunpur and Ghazipur before returning to Agra. Similarly his other Begs annexed territories like Rupa, Etawa, Kanauj and Dholpur. Babur, in turn, granted them rich jagirs and towns encouraging them to conquer more. These nobles conscious of their personal fortunes, fought with increased loyalty and zeal, extending Babur's hold on the areas acquired.

15.3.2 Battle of Khanua (March 17, 1527 CE)

² J.L Mehta, 2010, "*Advanced Study in the History of Medieval India: Volume II: Mughal Empire (1526-1707)*", Sterling Publishers Private Limited, p.135-6.

Babur next turned his attention towards Rana Sanga of Mewar who was determined to dislodge Babur before he could establish a stronghold. He now formed a confederacy of Hindu and Muslim chiefs like Hasan Khan Mewati, Mahmud Lodi and other Rajput chiefs. Babur equated this fight to *jihad* (holy war) and total dedication to win the war by his troops was only possible by egging them on under *jihad*.

The forces of Babur and Rana Sanga came face to face with each other on March 17, 1527 CE at Khanua or Kanwaha, a small village near Agra. Babur, as usual, employed his "*tulughma*" including the deployment of his mounted archers on the enemy's flanks and rear guard as well. The brilliant tactical advantage of the artillery once again brought success to him against the numerically superior army of Rana Sanga. The Rana escaped but was grief stricken at losing the battle and died two years later. Babur relentlessly pursued his success by crossing the river Jamuna and securing the powerful fortress of Chanderi from another Rajput chieftain, Medini Rai in 1528 CE.

The battle of Khanua is probably more important than the battle of Panipat; the one broke the unstable power of the Afghan dynasty, while the other shattered the grand alliance of the powerful Rajput confederacy which was staking its claim to the throne at Delhi. Agra and not Kabul henceforth became the center of Babur's power.

15.3.3 Battle of Ghagra (May 6, 1529 CE)

Babur next decided to suppress the turbulent Afghans of the East where its ruler Nusrat Shah of Bengal had offered shelter to Afghan nobles of the erstwhile Lodi Kingdom. Moreover, he had married Ibrahim Lodi's daughter and therefore, considered himself as the logical claimant to the throne of Delhi. Babur met the combined forces of Bihar and Bengal on the banks of Ghagra on May 6, 1529 CE and inflicted yet another crushing defeat on them. A peace treaty was concluded with Bengal whereby both parties agreed to respect each other's sovereignties and refrain from providing shelter to fugitives. With this Babur's empire extended from Badakshan in the West to Bengal in the East, from the Himalayas in the North to Chanderi in the South.

Babur did not keep good health towards the last days of his life. The strain of continuous warfare, administrative liabilities and excessive drinking, till the battle of Khanua, had told very heavily on his physique and he felt totally exhausted. He breathed his last on December 26, 1530 CE, at the age of 48.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 Who laid the foundation of the Mughal Empire in India?
- Q.2 When and where was Babur born?
- Q.3 Who invited Babur to attack India?
- Q.4 When and between whom was the First Battle of Panipat fought?
- Q.5 Who came victorious after the end of the First Battle of Panipat?
- Q.6 Who were the famous master-gunners who fought the First Battle of Panipat?
- Q.7 Which famous battle strategy did Babur use in the First Battle of Panipat?
- Q.8 Which two important cities did Babur capture during the First Battle of Panipat?
- Q.9 Who fought the Battle of Khanwa and when?
- Q.10 Between whom and when the Battle of Ghagra was fought?

15.4 Summary

- Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur, the founder of Mughal rule in India, was born on February 14, 1483 CE at Andizhan.
- He inherited the petty kingdom of Farghana, a small state in Transoxiana, from his father in 1494 CE.
- He tried to capture Samarqand but ultimately failed. He captured Kabul in 1504 CE.
- At the time of Babur's invasion in 1526 CE, Delhi and adjoining regions were under Sultan Ibrahim Lodi.
- Babur was a capable man. He had a long experience of fighting against the Turks, the Mongols, the Uzbeks, the Persians and the Afghans.
- He learned the warfare technique of *Tulughma* from the Uzbeks.
- The weak political situation in North-West India, the fabled wealth of India etc. tempted Babur to attack India.
- Alam Khan Lodi and Rana Sanga invited Babur to attack India.
- Babur attacked India five times from 1519 CE to 1525 CE. But the first four invasions were more or less exploratory raids.
- The First Battle of Panipat was fought on April 20, 1526 CE between Babur and Ibrahim Lodi in which Babur defeated Ibrahim Lodi.
- The First Battle of Panipat occupies a place of great importance in the history of medieval India. It laid the foundation of Mughal dynasty in India.
- Many reasons contributed to Babur's success.
- Babur defeated Rana Sanga in the Battle of Khanua fought on March 17, 1527 CE.
- Babur defeated the combined forces of Bihar and Bengal on the banks of river Ghagra on May 6, 1529 CE.
- Babur died on December 26, 1526 CE.

15.5 Glossary

Ambuscade: To attack from a concealed position.

Khalifa: It is a name or title which means "successor", "ruler" or "leader". It most commonly refers to the leader of a Caliphate, but is also used as a title among various Islamic religious groups and others.

Mantelets: Any of various bulletproof shelters or screens.

Mughal: A member of the Muslim dynasty of Mongol origin founded by the successors of Timur, which ruled much of India from the 16th to the 19th century.

15.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

Ans.1 Babur

Ans.2 Babur was born on February 14, 1483 CE at Andizhan

Ans.3 Babur was invited to attack India by Daulat Khan Lodi, the governor of Lahore and the ruler of Mewar, Rana Sanga.

Ans.4 The First Battle of Panipat was fought on April 20, 1526 CE between Babur and Ibrahim Lodi.

Ans.5 Babur

Ans.6 Ustad Ali and Mustafa

Ans.7 Tulughma

Ans.8 Delhi and Agra

Ans.9 The Rajput ruler of Mewar, Rana Sanga and Babur fought in the Battle of Khanwa on March 16, 1527 CE. Babur defeated him badly.

Ans.10 Between Mughal ruler Babur and the Afghans of Bihar and Bengal in 1529 CE. Babur defeated Afghans in this battle.

15.7 Suggested Readings

1. Bamber Gascoigne, 1971, "*The Great Moghuls*", London.
2. John F. Richards, 1993, "*The Mughal Empire*", Cambridge
3. Jos Gommans, 2002, "*Mughal Warfare*", London.
4. Mohibbul Hasan, 1985, "*Babur: Founder of the Mughal Empire in India*", New Delhi: Manohar Publications.
5. Radheyshyam Chaurasia, 2002, "*History of Medieval India: From 1000 A.D. to 1707 A.D.*", Atlantic Publishers.
6. William Irvine, 1985, "*The Army of the Indian Moghuls*", London.

15.8 Terminal Questions

1. Discuss the early career of Babur.
2. Analyze the causes of the First Battle of Panipat.
3. Describe the events of the First Battle of Panipat.
4. How was the First Battle of Panipat significant in the history of India?
5. What were the causes of success of Babur in the First Battle of Panipat?
6. Write short notes on:
 - (i) Battle of Khanua
 - (ii) Battle of Ghagra

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UNIT-16

HUMAYUN'S DIFFICULTIES

Structure

- 16.1 Introduction
- 16.2 Objectives
- 16.3 Early Difficulties of Humayun
 - 16.3.1 Efforts of Humayun to Remove his Difficulties
 - 16.3.2 Humayun in Exile
 - 16.3.3 Recovery of the Indian Empire and Humayun's Death

Self-Check Exercise-1

- 16.4 Summary
- 16.5 Glossary
- 16.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 16.7 Suggested Readings
- 16.8 Terminal Questions

16.1 Introduction

Nasiruddin Muhammad Humayun was the eldest son of Babur. He was born at Kabul on March 6, 1508 CE. He was the only son of his mother, Mahim Sultana. His younger brother Kamran and Askari were born of another wife of Babur, Gulrukh Begum while Hindal, the youngest one was born of Dildar Begum. Humayun received proper education and had experience of fighting and administration before his accession. He participated in the battles of Panipat and Khanua and administered the territories of Hisar, Firuza, Badakhshan and Sambhal during the reign of Babur who nominated him as his successor before his death. Nizamuddin, the wazir who had doubts about the capabilities of Humayun, tried to place Mahdi Khwaja on the throne, but later on supported the cause of Humayun. Therefore, Humayun ascended the throne on December 30, 1530 CE at the young age of 23, a few days after Babur's death.

16.2 Objectives

After Studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Know the early difficulties of Humayun,
- Understand the efforts made by Humayun to remove his difficulties,
- Examine how Humayun recovered his lost empire.

16.3 Early Difficulties of Humayun

Humayun had to face a number of difficulties right from his accession on the throne. His own character, his brothers and relatives and the legacy from Babur created many problems for him. However, his greatest enemy was the Afghans who yet aspired to capture the throne of Delhi from the Mughals.

Legacy from Babur

Humayun had to grapple with a number of problems left behind by his father. The administration had not yet been consolidated. Babur distributed money and treasures lavishly among his nobles and soldiers which led to financial difficulties for the empire. Therefore, Humayun inherited an unstable and bankrupt empire from his Babur. Besides, the advice of Babur to deal kindly with his brothers also created problems for an obedient son, Humayun.

Humayun's Brothers

All the three brothers of Humayun proved not only incompetent but unfaithful as well to their elder brother. When the Mughal empire needed the support of the brothers and, thereby, unity in the Mughal camp, the brothers of Humayun divided its resources by emphasizing on their selfish ends and ambitions. While Humayun needed help from his brothers, they either became indifferent towards him or revolted against him. Thus, each of his brothers created problems for Humayun at one time or the other.

Humayun's Relatives

Babur had allocated large jagirs to his relatives. That made them quite powerful and enhanced their ambitions. One of them Mahdi Khwaja aspired for the throne just after Babur's death. Another two relations of Humayun, viz., Muhammad Zaman Mirza, his brother-in-law and Muhammad Sultan Mirza, his cousin revolted against him and aided his enemies.

Absence of a Unified Army

The Mughal army was not a national army. It was a mixed body of adventurers-Chaghatais, Uzbeks, Mughals, Persians, Afghans and Hindustanis. Such an army could be effective only under the leadership of an accomplished commander like Babur. Under a man of less ability, it could turn out to be a congregation of adventurers.

Humayun's Character

Humayun was a courageous and benevolent person. However, as a king, he suffered from certain weaknesses. He was neither a capable commander nor a diplomat. He was unable to understand the enormity of his problems and the necessity of providing strong leadership to his followers. He also lacked the ability of continuous hard labor. However, the greatest weakness of Humayun was his extreme generosity which became one of the causes of his failure. Stanley Lane-Poole has rightly remarked: "His failure was in no small measure due to his beautiful but unwise clemency." Thus, the character of Humayun was also one of his difficulties.

The Division of Empire by Humayun

Humayun faithfully implemented the will of his father. At the very outset of his career as Emperor, he gave large territory to each of his brothers which virtually meant the division of the empire. He assigned Kabul and Kandhar to Kamran, Mewat to Hindal and Sambhal to Askari. Later on he permitted Kamran to occupy Punjab and Hisar-Firuz as well. According to Dr. A.L. Srivastava Humayun committed a mistake because he, thus, divided the resources and the strength of the empire. However, Dr. R.P. Tripathi says that Humayun had to do it according to the tradition of the Mongols and the Turks otherwise there was danger of civil war among the brothers.

Whatever may be the reason it was a mistake on the part of Humayun. Particularly, it was unwise on his part to give North-Western part of his empire to Kamran because it was the best recruiting ground of the soldiers for the Mughal army

The Afghans

The Afghans were the worst enemies of Humayun. They were ruling Delhi only some years back and they did not give up the ambition to capture it again. Mahmud Lodi had returned to Bihar and was supported by Nusrat Shah of Bengal to make a fresh attempt to capture Delhi. Bahadur Shah, the ruler of Gujarat was also an Afghan. He had conquered Malwa and was increasing his pressure on Rajasthan, predominantly on Mewar. Many fugitive Afghan nobles had found shelter under him.

Sher Shah Suri, another Afghan chief, was shrewdly attempting to organize the Afghans against the Mughals. He was an insignificant rival of Humayun at that time but, subsequently, he proved himself to be the strongest enemy of Humayun and, finally, succeeded in driving out Humayun from India.

16.3.1 Efforts of Humayun to Remove his Difficulties

The name Humayun implies ‘fortunate’ but he proved to be one of the most unlucky monarchs who ever sat upon the throne of Delhi. Along with the empire, he inherited a number of difficulties for which he did not owe any personal responsibility. He made the following efforts to remove his difficulties:-

Attack on Kalinjar (1531 CE)

Humayun engaged himself in fighting only after six months of his accession on the throne. He first attacked the extremely strong fort of Kalinjar. Its ruler Prataprudra Deo was sympathetic towards the Afghans. He was trying to annex Kalpi. If Kalpi had gone to him and he would have, then, sided with Bahadur Shah of Gujarat, it would have proved dangerous for Humayun. Therefore, it was primarily to check the growing power of Bahadur Shah that Humayun decided to capture Kalinjar and therefore, attacked it in 1531 CE. Humayun surrounded the fort but had to compromise at the end. Humayun entered into peace with Prataprudra Deo and returned after taking some money from him as compensation. Thus, the attack of Kalinjar did not prove to be of any importance.

The Battle of Dauhria and the First Siege of Chunar (1532 CE)

Under Mahmud Lodi, the Afghans, had forced the Mughal governor of Jaunpur to retreat and were strengthening their position in Awadh by the time Humayun reached in the East to pacify them. Humayun defeated the Afghans at Dauhria. Mahmud Lodi could escape from the battle but lost all his prestige among the Afghans. Humayun, then, besieged the fort of Chunar which was in the hands of Sher Khan. Chunar was known as the **Gateway of Eastern India** because it commanded the land and river route between Agra and the East. Humayun was unsuccessful in capturing the fort even after a siege of four months. By that time, Bahadur Shah of Gujarat increased his pressure on Rajasthan which was against the interest of Humayun. Therefore, he asked Sher Khan to accept his suzerainty and send a contingent of Afghan troops to serve him. Sher Khan agreed and sent his son Qutb Khah to serve the Mughal emperor. Humayun, then, returned to Agra.

Humayun wasted nearly one and a half year at Agra and spent his money in the construction of a new city in Delhi called **Din Panah**. In 1534 CE, Muhammad Zaman Mirza and Muhammad

Sultan Mirza revolted against Humayun in Bihar. Humayun defeated and imprisoned both of them though they fled away from the prison soon after.

War with Bahadur Shah (1535-36 CE)

The ruler of Gujarat, Bahadur Shah, was a powerful and capable ruler. He had entered into treaties with some states of South India, conquered Malwa in 1531 CE, captured the fort of Raisen in 1532 CE and compelled the ruler of Mewar to accept a treaty. He was in correspondence with Sher Khan and Nusrat Shah of Bengal against Humayun. He had strengthened his forces and established strong artillery by securing the services of a Turkish gunner, Rumi Khan. He provided shelter to Muhammad Zaman Mirza and refused to return him to Humayun. He desired to capture Delhi itself and, thus, was posing a threat to the Mughals.

Humayun decided to settle his score with Bahadur Shah and entered Malwa with this objective. At that time, Bahadur Shah had besieged the fort of Chittor. Rani Karanwati of Mewar is alleged to have sent a *rakhi* to Humayun and sought his help as a brother. Humayun advanced towards Chittor but stopped at Sarangpur on the way. He did not desire to attack Bahadur Shah till he was engaged in jihad against the infidels of Mewar. Dr. R.P. Tripathi has given some other reasons as well which forced Humayun to stop at Sarangpur. He says that Humayun desired to consolidate his army, win over those peoples of Malwa who were against Bahadur Shah and arrange for the stoppage of help coming to Bahadur Shah either from Mandu or Ahmedabad. He was apprehensive of the activities of the friendly states of Bahadur Shah in the South and wanted to take all precautions against their activities as well as those of Alam Khan Lodi who had gone towards Kalinjar and could attack Humayun from behind. Bahadur Shah defeated the Chittor army and freely looted it for three days. Humayun then proceeded forward and reached Mandasor, 60 miles from Chittor and checked the route of return of Bahadur Shah. Bahadur Shah also reached Mandasor. Humayun kept his army out of reach of the artillery of Bahadur Shah and cut his supplies. Bahadur Shah felt short of supplies and his army lost its morale. He fled away without fighting during the night of April 25, 1535 CE and took shelter in the fort of Mandu. Humayun pursued the fugitive. From Mandu, Bahadur Shah escaped to Champaner, then to Cambay and afterwards to Diu. Humayun pursued Bahadur Shah up to Cambay but then, leaving the task of pursuing Bahadur Shah to his nobles, returned to besiege the fort of Champaner. It was captured by him and he got a large booty from there which he extravagantly distributed among his followers.

By that time, the whole of Malwa and Gujarat had surrendered to the Mughals. It was a grand success and so were the seizure of the forts of Mandu and Champaner. Humayun appointed his brother Askari as the governor of Gujarat, left Hindu Beg for his support and came back to Mandu. However, Askari could not manage the affairs of Gujarat which resulted in a revolt by the people under Imad-ul-mulk, one of the trusted officers of Bahadur Shah. After sometime Bahadur Shah himself arrived in Gujarat. After a minor battle against the forces of Bahadur Shah, Askari decided to retire to the fort of Champaner. Tardi Beg, the governor of the fort, however, refused to hand over the fort and its treasure to Askari. Askari, then, proceeded towards Agra. Bahadur Shah captured Champaner immediately and Tardi Beg retreated to Mandu. Thus, the whole of Gujarat was lost by Humayun to Bahadur Shah. Fearing that Askari might capture Agra for himself, Humayun also left Mandu and advanced towards Agra. The two brothers met the way and Humayun was assured of the loyalty of his brother. He gracefully pardoned him and all other officers and reached Agra. Mandu was occupied by Mallu Khan in the name of Bahadur Shah. As a result Malwa was also lost to the Mughals. Thus, within a year, both Malwa and Gujarat were lost by the Mughals. It was a very poor show on the part of Humayun. Lane-Poole has commented: "Malwa

and Gujarat, two provinces equal in area to all the rest of Humayun's kingdom had fallen like ripe fruits into his hands. Never was conquest so easy. Never too was conquest more recklessly squandered away."

Struggle with Sher Shah Suri

Sher Khan consolidated his position in Bihar, while Humayun was busy in fighting against Bahadur Shah. He had become the master of South Bihar, was in possession of the strong fort of Chunar and most of the Afghan nobles had gathered under his banner. In Bengal, Nusrat Shah was succeeded by Mahmud Shah who proved to be an incapable ruler. That provided an opportunity to Sher Khan to strengthen his power at the cost of Bengal. He attacked Bengal in 1536 CE, besieged its capital Gaur and forced Mahmud Shah to pay thirteen lakh dinars. In 1537 CE, he again attacked Bengal. Only then Humayun realized that it was necessary to subdue Sher Khan.

Humayun proceeded towards Bihar in July 1537 CE and captured the fort of Chunargarh. In the meantime, Sher Khan had captured Gaur and looted all its treasure. Humayun reached Banaras and started negotiations with Sher Khan for peace. It was decided that Bengal would be given to Sher Khan under the suzerainty of the Mughals and he would pay ten lakh rupees annually while Bihar would be taken over by the Mughals. But before the signing of the treaty, a messenger of Mahmud Shah arrived and requested Humayun to attack Bengal to save his master. Humayun broke off the talks with Sher Khan and advanced towards Bengal. Sher Khan deputed his eldest son Jalal Khan to delay Humayun's advance. Jalal Khan was successful in his mission and returned to his father who had successfully finished his campaign in Bengal and returned to Bihar. Humayun, therefore, faced no difficulty in capturing Bengal. According to Dr. A.L. Srivastava, Humayun wasted eight months in Bengal and during this time Sher Khan seized Kara and Banaras and Sambhal, etc. and laid siege of Chunargarh and Jaunpur. He virtually blocked Humayun's passage of return to Agra. After some months Humayun received the shocking news of Sher Khan's activities and also of his brother Hindal who declared himself emperor at Agra. He left behind a small contingent of 5000 troopers under the command of Jahangir Quli Beg in Bengal and marched towards Agra in March 1539 CE.

(i) The Battle of Chausa (June 26, 1539 CE). Humayun took the route of the Grand Trunk Road which passed through South Bihar which was under the firm control of Sher Khan. The secret agents of Sher Khan provided him with all the details regarding the power of the Mughal army and its movements. According to Dr. A.L. Srivastava, it was a great mistake. However, Dr. R.P. Tripathi opines that, "it was the most proper route because it was known to the Mughals and led them to Chunargarh where the Mughals were still fighting against the Afghan besiegers." But Humayun was forced to cross the river Ganges once more and he reached Chausa, situated near the confluence of the Ganges and the Karmanasa. Sher Khan also reached there. The two armies lay face to face with each other from April to June 1539 CE. Negotiations of peace were carried on but nothing came out of them. Sher Khan deliberately delayed the battle. He waited for the monsoons which would create problem for the Mughal army which was camping in the low land between the two rivers. That actually happened with the first shower of the monsoons. On June 25, Sher Khan gave the impression to the Mughals that he was going to deal with one of the tribal chiefs in Bihar. But, he returned and attacked the Mughals in the early hours of June 26 from three directions. The Mughals were taken unawares and the entire army was destroyed. Humayun just saved his life by plunging himself into the river Ganges and crossing it with the help of a water-carrier, Nizam who offered him his *mashak* for swimming across the river. Sher Khan proclaimed himself the Sultan

and assumed the title of Emperor of India under the name **Sher Shah** after this battle. He captured Bengal as well and then returned to Kannauj.

(ii) The Battle of Bilgram or Kannauj (May 17, 1540 CE)-While Sher Shah was consolidating his position in the East, Humayun and his brothers wasted their time at Agra. Humayun had bigheartedly forgiven not only his brother, Hindal but also the rebel, Sultan Mirza. Yet the brothers could not UNITE among themselves. Kamran fell ill and he grew apprehensive that Humayun was poisoning him slowly. Therefore, he left for Lahore with most of his army. The Mughals defeated the Afghan army in Malwa which was sent by Sher Shah under his son Qutb Khan. However, they failed to take any effective measure against Sher Shah. However, Humayun finally moved towards the East and reached Bhojpur near Kannauj where Sher Shah had already encamped himself. This time too the two armies faced each other for more than a month and again the rains started. On May 17, 1540 CE when the Mughals were shifting themselves to a higher plain, Sher Shah pounced upon them with full force. In the Battle of Kannauj or Bilgram, the Mughals fought bravely but were defeated. Humayun again fled away. Sher Shah gave a hot chase to the fleeing Mughal Emperor who could reach Agra but had to escape from there as Sher Shah was pursuing him. Sher Shah captured Delhi and Agra and, thus, the Afghans went to Lahore, then to Sindh and, finally, left India to seek refuge at the court of Shah of Persia.

Causes of Failure of Humayun Against Sher Shah Suri

A number of causes were responsible for the failure of Humayun against Sher Shah. Among modern historians, Dr. R.P. Tripathi is one who has taken a most sympathetic view towards Humayun. He believes that the opposition of his brothers and weakness of his character as causes of his failure have been highly exaggerated by many historians which is an act of injustice to him. Humayun divided his empire among his brothers because he was following tradition of the Timurids. If he had not done so, there was every possibility of a civil war among the brothers. The time, which he spent in Mandu after the conquests of Gujarat and in Gaur after the conquest of Bengal, was not spent in ease and comfort but in organizing the administration of these newly conquered states. Among his brothers Kamran did nothing against him for the first ten years of his rule. However, he lost faith in Humayun's ability to defend the empire and so left him to defend his own provinces. Askari never revolted against Humayun. On the contrary, he always sided with Humayun in all his important battles. He left Humayun to go with Kamran because he was his real brother. Besides, he gave a chance to Humayun in fleeing to Persia and looked after his son Akbar in his absence. Hindal was a weak personality. He revolted against Humayun mostly at the instigation of others. Yet, he loved Humayun and, ultimately, died fighting for his sake. Certainly, if Kamran and Hindal would have supported Humayun before the battle of Chausa, possibly, Humayun would have succeeded against Sher Shah. But the cause of their neglect at that time was more due to their miscalculations rather than bad intentions. Similarly, there was nothing very much wrong in Humayun's character. He was addicted to opium but it was nothing as compared to the addiction of Babur to opium, liquor, etc. Humayun was a daring soldier and an experienced general. So his character and the opposition of his brothers should not be accepted as major causes of his failure. The chief cause of the Humayun's failure was that his enemies had equally effective artillery. Another important cause was that Sher Shah was, undoubtedly, a better and more experienced military commander as compared to Humayun. Yet, another disadvantage of Humayun was his financial problems which he inherited from his father and which worsened further due to his generosity. Besides, Humayun proved to be an unlucky man. He lost Gujarat and Malwa because

Tardi Beg declined to support Askari; Mahmud Shah of Bengal failed to defend himself against Sher Shah even for a few months; and, heavy rains troubled the Mughal army before the battle of Kannauj. Humayun was not a good judge of men and circumstances. As a diplomat he was no match to Babur or Sher Shah. Dr. Tripathi, therefore, concludes: "Humayun was neither favored by luck, nor so in as to be able to sustain the weight of the great problems which he was called upon to tackle. His chief opponent Sher Shah had the advantage of both."

Dr. S.R. Sharma opines that, assigning the North-Western provinces to Kamran, disregard of finances of the state, avoidance of support to Chittor, thereby, losing the golden opportunity of getting the sympathy of the failure to suppress Sher Shah before he could become formidable, his extremely Rajputs, neglect of the affairs of Gujarat and Malwa after their conquests, generous nature, errors in assessing the military situations and inability to take immediate decisions, etc. were the causes of his failure against Sher Shah.

According to Dr.A.L. Srivastava, Humayun committed numerous mistakes from the very beginning. He divided his empire among his brothers, engaged himself in wars without managing the finances of the state, failed to pacify Sher Shah in time, left Chunargarh uncaptured in 1532 CE, failed to attack Bahadur Shah when he was besieging the fort of Chittor, failed to consolidate his conquests of Malwa and Gujarat, wasted nearly six months in capturing Chunargarh when he attacked it the second time, advanced to Bengal without first conquering Bihar, gave ample time to Sher Shah to consolidate his position in the East after the battle of Chausa and encamped on the low land prior to the battle of Kannauj. All these were his mistakes. Apart from this he lacked leadership qualities, involved himself in pleasures when he was supposed to be active in looking after the affairs of the state and wasted his time and money at crucial moments of his life. All this led to his failure against Sher Shah.

Thus, there were various causes that were responsible for the failure of the Mughals under Humayun against the Afghans under the leadership of Sher Shah. On the one hand were the personal weaknesses and mistakes of Humayun and, on the other hand, was the superiority of leadership and organizing capacity of his rival Sher Shah. In fact, Humayun was never on sound ground and he failed to get a stronghold over his empire during his lifetime. Therefore, Stanley Lane-Poole has rightly remarked, "Humayun tumbled through life and he tumbled out of it."

16.3.2 Humayun in Exile

Humayun remained in exile from 1540 to 1555 CE after his defeat at the battle of Kannauj. His efforts to go to Kashmir or Badakhshan were thwarted by his brother Kamran. He then advanced towards Sindh and attempted to capture it but was unsuccessful. In 1541 CE he married Hamida Banu Begum, the daughter of the spiritual preceptor of Hindal, Mir Baba Dost *alias* Ali Akbar Jami. Hindal left for Kandhar at that time and another loyal officer of Humayun, Yadgar Mirza also left his company. Humayun advanced towards Marwar. Its ruler Maldeva had guaranteed of his help to Humayun but Humayun realized that he was not in a mood to help him at that time and, probably, was won over by Sher Shah to his side. He immediately withdrew himself because he feared that Maldeva would imprison him and hand him over to Sher Shah. While returning from there he was given shelter by Rana Virasala, the Rajput ruler of Amarkot in Sind where Akbar was born on October 15, 1542 CE. Shah Husain, the ruler of South Sindh agreed to give passage and needful help to Humayun to proceed to Kandhar at that time and Humayun left India. Kamran attempted to capture him on the way but Humayun could reach Persia safely after leaving his infant

son Akbar at the mercy of his selfish brothers. Akbar was taken under the care of Askari who was the governor of Kandhar. Shah Tahmasp, the monarch of Persia, welcomed Humayun and agreed to help him with money and soldiers in 1544 CE on condition of conversion to Shia faith, spread it among his subjects and restore Kandhar to Persia after its conquest. Humayun had to accept that embarrassing treaty and then he proceeded to attack Kandhar with the help of the Persian forces. Humayun captured Kandhar and Kabul from Kamran in 1545 CE and reserved Kandhar to himself after the death of the son of Shah Tahmasp. Here he was joined back by Hindal and Yadgar Mirza. But, Kamran and Askari troubled him. However, they were defeated many times, pardoned by Humayun every time but, ultimately, were captured and punished. Kamran was taken prisoner, blinded and sent to Mecca where he died in 1557 CE. Askari was also taken prisoner and exiled to Mecca in 1551 CE from where he never returned and died in 1558 CE. Hindal lost his life while fighting against the Afghans during this period. Thus, finally, Humayun became free from the rivalry of his brothers and settled himself in Afghanistan from where he got an opportunity to return to India and regain his lost empire.

16.3.3 Recovery of Indian Empire and Humayun's Death

Sher Shah died in 1545 CE and was succeeded by his son Islam Shah. Humayun once attempted to attack India during his life-time but could not carry out his plan due to vigorous activity of Islam Shah. Islam Shah died in October 1553 CE. As a result, there was a division of the Afghan empire in India. His 12 year old son, Firoz Shah was murdered by his maternal uncle, Mubariz who captured the throne and assumed the title of Muhammad Adil Shah. He was a pleasure-seeker and left the responsibility of administration in the hands of his Hindu minister, Hemu. The authority of Adil Shah was soon challenged by two members of the royal family, named Ibrahim Shah and Sikandar Shah and Bengal declared its independence under Muhammad Shah. Adil Shah, Ibrahim Shah and Sikandar Shah fought among themselves for the capture of the empire. The struggle proved to be unsuccessful and resulted in the division of the empire. Sikandar Shah settled at Lahore and Ibrahim Shah at Bayana while Adil Shah retired to Chunargarh leaving Hemu to contest against his rivals. Delhi was captured first by Ibrahim Shah and then by Sikandar Shah. In November 1554 CE. Humayun advanced towards Peshawar and occupied the territory up to Lahore by the beginning of 1555 CE. Sikandar Shah sent an army under Tatar Khan and Haibat Khan to check Humayun's advance. The Afghan armies suffered a defeat in the Battle of Machhiwara on the bank of the Sutlej and vacated Punjab. Sikandar Sur escaped to Shiwalik hills. The credit for this victory of Mughals was given to Akbar who was appointed governor of Punjab. Humayun entered Delhi on July 23, 1555 CE and became the Emperor of India once again. Agra was occupied soon afterwards.

However, Humayun was not destined to rule over his Indian dominions for long after his restoration. On January 24, 1559 CE when Humayun was descending the stairs of his personal library at **Din Panah** or **Sher Mandal**, he met with an accidental fall and fractured his skull. This injury proved fatal and only two days after the accident; he died on January 26, 1556 CE. Prior to his death, Humayun nominated his son Akbar as his successor to the throne.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 How many brothers Humayun had? Name them.
- Q.2 Which place was known as the Gateway of Eastern India and why?
- Q.3 Who ruled over Gujarat at the time of Humayun's attack?

Q.4 Between whom and when was the Battle of Chausa fought?

Q.5 When was the Battle of Kannauj or Bilgram fought?

Q.6 What was the period Humayun spent in exile?

Q.7 When and where was the son of Humayun, Akbar born?

Q.8 What was Din Panah?

16.4 Summary

- Nasiruddin Muhammad Humayun was the eldest son of Babur. He became the Mughal Emperor in 1530 CE.
- Humayun had to face a number of difficulties right from his accession on the throne.
- His own character, his brothers and relatives and the legacy from Babur created many problems for him. However, his greatest enemy were the Afghans who yet aspired to capture the throne of Delhi from the Mughals.
- Six months after his succession, Humayun besieged the fortress of Kalinjar in Bundelkhand, gained a decisive victory over Afghans at Dauhria and drove out Sultan Mahmood Lodhi from Jaunpur, and even defeated Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. However, his victories were short-lived due to the weakness of his character.
- Humayun had three brothers, Kamran, Askari and Hindal. He divided the empire among his brothers but this proved to be a great blunder on his part.
- Kamran was given Kabul and Kandahar. Sambhal and Alwar were given to Askari and Hindal respectively.
- Humayun captured Gujarat from Bahadur Shah and appointed Askari as its governor
- In the East, Sher Khan became powerful. Humayun marched against him and in the Battle of Chausa, held in 1539 CE, Sher Shah destroyed the Mughal army and Humayun escaped from there.
- Humayun reached Agra to negotiate with his brothers.
- In 1540, in the Battle of Bilgram or Kannauj. Humayun was forced to fight with Sher Shah alone and after losing his kingdom, Humayun became an exile for the next fifteen years.
- During his wanderings in deserts of Sindh, Humayun married Hamida Banu Begum, daughter of Ali Akbar Jami, who had been a preceptor of Humayun's brother Hindal.
- Humayun's wife gave birth to Akbar on October 15, 1542 CE.
- Humayun left India and lived under the generosity of Shah Tahmasp of Persia.
- Shah of Persia agreed to help Humayun on the condition to convert into Shia creed, to have the Shah's name proclaimed in his *khutba* and to give away Qandhar to him on his success.
- Humayun captured Qandhar and Kabul but refused to cede Qandhar to Persia. He sought help from the Safavid ruler. Later, he defeated his brothers Kamran and Askari.

- In 1555 CE, Humayun defeated the Afghans and recovered the Mughal throne. He died in 1556 CE due to his fall from the staircase of Sher Mandal library.

16.5 Glossary

Besiege: To surround a place with an army.

Fugitive: A person who is running away or escaping.

Mashak: Leather bag for carrying water.

Rakhi: An ornamental cotton wristband tied by a girl or woman on to the wrist of her brother, particularly on Raksha Bandhan festival.

16.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

Ans.1 Three brothers—Kamran, Hindal and Askari

Ans.2 Chunar, because it commanded the land and river route between Agra and the East.

Ans.3 Bahadur Shah

Ans.4 Between Humayun and Sher Shah Suri on June 26, 1539 CE.

Ans.5 May 17, 1540 CE

Ans.6 15 years from 1540 to 1555 CE

Ans.7 October 15, 1542 CE at Amarkot in Sindh

Ans.8 It was a magnificent library building in Delhi built by Humayun.

16.7 Suggested Readings

1. Bamber Gascoigne, 1971, *“The Great Moghuls”*, New York: Harper & Row.
2. Harbans Mukhia, 2004, *“The Mughals of India”*, Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
3. Ishwari Prasad, 1955, *“As Mughal Prince: The Life and Times of Humayun”*, Orient Longman Limited.
4. John F. Richards & Gordon Johnson (ed.), 1993, *“The Mughal Empire”*, The New Cambridge History of India. Vol.1.5. Cambridge University Press.
5. Rama Shanker Avasthy, 1967, “The Mughal Emperor Humayun”, History Dept., University of Allahabad.
6. S.K Banerji, 1938, *“Humayun Badshah”*, Oxford University Press.
7. S.R Sharma, 1999, *“Mughal Empire in India: A Systematic Study Including Source Material”*, Volume 2, Atlantic Publishers & Distributors.

16.8 Terminal Questions

1. "Humayun had rich legacy of difficulties from his father which he made richer by his own mistake." Discuss.
2. Describe the early difficulties of Humayun. How far he succeeded in solving them?
3. Discuss the contest between Humayun and Sher Shah for the sovereignty of Hindustan and point out the causes of the success of Sher Shah.
4. Discuss the Afghan-Mughul contest for the sovereignty of Hindustan between 1526 and 1556 CE.
5. "Humayun's failure was no small measure due to his beautiful but unwise clemency." How far do you agree with this view?
6. Write a short note on Humayun's period in exile.
7. How did Humayun recover his lost empire?

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UNIT-17

SHER SHAH SURI AND HIS ADMINISTRATION

Structure

- 17.1 Introduction
- 17.2 Objectives
- 17.3 Sher Shah Suri and His Administration
 - 17.3.1 Provincial Administration
 - 17.3.2 Finance
 - 17.3.3 Justice
 - 17.3.4 Police
 - 17.3.5 Trade and Commerce
 - 17.3.6 Currency
 - 17.3.7 Roads and Sarais
 - 17.3.8 Intelligence Department
 - 17.3.9 Religious Policy and Charity
 - 17.3.10 Buildings
 - 17.3.11 Education
 - 17.3.12 Military Administration
 - 17.3.13 Estimate of Sher Shah

Self-Check Exercise -1

- 17.4 Summary
- 17.5 Glossary
- 17.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 17.7 Suggested Readings
- 17.8 Terminal Questions

17.1 Introduction

A majority of the modern historians have recognized the ability of Sher Shah Suri as an administrator. However, the credit of assigning Sher Shah his rightful place in history goes to the research conducted in the 20th century by K.R Qanungo. He has described Sher Shah as, "The greatest administrative and military genius among the Afghans." He says that Sher Shah was a better constructive genius and nation-builder than even Akbar, the Great. Sir Woolseley Haig has also remarked: "He was in truth one of the greatest rulers who ever sat on the throne of Delhi. No other ruler from Akbar to Aurangzeb possessed such intimate knowledge of the details of administration or was able to control public business so minutely and effectively as he." However,

Dr. P. Saran and Dr. R.P Tripathi have expressed the opinion that "Sher Shah was a good administrator but he was not an innovator." They believe that Sher Shah was one of the best administrators among the rulers of medieval India but he did not introduce any novelty in administration. His revenue administration was not entirely new while his military reforms were based on the reforms introduced by Alauddin Khalji. Sher Shah learnt from the experiences of others. The administrative measures introduced by his predecessors were so adapted by him that they looked like new innovations. Apart from this, he practiced them with such a skilled hand that all his administrative measures succeeded in bringing out order, peace, strength and prosperity to the state as well as to his subjects. That itself is sufficient to regard him as one of the best administrators among the rulers of medieval India.

17.2 Objectives

After Studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the administrative system of Sher Shah Suri,
- Assess the ability of Sher Shah Suri as an administrator.

17.3 Sher Shah Suri and His Administration

17.3.1 Central Administration

The Sultan

Sher Shah paid due respect to the sentiments and traditions of the Afghans with the purpose of winning their loyalty and respect. However, he was aware that the Afghan theory of kingship was not feasible in India. So he brought changes in the traditions of the Afghans and came nearer the Turkish theory of kingship. Therefore, he concentrated all the powers of the state unto himself and had established highly centralized administrative machinery. His ministers enjoyed even less powers as compared with the ministers of the Mughals. All major decisions were taken by Sher Shah himself. Thus, Sher Shah was an enlightened despot who regarded administration as a part of his duty, and 'attended to every business concerning the administration of the kingdom and the revenues, whether great or small, in his own person'.³

The Ministers

Sher Shah's ministers were merely his own creatures who carried out routine administrative duties as per his directions and under his personal supervision. There were departments whose administrative heads enjoyed the position of ministers. They were as follows:

(i) Diwan-i-wizarat: The office in charge of this department was the **Wazir** (Vazir). He was, primarily, the finance minister and looked after the finance and revenues of the state. In theory, he had some powers of general supervision over other ministers. Sher Shah was himself an expert in land-revenue and financial matters. He used to take keen interest in the functioning of the department.

(ii) Diwan-i-arz: This was the second important department which was under the charge of **Arz-i-Mumalik** who was the army minister. He can be compared with a modern defence minister who looked after the recruitment, organization, discipline, disbursement of the salaries of the soldiers

³ J.L Mehta, 2010, '*Advanced Study in the History of Medieval India: Volume II: Mughal Empire (1526-1707)*', Sterling Publishers Private Limited, p.174.

and officers and all sorts of supplies to the army. However, he was not given the authority to command the soldiers in the battlefield.

(iii) Diwan-i-rasalat or Diwan-i-muhtasib: The officer in charge of this department worked as the foreign minister of the state. He received foreign envoys and ambassadors and maintained correspondence with foreign states. Sometimes, the function of charity and endowment department was also given to him.

(iv) Diwan-i-insha: The officer in charge of this department was called **Dabir-i-khas**. This department dealt with the drafting of royal proclamations and dispatches to the local officers. It also maintained government records.

Apart from these ministers, there were two other important departments of the state whose heads were not ministers but enjoyed equal consideration from the Sultan. The one was the **Diwan-i-qaza** (Department of Justice) which was headed by the chief Qazi. The chief Qazi was the head of the administration of justice only next to the Sultan. The other was **Diwan-i-barid** which was presided over by the **Barid-i-mumalik** who was the head of the intelligence department. The postal arrangements also fell within the purview of his duties. He was posted at all important places in the empire. The officer in charge of the royal household was called as **Diwan-i-saman**.

17.3.2 Provincial Administration

The provincial administration also did not receive much impact of Sher Shah's reforming zeal.

Subah or Iqta

Not much is known about the provincial administration of Sher Shah and whatever is known, historians have differed about it. Dr. Qanungo has opined that there was no administrative UNIT called Iqta or Suba during the reign of Sher Shah. According to him the largest administrative UNIT was the Sarkar. According to Dr. P. Saran there were Subas where military governors were appointed by Sher Shah. Dr. A.L. Srivastava believes that besides the Hindu rulers who had accepted the suzerainty of Sher Shah and were left free to manage their internal affairs, there were provinces called the Iqtas where military governors or Subedars were appointed. According to Dr. A.B. Pandey 'The head of a province was called the Hakim, Amin or Faujdar. Sher Shah devised yet another method to govern the distant province of Bengal. There was no military governor there. The entire Suba was divided into Sarkars (districts), each being looked after by a military officer called the chief Shiqdar.

Thus, there was no consistency in the administration of provinces during the reign of Sher Shah. But all provinces were kept under strict discipline by Sher Shah and there was no revolt by any provincial governor except that in 1541 CE in Bengal which was quickly suppressed by the Sultan.

Sarkars

According to Dr. Qanungo Sher Shah had divided his empire into 47 Sarkars or districts which were placed under the direct control of central government. Each Sarkar was manned by two chief officers--**Shiqdar-i-Shiqdaran** or Chief Shiqdar and **Munsif-i-Munsifan** of the Chief Munsif. The former was a military officer. He maintained peace in his Sarkar, supervised the work of his subordinate Shiqdars and helped in the collection of revenue and other taxes. The latter was, primarily, a judicial officer who decided only civil cases and looked after the working of his

subordinate judicial officers in the Parganas. Certainly, both these officers must have been getting assistance from a large number of junior officers and other subordinates in carrying out their duties.

Parganas

The Sarkars were divided into two or three Parganas each. There was a Shiqdar (military officer), Amin or Munsif (Civilian Judge), one Fotedar (treasurer) and two Karkuns (clerks or writers) in each Pargana.

Village

A village was the lowest and by far the most stable administrative UNIT of the state. Sher Shah accepted the time-honored custom of recognizing the autonomy of the villages. He left the administration of villages in the hands of their hereditary officers like Chaukidars, Patwaris, etc. Panchayati raj was treated as the law of the land. The village-panchayat (assembly) also enjoyed a large measure of independence in looking after the welfare of the people. All of them assisted state officials in collecting revenue and maintaining law and order.

17.3.3 Finance

Land-revenue, unclaimed property, trade-tax, mint, salt-tax, Khams, jizya and presents from subordinate rulers, governors, nobles, traders, etc were the main sources of the income of the state. The main items of expenditure comprized the expenses to maintain the army, salaries of civilian officers and the expenditure of the royal household and the Sultan. The local taxes were called *abwabs* which were imposed mostly on production and consumption of various trade and professions and on transport.

However, the land revenue was the primary source of income of the state. The experience gained by him in his youth as the manager of his father's jagir had given him first-hand knowledge of the land revenue problems and the secret of prosperity and stability of the state. According to Abul Fazl Sher Shah introduced the land revenue system of Alauddin Khalji. However, this opinion of Abul Fazl concerning Sher Shah seems incorrect. Sher Shah did not followed the revenue-system of Alauddin blindly. Rather, he did what he felt correct. Sher Shah believed that the welfare of the state could be achieved only by looking after the welfare of the peasants. Therefore, he paid personal attention towards the revenue administration and introduced certain successful measures to improve it. His revenue administration has been considered as one of the best during the medieval period. Its basic features were as follows:

- (i) The most important feature of the land revenue system of Sher Shah was the elimination of the intermediaries, zamidars, agents or contractors for collecting the land revenue. Ryotwari system or the system of cultivators or ryots was introduced in most of the places wherein the state kept direct relations with the peasants for the assessment and collection of the land revenue. However, the system could not be introduced in Multan, Malwa and Rajasthan where the Jagirdari system continued to exist.
- (ii) All cultivable land was divided into three categories on the basis of production, viz., good, middling and bad.
- (iii) The land was measured according to a uniform system and the quality of land was possessed by each cultivator was ascertained. An average of the produce was estimated in each case and then, according to Dr. Qanungo, the peasants were asked to pay 1/4 of

the average produce. However, according to Dr. P. Saran, Dr R.P. Tripathi and the majority of historians, the cultivators were asked to pay 1/3 of their produce to the state.

- (iv) The state preferred to collect revenue in the form of cash. Yet, the cultivators were given the facility to pay their revenue in kind as well. However, the revenue on perishable articles was paid by the peasants in form of cash only.
- (v) The peasants were provided with the facility to pay their revenue in two instalments in a year according to the crop seasons.
- (vi) The peasants were given *pattas* (title deeds) and *qabuliyats* (deeds of agreement) by the state. *Patta* gave all the details of the different categories of land held by the cultivator and the rate of land revenue payable by him on different crops. In *Qabuliyat*, the cultivator promised to pay a particular amount of land revenue to the state.
- (vii) The peasants were required to pay two more taxes, named the *jaribana* (Surveyor's fee) at the rate of 2.5 % and the *muhasilana* (tax-collector's fee) at the rate of 5 % of the land revenue to the state.
- (viii) Apart from these, the peasants had to pay 2 and a 1/2 per cent of their produce in kind to be returned to them in case of any natural calamity such as flood, famine, etc.
- (ix) Sher Shah's standing instructions to the tax collecting officials was that they should show leniency to the cultivators at the time of measurement but collect the revenue with all strictness.
- (x) Every care was taken to protect the crop from destruction during the course of war and if damaged the peasants were compensated by the state.

In spite of the best efforts of Sher Shah his land revenue administration suffered from certain defects. The peasants who possessed middling and bad quality of land had to pay more as compared to the owners of good quality land under this system. The taxation under which the peasants had to pay 1/3 of their produce as revenue, the *jaribana* and the *muhasilana* and further tax for emergencies was, certainly, heavy for the peasants. The peasants must have faced problems in paying the revenue in cash because of the difference in prices in different areas. The annual settlement of the revenue was problematic both to the peasants and state officials. The system was not introduced in the lands of jagirdars and therefore, the peasants of those lands could not draw any advantage out of it. Sher Shah was unable to eliminate corruption from the land revenue department.

Yet, the measures introduced by Sher Shah had largely succeeded in doing welfare of the peasants and increasing the state's income. Therefore, the revenue system of Sher Shah has been regarded as fairly good as compared with the system of other rulers of medieval India. He did not charge peasants much taxes from the peasants as compared to other rulers. He punished all those who troubled the peasants in any way and even took personal interest in safeguarding their interests of the peasants. Therefore, all historians have praised the revenue administration of Sher Shah. Dr. Qanungo writes: "Had Sher Shah been spared for a decade or two more, the zamindars as a class would have disappeared and Hindustan could have become one vast expanse of arable land without a bush or bramble, cultivated under the zealous care of indefatigable farmers."

17.3.4 Justice

The Sultan was the highest judicial authority in the state and held his court every Wednesday in the evening to hear any cases. He carved out a permanent place for himself in the hearts of the people for being benevolent and just monarch. Next to him was the chief Qazi who was the head of the department of justice. There were subordinate Qazis in every district and in all important cities. All of his higher officers and court had full authority to hear appeals against the decisions made by their junior counterparts. The cases related to the revenue were decided by chief Munsifs in Sarkars and by Munsifs in Parganas while the criminal cases were decided by the chief Shiqdars and Shiqdars in their respective areas. The criminal law was severe and the offenders were punished by flogging, fines, imprisonment and even cutting of the limbs.

Sher Shah was a just ruler who dispensed justice without any discrimination between the rich and the poor, high or low. He was richly 'adorned with the jewel of justice'. He did not spare even his near relatives if they resorted to any criminal deeds. He used to say: "Justice is the most excellent of religious rites and it is approved both by the kings of the infidels and the faithfuls."

17.3.5 Police

At that time there was no separate department of police. Maintenance of law and order was the bounden duty of the local military officials in their respective areas and if they failed in the discharge of their responsibilities, they too were punished. In case they failed to detect the offender, the resultant loss was to be made good by the concerned local official. In the villages, if the local officers of the village failed to trace out a murderer the village headman was given the death penalty. Thus, the laws and their enforcement were severe but successful. Elliot has remarked: "In the time of Sher Shah, an old woman might place a basket of ornaments on her head and go on journey."

17.3.6 Trade and Commerce

Sher Shah paid a good deal of attention to the fostering of trade and commerce. He facilitated trade and commerce by abolishing many internal customs and duties on merchandise at different places within his empire. He ordered for the collection of trade-tax only at two points-one, when and where the goods entered the territory of his empire and, the other, where it was sold. This encouraged trade and commerce. The revitalized police system, justice, protection of traders on roads, issue of good coins, etc. were also such measures of Sher Shah that contributed immensely to the development of trade and commerce. Sher Shah protected the property of traders and orders were issued to officers to look after the interests of the traders.

17.3.7 Currency

Sher Shah's currency and tariff reforms contributed a great deal towards the improvement of the economic condition of the country. At that time, the currency was in a deplorable state due to the paucity of current coins, the debasement with regard to their metal content and the absence of any fixed ratio between the coins minted in gold and those of other metals. Hence he took radical steps to remodel the currency.

Sher Shah imposed a ban on the use of all old coins and debased coins and issued better minted new coins of gold, silver and copper of all denominations of standard weights. He also fixed up their relative values. His silver rupee and copper dam had the halves, quarters, eighths and sixteenths. His rupee (without its inscription) lasted throughout the Mughal period and the same rupee formed the basis of the British currency system. These reforms proved successful since they removed the long-felt inconvenience and difficulties of the general public and of the business

commUNITY as well. V.A. Smith has remarked: "This rupee is the basis of the existing British currency system." Thus, Sher Shah's currency reforms were a great success.

17.3.8 Roads and Sarais

One of the greatest achievements of Sher Shah in administration was the construction of good and broad roads connecting important parts of his empire with his capital. These roads served several useful purposes amongst which were the Imperial defense, quick and regular dispatch of news from and to the emperor, improvement of the empire's trade and commerce as well as adding to the convenience of the travelers. He repaired many old roads and constructed new ones also. He planted shades giving shade to the traveler and trees bearing fruits on both sides of such roads. Sher Shah reconstructed the following highways:

- (i) The first which ran from Sonargaon (near Dacca) to Attock in the Punjab via Agra, Delhi and Lahore,
- (ii) The second which ran from Agra to Jodhpur and Chittor,
- (iii) The third which ran from Agra to Burhanpur, and
- (iv) The fourth which ran from Lahore to Multan.

For the convenience and comfort of the travelers, Sher Shah constructed sarais at the distance of every two '*kos*' (eight kilometers approximately). Nearly 1,700 sarais were built on both sides of the roads. These sarais were fortified lodgings or traveler's inns where they could spend the night and rest their mounts. Each sarai had separate lodgings for the Hindus and the Muslims, a well and a mosque and was looked after by a Shiqdar. Horses were kept there in readiness for the news carriers. Land was attached to every sarai to meet its expenses. Dr. Qanungo described these sarais as "veritable articles of the empire." Many of these sarais, subsequently developed into prosperous market towns to which peasants from the surrounding areas flocked to sell their produce. These sarais were also put to other uses of being stages for the news service or '*dak chowki*' or resting places for the news carriers of postal department.

17.3.9 Intelligence Department

Sher Shah maintained a highly efficient espionage system. Spies were appointed at all important and strategic places and with all important officers. The head of the intelligence department was called the **Darogha-i-Dak-Chauki**. The spies were expected to inform the Sultan all important news immediately. Late reporting or defaulters were severely dealt with. Two horses were kept in readiness at every sarai so that the news-carriers could get fresh horses at short intervals to maintain speed. The success of Sher Shah's administration largely depended on the efficient organization of his spy-system.

17.3.10 Religious Policy and Charity

Sher Shah was a pious Muslim and strictly followed the principles of Islam in his personal life. That is why he arranged charity for the poor. It is alleged that the expenditure of the royal kitchen was 500 gold mohurs daily and food was distributed freely to all needy persons. These centres were known as **langarkhanas**.

As regards his religious policy, historians have varied opinions. Dr. S.R. Sharma says that "it was not different from other Turk and Afghan rulers of the Delhi Sultanate." According to Dr. Qanungo "he was tolerant and respectful towards the Hindus." Dr. R.P. Tripathi says that "Sher

Shah was a tolerant monarch which is proved by the activities pursued in the fields of religion, literature and fine arts during his times.” Malik Muhammad Jaysi wrote his *Padmavat* and Vaisnavism became quite popular in Mathura and its nearby area during his time. Sher Shah’s buildings also justify that he never discriminated between Muslim, Afghan, Turks and Persian arts. Yet, Dr. Tripathi regards him primarily the ruler of the Afghans. Sher Shah exhibited intolerance in religious affairs many times. He declared *jihad* when he fought against Rajput rulers. His treatment of Raja Puran Mal of Raisin was certainly a proof of religious bigotry. He constructed a mosque after destroying a temple at Jodhpur. It is generally accepted that Sher Shah was liberal towards the Hindus in times of peace but, certainly, utilized the religious sentiments of the Muslims to serve his political ends particularly during times of war. Therefore, he was not as intolerant as his predecessor Muslim rulers and not as tolerant as future Mughal emperor, Akbar. He can be assigned a place somewhere between the two.

17.3.11 Buildings

Sher Shah constructed many buildings though he enjoyed a short span of rule as the Sultan. He constructed the fort of Rohtasgarh on the banks of the river Jhelum in the North-West and Purana Qila at Delhi. Sher Shah, after destroying the city of Kannauj, tried to build a new city named Sher Sur there and another city near the Purana Qila at Delhi. The mosque in Purana Qila has been regarded as a good example of Indo-Islamic architecture. However, the best building constructed by him is his own mausoleum at Sasaram in Bihar. The mausoleum has been built in the midst of a lake on a lofty plinth and ranks among the most beautiful buildings in India. Dr Qanungo said that "it is Muslim from outside but Hindu within." Havel described that "the mausoleum is a portrait of Sher Shah's personality and character." Cunningham was half inclined to prefer it to even the Taj Mahal while Percy Brown has praised every building of Sher Shah for designs and execution.

17.3.12 Education

There was hardly any branch of public activity that did not receive any personal attention of Sher Shah. In his continued efforts to improve the lot of his people, he provided for public education. The Hindus of the empire were given the necessary freedom to pursue the education of their children in the Hindu tradition. Some of their noted seats of learning received grants from him.

Sher Shah opened *maktabs* and *madrasas* for the promotion of education and learning for the Muslim population. He also awarded scholarships and stipends to scholars on the grounds of poverty and merit.

Sher Shah was the patron of several learned men in his imperial court. One of them was a renowned Sufi poet **Malik Muhammad Jayasi** whose work known as **Padmavat** gives a detailed Sufi allegorical treatment of the famous story of Rani Padmini of Chittor. This work is regarded as one of the greatest books of medieval Indian literature.

17.3.13 Military Administration

Sher Shah maintained a strong and well-equipped standing army for administering his vast empire. His military strength consisted of 1, 50,000 cavalry, 25,000 infantry, 5,000 elephants and a fairly substantial part of artillery. Probably, his artillery was the weakest part of his military strength while the cavalry consisted mostly of the Afghans. However, other Muslims and the Hindus too were employed in the army. Sher Shah personally supervised the recruitment, training, promotion,

discipline, disbursement of salary and supply of arms, clothes, etc. to his soldiers. The soldiers were paid in cash while the officers were assigned jagirs. He revived Alauddin Khalji's practice of branding of horses (*dagh*) of maintaining the descriptive roll of every soldier (*huliya*) in order to guard against proxies. His prime aim was to maintain as much direct contact with the soldiers as possible, hearing their grievances as and when noticed and removing them, as far as possible. Apart from Sultan's army, provincial governor, nobles and subordinate rulers were also allowed to maintain their separate armies which were called in for the assistance of the Sultan when required. Soldiers were kept in all forts and military cantonments spreading all over the territory of the empire. The strength of the army which was so spread in different parts of the empire must also be in large number. A stern disciplinarian himself, he maintained strict discipline in his army.

17.3.14 Estimate of Sher Shah

Sher Shah's administration has been regarded highly successful. Of course, he was not an innovator but he instilled a new spirit in the old institutions and improved them. Sher Shah's success during the short period of his rule challenges the support given by historians to the administrative failures of Babur and many others on the basis of the short period of their rule. Sher Shah too got very little time to rule, yet, he occupies a place among the best administrators of medieval India. Abbas Khan Sarwani concluded: "Sher Shah, in his wisdom and experience, was a second Haidar" H.G. Keene has also writes: "No government not even the British has shown so much wisdom as this Pathan." Sher Shah not only eliminated all disorders from the administration which had arisen after the decline of the Delhi Sultanate but also prepared a firm base for future administrators, especially for the Mughal emperor Akbar.

A number of historians have described Sher Shah as the forerunner of Akbar and he can, certainly, be assigned this place as an administrator. He provided an efficient administration to a large part of Northern India. It must have helped Akbar because he got a prepared base. Besides, he attempted certain measures successfully which became good examples for Akbar. This is the reason why Rushbrook Williams has remarked: "It was the rare good fortune of the house of Timur that they were at last to regain their heritage of conquest, strengthened by the Afghan Sher Shah, an administrator of marked originality, who, all unwillingly, built for the Mughals that structure of the administrative machinery, which, while it was necessary for securing the triumph of the new ideal of kingship they represented, they had been entirely unable to construct for themselves." Akbar drew advantage of the measures adopted by Sher Shah in the administration of army, justice, revenue, and control of the nobility and for public services. Sher Shah gave back the conquered territories of the Rajput rulers after their submission. Akbar pursued this policy in a wider standpoint. Sher Shah followed the policy of religious toleration towards his Hindu population in general and allowed them to perform their religious rites, fairs and festivals. He also maintained equal justice for all. Besides, Sher Shah adopted the principle that the duty of a monarch was not simply the maintenance of peace and order but to make an effort for the welfare of his subjects. Therefore, he consistently attempted to do good to the peasants, traders, soldiers, and all his subjects. That is why he could succeed in his administration in the short duration of his rule. Akbar also worked on this ideal. Indubitably, Akbar made improvements in all the measures adopted by Sher Shah. His revenue administration, Rajput policy, religious policy etc. were much more broad-based, better and therefore, he proved a better administrator than Sher Shah. However, it is acknowledged that Sher Shah espoused an ideal concept and ideal administration prior to Akbar. That is why, he is regarded as the precursor or forerunner of Akbar in many fields of administration. Dr. R.P. Tripathi writes: "Had Sher Shah lived longer he might have taken the wind out of Akbar's sails. He was

undoubtedly one of the greatest statesmen among the Sultans of Delhi. Indeed, he had paved the way for the highly enlightened policy of Akbar and was his true precursor."

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 In Sher Shah's administration, who headed the central department Diwan-i-arz?
- Q.2 The officer in charge of which department worked as the foreign minister of the state?
- Q.3 Who was the head of Diwan-i-insha?
- Q.4 What was the intelligence department known as in Sher Shah's administration?
- Q.5 Into how many Sarkars did Sher Shah divide his whole empire according to Dr.Qanungo?
- Q.6 Who looked after judicial matters at the pargana level during the reign of Sher Shah?
- Q.7 Who started silver coin of rupee?
- Q.8 Who was Daroga-i-Dak-Chauki in Sher Shah's administration?

17.4 Summary

- Sher Shah Suri has been recognized as a great administrator by the majority of historians.
- Sher Shah relinquished the Afghan theory of kingship as he thought that it was not feasible in India.
- Sher Shah concentrated all the powers in his hands and established a highly centralized administrative machinery.
- The Sultan was aided by four important ministers.
 - Diwan-i-Wizarat or Wazir – in charge of Revenue and Finance
 - Diwan-i-Ariz – in charge of Army
 - Diwan-i-Rasalat – Foreign Minister
 - Diwan-i-Insha – Minister for Communications
- Sher Shah's empire was divided into forty-seven Sarkars
- Each sarkar was further divided into various Parganas and in charge of various officers.
 - Shiqdar – Military Officer
 - Amin – Land Revenue
 - Fotedar – Treasurer
 - Karkuns – Accountants
- Under Sher Shah, the land revenue administration was well organized.
- The land survey was done sensibly.
- All cultivable lands were classified into three classes – good, middling and bad.
- The state's share was one-third of the average production and it was paid in cash or crop.

- The Sultan was the highest judicial authority in the state and held his court every Wednesday in the evening to hear any cases. He was very fair in imparting justice.
- Sher Shah introduced silver coin called Rupee and new copper coins called Dam.
- Police were competently restructured and crime was less during his regime.
- Sher Shah borrowed many ideas like the branding of horses from Alauddin Khalji
- Sher Shah had also developed communications by laying four important highways.

Sonargaon to Attock

Agra to Jodhpur

Agra to Burhanpur

Lahore to Multan

- For the convenience and comfort of the travelers, Sher Shah constructed roads and sarais.
- Sher Shah maintained a highly efficient espionage system. Spies were appointed at all important and strategic places and with all important officers.
- The religious policy of Sher Shah is a debatable topic. He was not as intolerant as his predecessor Muslim rulers and not as tolerant as future Mughal emperor, Akbar.
- Sher Shah constructed many buildings though he enjoyed a short span of rule as the Sultan. E.g. Fort of Rohtasgarh, tomb of Sasaram, Purana Qila etc.
- Sher Shah opened a number of educational institutions for imparting education to the people. He was also a patron of scholars.
- Sher Shah maintained a strong and well-equipped standing army for administering his vast empire.
- Some historians consider Sher Shah as the precursor of Akbar.

17.5 Glossary

Abwabs: The taxes which the government used to levy in order to meet unforeseen exigencies, were collectively known as abwabs. e.g. house tax, grazing tax etc.

Khams: One-fifth of the plunder taken during the time of war

Madrassa: An educational institution, a school especially for higher education.

Maktab: An elementary school.

Patwari: A government official who keeps records regarding the ownership of land.

17.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise -1

Ans.1 Arz-i-mumalik

Ans.2 Diwan-i-rasalat or Diwan-i-muhtasib

Ans.3 Dabir-i-khas

Ans.4 Diwan-i-barid

Ans.5 47

Ans.6 Diwan-a-Kaji

Ans.7 Sher Shah

Ans.8 He was the head of the intelligence department.

17.7 Suggested Readings

1. Basheer Ahmad Khan Matta, 2005, "*Sher Shah Sur: A Fresh Perspective*" Oxford University Press.
2. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqi, 1996, "*Sher Shah Suri and His Dynasty*", Publication Scheme, Jaipur, India.
3. Jesse Russel, Ronald Cohn, 2012, "*Sher Shah Suri*", Books on Demand.
4. John Middleton, 2015, "*World Monarchies and Dynasties*", Routledge.
5. Sunjoy K Singh, 2015, "*Sher Shah Suri*", Lenin Media.

17.8 Terminal Questions

1. Describe the salient features of the administration of Sher Shah.
2. Discuss the land revenue administration of Sher Shah. How far was Akbar benefitted by it?
3. "Sher Shah was the precursor of Akbar". How far do you agree with this view?
4. Write short notes on the following:
 - (i) Currency reforms of Sher Shah
 - (ii) Roads and Sarais constructed by Sher Shah
 - (iii) Sher Shah's religious policy and charity works
 - (iv) Military administration of Sher Shah

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UNIT-18

CONSOLIDATION OF MUGHAL EMPIRE UNDER AKBAR

Structure

- 18.1 Introduction
- 18.2 Objectives
- 18.3 Coronation and Early Difficulties of Akbar
 - 18.3.1 Akbar's Conquests

Self-Check Exercise-1

- 18.4 Summary
- 18.5 Glossary
- 18.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 18.7 Suggested Readings
- 18.8 Terminal Questions

18.1 Introduction

Akbar alone has been acclaimed the 'Great' among the medieval Indian rulers. He was the first Mughal ruler who planned the founding of an All-India Empire. He was an imperialist and desired to become the supreme ruler of Hindustan. Throughout his reign he followed the policy of expansion and even felt that this was necessary for the security of all his territories. He firmly believed in the concept that a king should always be intent on conquest. He completed the conquest of Northern India, made the Mughal Empire not only the strongest state in India but also one of the best administered states of his times, innovated certain policies which proved liberal, far-sighted and successful which added a new UNIT in the history of India and established the Mughal Empire firmly in India. Therefore, he has been rightly described as 'Great' among the Mughal emperors of India. Lane-Poole has said, "He was the greatest of all the Indian monarchs." Dr. Ishwari Prasad goes even ahead of him and says: "Akbar is one of the most remarkable kings, not only in the history of India but of the whole world. A comparison of European monarchs with Akbar easily establishes the superiority of the latter, both in genius and achievements."

18.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Learn about the coronation and early difficulties of Akbar,
- Understand the conquests of Akbar.

18.3 Coronation and Early Difficulties of Akbar

Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar, the illustrious son of Humayun and Hamida Banu Begam, was born on October 15, 1542 CE at the house of Raja Virsal of Amarkot (Sindh). At that time Humayun was running from place to place as a fugitive. When Humayun fled to Persia, he was forced to leave Akbar behind at Kandahar. Askari took Akbar under his protection. Later on, Akbar met his father at the age of three when Humayun conquered Kabul and Kandahar from his brothers Kamran and Askari. Circumstances once again separated Akbar from Humayun and it was only when Akbar was five years of age, he began his settled life with his father. Arrangements for Akbar's formal education were made by Humayun but Akbar was more interested in the training of arms, riding and hunting as compared to literary education. He received his first official assignment as the governor of Ghazni and Lahore during the life-time of his father and was actively engaged in eliminating the power of Sikandar Shah Sur in Panjab while his father, Humayun died at Delhi on January 24, 1556 CE. Bairam Khan who was the tutor and guardian of Akbar at that time took immediate step in crowning him king and Akbar was declared the Mughal emperor on February 14, 1556 CE at Kalanaur, (District Gurdaspur in Panjab). Akbar had not completed even 14 years of his age at that time.

Akbar was in great difficulty at that time of his accession to the throne. He was king of no land at the time of his coronation. The throne of Delhi was most insecure. Humayun had got no time to stabilize his Empire. Even Kabul, Kandahar and Badakshan were unsafe. Mirza Sulaiman, the Subedar of Badakshan, declared himself independent and even wanted to take Akbar and his cousin brother Mirza Hakim under his tutelage. Kandahar, which was in the jagir of Bairam Khan, was always in danger of attack from Persia while Mirza Muhammad Hakim, the governor of Kabul was also a minor like Akbar. He became virtually independent of Delhi under the tutelage of his ambitious mother Man Chuchak Begam and guardian Munim Khan. So Akbar could not expect any help from Afghanistan. In India, the Mughals had occupied only Delhi, Agra and its nearby places. All the outlying provinces of the empire slipped out of the hands of the Mughal forces immediately after the death of Humayun. Sikandar Shah, Ibrahim Shah and Adil Shah wanted to recapture the throne of Delhi. The Rajputs were again reasserting themselves and Marwar was still a powerful state. The economic condition of Akbar was also poor. The state exchequer was empty, the revenue could be collected forcefully and there was widespread famine in the areas near Delhi and Agra. Surrounded by odds from all sides, Akbar could not depend even on the loyalty of the Mughal nobility. Thus political anarchy prevailed throughout Northern India, and the public had to suffer untold hardships. However, the greatest difficulty was that of Hemu, the commander of the army of Adil Shah Sur who was proceeding to capture Delhi and Agra.

Bairam Khan, who served as the regent of the Mughal emperor from 1556 to 1560 CE and remained at the helm of the affairs of the Mughal Empire. He became the wakil of the kingdom with the title of Khan-i-Khanan. One of the major achievements of his regency period was the defeat of Hemu and the Afghan forces in the Second Battle of Panipat in 1556 CE, who were posing a serious threat to the Mughal Empire.

. During this phase of four years Bairam Khan appointed his favorite nobles on important positions. He emerged as the most powerful noble and became very arrogant. A group of nobles were against him. They managed to influence Akbar too. By this time Akbar also wanted to assume full control. He removed Bairam Khan. But he revolted and was defeated. Akbar pardoned him and asked him to retire. He decided to go to Mecca for pilgrimage. He was killed by an Afghan near Ahmedabad. His son later on became an influential noble under Akbar and is famous as Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khana.

18.3.1 Akbar's Conquests

Akbar was an imperialist. He openly declared and desired to pursue the policy of expansion of the Empire. He felt it necessary even for the security of his territories. He stated that: "A monarch should be ever intent on conquest; otherwise his enemies rise in arms against him." After overcoming his initial difficulties, Akbar started the policy of consolidating his hold on the throne.

Malwa

Malwa in Central India was ruled by Baz Bahadur. He neglected the affairs of the state and kept himself engrossed in romance with his talented mistress Rup Mati. Initially Akbar sent Adham Khan to conquer Malwa. Adham Khan defeated Baz Bahadur at the capital Sarangpur and Baz Bahadur fled. Adham Khan captured all his treasures and women in the harem but Rupmati committed suicide. When Akbar came to know that Adham Khan had kept most of the captured treasure to himself, he personally went to Sarangpur to punish him. Adham Khan pleaded for mercy, was forgiven and allowed to continue as the governor.

In 1562 CE, Pir Muhammad was appointed the governor of Malwa. His rule as governor was extremely unpopular and cruel. Baz Bahadur succeeded in winning back his lost kingdom. However, the success of Baz Bahadur was short-lived. He fled, remained a fugitive at various courts and finally joined the service of Akbar.

Chunar

The Afghans revolted in Jaunpur. However, it was suppressed by the local governor, Khan Zaman with the help of the imperial army. But, when, he himself tried to establish his independence, Akbar went towards Jaunpur personally. Khan Zaman submitted and was pardoned. Akbar then sent Asaf Khan to capture the fort of Chunar from the Afghans. He succeeded in capturing it in 1561 CE.

Gondwana

The state of Gondwana was ruled by Vir Narayan but his mother, Rani Durgavati, a brave Chandel princess of Mahoba was its *de facto* ruler. Durgavati was a brave and successful ruler. She had not given any cause to Akbar. But purely due to his imperialistic designs and interests, Akbar deputed Asaf Khan, the governor of Kara to conquer Gondwana in the year 1564 CE. Vir Narayan and Durgavati faced the Mughals in the ensuing Battle of Nardhi. Vir Narayan was seriously wounded and was obliged to withdraw for safety in the fort of Chauragarh. Later Rani Durgavati was also wounded the next day and preferred to stab herself to death in order to prevent herself from being captured by the enemy. Subsequently, the Mughal army attacked the fort of Chauragarh. Vir Narayan heroically defended the fort but was killed in this battle and the fort was captured by the Mughals. The Rajput ladies performed *jauhar* and Gondwana was then annexed to the Mughal dominion.

Rajasthan

It was part of the imperial policy of Akbar to bring Rajasthan to submission. Akbar pursued a different policy than pure annexation towards the Rajput rulers. His policy towards the Rajputs though, originated in his ambition, was far more generous and humane. The main features of this policy were as follows:

- (a) He captured all important forts in Rajasthan.

(b) He accepted the services of all those Rajput rulers who willingly surrendered to him. Their states were returned to them and some of them even entered into matrimonial alliance with Akbar.

(c) He fought aggressive wars against those rulers who refused to submit to him voluntarily and annexed their territories.

Akbar was successful in getting the submission of all Rajput rulers of Rajasthan except the state of Mewar. However, he captured the fort of Chittor and larger part of the territory of Mewar. Thus, he largely succeeded in getting submission of Rajasthan.

(i) Amber (Modern Jaipur) -- Raja Bhar Mal, the ruler of Amber, was the first Rajput ruler who submitted to Akbar. He voluntarily offered to enter into a matrimonial alliance with the emperor. He met the emperor in the way while he was on a pilgrimage to the mausoleum of Shaikh Muin-ud-din Chishti at Ajmer in 1562 CE. He acknowledged the suzerainty of Akbar and offered his daughter in marriage to the emperor. Akbar agreed to it. He married the Rajput princess on his return journey and took Bhagwan Das and Man Singh, the adopted son and grandson respectively of Raja Bhar mal into his service. This very Rajput princess gave birth to the next Mughal emperor, Jahangir.

(ii) Merta -- Merta was ruled by Jaimal Rathore who was a vassal of Rao Maldev of Jodhpur. It was attacked by Mirza Sharafuddin, a Mughal officer in Akbar's service near Ajmer in 1562 CE. Jaimal abandoned the fort but it was defended by Rajputs under the leadership of Deva Das. However, the Rajputs were defeated and the fort was captured by the Mughals in 1562 CE after much loss of life on both sides. Jaimal took shelter with Rana Udai Singh of Mewar. Later on, he laid down his life fighting for the defense of Chittor against the Mughal onslaught.

(iii) Mewar -- The Sisodia family of the rulers of Mewar commanded a unique respect among the Rajput rulers. The rulers belonging to this clan claimed descent from Rama, the hero of Ramayana. The power and prestige of Mewar had suffered a set-back after the death of Rana Sangram Singh. The then ruler of Mewar, Rana Udai Singh was attempting to recover the lost prestige of Mewar. The Rana looked down with contempt the ruling family of Amber who had submitted to Akbar and entered into marriage alliance with him. He offended Akbar not only by refusing to acknowledge his suzerainty but provided shelter to Baz Bahadur, the fugitive ruler of Malwa and also helping the rebellious Mirzas. Besides, Mewar was politically and economically important. It commanded the trade-route from North India to the sea-coast of Gujarat and the conquest of North India by Akbar was incomplete without the submission of Mewar. Chittor, the capital of Mewar, occupied a strategic position.

Akbar attacked Mewar in 1567 CE and besieged the fort of Chittor. The Rajput nobles of Mewar realized the gravity of the situation and advised Rana Udai Singh to leave the fort and move to a safer place with his family. Therefore, the Rana went to the forest for safety leaving the defense of the fort to Jaimal Rathore and Fateh Singh or Fatha. The Mughal siege went on for more than five months. One night, when Jaimal was supervising some repairs of the ramparts of the fort, he was seriously wounded by the gun-shot of Akbar. Jaimal soon died of his wound. His death disheartened the Rajputs who, then, prepared themselves for the final battle. The Rajput women performed *jauhar*. Next morning, the Rajputs came out of the fort and under the command of Fateh Singh and attacked the Mughals. The Rajput soldiers fought recklessly and were killed to the last man. The resistance of the Rajputs infuriated Akbar so much that when he entered the fort, he ordered a general massacre of the survivors of the fort. Nearly 30,000 of the non-combatant civilians were butchered to death. Deeply impressed by the valor of the defenders of Chittor, Akbar

commemorated their heroism by erecting the stone statues of Jaimal and Fateh Singh, mounted on elephants, on either side of the inner entrance of main gate of the fort of Agra.

Colonel Tod described Rana Udai Singh as a weak and cowardly ruler. But the modern historians do not subscribe to this view. Udai Singh left the fort not because of cowardice but on the advice of his nobles for the safety of the royal family. He built a new capital at Udaipur, and continued the struggle against the Mughals till his death on March 3, 1572 CE.

Rana Udai Singh was succeeded to the throne by his son Rana Pratap Singh who vowed to recapture his capital as well as the fort. All attempts of Akbar to convince Rana Pratap to accept his suzerainty failed. In 1576 CE, Akbar deputed a strong army under Man Singh and Asaf Khan to attack Mewar. Rana Pratap fought against them in the **Battle at Haldighati** on June 18, 1576 CE. The Rana had a very small army in comparison with the Mughal army. Yet, his attack was so furious that the Mughal army felt desperate. However, Rana Pratap was hard pressed from all sides by the numerical strength of the Mughals and his life was endangered. At that time his one noble, Bida Jhala snatched away Rana's crown from his head and wore it himself. He was understood as the Rana by the Mughals and was surrounded. That gave Rana Pratap a chance to escape and he left the battlefield. The Rajputs were defeated but the Mughals also felt so exhausted that they had no energy to pursue Rana at that time. Next morning they moved forward and took possession of Gogunda which had already been evacuated by the entire population bag and baggage. But Man Singh failed to achieve any remarkable success. He was recalled by Akbar at the court. Later on, many other Mughal nobles were sent in succession in pursuit of Rana Pratap but nobody could break up his spirits. The entire Mewar was ravaged by the Mughals and the Rana was forced to seek shelter in hills and forests and suffer hunger and thirst along with his family members. Yet, he did not lose his spirit and continued his resistance. He never accepted the suzerainty of Akbar and when he died in 1597 CE he had succeeded in recovering most of Mewar from the Mughals. The struggle of Rana Pratap against Akbar has been considered as a glorious UNIT in Indian history.

(iv) Ranthambhor – Flushed with victory, Akbar ordered an expedition to Ranthambhor, the second 'invincible stronghold' of the Rajputs in April 1568 CE. The ruler of Ranthambhor, Raja Surjan Rai was a Hara Rajput of Bundi and a vassal of Mewar. Due to the uprising of the Mirzas in Malwa, the Mughal army was recalled. In February 1569, Akbar took charge of the army of invasion in person. The fort was besieged and Surjan Rai sued for peace and was granted very liberal terms. He surrendered the fort on March 18, 1569 CE, and entered the imperial service.

(v) Kalinjer -- Kalinjer was ruled by Raja Ram Chand of Rewa. Akbar sent Majnun Khan Qaqshal to capture it in August 1569 CE. The Raja surrendered the fort to the Mughals without fighting as he had come to know the fall of Chittor and Ranthambhor and could realize the futility of resistance. Majnun Khan was appointed as the first Mughal governor of Kalinjer.

(vi) Marwar --The surrender of the fort of Chittor and Ranthambhor demoralized the Rajput rulers and they saw no chance of any success against the mighty power of the Mughals. The pacifying policy of Akbar towards the Rajputs allured them further to accept the suzerainty of Akbar. Therefore, Akbar did not encounter resistance from other Rajput rulers. In 1570 CE. Chandra Sen, the ruler of Jodhpur submitted himself before Akbar. Similarly, the rulers of Bikaner and Jaisalmer also paid personal attendance before Akbar and accepted his suzerainty. A princess of the ruling family of Bikaner and a daughter of the then ruler of Jaisalmer, Har Rai were also married to Akbar.

Therefore by 1570 CE, except Mewar and some of its tributary states, entire Rajasthan submitted to Akbar. It was a unique success of Akbar. The Rajput rulers not only accepted his suzerainty but a few of them entered into matrimonial alliances with the Emperor and, thus, became his loyal friends and relatives which helped in consolidation of the Mughal Empire in India. Akbar, on his own part, not only returned their kingdoms but also treated them well. Except that the strong forts of Rajasthan were occupied by the Mughals, the Rajput rulers suffered no loss of their territories. On the contrary, they gained handsome jagirs, titles and honor by accepting the service of the Emperor. The success of Akbar against the Rajputs was complete. Colonel Tod has remarked: "Akbar was the real founder of the Empire of the Moguls, the first successful conqueror of Rajput independence." prosperous province.

Gujarat

Having conquered Malwa and broken the brunt of the Rajput power, Akbar turned his attention to Gujarat which was a prosperous province. It was regarded as the center-place of the trade with the Western world. The Muslim pilgrims to Mecca too had to pass through the ports of Gujarat. Muzaffar Khan III, the ruler of Gujarat was an incompetent and unpopular ruler who had mismanaged the affairs of the state which had resulted in mutual conflict of powerful nobles. The rebellious Mirzas converted Gujarat into a place of refuge. The submission of Rajput rulers made the task of Akbar easier because it was now easy to keep it under the control of Delhi. Akbar attacked Gujarat in person in 1572 CE. He found little resistance and occupied Ahmedabad after a minor battle and liberated the towns of Baroda, Champaner and Surat in a couple of months. Muzaffar Khan and his nobles then surrendered to Akbar. The Mughal forces occupied territory as far as Cambay, and defeated the rebellious Mirzas at the Battle of Sarnal. Akbar appointed Mirza Aziz Khan Koka (Khan-i-Jahan) as governor of Gujarat and returned to his capital and celebrated the victory in a befitting manner. The township of Sikri was renamed as Fatehpur Sikri to commemorate the victory of Gujarat.

Within six months of Akbar's return to Gujarat there was a revolt in Gujarat. Muhammad Husain Mirza, who had fled to Daultabad returned to Gujarat. The nobles of Gujarat joined him and they besieged the Mughal governor Mirza Aziz Khan Koka in the fort of Ahmedabad. On the receipt of intelligence, Akbar hurried back to Gujarat and completed the journey of 450 miles only in eleven days. It is considered as the swiftest military campaigns on record. The rebels were defeated in a battle near Ahmedabad and the revolt was completely suppressed. The governor remained the same but Todar Mal was appointed to look after the revenue administration of Gujarat and he settled it after six months of hard labor.

Bihar and Bengal

Bihar and Bengal were the strongholds of the Sur Empire under Sher Shah Suri. After his death, Sulaiman Karrani, the Afghan governor of Bihar asserted his independence. However, he accepted the suzerainty of Akbar in 1568 CE. He was a competent ruler, brought Bengal and Orissa under his rule and established his headquarters at Tanda. He died in 1572 CE and his son and successor Bayazid was murdered by the Afghan nobles. They installed his second son Daud on the throne. However, Daud declared independence after his accession and even dared to attack the Eastern border of the Mughal Empire. Akbar attacked Bihar in 1574 CE. He then left Munim Khan to complete the conquest of Bengal and Orissa and returned to the capital. Munim Khan conquered Tanda and Daud fled away to Orissa. In 1575 CE, Daud fought the Mughals for the first time at Tukarao near the eastern bank of the river Suvaranarekha. He was defeated. He acknowledged the

suzerainty of the Mughals and was assigned Orissa as his jagir in return. But Munim Khan died in October 1575 CE due to his failing health and Daud refused to accept these terms. He attacked Tanda and captured it. Akbar now sent Khan-i-Jahan as the governor of Bengal and Bihar who decisively defeated and killed Daud in a battle near Rajmahal in July 1576 CE Bengal was thus, finally annexed to the Mughal Empire.

Kabul

Akbar had installed his half-brother Mirza Muhammad Hakim as the ruler of Kabul. He tried to capture Punjab in 1566-67 CE but his attempt was foiled. He again dared to attack India in 1581 CE. There were some revolts in Bengal and Bihar at that time and some rebellious nobles of Akbar desired to place Mirza Muhammad Hakim on the throne of Delhi. Feeling disappointed with the religious policy of Akbar some respectable nobles at the court of Akbar were in correspondence with Mirza Hakim and some fanatic Maulvis declared support to the cause of Mirza Hakim as a religious duty. These circumstances stimulated Mirza Hakim to try his luck in India against Akbar. However, after crossing the river Indus when he proceeded towards Lahore he found no support for his cause in Punjab. Akbar proceeded to face Mirza Hakim himself.

Realizing that he would not get any support in India and, in that case, it would be useless to fight against Akbar, Mirza Hakim returned to Kabul. Akbar deputed Raja Man Singh in advance to capture Kabul and himself followed him leisurely. Mirza Hakim fled away without fighting and Kabul was occupied by Man Singh. Mirza Hakim sought pardon but Akbar insisted on his personal attendance which he refused. Akbar entrusted the civil and military administration of the province to his trusted officers and appointed Mirza Hakim's sister Bakht-un-Nisa Begum as the governor of Kabul and left for Punjab. After his return, Mirza Hakim returned to Kabul and took up the virtual reins of government from the hands of his sister though she remained the governor in name. But, Mirza Hakim died very soon the same year (1581 CE). In July 1585 CE, Kabul was brought under the direct administrative control of Delhi. Raja Man Singh was the first among the Mughal bureaucracy to receive appointment as the governor of Kabul, thus reinforcing the Mughal prowess in Central Asia by Rajput valor.

Kashmir

As a part of the general scheme of subjugating the entire Indus Valley, Akbar decided to bring Kashmir under his control. In response to his demand for the acceptance of Mughal paramountcy, Yusuf Khan, the then ruler of Kashmir had sent his sons in 1581 CE to wait on Akbar but himself had avoided his presence at the court. Dissatisfied with the behavior of Yusuf Khan, Akbar sent an invading army under the leadership of Qasim Khan and Raja Bhagwan Das to effect the conquest of Kashmir in 1586 CE. The snow and rain in Kashmir discouraged the Imperial army and the Mughals proposed a treaty with Yusuf Khan who agreed for peace. He acknowledged Akbar's suzerainty, agreed to the recitation of *khutba* and minting of coins in the name of the Emperor. However, when he presented himself before the Emperor, he was arrested as the terms of the treaty were not acceptable to Akbar. Yakub Khan, son of Yusuf Khan, attempted to fight against the Mughals but he had to retreat to Srinagar because of a local uprising there. Therefore, the Mughals got the opportunity to proceed ahead. Yakub Khan fled away and Srinagar was captured by the Mughals. Later on, Yakub Khan surrendered himself and was imprisoned. Thus, in 1586 CE, Kashmir became a part of the Mughal Empire.

Sindh

After the conquest of Kashmir, only the Southern part of the Indus Valley was required to be subdued. Akbar desired this territory to be annexed since it provided a clear road for the invasion of Kandahar. Sindh was ruled by the Arghun dynasty and the ruler at that time was Mirza Jani Beg of Thatta.

In 1590 CE, Akbar appointed Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khana as governor of Multan and Bhakkar and was instructed to take over the work of the conquest of Sindh. Abdur Rahim attacked Sindh in 1591 CE and defeated Mirza Jani Beg in two battles. Jani Beg then entered Imperial service and was appointed the governor of Sindh in 1593 CE. Thus, the conquest of Sindh opened the hinterland of the Punjab for trade, down the river Indus.

Orissa

Orissa was ruled at that time by Qutulu Khan Lohani. After his death, his son, Nisar Khan became the ruler of Orissa. In 1590 CE, Raja Man Singh, governor of Bihar attacked Orissa. Nisar Khan surrendered to the Mughals after a weak resistance. He was deputed as the governor of Orissa. But, after two years he rebelled and even occupied Puri and Jagannath. Around 1592 CE, Raja Man Singh brought the whole of Orissa under the Mughal rule.

Baluchistan and Makran

Following the conquest of Sindh, Baluchistan situated on the Western part of the Indus Valley and Makran, the region near the sea coast, attracted Akbar's attention. He dispatched Mir Masum to conquer Baluchistan in 1595 CE. Mir Masum succeeded in his mission, defeated the Baluchi chiefs and annexed the entire Baluchistan and Makran to the Mughal Empire.

Kandahar

The road to Kandahar was now opened, both from the North as well as from the South. Strategically situated, Kandahar was under the Shah of Persia. The then governor of Kandahar, Muzaffar Husain Mirza ruined his relations with his ruler and, thereby, felt insecure. He decided to accept the service of Akbar and surrendered the fort to the Mughal officer, Shah Beg. The Mirza negotiated a settlement with Akbar, entered the Mughal service, and became a Mansabdar with 5000 horses earning the jagir of Sambhal. In return for this favor, he surrendered the fort of Kandahar to Shah Beg. Thus, Kandahar was peacefully acquired and remained within the Empire till 1622 CE.

South India

After completing the conquest of Northern India, Akbar now diverted his attention to the conquest of Deccan and South India where disUNITY and warfare between the various kingdoms provided a congenial political condition for an invader. To begin with, he sent political missions to induce the rulers of the Deccan states of Khandesh, Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golconda in 1591 CE to accept his suzerainty. Ali Khan, ruler of Khandesh alone accepted Akbar's offer, accepted his suzerainty and agreed to pay an annual tribute. The rulers of the other states, however, refused to accept the offer of Akbar politely. Akbar deputed Prince Murad and Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khana to conquer Ahmadnagar. In 1595 CE, the fort of Ahmadnagar was besieged by the Mughals. However, it was heroically defended by Chand Bibi, who was acting as the regent on behalf of her nephew. Eventually, because of mutual differences among the Mughal officers, lack of supplies and possibilities of help from Golconda and Bijapur to Ahmadnagar, the Mughals made peace with Chand Bibi who readily agreed for it. A treaty was accepted by both the parties in 1596 CE by which Bahadur, grandson of Burhan-ul-mulk, was accepted as the Sultan of Ahmadnagar under the

suzerainty of Akbar and Berar was ceded to the Mughal ruler. However, the peace did not last long. There arose internal dissensions in Ahmadnagar. Chand Bibi separated herself from the administration of the state while other nobles tried to recover Berar from the Mughals. Akbar again deputed prince Murad and Khan-i-Khana against Ahmadnagar but as differences arose between the two, recalled Khan-i-Khana and deputed Abul Fazl in his place. Prince Murad died in 1597 CE. Then Prince Daniyal and Khan-i-Khana were deputed for the campaign in the Deccan and Akbar too decided to take the command in person. The Mughals captured Daultabad in 1599 CE and Ahmadnagar in 1600 CE. Chand Bibi either committed suicide or was murdered by those nobles who disliked her efforts of peace with the Mughals. The young king, Bahadur Nizam Shah, was sent as a prisoner to the fort of Gwalior.

However, it did not mean the extinction of the state of Ahmadnagar. A major portion of it yet remained free from the Mughals and the nobles of Ahmadnagar continued to resist the Mughals in the name of another child of the dynasty. Khandesh also attempted to reassert its independence. Raja Ali Khan, the ruler of Khandesh died fighting against Ahmadnagar from the side of the Mughals. He was succeeded by his son Miran Bahadur Shah. He refused to acknowledge the suzerainty of Akbar and pay tribute, at the time when the Mughals were engaged with Ahmadnagar. Akbar attacked Burhanpur, the capital of Khandesh in 1599 CE and occupied it. Miran Bahadur fled to Asirgarh. Akbar decided to capture the fort of Asirgarh. It was considered to be one of the strongest and best-equipped fortresses in the world at that time. Akbar besieged the fort of Asirgarh and after the siege of 6 months, Miran Bahadur surrendered himself. Thus, the fort of Asirgarh fell into the hands of the Mughals in 1601 CE. Miran Bahadur was sent as a prisoner to the fort of Gwalior and a pension was fixed for him. the conquest of Asirgarh fort was a decisive victory for the Mughals since it provided them a firm base and strong foothold for the future invasions of the Deccan.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 When was Akbar born?
- Q.2 When was the Second Battle of Panipat fought?
- Q.3 Who was the ruler of Gondwana when Akbar's forces attacked it?
- Q.4 Name the first Rajput ruler who submitted to Akbar.
- Q.5 When did Akbar attack Mewar?
- Q.6 When and between whom was the Battle of Haldighati fought?
- Q.7 Which city was built by Akbar to commemorate the victory of Gujarat?
- Q.8 Who was the ruler of Kashmir at the time of Akbar's invasion?
- Q.9 Name the Deccan kingdom conquered by Akbar?

18.4 Summary

- Akbar was born on October 15, 1542 CE at the house of Raja Virsal of Amarkot (Sindh).
- He was the first Mughal ruler who planned the founding of an All-India Empire.
- He was an imperialist and desired to become the supreme ruler of Hindustan.

- Throughout his reign, he followed the policy of expansion and even felt that this was necessary for the security of all his territories.
- Akbar was in great difficulty at that time of his accession to the throne. He was king of no land at the time of his coronation. However, he overcame his initial difficulties and started consolidating his hold on the throne.
- In a career of conquest spread over 40 years, Akbar successfully brought the whole of Northern, Western, Eastern, Central and parts of the Deccan within the fold of his Empire.
- The Mughal Empire extended from Kandahar and Kabul in the West to Bengal in the East and from Kashmir in the North to Berar and Ahmadnagar in the South during his time and became the most extensive and powerful Empire in India.
- The power the Afghans was totally subdued. They lost the ambition of an independent kingdom of their own and accepted service under the Mughal Emperor.
- Similarly, the Rajput states, with the exception of Mewar, also accepted the suzerainty of Akbar and helped him in extending and consolidating the Mughal Empire.
- Thus, Akbar succeeded in fulfilling his ambition of conquering India to a great extent and also paved the way to complete the conquest of the remaining part of India by his successors.

18.5 Glossary

Fugitive: A person who has escaped from captivity or is in hiding.

Konkan: A rugged Unit of the Western coastline of India, including the districts of Maharashtra and Goa.

Khutba: A pulpit address of prescribed form that is read in mosques on Fridays at noon prayer and contains an acknowledgment of the sovereignty of the ruler.

18.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Ans.1 October 15, 1542 CE

Ans.2 1556 CE

Ans.3 Rani Durgavati

Ans.4 Raja Bhar Mal

Ans.5 1567 CE

Ans.6 June 18, 1576 CE between Akbar's forces and Rana Pratap

Ans.7 Fatehpur Sikri

Ans.8 Yusuf Khan

Ans.9 Ahmadnagar

18.7 Suggested Readings

1. Irfan Habib, 1997, "*Akbar and His India*", New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

2. M. Athar Ali, 2006, “*Mughal India: Studies in Polity, Ideas, Society and Culture*”, Oxford University Press.
3. Muni Lal, 1980, “*Akbar*”, University of Michigan.
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5. R.C Majumdar (ed.), 1974, “*History and Culture of the Indian People*”, Vol. VII. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.
6. Shireen Moosvi, 2008, “*People, Taxation and Trade in Mughal India*”, New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

18.8 Terminal Questions

1. Discuss the coronation and early difficulties of Akbar.
2. Write an account of the territorial expansion under Akbar. How far did he pursue the policy of aggression, and how far one of self-preservation?
3. Give an account of the conquests of Akbar.
4. Make a rapid survey of the struggles of the Rajputs with the Mughals for the preservation of their independence.
5. Trace carefully, stage by stage, the expansion of Akbar’s Empire. How did Akbar solve the naughty problem of North-West Frontier defenses?
6. Describe Akbar’s conquest of South India.

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UNIT-19

RAJPUT POLICY OF AKBAR AND JAHANGIR

Structure

- 19.1 Introduction
- 19.2 Objectives
- 19.3 Aims and Nature of Akbar's Rajput Policy
 - 19.3.1 Evolution of Akbar's Rajput Policy
 - 19.3.2 Results of Akbar's Rajput Policy

Self-Check Exercise-1

- 19.4 Rajput Policy of Jahangir

Self-Check Exercise-2

- 19.5 Summary
- 19.6 Glossary
- 19.7 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 19.8 Suggested Readings
- 19.9 Terminal Questions

19.1 Introduction

The history of the last three hundred and fifty years had proved that in this land of the Hindus, a stable or a peaceful government could not be established without winning over the sympathies of the Rajputs. Further, history has shown that earlier attempts, however partial, made to placate and consolidate them, had produced encouraging results.

19.2 Objectives

After Studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the aims and nature of the Rajput Policy of Akbar,
- Analyze the evolution of Rajput Policy of Akbar,
- Know the results of Akbar's Rajput Policy,
- Examine the Rajput Policy of Jahangir.

19.3 Aims and Nature of Akbar's Rajput Policy

Akbar was the first Mughal emperor who pursued a planned policy towards the Rajputs. Various factors participated in the formation of Rajput policy of Akbar. The contemporary Rajput states were seen to have developed traditional enmity against their neighbors. If this could be exploited as a part of the Mughal imperial policy, expansion of Mughal power could be rendered easy.

Again, individually, the Rajputs were determined fighters, brave and courageous. Besides, they were also famous for their personal qualities of honesty, chivalry, and loyalty to the leader. Thus, the Rajputs were a better lot than the foreign levies on whom the Mughals relied. These foreign levies were often vain, cruel and ruthless and showed little loyalty to the sovereign and were often rebellious. With the support of the Rajputs, the problem of the foreign levies could be satisfactorily tackled. Thus, in his self-interest, Akbar felt that it was essential to obtain the support, goodwill and alliance of the Rajputs even on their terms.

Akbar realized that without subduing or conciliating the Rajputs, his dream of an empire could not be built upon solid foundations. Further, the consolidation of the empire required a political and social synthesis that could not be achieved without the cooperation of the Rajputs. This factor could also help him shake off the foreign nature of his monarchy and convert it into a national one, which, in turn, could win him popular support and strengthen the rule of his dynasty.

It is said that Akbar was born under the roof of a Rajput and hence he had a sense of gratitude and affection for the Rajput clan. By nature, he was a tolerant and broad-minded benevolent ruler who was keenly interested in cultivating friendships with Hindus who incidentally formed the majority. The Rajputs were mostly followers of Hinduism. The liberal tendencies of his family and the influence of his tutors, especially Abdul Latif, made him generous towards them.

Akbar always aimed at conciliation, yet, he did not want to convey the impression that this aim was born out of any weakness on his part. He wanted to demonstrate his overwhelming military superiority as the base of this policy of conciliation and friendship. Those Rajput states which submitted to his suzerainty were treated generously. Those who chose to oppose him were defeated and their impregnable forts were captured. Further, a ruler who submitted even after his defeat was again treated well, his family honor was respected and he was allowed to retain his former territory, permitted to enjoy full autonomy in his internal administration while Akbar guaranteed full protection against any outside aggression. If some forts were seized and retained for reasons of imperial security, that ruler was given liberal compensation by the grant of Jagirs elsewhere.

At the same time, the Rajputs were invited to share the burdens of the imperial government and the wars of conquest and those who agreed, were given high positions and ranks, proportionate to their ability and status. The highest mansab and governorships of provinces were offered to them. With the intention of perpetuating friendly relations, he persuaded Rajputs to accept jobs in his civil and military organization and if, by chance, the ruler did not want such an honor and instead offered the services of his followers and relations, the Emperor readily accepted them.

Akbar's policy towards the Rajputs though, originated in his ambition, was far more generous and humane. Through his actions, he proved that he had no wish either to annex their states or interfere with their social, religious or economic life, but he only wanted their allegiance to the proposed imperial confederation, which was uppermost in his mind. This allegiance comprised four aspects.

- (i) The rulers had to pay some tribute as a part of their contribution to the empire.
- (ii) The rulers had to surrender their own foreign policy and their right to settle disputes by mutual war.
- (iii) They had to send a fixed military quota for imperial service, whenever required.
- (iv) The rulers should consider themselves to be an integral part of the empire and not merely as individual UNITS.

Akbar, thus, treated Rajputs on a basis of equality and all imperial positions were thrown open to them. So allegiance to the Mughal Empire, in turn, meant peace, order and prosperity. It is this aspect that appeared to have been the deciding factor. Most of the Rajput rulers declared their allegiance to the Mughal emperor and fought against the great Rajput warrior and hero, Rana Pratap Singh of Mewar, whose sole aim was, at best, regional independence and not the political unification of Rajputana.

To bridge the gulf between the suzerain and the vassal, Akbar desired to establish matrimonial alliances with the Rajputs. The overall objective of such alliances was the Indianization of the Mughals while these gave the Rajputs the honor and distinction of becoming close relations of the Imperial House.

Yet, the policy of matrimonial alliance was not devised by Akbar but had been used as an integral part of the smart statecraft all over the world and throughout the various periods of history. Humayun entered into matrimonial alliances with powerful zamindars and local rajas. Akbar's policy, when used as statecraft, symbolized the dawn of a new era in the Indian political horizon and secured to the ensuing four generations of Mughal emperors, the services of some of the greatest stalwarts of Rajputs of medieval India. Even to that extent, Akbar followed the policy of his father and grandfather who had used matrimonial alliances as a part of statecraft.

Further, according to Dr. R.P. Tripathi, there is no historical evidence to show that matrimonial alliance was a part of a general policy of Akbar enforced ruthlessly or there was any great social upsurge or opposition to such an alliance. In fact, there was no novelty attached to such relationships and the Rajputs were free to enter or not to enter into such alliances. However, Ishwari Prasad maintains that these matrimonial alliances were one-sided and frequently were the result not of choice but of necessity.

Akbar's relations with the Rajputs may now be reviewed against this background. Almost all the Rajput rulers of Rajasthan, with the exception of the ruler of Mewar, submitted to him. Raja Bharmal, the ruler of Amber (modern Jaipur), was the first Rajput ruler who submitted to Akbar in 1562 CE, while Akbar was proceeding to Ajmer on the pilgrimage to the mausoleum of Khwaja Muinuddin Chisti. He acknowledged Akbar's suzerainty and offered his daughter in marriage to Akbar. This Rajput princess gave birth to the next Mughal emperor, Jahangir. Akbar took Bhagwan Das and Man Singh, the adopted son and grandson respectively of the Raja, into his service.

19.3.1 Evolution of Akbar's Rajput Policy

Akbar tried to befriend the Rajputs and at the same time desired to bring them under his suzerainty.

Merta

Merta was ruled by Jai Mal, a vassal of Rana Udai Singh of Mewar. It was attacked in 1562 CE by Mirza Sharafuddin, a Mughal Officer in Akbar's service. Jai Mal abandoned the fort which was defended by the Rajputs under the leadership of Dev Das. However, the Rajputs were defeated and slaughtered and the fort fell into Mughal hands in 1562 CE.

Mewar

Mewar had on its North, the kingdoms of Jaipur and Ajmer, on the South Pratapgarh and Dungarpur, on the East Kotah and Bundi and on the West Marwar. Mewar was rich in natural resources, its people were hardy mountaineers and were acclaimed as brave fighters. The ruling family of Mewar, the Sisodia was the most respected family among the Rajput rulers of Rajasthan.

The Rana of Mewar was an acknowledged leader of Rajput chivalry. The power and prestige of Mewar had suffered a setback after the death of Rana Sangram Singh. The then ruler of Mewar, Rana Udai Singh was doing his best to regain Mewar's lost prestige.

The reasons why Akbar was attracted to the kingdom of Mewar are as follows:

- (i) Mewar was economically and politically important. Economically, it commanded the trade route from North India to the sea ports of Gujarat while politically Akbar realized that, in order to fulfil his aim of the conquest of Northern India, the capture of the famous fortresses of Chitor and Ranthambhor was necessary. So, the conquest of Mewar was, but, a part of a larger enterprise, as a stepping-stone to Akbar's further conquests in the realization of his ultimate dream of a UNITED Hindustan.
- (ii) The Rana looked down with contempt the Raja of Amber for his submission to Akbar and his entering into a marriage alliance.
- (iii) He refused to accept Akbar's suzerainty.
- (iv) He offended Akbar by giving shelter to the fugitive ruler of Malwa, Baz Bahadur, and by helping the rebellious Mirzas.
- (v) The Rana's second son Shakti Singh, after offending his father, had joined the service of the Mughals.

The capital city of Chitor, Mewar, occupied a strategic position. Situated on a rocky hill, at an elevation of 150 metres from the plains, it was surrounded on all sides by dense forests and deep ravines which made it difficult for an invader to climb up to the summit, except from its Southern side. The only entrance to the fort was by a zigzag road, cut through the rock itself and an invader could possibly reach the summit only by passing through seven successive gates.

Akbar besieged the fort of Chitor in 1567 CE. On the advice of his nobles, Rana Udai Singh went into the forest for safety leaving the defense of the fort to Jai Mal and Fatta or Fateh Singh. The Mughal siege went on for more than five months. One night, when Jai Mal was supervising some repairs of the ramparts of the fort, he was seriously wounded by a gun shot from Akbar. With his fall, the Rajputs became disheartened the women committed *jauhar* and the following day, all the Rajputs including the wounded Jai Mal fought to the last man and died on the battlefield.

Rajput resistance under Jai Mal and Fatta angered Akbar to such an extent that on entering the fort, Akbar ordered a general massacre. However, he appears to have felt sorry later and paid homage to the brave leaders by erecting statues of Jai Mal and Fatta mounted on elephant back and in full regalia at the gate of the Agra fort to commemorate their heroism. Akbar left for Ajmer after appointing Abdul Majid Asaf as the Governor of Chitor.

Colonel Tod has described Udai Singh as a weak and cowardly ruler. But, modern historians do not subscribe to this point of view, since there is evidence that Rana Udai Singh left the fort only on the advice of his nobles and for the safety of the ruling family. Further, he never submitted to Akbar while he suffered hardships throughout the rest of his life.

Though the Mughals succeeded in capturing the capital and the fort of Chitor, yet a greater territory of Mewar still remained in Rana Udai Singh's possession. Rana Udai Singh died in 1572 CE and was succeeded by his son Rana Pratap Singh who vowed to recapture his capital as well as the fort. All attempts by Akbar to make him accept his suzerainty failed and in 1576 CE, Akbar deputed Man Singh and Asaf Khan to attack Mewar. Rana Pratap fought against them in the famous

Battle of Haldighati on June 18, 1576 CE. In comparison with the Mughal army, the Rana's army was small, yet the attack was so furious that the Mughal army became desperate. However, Rana was hard pressed from all sides by the Mughals who enjoyed numerical strength, endangering his life. At that time, one of the Rana's nobles Bida Jhala, snatched away the Rana's Crown and wore it himself. The Mughals mistaking him for the real Rana, surrounded him which gave Rana Pratap a chance to escape from the battlefield. Though the Rajputs were defeated, the Mughals became exhausted and did not have the energy to pursue the escaping Rana. Gogunda was occupied by the Mughals but they could not achieve any further. Both Man Singh and Asaf Khan were opposed to any indiscriminate plundering of the Rana's territory and hence were sent in pursuit of the success recalled.

Other Mughal officers were sent in pursuit of Rana but they too, were unsuccessful. Though the whole of Mewar was ravaged by the Mughals. The Rana, forced to seek the shelter of the hills, did not lose his spirit to fight and continue his resistance. He never accepted Akbar's suzerainty and before he died in 1597 CE. He had succeeded in recovering a large part of Mewar from the Mughals. Rana Pratap's struggle against Akbar is considered as a glorious UNIT in Indian History.

Ranthambhor

The ruler of Ranthambhor Raja Surjan Rai was a Rajput of Bundi and a vassal of Mewar. Akbar's army marched against the ruler's forces and attacked the fort of Ranthambhor in 1569 CE and after a siege of one and a half months, the Raja surrendered. He accepted Akbar's suzerainty and entered his imperial service. Later on, he was appointed as governor of the Benares province and the fort of Chunar.

Kalinjar

Kalinjar was ruled by Raja Ram Chand of Rewa. Akbar sent his army against Kalinjar in August 1569 CE. The Raja had already heard about the fall of Chitor and Ranthambhor and surrendered without a fight.

Marwar

The surrender of Chitor and Ranthambhor demoralized the Rajput rulers. Akbar's conciliatory policy made them accept his suzerainty. So, Akbar did not encounter any resistance from other rulers. In 1570 CE the rulers of Jodhpur, Bikaner and Jaisalmer accepted his suzerainty. By 1570 CE with the exception of Mewar and a few of its tributary states, the whole of Rajasthan submitted to Akbar and his success against the Rajputs was complete.

Akbar came into contact with three distinct types of Rajputs:

- (i) Those like the ruler of Amber who easily submitted to the Mughal ruler and were readily assimilated into the Imperial system;
- (ii) Those who put up a decent fight or came to an honorable settlement with the conqueror, like Ranthambhor and;
- (iii) Those who refused to be assimilated and sought refuge either in fight or persistent fight, like the Rana of Mewar.

The first two, by their very submission, displayed a spirit of compromise and assimilation which was quite necessary for the building up of a UNITED nation towards which Akbar was bending the whole might of his genius, The last by his eternal hatred, unconquerable pride and

indomitable courage, never to submit or yield, contributed his own quota to the strength and nobility of our national character.

19.3.2 Results of Akbar's Rajput Policy

Akbar's Rajput policy has been praised by most of the contemporary and later historians. Its critics have been Badauni, in the earlier days and Qureshi, among the modern historians, condemn it and hold it to be responsible for hastening the collapse of the Mughals in India. However, these critics are biased. The Rajput policy was beneficial both to the Mughal Empire as well as to the Rajputs for more than a century. The Rajput's friendship and cooperation provided the necessary security and permanence to the Mughal rule. Through active participation in all Governmental activities, the Rajputs contributed most to the economic prosperity and the cultural renaissance, helping to bring about a synthesis of Hindu and Muslim cultures. To the Rajputs, this policy brought peace to their region. They continued to enjoy internal autonomy; they had the freedom to practice their religion, celebrate their festivals and continue with their traditional laws; and were also assured of their hereditary claims to their principalities. Viewed from these overall benefits derived from both, this policy proved to be successful.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 Name the first Mughal Emperor to have pursued a planned policy towards the Rajputs.
- Q.2 What was the overall objective of Akbar in establishing matrimonial relations with the Rajputs?
- Q.3 Which Rajput ruler never surrendered to Akbar?
- Q.4 Name the first Rajput ruler who acknowledged Akbar's suzerainty and offered his daughter in marriage to Akbar.
- Q.5 Give any two reasons why Akbar was attracted to the kingdom of Mewar.
- Q.6 When did Akbar besiege the fort of Chitor?
- Q.7 When and between whom was the Battle of Haldighati fought?
- Q.8 When the rulers of Jodhpur, Bikaner and Jaisalmer did accepted the suzerainty of Akbar?

19.4 Rajput Policy of Jahangir

Jahangir continued the Rajput policy of his father Akbar in a similar manner. Jahangir was the son of a Rajput princess, and very liberal and broadminded in his religious outlook. The temporary breakup of his relations with Raja Man Singh on the Khurram episode did not have any adverse impact on Rajput policy of Jahangir. Raja Man Singh lost influences at the imperial court but not so his position, status or the fortunes. Jahangir too entered into matrimonial relations with Rajputs and had married a number of Rajput princesses, and he maintained very cordial relationship with the Rajput ruling houses. Jahangir's successor Prince Khurram was born of a Rajput princess, daughter of Raja Udai Singh of Jodhpur (Marwar). The imperial court was adorned by generals, scholars and artists of all commUNITies as ever before, and the doors of civil and military services were wide open for the Hindus.

War and Peace with Mewar

At the time of the accession of Jahangir, Mewar was in a state of war with the Mughal Empire. There was a general notion that the continued existence of an independent Mewar was partly due to the folly of Jahangir himself because, during his career as a prince, he had refused to obey his father's order to undertake the task of its subjugation. Therefore, the conquest of Mewar became a matter of prestige with Jahangir; the existence of a rebellious principality in the heart of an all-powerful Mughal empire was annoying him. Consequently, immediately after his accession to the throne, he ordered the despatch of a military expedition to Mewar under the command of prince Parvez assisted by Asaf Khan Jafar Beg, an imperial minister against Rana Amar Singh of Mewar. The imperialists were accompanied by Sagar, an uncle of Rana Amar Singh, who had deserted his people and was residing at the Mughal court as a pensioner. A bloody but indecisive battle was fought between the Rana and the imperial troops at the pass of Dewar. The Mughals installed Sagar as their protegee at Chitor with the purpose of creating a rift between the Rajputs of Mewar although the people refused to acknowledge the traitor as their rana and Sagar had to vacate Chitor in disgrace soon afterwards. The Mughal armies were recalled by Jahangir from Mewar on the sudden outbreak of Khusrau's revolt. It marked the end of the first phase of struggle between Mewar and the Mughal Empire during the reign of Jahangir.

After settling Khusrau's affair, Jahangir directed his attention once again to the problem of Mewar. From 1608 to 1615 CE, he sent as many as four military expeditions for its subjugation. In 1608 CE Mahabat Khan led the imperial armies into Mewar and invaded its territories of the plains although the Rana held out in the forested hills and valleys of Mewar; Mahabat Khan was recalled to the court. In 1609 CE, Abdullah Khan attacked Mewar but in vain. In 1611 CE Mirza Aziz Koka and prince Khurram were directed to lead the imperial troops against Mewar but their mutual disputes resulted in the failure of the expedition.

Finally, Jahangir made up his mind, in 1613 CE, to launch a continual military campaign against Mewar under his personal supervision. He shifted his headquarters to Ajmer, and directed the entire might of the imperial arms against Mewar. Prince Khurram was credited with the exclusive command of the army of invasion. He adopted a scorch-earth policy in Mewar. He ravaged the towns, razed the villages to the ground and destroyed the standing crops. The areas infested and defended by the Rajputs were put under a state of blockade. All supplies from outside to those areas were stopped. To add insult to the injury, Mewar was engulfed in famine and epidemic. Consequently, the people living in the plains of Mewar were uprooted and threatened with annihilation. The conflict between the tiny state of Mewar and the mighty Mughal Empire was unequal and even undesirable. Hard-pressed, Rana Amar Singh and his associates, ultimately, realized the futility of prolonging the struggle which had destroyed the whole state and brought untold miseries on its people. In 1615 CE, the Rana sent his maternal uncle Shubh Karan for peace negotiations with Jahangir on honorable terms. The prince as well as Jahangir was delighted to see a turn in the tide; on the recommendations of the former, the emperor ratified a treaty of peace with Mewar on the most liberal terms ever granted to any Rajput vassal state by the Mughals. As per the terms of the treaty, Rana Amar Singh recognized Jahangir as his suzerain. The Mughals restored all the territories of Mewar to Rana, including Chitor, which had ever been annexed by them since the beginning of the conflict with Mewar under Akbar. Although, no limit was imposed on the armed forces to be kept by the Rana. As a point of prestige for the Mughal Empire, it was agreed by the Rana that the fort of Chitor would not be repaired or fortified so that it might not be used as a stronghold against the imperial government in the future. Rana Amar Singh was not obliged to attend the imperial court or join the imperial service. He was also not required to enter into a matrimonial alliance with the Mughals. Jahangir himself records in his memoirs that, when Rana

Amar Singh visited prince Khurram in his military camp somewhere in Mewar, the prince 'behaved to him with perfect kindness.'

According to Jahangir there was prevalent a custom among the Rajputs that the son who is the heir-apparent should not go with his father to pay his respects to a king or prince." As per this custom the Rana did not bring with him Karan, his son, who had received the tika'. Therefore, Karan came to pay homage to prince Khurram after some time, and was received with equal warmth. He accompanied prince Khurram to pay personal respects to Jahangir at Ajmer. The affectionate treatment meted out to Karan, the crown prince of Mewar, by Jahangir exhibits not only a great stroke of diplomacy and statesmanship but also his honest and sincere desire likes Akbar to win over the love and cooperation of the Rajputs.

Unsurprisingly, the Treaty of Peace with Mewar (1615 CE) was a major breakthrough in the history of the Mughal rule in India. It marked the ultimate success of the policy of political unification of the country and establishment of a nation-state of India on secular lines, as envisioned by Akbar in 1562 CE. The Rajput policy of Jahangir was crowned with success. Jahangir and his son prince Khurram (later the emperor Shah Jahan) had correctly imbibed the national policy of Akbar, and they pursued it in the right spirit. Jahangir deserves every credit for having secured the submission of Mewar by pursuing very liberal and friendly policy towards it. Mewar enjoyed complete autonomy during the reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan and professed loyalty to the Mughal throne till the last quarter of the 17th century. However, Aurangzeb reversed the liberal and secular policy of his ancestors which compelled many subordinate Hindu chiefs, including Kana Raj Singh of Mewar, to revolt and break away from the Mughal empire.

Self-Check Exercise-2

- Q.1 How many military expeditions were sent by Jahangir to Mewar for its subjugation?
- Q.2 Who exclusively commanded the army of invasion on Mewar in 1613 CE?
- Q.3 Who was sent by Rana Amar Singh of Mewar for peace negotiations with Jahangir in 1615 CE?
- Q.4 When the Treaty of Peace was concluded between the Mughals and the State of Mewar?

19.5 Summary

- Akbar was the first Mughal emperor who pursued a planned policy towards the Rajputs.
- Various factors contributed to the formation of Rajput policy of Akbar.
- Akbar was impressed by the chivalry, faithfulness, daresness, fighting skill etc. of the Rajputs.
- Akbar realized that without subduing or conciliating the Rajputs, his dream of an empire could not be built upon solid foundations.
- Further, the consolidation of the empire required a political and social synthesis that could not be achieved without the cooperation of the Rajputs.
- The liberal tendencies of Akbar's family and the influence of his tutors, especially Abdul Latif, made him generous towards the Rajputs.
- Those Rajput states which submitted to his suzerainty were treated generously. Those who chose to oppose him were defeated and their impregnable forts were captured.

- A ruler who submitted even after his defeat was again treated well, his family honor was respected and he was allowed to retain his former territory.
- Rajputs were invited to share the burdens of the imperial government and the wars of conquest and those who agreed, were given high positions and ranks, proportionate to their ability and status.
- Most of the Rajput rulers declared their allegiance to the Mughal emperor.
- To bridge the gulf between the suzerain and the vassal, Akbar desired to establish matrimonial alliances with the Rajputs. The overall objective of such alliances was the Indianization of the Mughals.
- Almost all the Rajput rulers of Rajasthan, with the exception of the ruler of Mewar, submitted to Akbar.
- Raja Bharmal, the ruler of Amber (modern Jaipur), was the first Rajput ruler who accepted Akbar's suzerainty and offered his daughter in marriage to Akbar in 1562 CE.
- Akbar captured Merta in 1562 CE.
- Rana Pratap, the Sisodia ruler of Mewar refused to accept Akbar's suzerainty.
- Akbar besieged the fort of Chitor in 1567 CE.
- In the famous Battle of Haldighati fought on June 18, 1576 CE between Rana Pratap of Mewar and Akbar's forces under Man Singh, Rana Pratap was defeated.
- However, Rana Pratap managed to escape and never accepted Akbar's suzerainty.
- The ruler of Ranthambhor, Raja Surjan Rai and ruler of Kalinjar, Raja Ram Chand was defeated by Akbar's army in 1569 CE.
- In 1570 CE the rulers of Jodhpur, Bikaner and Jaisalmer accepted Akbar's suzerainty.
- The Rajput policy of Akbar was a grand success.
- Jahangir continued the Rajput policy of his father Akbar in a similar manner.
- The temporary breakup of his relations with Raja Man Singh on the Khurram episode did not have any adverse impact on Rajput policy of Jahangir.
- Jahangir too entered into matrimonial relations with Rajputs and had married a number of Rajput princesses, and he maintained very cordial relationship with the Rajput ruling houses.
- At the time of the accession of Jahangir, Mewar was in a state of war with the Mughal Empire.
- Immediately after his accession to the throne, Jahangir ordered the despatch of a military expedition to Mewar. However, the Mughal armies were recalled on the sudden outbreak of Khusrau's revolt.
- From 1608 to 1615 CE, Jahangir sent as many as four military expeditions to Mewar for its subjugation.
- Ultimately in 1615 CE there was a Treaty of Peace with Mewar which was a major breakthrough in the history of Mughal rule in India.

- The Rajput policy of Jahangir was crowned with success. Mewar enjoyed complete autonomy during the reigns of Jahangir.

19.6 Glossary

Jauhar: It was a Hindu practice of mass self-immolation by women to avoid capture, enslavement and rape by an invading Islamic army, when facing certain defeat during a war.

Mansab: It means position or rank.

Massacre: The killing of a large number of people.

Regalia: The emblems or insignia of royalty, especially the crown, scepter, and other ornaments used at a coronation.

19.7 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Ans.1 Akbar
- Ans.2 Indianization of the Mughals
- Ans.3 Ruler of Mewar
- Ans.4 Raja Bharmal of Amber
- Ans.5 Mewar was economically and politically important.
- Ans.6 1567 CE
- Ans.7 It was fought on June 18, 1576 CE between Man Singh and Rana Pratap of Mewar.
- Ans.8 1570 CE

Self-Check Exercise-2

- Ans.1 Four
- Ans.2 Prince Khurram
- Ans.3 Shubh Karan
- Ans.4 1615 CE

19.8 Suggested Readings

1. Irfan Habib, 1997, "*Akbar and His India*", New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
2. Jadunath Sarkar, 1984, "*A History of Jaipur*", New Delhi: Orient Longman.
3. Muni Lal, 1980, "*Akbar*", University of Michigan.
4. Nurul Hasan, 2007, "*Religion, State and Society in Medieval India*", New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
5. R.C Majumdar, 1984, "*The Mughal Empire*", Bombay: Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan.

19.9 Terminal Questions

1. Discuss the aims and nature of the Rajput policy of Akbar.

2. Trace the evolution of Akbar's Rajput policy.
3. Give an account of Mughal-Mewar relations during the reign of Akbar and Jahangir.
4. What were the results of Akbar's Rajput policy?
5. Discuss the Rajput policy of Mughal Emperor Jahangir.

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UNIT-20

DECCAN POLICY OF THE MUGHALS

Structure

- 20.1 Introduction
- 20.2 Objectives
- 20.3 Deccan Policy of The Mughals
- Self-Check Exercise-1
- 20.4 Summary
- 20.5 Glossary
- 20.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 20.7 Suggested Readings
- 20.8 Terminal Questions

20.1 Introduction

The Deccan policy of the Mughals was not determined by a single factor but guided by a number of factors like the strategic importance of the Deccan states, and the administrative and economic necessities of the Mughal Empire etc. Babur could not establish any contact with the Deccan due to his preoccupation in the North. Humayun also could not find enough time because of his involvement in Gujarat, Bihar and Bengal to devote himself in the affairs of the Deccan. Akbar was the first Mughal emperor who wished to extend the Mughal suzerainty in the Deccan.

20.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the Deccan policies of the Mughals from Babur to Aurangzeb,
- Make an assessment of the Deccan policy of the Mughals.

Babur

At the time of Babur's invasion on India there were six Muslim states, viz., Khandesh, Berar, Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, Golconda and Bidar and one Hindu state, i.e., Vijayanagar in the South. According to Babur, the state of Vijayanagar was the most powerful among them. He mentions that Krishnadeva Raya (1509-1530 CE) was the greatest monarch of the Tuluva Dynasty of Vijayanagar. However, Babur could not pay any attention towards the South.

Humayun

During Humayun's reign (1530-40 CE), Muhammad Shah, ruler of Khandesh supported Bahadur Shah of Gujarat against Mewar and fought against Humayun at Mandsaur and Mandu. Therefore, Humayun attacked Khandesh after his conquest of Gujarat. Muhammad Shah begged pardon which was granted by Humayun. Thus, Humayun had no planned policy towards the Deccan. It was the beginning of the Mughal rule in India and the Afghans were challenging the authority of the Mughals in Northern India. It kept both Babur and Humayun busy in the North.

Akbar

After the conquest of the North-Western frontier, Akbar turned his attention to the conquest of Deccan and Southern India where disUNITY and warfare between the various kingdoms provided a congenial political condition for an invader. The Vijayanagar Empire had restrained the Muslim

kingdoms of the Deccan from fighting one another. However, with the fall of Vijayanagar, after the Battle of Talikota in 1565 CE, the Muslim chieftains devoted their entire energies and resources in mutual warfare.

Akbar was the first among the Mughal emperors who planned to conquer the Deccan. His primary objective in conquering the Deccan was to expand his rule all over the country. He was also dissatisfied with the constant religious strife in the Deccan and was extremely keen on establishing Sulh-i-kul. Besides, Akbar was not happy with the Portuguese who were becoming powerful on the Indian sea-coast and growing as a menace to the Mughal Empire. Moreover, they were harassing the Haj Pilgrims bound for Mecca. Akbar wanted to break up their power which could be possible by conquering the Deccan. According to Abul Fazl one objective of Akbar in conquering the Deccan was to liberate the subject-people of the Deccan from the despotic rule of their local rulers and provide them peace and prosperity. However, modern historians have not given any importance to his opinion.

In 1591 CE, Akbar despatched from Lahore four diplomatic missions to Khandesh, Ahmadnagar Bijapur and Golconda and asked them to accept his sovereignty. Except Khandesh all other states refused. Later on, Ali Khan, ruler of Khandesh died fighting on the side of the Mughals against Ahmadnagar. Akbar then turned his attention to the kingdom of Ahmadnagar. In 1593 CE the Mughals attacked Ahmadnagar. Chand Bibi, an aunt of the reigning king Muzaffar of Ahmadnagar fought bravely against them. However, she either committed suicide or was murdered later on. But Ahmadnagar continued to fight and it was after many years of struggle that the Mughals succeeded in capturing the territories and forts of Berar, Ahmadnagar and Daulatabad. Miran Bahadur, son of Ali Khan succeeded his father to the throne of Khandesh. He refused to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Mughals and stopped paying tribute. The Mughals, therefore, attacked Khandesh, captured the fort of Asirgarh in 1601 CE and, finally, annexed all territories of Khandesh to Empire. Miran Bahadur was imprisoned in the fort of Gwalior and was given a pension. However, during his lifetime Akbar failed to take any action against Bijapur and Golconda. Thus, Akbar occupied Khandesh, captured a part of the territory of Ahmadnagar along with some strong forts like Daulatabad, Ahmadnagar, Burhanpur, Asirgarh etc. and, thus, not only established the power of the Mughals in the Deccan but also paved the way for the conquest of the Deccan for his successor.

Jahangir

Like his father, Jahangir was also committed to the conquest of the entire Southern India. Akbar had conquered only a part of the Nizamshahi kingdom of Ahmadnagar including its capital town. However, the major part of the state remained under the control of Nizamshahi nobles. Jahangir endeavored to annex Ahmadnagar and force the rulers of Bijapur and Golconda to accept his suzerainty. But, the Mughals had to face tough resistance put up by Malik Ambar, the Wazir of Ahmadnagar. He improved the economy of Ahmadnagar, trained Maratha soldiers in guerilla warfare, fought aggressively against the Mughals and during the early period of the reign of Jahangir recovered the fort of Ahmadnagar and some other territory of the state of Ahmadnagar. Although Jahangir deputed his most capable generals such as Khan-i-Jahan Lodhi, Abdullah Khan in the Deccan campaigns yet no success was gained because of the mutual differences among the Mughal officers and the success of Malik Ambar in opposing them. In 1617 CE, Prince Khurram attacked Ahmadnagar and forced it to sign a treaty by which Ahmadnagar surrendered the fort of Ahmadnagar and the territory of Balaghat to the Mughals. Prince Khurram was conferred upon the title of Shah Jahan by Jahangir at that very time. But it was, in fact, no remarkable success of the

Mughals. Ahmadnagar was not prepared to accept the sovereignty of the Mughals and started fighting against them again.

In 1621 CE, however, peace was again signed between the two by which Ahmadnagar surrendered a part of its territory to the Mughals and also paid rupees eighteen lakhs in cash. Bijapur and Golconda which had helped Ahmadnagar who also paid rupees twelve lakhs and rupees twenty lakhs respectively to the Mughals. Thus, during Jahangir's reign, Ahmadnagar was weakened and the states of Bijapur and Golconda were pressurized. But, there was no extension of the empire and no state of the Deccan was either finished or forced to submit. Dr. R.P. Tripathi has commented: "It advanced the Mughal power no further than it had stood when Akbar left the Deccan."

Shahjahan

Shah Jahan's Deccan policy was a continuation of the one initiated by his ancestors, Akbar and Jahangir. He also attempted either to annex the kingdoms of the Deccan or force them to accept his suzerainty. He was a capable commander and understood the politics of the Deccan well. The death of Malik Ambar provided him good opportunity to put pressure on Ahmadnagar. Fateh Khan, son of Malik Ambar, who became the Wazir was incapable and corrupt. He was not sincere to the Sultan or to the state. Instead, he was interested in pursuing his own selfish ends. He got murdered Sultan Murtaza Nizam Shah II and placed a child, Hussain Shah on the throne. But he was not loyal even to him. He opened discussions with the Mughals and at the same time tried to befriend Bijapur. His unprincipled diplomacy resulted in the loss of many loyal nobles like Shahji Bhonsle to him as well as the faith of Bijapur and the Mughals. Eventually, he surrendered Sultan Hussain Shah to the Mughals in 1633 CE. Hussain Shah was imprisoned in the fort of Gwalior and Ahmadnagar was annexed to the Mughal Empire. It meant the end of the state of Ahmadnagar though Shahji Bhonsle continued to fight against the Mughals on behalf of another child of the ruling dynasty of Ahmadnagar, named Murtaza III. However, he surrendered that child to the Mughals in 1636 CE and accepted the service of Bijapur.

Muhammad Qutb Shah, the Sultan of Golconda died in 1626 CE. He was succeeded by minor son Abdulla Qutb Shah, then a lad of eleven years and a half. In 1636 CE, Golconda was forced to accept the suzerainty of the Mughals. Aurangzeb, when appointed as governor of the Deccan in 1652 CE, pressurized Golconda because it had failed to pay the annual tribute to the Mughals. Aurangzeb started interfering into the affairs of Golconda on one pretext or the other. He got the opportunity when Mir Jumla, one of the most prominent nobles of the Sultan, quarreled with him and sought personal intervention for restoring peace from Shah Jahan. Aurangzeb occupied Hyderabad and besieged the fort of Golconda. But before he could capture it, he received orders of Shah Jahan to raise the siege. Consequently, a treaty was signed between the two by which Golconda accepted the suzerainty of the Mughal emperor, married one of his daughters to prince Muhammad, son of Aurangzeb, gave rupees ten lakhs as dowry and yet another rupees seventeen lakhs as war-indemnity to the Mughals. Thus, though Golconda was weakened but its existence remained.

Muhammad Adil Shah I ascended the throne of Bijapur in 1627 CE. He had no fixed plan against the onslaughts of the Mughals while his nobles were divided among themselves. On December 3, 1631 CE, Shah Jahan ordered his Prime Minister Asaf Khan to invade Bijapur, but this invasion proved to be a failure. The Mughals again attacked it in 1636 CE and compelled it to accept their suzerainty. Later on, it enjoyed immunity from the attacks of the Mughals for the next

twenty years. Adil Shah died in November 1656 CE. It was believed that he had no son but his wife, Bari Sahiba declared one child as his son and succeeded in placing him on the throne, with the name of Adil Shah II, then a lad of eighteen. Shah Jahan tried to take advantage of it. He charged Bijapur for different things and ordered Aurangzeb to attack it. Aurangzeb besieged the fort of Bijapur but before he could capture it, he received order of Shah Jahan to raise the siege. A treaty was, therefore, signed between the two in 1657 CE by which Bijapur accepted the suzerainty of the Mughal emperor and agreed to pay rupees one and a half crores to the Mughals. The forts of Bidar and Kalyani also fell to the Mughals.

Aurangzeb also forced Shivaji to settle for peace with the Mughals. Thus, during the reign of Shah Jahan the Deccan policy of the Mughals was quite successful. The state of Ahmadnagar was completely annexed to the Mughal Empire and Bijapur and Golconda were forced to accept the suzerainty of the Emperor, surrender part of their territories and some important forts and pay annual tribute and war-indemnity. If Shah Jahan himself would not have stopped Aurangzeb, probably Bijapur and Golconda could be annexed. The politics of Deccan was very well understood by Shah Jahan. He probably felt that the annexation of these two states would complicate matters for the Mughals. Therefore, he felt satisfied by making them weak and accepting of his sovereignty by them. Prince Dara Shukoh and Princess Jahan Ara did not want the elimination of these states because it would have enhanced the power and prestige of Aurangzeb. Shah Jahan's illness and the possibility of a war of succession among his sons was, probably, another reason of the safety of these states at that time.

Aurangzeb

Aurangzeb's policy towards the Deccan had political, economic and religious motives. The expansion of the Mughal Empire was one purpose of Aurangzeb. Probably, extinction of the states of Bijapur and Golconda was a prior necessity for the destruction of the power of the Marathas in the Deccan. Besides this, the very existence of Shia rulers, in spite of their humble submission to the Mughal throne, was an eye sore to him. Apart from this, the states of the Deccan were wealthy. Aurangzeb was tempted to conquer them with a view to capture their wealth. Therefore, Aurangzeb was not satisfied simply by acceptance of his suzerainty by them but he desired to annex them to the Mughal Empire.

During the first half of his reign (1657-81 CE) Aurangzeb remained busy in Northern India. Therefore, the responsibility of looking after the Deccan affairs was left to his different nobles. Bijapur had failed to fulfill the terms of the treaty of 1657 CE. Therefore, Mirza Raja Jai Singh was deputed to attack it in 1665-66 CE but he failed to get the submission of Bijapur. However, the situation, changed when Adil Shah II died in 1672 CE and was succeeded by his four-year son, Sikandar Adil Shah. The Sultan, being a minor, was unable to keep his nobles under his control. The nobles were divided into two groups, viz., the foreigners and the Indian Muslims. Both these groups attempted to capture the power of the throne which led to maladministration of the state. Taking advantage of this the Mughals attacked Bijapur in 1676 CE but with no result. The Mughals didn't succeed in the coming years also till Aurangzeb himself reached the Deccan. In 1681 CE, there took place a fateful occurrence in the revolt of Prince Muhammad Akbar which took Aurangzeb to the South in fury. Aurangzeb reached the Deccan in 1682 CE with a view to destroy all states of the South. He first deputed his son, Azam against Bijapur. Bijapur collapsed after 15 months of heroic resistance and was annexed to the Mughal Empire on September 22, 1686 CE and Adil Shahi dynasty came to an end. Sikandar Adil Shah was granted a pension.

Abul Hasan Qutb Shah (1626-72 CE) was the Sultan of Golconda at that time. He had purchased peace with the Mughals in 1657 CE by giving away his daughter in marriage to Prince Muhammad Sultan, the eldest son of Aurangzeb. He was a Shia, had entrusted the work of administration to his two capable Brahmin ministers, Madanna and Akhanna and buried himself in the pleasures of harem life. He had expressed his displeasure at the occupation of Bijapur by the Mughals. Aurangzeb was dissatisfied with all that and ordered Prince Shah Alam to attack Golconda. Abul Hasan left Hyderabad and sought shelter in the fort of Golconda. Abul Hasan pleaded for a treaty with the prince and he agreed. But Aurangzeb was not prepared for any treaty. He besieged the fort of Golconda in 1687 CE and captured it by strategy. Sultan Abul Hasan was made captive in the fort of Daulatabad and was given a lifetime pension. Golconda was annexed to the Mughal Empire.

The conquests of Bijapur and Golconda did not complete the conquest of the Deccan by Aurangzeb. The rise of the Maratha power under Shivaji was yet a powerful challenge to him. Shivaji had established an independent kingdom in Maharashtra. Shivaji first came into conflict with the Mughals in 1656 CE when he attacked Ahmadnagar and Junar. But Aurangzeb forced him to agree for peace in 1657 CE. After consolidating his hold over the throne, Aurangzeb appointed his maternal uncle Shaista Khan to be the viceroy of the Mughal Deccan. He ordered him to attack the Maratha territories while Shivaji was involved in his conflict with Bijapur. But Shaista Khan failed. On April 14, 1663 CE, Shivaji carried out a very daring exploit by organizing a surprise night-attack on Shaista Khan in his sleeping chambers at Poona. Aurangzeb recalled Shaista Khan and deputed Raja Jai Singh to attack Shivaji. Jai Singh forced Shivaji to sign the **Treaty of Purandhar** on June 24, 1665 CE by which he surrendered 3/4th of his territory and forts. Shivaji visited Agra in 1666 CE where he was virtually imprisoned. However, he managed to escape from Agra on August 29, 1666 CE. He renewed his hostilities against the Mughals in 1670 CE. Shivaji celebrated his coronation ceremony with great pomp and show at Raigarh on June 16, 1674 CE and assumed the title of **Maharaja Chhatrapati**, thus proclaiming the establishment of a sovereign Hindu state. Shivaji died on April 13, 1680 CE but before his death he had succeeded in establishing quite an extensive kingdom in the South. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Shambhaji. Prince Akbar, son of Aurangzeb found shelter with him. But Shambhaji was an incompetent ruler. Aurangzeb reached the Deccan in 1682 CE and succeeded in capturing Shambhaji. He was killed on March 21, 1689 CE and the entire Maharashtra was occupied by Aurangzeb. It completed the conquest of the South by Aurangzeb. However, his success did not last long. The Marathas rose as one force against the Mughals to liberate their motherland. The Maratha war of independence was first led by Shivaji's second son Raja Ram and then by his widow, Tara Bai. Both Raja Ram and Tara Bai proved equal to their task. Raja Ram proved to be a capable organizer while Tara Bai proved herself quite diplomatic. After the death of her husband, she declared her infant son Shivaji II as the ruler of the Marathas and fought against the Mughals. A Muslim historian, Khafi Khan, who was, in no way favorable to the Marathas, wrote about her: "It was the result of her efforts that the Marathas started attacking not only the Subas of the Deccan but also the distant Mughal provinces and Aurangzeb failed to subdue the Marathas even till the end of his reign." This war continued till Aurangzeb's death. Different Maratha chiefs organized their armies, used guerilla warfare against the Mughals, attacked the Mughal territory even outside Maharashtra and continued their efforts till they succeeded in snatching away Maharashtra from the clutches of the Mughals. Aurangzeb failed to subdue the Marathas and died in the Deccan fully realizing his failure against the Marathas. Thus, the Deccan policy of Aurangzeb ultimately failed.

The Deccan policy of the Mughals reached perfection of its success during the Aurangzeb's rule. However, its success proved to be temporary. Aurangzeb failed to consolidate his success. The Marathas rose against him and brought about the collapse of his Deccan policy. The failure of the Deccan policy of Aurangzeb led to the disintegration of the Mughal Empire. The conquest of the South by Aurangzeb expanded the boundary of the Mughal Empire so extensively that it became impossible to administer it from one place. Indian history had proved it a number of times that the attempt to annex the South by the rulers of the North failed every time. The story was repeated during the reign of Aurangzeb. In his effort to conquer the South and keep it under his direct rule, Aurangzeb neglected even the North which was the source of strength of his empire. While Aurangzeb and his best officers could not liberate themselves from the wars in the Deccan, the North was left in the hands of his junior and less competent officers. Therefore, the hold of the Mughals over Northern India also became loose. The continuous warfare in the Deccan also exhausted the treasury. All this resulted in the failure of Aurangzeb and contributed to the decline of the Mughal Empire. It was the **"Deccan Ulcer"** that ruined Aurangzeb. His Deccan policy was misguided and impractical. The annexation of Bijapur and Golconda by Aurangzeb was also unwise. It resulted in direct conflict of Aurangzeb with the Marathas which became primarily responsible for the failure of his Deccan policy though Jadunath Sarkar has expressed a divergent opinion. He has opined that the weak states of the Deccan neither could function as a protective wall between the Mughals and the Marathas nor could become fruitful allies of the Mughals. Therefore; a confrontation between the Mughals and the Marathas was inevitable. During the rule of later Mughals, the Deccan was lost to the empire and the Marathas gained ascendancy.

Assessment

Thus, it is quite evident that the personal whims or religious considerations of the Mughals did not dictate their policy towards the Deccan states. Beginning from Akbar, there were changes in relations between the Mughals and the Deccan states. It is better to look at these changes by considering the overall socio-economic and administrative situation of the Mughal Empire. Akbar's basic concern in the Deccan was to establish Mughal authority there and to protect the 'Surat hinterland'. He knew that it was not possible to achieve this objective through military conquest only, so he took recourse to diplomacy. Jahangir was in favor of maintaining the position that Akbar achieved by the treaty of 1600 CE in the Deccan and Jahangir's reading of the situation in the Deccan and the internal problems of the Empire influenced him to follow this policy. Violation of the Treaty of 1600 CE by Ahmadnagar forced Shah Jahan to follow an aggressive policy against Ahmadnagar and the Treaty of 1636 CE settled the Deccan problem at least for the next 20 years. Again, the growing expansion of Bijapur and Golkonda in the Karnatak region and the financial crisis of the Empire persuaded Shah Jahan to change his policy. Even Aurangzeb who, before his accession to the throne, was a staunch advocate of forward policy in the Deccan was not in favor of outright conquest of Bijapur and Golkonda. However, the rising power of the Marathas, fear of an alliance between the Marathas and Bijapur-Golkonda as well as the internal crisis of the Empire forced Aurangzeb to conquer Bijapur and Golconda in the 1680s. All these goes to show that the Deccan policy of the Mughals was determined by the needs of the contemporary situation rather than by mere personal whims of the rulers.

Some historians criticize the Deccan policy of the Mughals as wrongly devised and the Mughal Empire ultimately had to pay for it. Passing such judgment would be historically inappropriate. Considering the prevailing situation in the Deccan, particularly the rise of the Marathas on the one hand and the existing enmity and distrust of the Deccan states on the other,

made the Mughal intervention in the Deccan inevitable. It is evident that the Mughal rulers certainly considered the contemporary situation before taking any step towards the Deccan states. Various factors guided their attitude towards the Deccan states. Their occasional failure in the Deccan was not only because of their lack of understanding of the Deccan problem but the factional strife of the Mughal nobles as well as their questionable loyalty was equally responsible for the fiasco in the Deccan affairs. So one should understand the Deccan policy of the Mughals from a broader perspective, instead of narrowing down on any single factor.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 Who was the first Mughal emperor who planned to conquer Deccan?
- Q.2 When Akbar did despatched four diplomatic missions to Khandesh, Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golconda?
- Q.3 In which year was the fort of Asirgarh captured by the Mughals?
- Q.4 Who was Malik Ambar?
- Q.5 Who ascended to the throne of Bijapur in 1627 CE?
- Q.6 Who were Madanna and Akhanna?
- Q.7 When was the Treaty of Purandhar signed?
- Q.8 Name the title assumed by Shivaji at Raigarh on June 16, 1674 CE.

20.4 Summary

- Babur and Humayun had no planned policy towards the Deccan.
- It was the beginning of the Mughal rule in India and the Afghans were challenging the authority of the Mughals in Northern India. It kept both Babur and Humayun busy in the North.
- Akbar was the first Mughal ruler who wanted to extend the Mughal suzerainty over the Deccan states.
- Akbar remained satisfied with the conquest of Khandesh, Berar and parts of Ahmadnagar.
- There was no addition to the Mughal territory in the Deccan during the reign of Jahangir.
- Shah Jahan in alliance with Bijapur partitioned Ahmadnagar in 1636 CE and till 1656-57 CE did not follow any forward policy in the Deccan.
- Initially, Aurangzeb had no desire to annex Bijapur and Golconda, but ultimately both the states were annexed to the Mughal Empire.
- This annexation did not bring the Deccan problem to an end, rather by the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century the crisis again cropped up in the Deccan and the major threat to the empire came from the Marathas.

20.5 Glossary

Chhatrapati: The word ‘Chhatrapati’ is a Sanskrit language which means King of kings/Emperor. It is a symbolic representation of the protector of people.

Haj: The religious journey (pilgrimage) to Mecca that many Muslims make.

Hinterland: The areas of a country that are away from the coast, from the banks of a large river or from the main cities

Sulh-i kul: It is an Arabic term literally meaning “peace with all,” “universal peace,” or “absolute peace,” drawn from a Sufi mystic principle.

20.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

Ans.1 Akbar

Ans.2 1591 CE

Ans.3 1601 CE

Ans.4 Malik Ambar *was* a Prime Minister and general who served as the Wazir of Ahmadnagar Sultanate.

Ans.5 Muhammad Adil Shah I

Ans.6 Madanna and Akkanna were two capable Brahmin ministers who rose to prominence in the 17th century in the final two decades of the Golconda Sultanate..

Ans.7 June 24, 1665 CE

Ans.8 Maharaja Chhatrapati

20.7 Suggested Readings

1. Fergus Nicoll, 2009, “*Shah Jahan: The Rise and Fall of the Mughal Emperor*”, London: Haus
2. John F. Richards, 1993, “*The Mughal Empire*”, The New Cambridge History of India. Vol. V. Cambridge University Press.
3. Meena Bhargava, 2014, “*The Decline of the Mughal Empire*”, Oxford University Press.
4. M.Siraj Anwar, 2008, “*Mughals and the Deccan: Political relations with Ahmadnagar Kingdom*”, BR Publishing Corporation.
5. Sailendra Sen, 2013, “*Textbook of Medieval Indian History*”, Primus Books.
6. Yar Muhammad Khan, 1971, “*The Deccan Policy of the Mughuls*”, UNITED Book Corporation

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20.8 Terminal Questions

1. Discuss the factors that motivated Akbar to intervene in the Deccan.
2. Explain Jahangir’s approach towards the Deccan states.
3. “Shah Jahan showed more practical wisdom in dealing with the states of the South.” Discuss the Deccan policy of Shah Jahan in view of the above remark.

4. Analyze the Deccan policy of Aurangzeb. Do you think that it was the “Deccan Ulcer” that ruined Aurangzeb?
5. Why did Aurangzeb ultimately occupy Bijapur and Golconda?
6. What were the major considerations of the Mughals in determining their policy towards the Deccan states?
7. Explain the Deccan policy of the Mughals from Akbar to Aurangzeb.
8. Make an assessment of the Deccan policy of the Mughals.

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SECTION-IV

UNIT-21

MUGHAL STATE: CONCEPT OF MONARCHY AND DIN-I-ILAHI

Structure

- 21.1 Introduction
- 21.2 Objectives
- 21.3 Abul Fazl's Concept of Monarchy
- Self-Check Exercise-1
- 21.4 Din-i-Ilahi and its Critique
- Self-Check Exercise-2
- 21.5 Summary
- 21.6 Glossary
- 21.7 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 21.8 Suggested Readings
- 21.9 Terminal Questions

21.1 Introduction

Abul Fazl was the historian at Akbar's court. He occupies a place of distinction among the many eminent scholars of medieval India. He wrote a treatise on Akbar's reign known as *Akbarnama*. A part of it called *Ain-i-Akbari* explains the concept of monarchy.

Akbar's religious policy has evolved in the course of time depending on different internal and external factors. The final stage of Akbar's religious policy, the *Din-i-Ilahi* (Religion of God), was a syncretic religious movement advocated by him in 1582 CE. It was one of the most substantial dimensions of mutual interaction and relationship between Hinduism and Islam.

21.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Understand Abul Fazl's concept of monarchy,
- Examine Akbar's *Din-i-Ilahi*.

21.3 Abul Fazl's Concept of Monarchy

The real manifestation of the concept of monarchy of the Mughals took place during the reign of Akbar. The state ideology of the Mughals was articulated by Abul Fazl. While writing the history of Akbar, it seems that Abul Fazl felt the need of giving justification to the actions of his monarch. That Akbar was an ideal monarch could be established by setting down standards for the institution of monarchy which would well conform to his actions. Though the institution of monarchy was in vogue in the Islamic civilization, yet Abul Fazl tried to provide a fresh interpretation. Scholars believe that it was influenced by the Timurid structure of the monarchy and the ideas of the famous Sufi saint Shihabuddin Suharwardy. According to it he believed that there is a divine radiance (*Farr-i-Izadi*) in every person, but only the highest person can be the leader of his era. This ideology was also at the core of the kingship theory propounded by Abul Fazl. The following elements formed the Mughal concept of monarchy:

Divine Principle of Kingship

Abul Fazl has explained Akbar's views regarding the sovereign attitude towards his subjects. He says that the king was something more than an average human being. He was the representative of God on earth and His shadow. He was given greater knowledge and wisdom than any other human being. Kingship was God's gift and was not bestowed till many thousand grand requisites were gathered in an individual. According to him, "state-power is the light emanating from God and the ray emanating from the sun." Akbar and other Mughal rulers assumed the title of *Zill-i-Ilahi* i.e. 'Shadow of God'. This divine principle of kingship increased the power of the Mughals and imparted a feeling of respect and admiration for the position of the emperor.

Abul Fazl believed that the term *Padshahat* (*Badshahat*) meant 'an established owner' where *Pad* means stability and *shah* stands for owner. Therefore, *Padshah* means powerful and established owner who cannot be removed by anyone. In the Mughal Empire, the *Badshah* had a superior place. He was the ultimate authority on all social, economic, political and judicial powers. This theory of *Badshahat* was a combination of Mongol, Turkish, Iranian, Islamic and Indian political traditions.

While the rule of the king is legitimate in the divine light, but it does not imply that it liberates the ruler from his duties. He makes an important distinction between the just and the unjust ruler. It is only "a just ruler (*kargiya*)" who is able "to convert, like a salt- bed, the impure into pure, the bad into good. The just ruler was characterized by tolerance, respect for reason and fatherly love to all the subjects irrespective of their religion or creed.

During the Delhi Sultanate, the king had no say in religious matters. But when Akbar became the king, he made himself the final authority even in religious disputes vis-à-vis the *Imam-e-Adil* because he followed the order of God and he could not be wrong. Therefore, people must follow his order. It is clear that Akbar was the ideal king for Abul Fazl and that's why he viewed Akbar as a 'complete man who could never be wrong.'

Communication of the Idea of Divine Principle by means of Pictures

It is worth mentioning that the pictures to be painted with the details of the chronicles contributed significantly to the communication of these ideas. These pictures had an enduring impact on the mind of the beholders. From the 17th century, Mughal artists began to portray Mughal rulers with auras. Abul Fazl viewed these halos as symbolizing divine light in European paintings of Jesus and the Virgin Mary.

Separation in Religion and Politics

Abul Fazl wanted to divorce religion from politics altogether. Akbar was interested in establishing the authority of the ruler over all other elements of the state and did not like the unwarranted interference of the Ulema class in politics. He wanted to eradicate the influence of the Ulema class and conduct his government policy on the basis of people-friendly principles. On September 2, 1579 CE through a decree named *Mahzar*, Akbar was acknowledged as the supreme power to make final decisions in the controversial issues arising out of the interpretation of the Quran.

Adherence to the Policy of *Sulh-i-kul*

The policy of *Sulh-i-kul* (universal peace) pervades all of Abul Fazl's political and religious theories. It occupied an important place among the elements that formed the Mughal theory of kingship. The most important feature of the Mughal theory of kingship was accepting the secular form of the state and adopting the policy of religious tolerance. Abul Fazl believes that the ideal of

Sulh-i-kul was the foundation of enlightened governance. This doctrine of peace says that the agent of God could not practice discrimination among the various faiths present in the society. In *Sulh-i-kul* all religions and sects had freedom of expression. The only condition was that they would neither harm the monarchy nor fight among themselves. Actually, this policy was the need of the hour to justify the religious policy of Akbar. Even sovereignty was not confined to any particular faith. It was thought that all religions were, in essence, the same but only the path differed. It became overarching. According to Abul Fazl, in a multi-religious country like India, the theory of monarchical sovereignty was more relevant. Here, sovereignty was not related to any religion because he considered that monarch was above all religions. He endorsed the good values of different religions and thus brought together different faiths for maintaining peace everywhere. He had to sustain those qualities by following an appropriate religious status.

After assessing Abul Fazl, we may conclude that a sovereign must have the spirit of tolerance for the existing beliefs and he should not reject the traditional conduct of his people which was necessary and complementary. Abul Fazl justified Akbar's views by promoting him as having a rationalist approach to social reforms. He argued that Akbar did so, as he wanted to build a country that could stand out in the world with greater confidence.

Implementation of Sulh-i-kul through State Policies

The idea of *Sulh-i-kul* was implemented by means of state policy by the Mughal emperors. All the nobles like Irani, Turani, Afghani, Rajput, Deccan, etc. were included in the Mughal aristocracy. Abul Fazl strongly believed in the hierarchy, but he was more concerned about the need for talent for the empire. He did not bother about the social background of a talented person. While conferring all these posts and awards, not their caste or religion, but their service and loyalty to the emperor were kept in mind. Akbar proved that his rule was not based on religious bias by abolishing the pilgrimage tax in 1563 CE and *jizya* in 1564 CE. The officers of the empire were also directed to follow the rules of *Sulh-i-kul* in the administration. The Mughal emperors provided grants for the maintenance and construction of places of worship.

Sovereignty as a Social Contract

Abul Fazl can be compared with Ziauddin Barani of Delhi Sultanate in the political sphere. Both of them were concerned with social stability, however, Abul Fazl's method of handling this concept was different. His *Ain-i-Akbari* creates a theory of sovereignty on the basis of social contract instead of *Shariah*. He drew a picture of the society that existed before and explained the emergence of sovereignty. He realized that there would be lawlessness and rebellion in society in the absence of a strong ruler and this will be harmful. It represents a picture of Pre-State society which is similar to the negative picture of the Pre-Contract State given by Thomas Hobbes.

Abul Fazl propagates a theory of 'Social Contract' to justify the need of political authority. According to this theory, sovereignty was a social contract between the king and the subjects. The emperor protected the four entities of his subjects – life (*jana*), property (*maal*), honor (*namas*) and religion (*din*) and, in lieu of obedience from the subjects and a share in the resources. Only the just ruler would have been able to honor these contracts with power and divine guidance. Akbar believed that a king is the greatest well-wisher and protector of his subjects. A king is supposed to be just, fair and generous. He should consider his subjects like his own children and should strive for the betterment of his subjects every moment. Akbar's successors also kept this principle of public interest as the main basis of their monarchical ideas.

Abul Fazl located the basis of sovereignty in the needs of the social order. Here his reasoning first follows the pure commands of reason (*aql*), appealing to the tradition of the philosophers (*filasafa*) and the scientists (*hukama*) According to Abul Fazl, sovereignty was in nature, a divine light (*Farr-i-Izadi*) and with this statement he, seems to dismiss as inadequate the traditional reference to the king as the shadow of God (*Zill-i-Ilahi*).

Criticism of Abul Fazl

Abu Fazl is criticized for not being a true Muslim and for being a *kafir*. He did not believe in the superiority of Islam over all religions while Barani and other thinkers regarded it as supreme. It is because of this reason that many people called Abul Fazl a rebel, a *kafir*, Hindu or *Agnipujak* etc. He was too cynical of tradition and those hostile to him record that he had roughly brushed aside Ghazali's criticisms of the scientists with the short remark that Ghazali had spoken nonsense. His cosmopolitan philosophy and *Din-i-Ilahi* met with partial success in India. Policies such as *Sulh-i-kul* and *Din-i-Ilahi* reinforced his governance and administration, but these new experiments were not as successful as Akbar hoped. There was inconsistency in his theory of social contract and the divine origin of sovereignty since the two theories were not logically compatible with each other. Indeed, he may be said to have attempted to combine the two, however, certain logical inconsistencies persisted.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 Who was Abul Fazl?
- Q.2 Who wrote the famous book *Ain-i-Akbari*?
- Q.3 Who founded the new faith *Din-i-Ilahi* and when?
- Q.4 What do you understand by *Din-i-Ilahi*?
- Q.5 What is *Sulh-i-kul*?
- Q.6 Which theory was propagated by Abul Fazl to justify the need of political authority?
- Q.7 According to Abul Fazl which four entities were saved by the Mughal Emperor?

21.4 Din-i-Ilahi and its Critique

No aspect of Akbar's character and history has been of so much interest and controversy as his faith and religious policy. Akbar proved to be the most liberal exponent of universal tolerance or *Sulh-i-kul* among all the Muslim rulers. Early in his life, shrewd Akbar understood that tolerance of the Hindus by itself was inadequate as at the most they would accept him only passively. But he would not gain their trust and active cooperation which were necessary for the consolidation of his empire.

Akbar found truth in all religions and realized that it was not the monopoly of Islam. He recommended human reason as the only basis of religion and extended complete tolerance to all the religions existing in his empire. The turmoil of schisms and the narrow-mindedness of the religious fanatics troubled him and he sincerely attempted to find a way to solve the problem.

The final stage in Akbar's religious policy was reached in 1582 CE when he promulgated the *Tauhid-i-Ilahi* alias *Din-i-Ilahi* or the Divine Faith. It was not a religion but a socio-religious order or a brotherhood conceived and designed to cement diverse commUNITies in the land under one faith. It was the logical result of the declaration of *Khutba* in 1579 CE. According to Dr.K.S Lal,

“Since now the Emperor was supreme in religious matters also, he must give spiritual guidance to his people”. He further writes, “His (Akbar’s) problem was how he could bring together into one fold people who believed in his philosophy of *Sulh-i-kul* (peace with all), and his answer was *Din-i-Ilahi*.”

According to Badaoni, after returning from his Kabul campaign in 1582 CE Akbar convened a council of his important courtiers and officers to formally promulgate the *Din-i-Ilahi*. It was an order of Sufistic type. Those who were willing to join and those whom Akbar approved, became its members. Abul Fazl became the chief priest of this organization. The man who desired to become a member of this organization approached Abul Fazl for the purpose. The applicant was presented to Akbar with turban in his hands on Sunday, which was fixed as the day for initiation. The applicant performed *sijdah* (prostration) by placing his head at the feet of Akbar. The latter blessed him by raising him up by the touch of his shoulders, placed the turban back on his head, and gave him the *shast* (his own portrait) on which was engraved Akbar’s favorite phrase *Allah-hu-Akbar*. He was thus accepted as a member of the order by emperor himself. The rules of conduct to be observed by the members of *Din-i-Ilahi* were as under:

- (i) The *Ilahias*, as the members of the *Din-i-Ilahi* were called, greeted each other with the words *Allah-hu-Akbar* and *Jalle-Jalal-e-hu*.
- (ii) They celebrated their birth anniversary by throwing a feast to their associates. They also gave dinner in their lifetime as against the old practice of giving dinner after one’s death.
- (iii) The members of the *Din-i-Ilahi* abstained from eating meat as far as possible, did not dine with or use the utensils of the butchers, fisherman and bird catchers.
- (iv) They did not marry old women or minor girls, and practiced charity.
- (v) They were expected to try for salvation by leaving worldly desires, and observing good conduct and purity.
- (vi) There were four grades of devotion to Akbar as the spiritual guide of the *Ilahias*; these were in the ascending order of importance-property, life, honor and religion. The sacrifice of these things determined the grade of a member within the order. Whosoever sacrificed all four of them belonged to the first grade; who sacrificed three of them belonged to the second grade; who sacrificed two of them was of the third grade, and who sacrificed only one of them belonged to the fourth or last grade. Obviously, religion was the last and the most valuable thing, the surrender of which was not mandatory for enrolment as a member of the organization.

Criticism of Akbar’s *Din-i-Ilahi*

Akbar has been criticized severely for the introduction of *sijdah* at the initiation ceremony for joining the *Din-i-Ilahi*. As per Muslim law introduction of *sijdah* could be claimed by God alone. However, this was not the case with the Hindu law and practice. Akbar had introduced also called the *zaminbos* at the imperial court in 1577-78 CE, long before the promulgation of *Din-i-Ilahi*. Akbar was an absolute monarch who claimed himself to be the ‘Shadow of God on Earth’ on the basis of the ‘Theory of Divine Rights of Kingship’. It is evident that he had introduced *sijdah* as a custom in his capacity as the *Zill-i-Ilahi*, and not as ‘a religious command’ as founder of the *Din-i-*

Ilahi. In fact, everyone who presented himself before Akbar had to practice *sijdah*. On Badaoni's criticism of *Din-i-Ilahi*, M.L Roychoudhury writes that if *zaminbos* was so obnoxious and anti-Islamic, why should Badaoni submit to that formality? Even as early as 1577 CE and as late as 1593 CE, Badaoni practiced *zaminbos* to the emperor in the open court. Bartoli described it as the result of "Akbar's Astute and Knavish Policy." Vincent Arthur Smith commented: "The Divine Faith was a monument of Akbar's folly, not of his wisdom."

Mohsin Fani in his *Dastan-i-Mazahib* provides ten virtues or commandments of the *Din-i-Ilahi* which were liberal-mindedness and kindness, forgiveness of the evil doers and repulsion of anger with mildness, abstinence from worldly desires, non-attachment to the materialistic world, careful thought on the positives and negatives of the proposed actions, performance of noble deeds with courage, softness of voice and gentle speech, good treatment with the fellow-brethren, total break with the bad characters and evil-minded persons and the deduction of soul in the love of God. This was Akbar's creed. The *Din-i-Ilahi* emphasized on the purity of individual life and devotion to God in the true spirit of the Bhakti and Sufi saints of the age. The scrutiny of its principles and virtues as provided by Abul Fazi and Mohsin Fani indicates that *Din-i-Ilahi* could not be called a new religion or *Din* in the literal sense of the term which might contain some previously unknown religious philosophy, dogma, beliefs, or rituals. Perhaps, the use of the term *Din* with reference to a spiritual organization or Sufi sect of sorts was most unfortunate because it gave rise to all kinds of doubts in the hearts of the orthodox Muslims who charged Akbar of apostasy from Islam. He was called as a heretic and an enemy of Islam who had disrespected the Prophet Muhammad by assuming the role of a prophet himself. According to Badaoni, Akbar had renounced Islam in the later years of his life adopted a number of anti-Islamic practices and even persecuted the Muslims on account of their religious views. Likewise, some Christian missionaries, who had failed to convert Akbar to Christianity, also criticized him of apostasy and hypocrisy. However, unbiased researchers have found no substance in such accusations leveled against Akbar. The hostile and rather spiteful attitude of Badaoni towards Akbar, and the prejudiced accounts of the Christian missionaries have been too comprehensively exposed by modern historiographers to need any more explanation in this study. Similarly, Vincent Arthur Smith's bitter condemnation, which was based on the above-mentioned sources, has also been rejected as it has been found to be unfair, and rather harsh. Undoubtedly, *Din-i-Ilahi* was not a new religion, it did not have even the basic necessity of a religion, viz., a prophet, a place of worship, a religious text or a priestly class. Akbar did not propagate the *Din-i-Ilahi* in the spirit of a missionary; he never forced anybody to adopt the new creed although it would not have been difficult for him to do so. Akbar never attempted to increase its membership. On the contrary, according to Abul Fazl, he was hesitant to accept new members within the order. *Ain-i-Akbari* mentions only 18 names of the persons who had adopted the *Din-i-Ilahi* in toto. They comprised only one Hindu, Raja Birbal. The total number of the *Ilahias* of all grades was a few thousand. Badaoni further mentions that Raja Bhagwan Dass and Man Singh refused to accept the membership of *Din-i-Ilahi*, and Akbar is never known to have expressed his annoyance with them on this account. When the prominent Hindu officers of the Mughal court who had rendered vital services to the state and who were known for their persistent loyalty to the person of Akbar, refused to oblige him by accepting the membership of the *Din-i-Ilahi*, its importance as a vehicle for the promotion of Hindu-Muslim UNITY or national integration was also lost immediately. The *Din-i-Ilahi* as an organization of a few of the liberal-minded and God-fearing intellectuals and saints established the model before the people on the basis of which they could generate the forces of national integration by overcoming their respective religious pride and prejudices and other separatist or divisive tendencies. Akbar not only provided political but also

moral and spiritual leadership to the Indians of his day; he deserves a place of honor and pride in the annals of Indian history for all times to come.

Self-Check Exercise-2

- Q.1 What were the members of *Din-i-Ilahi* known as?
- Q.2 Who wrote the book “*Dastani-i-Mazahib*”?
- Q.3 Who was the only Hindu courtier of Akbar to accept *Din-i-Ilahi*?
- Q.4 Name the historian who commented, “The Divine Faith was a monument of Akbar's folly, not of his wisdom.”

21.5 Summary

- Abul Fazl was the trusted court historian of Akbar. However; he had a genuine adulation and reverence for Akbar.
- The real manifestation of the concept of monarchy of the Mughals took place during the reign of Akbar. *Ain-i-Akbari* of Abul Fazl explains the concept of monarchy.
- That Akbar was an ideal monarch could be established by setting down standards for the institution of monarchy which would well conform to his actions.
- *Farr-i-Izadi* or Divine Radiance was at the core of the kingship theory propounded by Abul Fazl.
- According to Abul Fazl the king was something more than an average human being. He was the representative of God on earth and His shadow (*Zill-i-Ilahi*).
- Abul Fazl believed that the term *Padshahat* (*Badshahat*) meant ‘an established owner’ where *Pad* means stability and *shah* stands for owner. Therefore, *Padshah* means powerful and established owner who cannot be removed by anyone.
- Abul Fazl wanted to divorce religion from politics altogether. Akbar was interested in establishing the authority of the ruler over all other elements of the state.
- The policy of *Sulh-i-kul* (universal peace) pervades all of Abul Fazl’s political and religious theories.
- The most important feature of the Mughal theory of kingship was accepting the secular form of the state and adopting the policy of religious tolerance.
- Abul Fazl justified Akbar’s views by promoting him as having a rationalist approach to social reforms.
- The idea of *Sulh-i-kul* was implemented by means of state policy by the Mughal emperors. The officers of the empire were also directed to follow the rules of *Sulh-i-kul* in the administration.
- Abul Fazl’s *Ain-i-Akbari* creates a theory of sovereignty on the basis of social contract to justify the need of political authority.
- Abu Fazl is criticized for not being a true Muslim and for being a *kafir* as he did not believe in the superiority of Islam over all religions.

- There was an inconsistency in Abul Fazl's theory of social contract and the divine origin of sovereignty since the two theories were not logically compatible with each other.
- The final stage in Akbar's religious policy was reached in 1582 CE when he promulgated the *Tauhid-i-Ilahi* alias *Din-i-Ilahi* or the Divine Faith.
- *Din-i-Ilahi* was not a religion but a socio-religious order or a brotherhood conceived and designed to cement diverse commUNITies in the land under one faith. Abul Fazl became the chief priest of this organization.
- Mohsin Fani in his *Dastan-i-Mazahib* provides ten virtues or commandments of the *Din-i-Ilahi*.
- Akbar's *Din-i-Ilahi* has been severely criticized by the historians such as Badaoni, V.A Smith and others.
- The *Din-i-Ilahi* emphasized on the purity of individual life and devotion to God in the true spirit of the Bhakti and Sufi saints of the age.
- Undoubtedly, *Din-i-Ilahi* was not a new religion, it did not have even the basic necessity of a religion, viz., a prophet, a place of worship, a religious text or a priestly class.
- The *Din-i-Ilahi* as an organization of a few of the liberal-minded and God-fearing intellectuals and saints.
- It established the model before the people on the basis of which they could generate the forces of national integration by overcoming their respective religious pride and prejudices and other separatist or divisive tendencies.

21.6 Glossary

In toto: As a whole.

Kafir: Someone who rejects or disbelieves in God as per Islam or the tenets of Islam; or more broadly any non-Muslim.

Khutba: A pulpit address of prescribed form that is read in mosques on Fridays at noon prayer and contains an acknowledgment of the sovereignty of the reigning prince.

Shariah: *The holy laws of Islam that cover all parts of a Muslim's life.*

Social Contract: When a group of people agrees to give up certain rights and accept a central authority in order to protect their other rights.

Zaminbos: Kissing the ground.

21.7 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

Ans.1 Abul Fazl was the court historian of Akbar.

Ans.2 Abul Fazl

Ans.3 Akbar in 1582 CE.

Ans.4 The name *Din-i-Ilahi* literally translates to "God's Religion" or "Religion of God" or "Divine Religion".

Ans.5 *Sulh-i kul* is an Arabic term literally meaning “peace with all,” “universal peace,” or “absolute peace,” drawn from a Sufi mystic principle.

Ans.6 Theory of Social Contract.

Ans.7 Life (*jana*), property (*maal*), honor (*namas*) and religion (*din*).

Self-Check Exercise-2

Ans.1 *Ilahias*

Ans.2 Mohsin Fani

Ans.3 Raja Birbal

Ans.4 Vincent Arthur Smith

21.8 Suggested Readings

1. Ahmad Bashir, 1951, “*The Religious Policy of Akbar, 1556-1605*”, University of London.
2. Ira Mukhoty, 2020, “*Akbar: The Great Mughal*” Aleph Book Company.
3. Makhanlal Roychoudhury Sastri, 2017, “*The Din-i-Ilahi: The Religion of Akbar*”, Andesite Press.
4. Sri Ram Sharma, 1989, “*Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors*”, Ist Edition, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers.
5. Vincent A. Smith, 2018, “*Akbar, the Great Mogul: 1542-1605 (Classic Reprint)*” Forgotten Books

21.9 Terminal Questions

1. Discuss Abul Fazl’s concept of monarchy.
2. What is the Divine Origin of Badshahat? Differentiate between Just and Unjust ruler.
3. Elaborate the notion of Sovereignty and Social Contract in Abul Fazl’s thought.
4. What do you understand by *Sulh-i-kul*?
5. Give an account of the *Din-i-Ilahi* of Akbar.
6. “*Din-i-Ilahi* was a monument of Akbar’s folly rather than of his wisdom”. Discuss.

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UNIT-22

MUGHAL-RAJPUT RELATIONS IN THE 16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES

Structure

- 22.1 Introduction
- 22.2 Objectives
- 22.3 Mughal-Rajput Relations
- Self-Check Exercise-1
- 22.4 Summary
- 22.5 Glossary
- 22.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 22.7 Suggested Readings
- 22.8 Terminal Questions

22.1 Introduction

For long it has been held that the Mughal-Rajput relations were determined by the personal religious beliefs of the individual rulers. On this basis, Akbar's liberalism and Aurangzeb's orthodoxy were considered the yardstick of their policies and its impact on the political scene. However, recently the Mughal-Rajput relations are being considered within the framework of Mughal nobility as well as the tensions within the different segments of the nobility itself. A centralized bureaucratic Mughal empire was faced with the problem of dissolution of power between its various components. The political variations of the Mughal Empire were governed to a large extent by the struggle for supremacy or autonomy by the bureaucracy and the autonomous rajas and zamindars. The social and cultural aspects and the geostrategic context of the country are equally important to be taken into account. Rajasthan and Malwa played a key role in determining the early course of political events in North India. The Mughal-Rajput conflict cannot be understood independently but should be seen as part of a conflict which had a past history. It developed in the background of the decline of the Delhi Sultanate and the emergence of a new state system in Rajasthan, Gujarat and Malwa.

22.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Analyze the evolution of Mughal-Rajput relations in the 16th and 17th centuries.

22.3 Mughal-Rajput Relations

During the 16th century, the Mughal-Rajput alliance developed in response to the political requirements and interests of the two most important ruling elites in the country- the Mughal and the Rajput. The relations between the two developed in the context of a relatively slow expansion of the empire, and restricted economic growth. It resulted in internal tension which was reflected in increased religious dissension and of the reassertion of the principle of regional independence by the Marathas and other powers. These factors, in addition to internal clash among the Rajputs, had a definite impact on the evolution of Mughal-Rajput relations during the period.

Akbar opened a new UNIT in the direction of Rajput policy. In the field of military, the Rajputs were the leaders of the Hindus and they were renowned for their bravery. Unsurprisingly Akbar, who wanted to establish his Empire on the willing co-operation of the Hindus, decided to win over the Rajputs.

Raja Bharmal, the ruler of Amber was the first one to establish friendly relations with Akbar in 1562 CE. Bharmal married his younger daughter Harkha Bai (also known as Jodha Bai) to Akbar. The Hindu wives of Akbar enjoyed complete religious freedom and received an honored place to their parents and relations in the nobility.

Bharmal was made a high dignitary. His son, Bhagwan Das, was assigned the mansab of 5000 and his grandson, Man Singh was given the mansab of 7000. Akbar stressed his special association with the Kachhawaha ruler in many other ways. The rulers of Jaisalmer and Bikaner had also formed matrimonial alliances with Akbar. Mewar was the only state which had stubbornly refused to accept the suzerainty of the Mughals.

Although Chittor and the plain area around Mewar had come under Mughal domination, Udaipur and the hilly area which formed the larger part of Mewar had remained under the control of the Rajput ruler. Akbar even adopted a disciplinarian approach to deal with Mewar. He re-imposed *jaziya* tax and declared religious war against Rana. But his dependence on religion to solve Mewar threat failed to yield decisive result. Even after the **Battle of Haldighati** in 1576 CE, Mughals failed to establish their complete authority over Mewar. Thus, it is evident that had Akbar not followed a broad based, tolerant and friendly approach with Rajputs, it would not have been possible for him to control Rajputana.

Akbar's Rajput policy had developed completely by 1585-86 CE. His relation with Rajputs was stable and balanced by now. Rajputs were not only friends but partners in the Mughal Empire. Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari* provides a list of names of 24 Rajput mansabdars. Raja Todarmal was made the head of revenue department.

The Rajput policy of Akbar proved extremely successful for Mughal Empire and is regarded as the best example of his diplomatic skills. With the help of Rajputs, Akbar was able to establish a strong and stable empire. The Rajputs were a martial clan among Hindus and he could get rid of the influence of his own conspirators.

The Mughal-Rajput matrimonial alliances transformed the outlook and state policy of Akbar. He was surprised to note the devotional attachment of the Rajputs of to him. They were ever ready to lay down their lives for Akbar and the honor of the Mughal throne. Akbar won over their love and services beyond all contemplations. Akbar also reciprocated by following a rational approach to the problem of Hindu subjects, especially the Rajputs. A number of Rajputs were taken into the Imperial service. Many joined as Mansabdars. The hated *jizya* and Pilgrimage tax was also abolished. Akbar made every effort to remove the feeling among the Rajputs that they were being discriminated against. It was this policy of reconciliation towards the Hindus in general and the Rajputs in particular which enabled Akbar to establish control over the whole of Northern India and a part of the Deccan.

Akbar's son Jahangir continued his father's policy of establishing personal relation with the Rajput chiefs by entering into matrimonial relation with them. He had already married a Kachhawaha princess, Man bai, the daughter of Raja Bhagwant Das and a Jodhpur princess, the daughter of Mota raja Udai singh, in Akbar's lifetime. He had also married Princesses from Bikaner and Jaisalmer. When Jahangir assumed the throne, he entered into marriage relations with Rajput ruling houses, including one with the daughter of Ram Chandra Bundela and another with the daughter of Jagat Singh Kachhawaha, the eldest son of Raja Man Singh. However, Mewar was still defying the Mughals. Matrimonial alliances between the Mughals and the leading Rajput states

became less frequent once Mewar had submitted and the alliance with the Rajput had attained a measure of stability.

During the reign of Jahagir, his son Khurram (later Shahjahan) was married to Bai Lilawati, granddaughter of Raja Gaj Singh and daughter of his son Rao Sakat Singh. There is no other recorded marriage of Shahjahan or Aurangzeb with the daughter of the leading Rajput houses. Thus, marriages between the Mughal rulers and the leading Rajput houses had a limited political purpose which had been largely fulfilled by the time Mewar had surrendered. These marriages did lead to cordial relations between the Mughals and the leading Rajput houses.

Prior to Akbar's reign, the practice of giving Hindu princesses to Muslim kings in marriage was known. It has been an integral part of astute statecraft all over the world and throughout the various periods of history. Humayun entered into matrimonial alliances with powerful zamindars and local rajas. But in most of the cases these marriages did not lead to any stable relations between them, and the women were lost to their families and did not return after marriage. However, Akbar's policy of matrimonial alliances marked a departure in India from earlier practice in that the marriage itself marked the beginning of a new order of relations, in which the Hindu Rajputs who married their daughters or sisters to him would be treated on par with his Muslim fathers-in-law and brothers in-law in all respects except being able to dine and pray with him or take Muslim wives. These Rajputs were appointed as members of his court and their daughters' or sisters' marriage to a Muslim ceased to be a sign of degradation.

The Mughal harem comprised of women of diverse races including the Rajputs. The Mughal emperors especially Akbar, allowed his Hindu wives to practice their own religion inside the harem. Akbar also participated in the Hindu festivals such as Holi, Rakhi, Dusshera and Diwali in his court. A number of paintings of Jahangir and Shahjahan's period depict the scattering of colors in the court and the palace in the presence of the emperor.

Akbar even wore the *tilak*, mark of a Hindu who has fulfilled his rites in the festivals. He changed the style of his turban to a Rajput one, adopted much of the Rajput style of dress, just as he advised the Muslim ladies of the harem to wear, for the sake of coolness, the short bodice, bare midriff and the light gauzy skirts and veil of Hindu women. However, they refused and followed the customs of their mothers and grandmothers, but it might indeed have been these, to her, grievous deviations of her revered Emperor that, in 1576 CE, made Gulbadan decide to make the haj.

Rajputs were appointed as commanders of the Mughal armies and were rewarded by means of revenue and land and as revenue and land passed through the generations, so did family loyalty to Mughal rule. Ceremonial and secular patronage also played a role in the connection between Mughals and Rajputs with an elaborate display of, non-Islamic symbols to reward and promote harmony in the heterogeneous cavalry which served them. Men were rewarded with the personal robes of the Emperor, swords, horses, turban, jewels, and decorated quivers, never with Koran's. By means of military service, marriage and patronage, the Rajputs emerged as a caste which was loyal to Mughal court. Akbar married a Rajput princess making his son and eventual successor Jahangir half Rajput. In turn, Jahangir's son Shahjahan was also a son of a Rajput mother. Pt. Jawarharlal Nehru refers to this period as "Mughal-Rajput cooperation" and advocates that "racially this Turk-Mongol dynasty became far more Indian than Turk or Mongol.... The Mughal nobility became progressively Indianized and the Rajputs and others were influenced by Persian culture". These changes altered the way Hindus and Muslims used to look themselves and each other.

Colonel Tod has described the Rajput character in glowing terms. According to him the Rajput race is the noblest and proudest in India, they are of highest antiquity and purest descent, they have a feudal military autocracy and brave and chivalrous, keenly sensitive to disrespect and especially jealous of the honor of their women.

It would be impractical to elucidate on dress, the fashion varying in each province and tribe, though the stuff was everywhere the same: cotton in summer, and quilted chintz or broadcloth in winter. The ladies have only three articles of parure; the *ghaghra*, or petticoat, the *kanchuli*, or corset; and the *duppatta*, or scarf, for covering the upper part of the body as well as used as a veil. The other articles comprised *lugdi*, the medieval version of a sari, *angarli* and *kamcholi* kinds of blouses. Earlier the blouse was tied at the back with strings for keeping the breasts in place. Later on, under the influence of Mughals blouses with front openings became the fashion. Numerous ornaments were worn. Men used to wear the trousers of every shape and calibre, a tunic girded with a ceinture, and a scarf, form the wardrobe of every Rajput. The turban was the most significant part of the dress, and was the definite mark of the tribe; the form and fashion were varied, and its decoration differed according to time and circumstances.

The men wore a dhoti, termed the loin cloth by the British, and a loose fitting, long, shirt or *angarkhah*. The simplicity of dress of the earlier rulers gave way under the influence of the Mughals and the nobility took to a short coat called the *achkan* with a central row of buttons and tight fitting *pajyamas*. Both men and women wore shoes or slippers, which were made of leather. The richer classes had their shoes made from tiger, panthers and antelope skins and ornamented with gold and silver. Turban, *pagdi* or *safa* was the famous head dress of the Rajputs.

Due to their close association with the Mughal courts the Rajputs adopted the Mughal styles of clothing and chose richly embroidered brocades and silks from Benares. Beautiful Kashmir shawls and pashminas replaced the local *Dhabla* in their wardrobe.

The influence of Mughal culture on Rajasthan was confined to the court nobility and upper Unit of the official class, in the religious and cultural life the rulers and the people followed their traditional beliefs and customs, but their court life, formalities and manners and upper Unit of the official class, but their court life, formalities and manners were influenced by the Mughals. The Mughal influence came not all at once but it entered slowly and gradually.

The Rajput states gradually came under the Mughal rule when the Rajput Kingdoms were conquered by the Mughals. It started with Amber captured by the Emperor Akbar in 1562 CE to Mewar, the last of the Rajasthani kingdoms to fall in 1615 CE. A number of Rajput rulers were given high military rank in the Mughal army, and further connections were made through the Mughal policy of forming matrimonial alliances with the Rajput royal houses. The Rajasthani rulers thus started attending the Mughal court and to assimilate many aspect of court culture, which absorbed. From architecture to painting, the Mughal ideas and aesthetics combined with local styles to form a new post Mughal-Rajput culture.

During the reign of Shahjahan, the Rajputs were assigned important commands and were granted high mansabs which suggests that he trusted the Rajputs and assigned them important duties. However, he discontinued Jahangir's policy of not granting subedari to the Rajput rajas of leading houses. However, these assignments were few and rare. The Rajputs continued to be given posts like the *qiladar* and *faujdar*. The distinction between civil and military was still made on the basis of caste and ethnic origins. During the rule of Jahangir and Shahjahan, the Rajputs continued to be allies but they had hardly any role in administration.

In Shahjahan's reign there were two conflicts against the Bundelas and Mewar and both occurred as a result of conflicting interpretations of concept of paramountcy and suzerainty. The Rajputs got involved in military raids for gaining territory at the cost of their neighbors and for extracting money from those who were supposedly subordinate to them but could rebel against them whenever the opportunity arose. The Mughals who held authority wanted to control these conflicts out of self-interest and because the subordinate chieftains had direct relations with the Mughals to protect themselves and seek the help of Mughals when required. Thus, the Mughals and the Rajputs had common interests in so far as the collecting of land revenue and maintenance of law and order were concerned, but there were differences in rights and privileges. They could be resolved by a process of give and take or could lead to tensions. The Mughals attempted to make it clear that no subordinate chief could extend his territory without the consent of the Mughal Emperor. If he was prepared to part with the gains of conquest, he could be given permission. This shows the class nature of the struggle between the Mughals and Rajputs.

Struggle with Mewar should be studied in the light of the concept of Mughal paramountcy. During Akbar's reign, subordinate principalities of Mewar had asserted their independence. But, in 1615 CE, the over-lordship of Mewar over these states and territories was recognized. Later, these subordinate chieftains again proclaimed their independence and tried to expand into neighboring areas. They were supported by the Mughals. Struggle for control over territories occurred between the Mughals and Mewar.

The Rajput policy of Aurangzeb during the 1680's was a cause of concern for both the Rajputs as well as to a Unit of the Mughal nobility. This is evident from the Rajput-Mughal nobles' involvement in the rebellion of Prince Akbar. The rulers of Mewar and Marwar were disgruntled with Aurangzeb's policy and they wanted the restoration of territories seized by Aurangzeb. A Unit at the Mughal court, e.g., Prince Azam regarded Aurangzeb's Rajput policy as defective and tried to conspire with the Rana of Mewar expecting his help in the war of succession. Aurangzeb became lukewarm towards the Rajputs in the second half of the 17th century. They were not offered important assignments. He interfered in matters pertaining to matrimonial alliances between the Rajputs. However, Aurangzeb's tussle with Mewar and Marwar did not mean a breach with the Rajputs in general. The rulers of Amber, Bikaner, Bundi and Kota continued to receive ransabs. But they were not given high ranks or positions in Aurangzeb's reign like during the reign of Akbar and his successors Jahangir and Shahjahan.

It cannot be claimed that wars with Mewar and Marwar signaled the suspension of Akbar's policy of alliance with the Rajputs. In effect, the wars show the conflict between the policy of alliance with the Rajputs and the broader policy of winning over the local ruling elites, i.e. zamindars. It is difficult to say that Aurangzeb's orthodoxy exclusively shaped his Rajput policy. A number of other factors were operational. As the Mughal Empire got UNITED in the North, the next step was to expand it Southwards which meant an alliance with the Marathas. The Rajputs lost their importance in the Mughal system as the prominence of the Marathas increased in the second half of the 17th century. Now the Rajputs required an alliance with the Mughals. The wars with Mewar and Marwar drained the state's exchequer but it was not a serious one and did not affect the overland trade to the Cambay seaports substantially. However, the Rajput policy of Aurangzeb showed his incompetence to deal with issues effectively which affected the prestige of the Empire. It led to political and religious disharmony which demonstrated lack of political insight. All this stimulated rebellions by the Mughal Princes in alliance with the Rajputs.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 Name the first Rajput ruler to establish friendly relations with Akbar.
- Q.2 Who was Bhagwan Das in Akbar's court?
- Q.3 Name the Rajput ruler who was given the mansab of 7000 in Akbar's court.
- Q.4 Which Rajput state strongly refused to accept the friendship of the Mughals?
- Q.5 When and between whom was the Battle of Haldighati fought?
- Q.6 Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari* provides a list of names of how many Rajput mansabdars?
- Q.7 Who was made the head of the revenue department during Akbar's reign?
- Q.8 When was Amber captured by Akbar?

22.4 Summary

- Earlier, Mughal-Rajput relations were determined by the personal religious beliefs of the individual rulers.
- However, recently the Mughal-Rajput relations are being considered within the framework of Mughal nobility as well as the tensions within the different segments of the nobility itself.
- During the 16th century, the Mughal-Rajput alliance developed in response to the political requirements and interests of the Mughals and the Rajputs.
- The Mughal-Rajput relations developed in the context of a relatively slow expansion of the empire, and restricted economic growth.
- It resulted in internal tension which was reflected in increased religious dissension and of the reassertion of the principle of regional independence by the Marathas and other powers.
- These factors, in addition to the internal clash among the Rajputs, had a definite impact on the evolution of Mughal-Rajput relations during the period.
- Akbar, who wanted to establish his Empire on the willing co-operation of the Hindus, decided to win over the Rajputs. He established friendly relations and entered into matrimonial alliances with the Rajputs.
- However, the Rajput state of Mewar refused to accept Akbar's suzerainty and was constantly at war with the Mughals.
- The Rajput policy of Akbar proved extremely successful for Mughal Empire and is regarded as the best examples of his diplomatic skills. With the help of Rajputs, Akbar was able to establish a strong and stable empire.
- Akbar's son Jahangir continued his father's policy of establishing personal relation with the Rajput chiefs by entering into matrimonial relation with them. He and his son Khurram entered into matrimonial alliance with the Rajputs.
- Rajputs were appointed as commanders of the Mughal armies and were rewarded by means of revenue and land and as revenue and land passed through the generations, so did family loyalty to Mughal rule.
- Due to their close association with the Mughal courts the Rajputs adopted the Mughal styles of clothing.

- The influence of Mughal culture on Rajasthan was confined to the court nobility and upper Unit of the official class.
- During the reign of Shah Jahan, the Rajputs were assigned important commands and were granted high mansabs which suggests that he trusted the Rajputs and assigned them important duties. However, he discontinued Jahangir's policy of not granting subedari to the Rajput rajas of leading houses.
- In Shahjahan's reign there were two conflicts against the Bundelas and Mewar and both occurred as a result of conflicting interpretations of the concept of paramountcy and suzerainty.
- The Rajput policy of Aurangzeb during 1680s was a cause of concern for both the Rajputs as well as to a Unit of the Mughal nobility.
- The rulers of Mewar and Marwar were disgruntled with Aurangzeb's policy and they wanted the restoration of territories seized by Aurangzeb.
- It is difficult to say that Aurangzeb's orthodoxy exclusively shaped his Rajput policy. A number of other factors were operational.
- The Rajputs lost their importance in the Mughal system as the prominence of the Marathas increased in the second half of the 17th century.
- The Rajput policy of Aurangzeb showed his incompetence to deal with issues effectively which affected the prestige of the Empire.

22.5 Glossary

Faujdar: A police officer.

Paramountcy: Supreme power or authority.

Qiladar: The commandant of a fort or the fort officer.

Subedari: A 'Subah' was the term for a province in the Mughal Empire. The ruler or the governor of a 'subah' was known as a 'subedar'.

Tilak: A mark worn by a Hindu on the forehead to indicate caste, status, or sect, or as an ornament.

22.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

Ans.1 Raja Bharmal

Ans.2 Bhagwan Das was a prominent noble and adviser in Akbar's court who was the brother of Akbar's wife Jodha Bai.

Ans.3 Man Singh

Ans.4 Mewar

Ans.5 In 1576 CE between Akbar's forces and Maharana Pratap of Mewar.

Ans.6 24

Ans.7 Raja Todarmal

Ans.8 1562 CE

22.7 Suggested Readings

1. Rima Hooja, 2006, "*A History of Rajasthan*", Rupa & Company.
2. Ruby Lal, 2005, "*Domesticity and Power in the Early Mughal World*", Cambridge University Press.
3. Satish Chandra, 1993, "*Mughal Religious Policies, the Rajputs & the Deccan*", New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.
4. Soma Mukherjee, 2001, "*Royal Mughal Ladies and Their Contributions*", Gyan Books.
5. William Irvine, 1991, "*Later Mughals*", Atlantic Publishers & Distributors.

22.8 Terminal Questions

1. What were the main tenets of Mughal policy towards the Rajputs in the 17th century?
2. Discuss the Mughal-Rajput relations during the reign of Akbar.
3. Give an account of the Mughal-Rajput relations during the time of Jahangir.
4. How did the Mughal culture influence the Rajputs?
5. Discuss the Mughal-Rajput relations during the reign of Shahjahan.

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UNIT- 23

RAJPUT POLICY OF AURANGZEB

Structure

23.1 Introduction

23.2 Objectives

23.3 Main Objectives of Rajput Policy of Aurangzeb

Self-Check Exercise-1

23.4 Summary

23.5 Glossary

23.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

23.7 Suggested Readings

23.8 Terminal Questions

23.1 Introduction

Of all the Hindus, Aurangzeb feared the Rajputs most. For over two decades he had not dared to disclose his real designs against the Hindus out of fear of the powerful Rajput chiefs. He regarded their power and influence as the greatest hurdle in executing his policy of the religious persecution of the Hindus. It was not possible for him to establish the supremacy of Islam in India with subjugating the Rajputs.

Raja Jaswant Singh of Marwar, Rana Raj Singh of Mewar and Raja Jai Singh of Jaipur were three important Rajput rulers at that time. Aurangzeb doubted the loyalty of the Rajputs and wanted to finish their independent existence and annex their states to the empire. He upturned the guiding principle which was enunciated by Akbar and pursued by Jahangir and Shahjahan.

23.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Analyze the main objectives of Rajput policy of Aurangzeb
- Understand the relation of Aurangzeb with Raja Sawai Jai Singh,
- Know about Aurangzeb's attack on Marwar and Mewar,
- Examine the results of the Rajput policy of Aurangzeb

23.3 Main Objectives of Rajput Policy of Aurangzeb

Aurangzeb was cynical about the faithfulness of the Rajputs as most of the Rajput general supported Dara Shikoh in the Mughal war of succession. Since Aurangzeb was a Sunni Muslim, he could not rely on the Rajputs who were Hindus. He thought that in his effort to turn India into an Islamic country the chief resistance would come from the Rajputs. The Rajputs were the pioneer Hindus. They possessed political and military powers. As such they could give tough resistance against his plan of imposing Islamic rule over the Hindus. The Rajputs also sympathized with the Satnami rebels. Some Rajput generals openly opposed him. Jaswant Singh was an important mansabdar in the Mughal court from the time of Shah Jahan. He sided with Dara Shikoh in the war of succession against him. Raja Jaswant Singh fought against Aurangzeb at the Battle of Dharmat (1658 CE), joined him a little later, but again left his side when he was going to fight with Shah Shuja. However, he was successfully persuaded by Raja Jai Singh to accept the suzerainty of Aurangzeb. Though Jai Singh showed adherence to Aurangzeb's court but he grew suspicious of him too. Thus, the two important Rajput rulers-Raja Jaswant Singh and Raja Jai Singh had accepted

service under Aurangzeb while Mewar was at peace with the Mughal Empire since the peace-treaty signed during the reign of Jahangir. Aurangzeb, however, was neither sincere to these Rajput rulers nor he had faith in their loyalty. He deputed Jai Singh to fight in the Deccan who died in 1666 CE. Jaswant Singh was dispatched to fight against the Afghans on the North-West frontier. He proved his commandership there but could not come back alive to the court.

Aurangzeb apprehended stiff resistance from the Rajputs in his project to bring the semi-independent Rajput states under the fold of the Mughal Empire. He followed Islamic principles of kingship and desired to snatch away the Rajput King's territories and subjugate them.

Attack on Marwar

Jai Singh being already dead, Aurangzeb waited in implementing his plans till the death of Jaswant Singh who died at Jamrud (Afghanistan) in December 1678 CE. The eldest son of Jaswant Singh, Prithvi Singh had died because of a deceitful act of Aurangzeb while his other two sons had died fighting against the Afghans. Therefore, there was no heir to succeed Jaswant Singh as ruler of Marwar. Aurangzeb dispatched an army to occupy Marwar and it met with easy success as the major part of the Rajput army was in Afghanistan. Aurangzeb himself went to Ajmer, destroyed the Hindu temples there. Aurangzeb also humiliated the Rathors by selling the throne of Jaswant Singh to the chief of Nagar in 36 lakhs. It was clear that the Emperor now felt himself strong enough to suppress the Rajputs in particular and the Hindus in general.

However, everything was not over yet. While returning from Afghanistan, the two widowed queens of Raja Jaswant Singh gave birth to two sons at Lahore in February 1679 CE. One of them died after a few months while the other, named Ajit Singh live long to enjoy an eventful career. Rajput commander Durga Das Rathor reached Delhi with queens and pleaded with Aurangzeb to recognize Ajit Singh to be the rightful successor of his father's heritage, but Aurangzeb agreed to his request provided Ajit Singh was converted to Islam. It resulted in the beginning of that war between the Rathors and the Mughals. Aurangzeb annexed the state of Jodhpur. The family of Jaswant Singh was brought to Delhi. Durga Das rescued Ajit Singh and his mother from the clutches of Aurangzeb by a stratagem, substituting a maid-servant and her child in place of the queen and the prince. By the time, the Mughals came to know about it, Durga Das was beyond the reach of the Mughals. On Aurangzeb's orders, the Mughal army went in pursuit for twenty *kos* but they could not overtake the Rajputs and return unsuccessfully. The small detachments of the Rathors that Durga Das left at different places blocked its way so that Durga Das, Ajit Singh and her mother could reach Marwar safely. Ajit Singh was accepted as the king by the people of Marwar and the war of independence was started by the Rathors under the leadership of Durga Das. Aurangzeb procured two children of the menials who were declared to be the sons of Maharaja Jaswant Singh and converted them to Islam with fanfare and proclaimed that the protege of Durga Das was a bogus prince. But it brought about no favorable result as the Rathors continued their resistance and Durga Das became their hero. The Rajputs still cherish his valor and courage and say that "O, mother, produce a son like Durga Das." Colonel Tod called him the 'Ulysses' among the Rathors. According to Jadu Nath Sarkar Durga Das fought against terrible odds and with distrust and wavering among his own countrymen, he kept the cause of his chieftain triumphant. Mughal gold could not seduce, Mughal arms could not daunt that constant heart. He showed the rare combination of the dash and valor of a Rajput soldier with the tact, diplomacy and organizing power of a Mughal minister of state. Durga Das placed Ajit Singh, the first infant son of Maharaja Jaswant Singh, on the throne. Aurangzeb flew into rage to hear of these developments. He immediately declared war on Marwar. He himself went to Ajmer and deputed a strong Mughal army under the

command of Prince Akbar and Tahavvar Khan to take the charge of the campaign against the Rajputs. The Mughals plundered Marwar, destroyed every temple and raised mosques in their place and occupied Marwar by the middle of 1681 CE. The Rathors retired to hills and deserts but continued their confrontation and harassed the Mughals

Mewar joins the Struggle

Aurangzeb demanded *jizya* from Raj Singh, ruler of Mewar. He wanted to break the power of the Sisodias. Ajit Singh's mother was the princess of Mewar and he feared that Raj Singh would come to the support of Marwar. Raj Singh felt that Aurangzeb would like to finish him and it would be challenging to save Mewar if once Marwar was subdued. Therefore, he decided to join Marwar against the Mughals. He started fortifying the fort of Chitor and deputed a force for the protection of the pass of Devbari. Aurangzeb anticipated Maharana's plans and attacked Mewar. He himself left Ajmer in November 1679 CE and advanced towards Udaipur. Maharana left Udaipur and it was easily occupied by the Mughals. Chitor was also seized and it is believed that around 173 temples in Udaipur and 63 temples in Chitor were destroyed. Raj Singh suffered a defeat in a pitched battle in February 1680 CE. He evacuated Chitor and Udaipur and, retreated to the inaccessible hills with his soldiers and the majority of the subjects. Aurangzeb returned to Ajmer in January 1680 CE. Rana Raj Singh died a sudden death in November 1680 CE. But the Rajputs continued harassing the Mughals. Aurangzeb deputed his three sons, Akbar, Muazzam and Azam to capture Mewar which was now attacked from three sides. However, the attack proved to be unsuccessful because the princes could not function in union and the Sisodias and the Rathors worked in collaboration.

Prince Akbar's Revolt

Muhammad Akbar, son of Aurangzeb, was a man of liberal views. He was not satisfied by the unjust and cruel war against the Rajputs which threatened the very foundations of the Mughal Empire. Maharana Raj Singh and Durga Das proposed to him that if he would declare himself the emperor the combined forces of Mewar and Marwar would support him. However, Maharana Raj Singh died on November 1, 1680 CE. His son and successor Jai Singh also assured Prince Akbar of his support after his coronation. Tempted by the offer of the Rajputs, Prince Akbar declared himself the emperor of the Mughals on January 1, 1681 CE. It was declared that Aurangzeb had lost his claim over the throne because of his defiance of Islamic laws. Akbar advanced toward Ajmer with 70,000 Rajput soldiers as his allies. Aurangzeb summoned Prince Muazzam to his help and reached Rohara, eight miles ahead of Ajmer to face Akbar. He also successfully defected some Mughal officers of Akbar to his side. He sent a message to Tahavvar Khan, the principal adviser of Akbar that if he would not return to the Imperial side, all his family members who were with Aurangzeb would be put to death. Tahavvar Khan was demoralized, secretly left the camp of Akbar, and reached the royal camp where he was immediately killed. Aurangzeb planned another stratagem as well. By means of a single act of cunning diplomacy, he created suspicions in the hearts of Rajputs against his rebellious son Akbar. He wrote a letter of commendation to Akbar for having be-fooled and entrapped the Rajputs. The letter was dropped near the Rajput camp and, as desired, was picked up by the Rajputs and handed over to Durga Das. Although Durga Das was not convinced of it but most of the Rajput chiefs did not agree with him and secretly left the side of Akbar the same night. When Akbar got up in the morning, he found Durga Das and some other chiefs with only two or three thousand soldiers by his side. He was totally discouraged. Aurangzeb's troops overran his camp and fled for his dear life again to the Rajputs with only 350 men. Thus, Aurangzeb succeeded in befooling the Rajputs and the revolt of Akbar finished without a single battle. The cunningness of

Aurangzeb having been exposed, Prince Akbar and the Rajput leaders were sorry but there was no use of crying over spilt milk. Durga Das promptly took Akbar under his protection and succeeded in taking him to Maharashtra where he was left under the protection of Shambhaji, son of Shivaji. Aurangzeb chased Akbar and reached Maharashtra in 1682 CE. Akbar felt his life insecure and he flew to Persia by sea. In the way, he was forced to seek shelter with Imam of Masket who agreed to hand him over to Aurangzeb in return of two lakh rupees. However, due to the pressure of the ruler of Persia, Akbar was set free and he reached Persia safely where he died near the closing years of his father's reign.

Treaty between Mewar and the Mughals

Akbar's revolt failed, yet it saved Mewar. Aurangzeb was much more afraid of Akbar than any other enemy at that time. It became necessary for Aurangzeb to pursue Akbar. He thought of concluding peace with Mewar. Maharana Jai Singh also wanted to conclude peace with Aurangzeb. Therefore, a treaty between the two was signed on June 24, 1681 CE on the following terms:

- (i) The Mughals settled to withdraw their forces from Mewar.
- (ii) Maharana Jai Singh accepted the mansab of 5,000 while his son Bhim Singh was given the title of Raja and taken into the Mughal service.
- (iii) The Maharana surrendered the Parganas of Mandal, Pur and Bednur to the Mughals in lieu of *jizya* imposed on his kingdom.

War against Marwar

The Rathors sustained their struggle against Aurangzeb even after the conclusion of peace with Mewar. While Durga Das was in the Deccan with Prince Akbar from 1681 to 1687 CE, the Rathors fought against the Mughals, without any leader. It was mostly guerrilla warfare and the Mughal outposts were greatly harassed. The Mughals remained encamped in Marwar. In 1687 CE, Durga Das returned to Marwar from the Maratha camp in Deccan and reactivated the freedom struggle against the imperialists. By that time, Ajit Singh had become young. Therefore, both led the Rathors, recaptured some military posts of the Mughals and raided the Mughal territory up to the vicinity of Delhi. Raja Durjan Sal Hara of Bundi was one of their allies in the struggle. In 1694 CE, Durga Das handed over the daughter of Prince Akbar, Safiyat-un-nisa and in 1698 CE, his son Buland Akhtar to Aurangzeb. Durga Das had not only gave shelter to these children but had given them good education and even that of principles of Islam which created an atmosphere of friendliness between the Rathors and the Mughals. It resulted in peace between the two. Ajit Singh was offered the jagir of Jalor, Sanchod and Siwana and Durga Das was given the Faujdari of Patan in Gujarat and the mansab of 3,000. Thus, both were taken into the Mughal service. It was no respectable settlement for the Rathors. However, they compromised and utilized next some years to strengthen themselves. In 1701 CE, Ajit Singh and Durga Das again revolted but again agreed for peace in 1704-05 CE. By 1707 CE, Ajit Singh had become the *de facto* ruler of the major part of his state. Aurangzeb died in the South on February 20, 1707 CE. Ajit Singh came to know about Aurangzeb's death on March 4, and three days later, he led the final assault on the Mughal troops and succeeded in capturing the capital city of Jodhpur. According to Jadu Nath Sarkar, when Ajit Singh entered Jodhpur, the Mughals ran away, leaving their property behind. They were killed or imprisoned. Many of them fled in the disguise of Hindus, to escape the cruel vengeance of the Rajputs. The fort of Jodhpur was purified with the water of the holy river Ganga and Tulsi leaves. Gradually Ajit Singh regained all territory of Marwar and the work initiated by Durga Das, finally,

came to a successful conclusion. In 1709 CE, Bahadur Shah I, the son and successor of Aurangzeb, recognized Ajit Singh as the Rana of Marwar.

Results of the Rajput Policy

The Rajput policy of Aurangzeb alienated the sympathy of the loyal Rathor and Sisodia clans from the Mughal throne. According to Jadu Nath Sarkar, the results of the Rajput policy of Aurangzeb were disastrous to the Mughal Empire. Several thousands of lives were sacrificed and enormous amounts of money were squandered away without any lasting success or benefit to the emperor. Constant war with Rajputs was highly damaging to the prestige of the Mughal Empire. It was definitely an act of political un-wisdom on the part of Aurangzeb to provoke the hostility of the Rajputs. Aurangzeb's rash policy deprived him of the devoted loyal services of gallant Rajput chiefs and soldiers which he needed badly to fight against the Marathas in the South and the restless Afghan tribes in the North-West frontier. As the emperor was busy in a futile war with the Rajputs in the North, the Southern rulers became more powerful. The Marathas took full advantage of this situation. Aurangzeb's narrow vision and religious fanaticism led him to break the pillars on which the empire rested for more than a hundred years.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 Which Rajput ruler fought against Aurangzeb in the Battle of Dharmat?
- Q.2 Who was Ajit Singh?
- Q.3 Whom did Colonel Tod called 'Ulysses' among the Rathors?
- Q.4 For the protection of which Rajput state did Durga Das Rathore struggle against Aurangzeb for an extended period of time?
- Q.5 Name the Mughal prince who rose in revolt against Aurangzeb.
- Q.6 When did Prince Akbar declare himself the emperor of the Mughals?
- Q.7 When was the treaty between Mewar and Mughals signed?
- Q.8 When Ajit Singh did became the *de facto* ruler of the major part of Marwar?

23.4 Summary

- Rajputs were the most dreaded enemies of Aurangzeb. It was not possible for him to establish the supremacy of Islam in India with subjugating the Rajputs.
- Aurangzeb adopted a stern and strict policy towards the Rajputs
- Raja Jaswant Singh of Marwar, Rana Raj Singh of Mewar and Raja Jai Singh of Jaipur were three important Rajput rulers during the time of Aurangzeb.
- All the three rulers were at peace with the Mughals under Aurangzeb ascended the throne.
- Aurangzeb reversed the Rajput policy enunciated by Akbar and pursued by Jahangir and Shahjahan.

- Aurangzeb was cynical about the faithfulness of the Rajputs as most of the Rajput general supported Dara Shikoh in the Mughal war of succession.
- He apprehended stiff resistance from the Rajputs in his project to bring the semi-independent Rajput states under the fold of the Mughal Empire.
- Aurangzeb deputed Raja Jai Singh in the Deccan where he died in 1666 CE. He sent Raja Jaswant Singh to defend the North-West Frontier of his empire.
- Raja Jaswant Singh died in Afghanistan in 1678 CE. So Aurangzeb occupied Marwar.
- However, while returning from Afghanistan, the two wives of Raja Jaswant Singh gave birth to two sons at Lahore. One of them died but the other named Ajit Singh remained alive.
- Durga Das, the Rajput commander, came to Delhi with the prince and requested Aurangzeb to hand over Marwar to Maharaja Ajit Singh. Aurangzeb did not agree.
- Ajit Singh was declared the ruler of Marwar and the war of liberation of Marwar commenced from that time.
- Rana Raj Singh of Mewar, gave support to Marwar as he realized that it was in the interest of Mewar to fight against the Mughals.
- In 1681 CE, Akbar, son of Aurangzeb revolted against his father with the support of the Rajputs.
- The revolt of Akbar failed and he fled to Deccan under the protection of Durga Das. Aurangzeb offered peace to Mewar and it was accepted.
- However, the Rathors of Marwar continued their fight against the Mughals.
- In pursuit of his son Akbar, Aurangzeb left for Deccan and could never come back from there.
- Marwar fought against the Mughals till the death of the Aurangzeb in 1707 CE, of course accepting peace in between twice, and finally succeeded in attaining its independence.
- Thus, Aurangzeb proved to be unsuccessful in subduing either Mewar or Marwar. The only result of his policy against these states was that he lost the support of the Rajputs.
- The Rajputs, who were one of the loyal supporters of the Mughal Empire since the reign of Akbar, revolted against Aurangzeb.
- Their services could no more be utilized in consolidating the Mughal Empire. On the contrary, it multiplied the problems of the empire.
- It led to other revolts also. Thus, the Rajput policy of Aurangzeb proved to be a failure and resulted in the weakening of the Mughal Empire.

23.5 Glossary

De facto: A Latin expression used to say that something exists even though it may not be legally accepted as existing.

Guerilla Warfare: A war in which small groups of soldiers not belonging to regular or established army UNITS engage in fighting against typically larger regular forces.

Kos: *An Indian UNIT of distance having different values in different localities.*

Pargana: A group of villages or a subdivision of a district in India.

23.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

Ans.1 Raja Jaswant Singh

Ans.2 Ajit Singh was the ruler of Marwar region in the present-day Rajasthan and the son of Jaswant Singh Rathore.

Ans.3 Durga Das Rathore

Ans.4 Marwar

Ans.5 Muhammad Akbar

Ans.6 January 1, 1681 CE

Ans.7 June 24, 1681 CE

Ans.8 1707 CE

23.7 Suggested Readings

1. Ashvini Agrawal, *“Studies in Mughal History”*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, New Delhi, India.
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23.8 Terminal Questions

1. Discuss the relations of the Mughals with the Rajput rulers during the rule of Aurangzeb.
2. What were the motives of Rajput policy of Aurangzeb?
3. Describe Aurangzeb’s struggle with the Rajput state of Marwar.

4. Explain the revolt of Prince Muhammad Akbar during the reign of Aurangzeb.
5. What were the consequences of Rajput policy of Aurangzeb? Do you believe that the reversal of Akbar's Rajput policy by Aurangzeb was responsible for the disintegration of the Mughal Empire?

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UNIT-24
DECCAN POLICY OF AURANGZEB

Structure

- 24.1 Introduction
- 24.2 Objectives
- 24.3 Motives of Aurangzeb's Deccan Policy
- Self-Check Exercise-1
- 24.4 Summary
- 24.5 Glossary
- 24.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise
- 24.7 Suggested Readings
- 24.8 Terminal Questions

24.1 Introduction

Pursuing his rebellious son Akbar, Aurangzeb reached the Deccan in 1682 CE. Thereafter, he got no time to return to the North. He spent the last 25 years (1682-1707 CE) of his life in the Deccan. The main purpose of Aurangzeb's Deccan policy was to conquer Bijapur and Golconda. He also wanted to destroy the power that had become powerful under the leadership of Shivaji in the Deccan. After the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 CE, the treasury became empty and further weakened the Empire. The Deccan Policy of Aurangzeb was partly responsible for the downfall of the Mughal Empire.

24.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Know the purpose of Aurangzeb's policy towards Deccan,
- Understand Aurangzeb's conquest of the state of Bijapur,
- Learn about the conquest of Golconda by Aurangzeb,
- Examine Aurangzeb's relations with the Marathas,
- Analyze the consequences of the Deccan policy of Aurangzeb,
- Discuss the causes of the failure of Aurangzeb's Deccan policy.

24.3 Motives of Aurangzeb's Deccan Policy

It would be an anathema to a restless emperor like Aurangzeb to feel contented with the little extension of his territory, this way or that way. The arch imperialist that Aurangzeb was, it was his firm desire to extend the frontiers of his kingdom on all sides and to become the unquestionable master, the undisputed ruler of the whole of Hindustan.

There was also a religious motive. Aurangzeb was a Sunni orthodox Muslim. Golconda and Bijapur which were yet to be incorporated into the Mughal dominion were Shia states. Their independence was highly offensive to his religious and imperialist zeal. The very existence of the Shia rulers, in spite of their humble submission to the Mughal throne, was an eyesore to him. To add insult to injury, both the Shia rulers usually mingled with the Marathas, and, ever since the rise

of Shivaji, they were inclined towards him as allies against the Mughal menace. Aurangzeb also felt that the existence of these states enabled the Marathas to enrich themselves. The nascent Maratha nation was to be nipped in its bud before it became a thorn by the side of the empire. The Marathas got not only military and administrative experience but also received a lot of money. Aurangzeb must have argued that if those states were annexed to the Mughal Empire, the Marathas would not dare to attack them. No wonder Aurangzeb himself proceeded to put an end to these states.

Conquest of Bijapur (1686 CE)

In compliance of Shahjahan's orders, Aurangzeb had concluded a treaty with Bijapur before the war of succession started. As per the terms of the treaty it was agreed that Bijapur would pay rupees one and a half crore to the Mughals besides surrendering the fort of Bidar, Kalayani and Pandra. Bijapur could not fulfil these terms. When Aurangzeb sat on the throne, he deputed Raja Jai Singh, the Mughal viceroy of Deccan, to suppress Bijapur and Shivaji both. Jai Singh compelled Shivaji to accept the Treaty of Purandhar and then attacked Bijapur but was forced to retreat and died at Burhanpur in July 1666 CE.

At that time Bijapur was weakened by party factions and the rising tide of the Marathas. The death of its ruler, Ali Adil Shah in 1672 CE threw the affairs of Bijapur into chaos. He was succeeded by his four-year-old son, Sikandar Adil Shah. Taking advantage of the infancy of the ruler the nobles at the court began to quarrel among themselves. That gave a convenient opportunity to Bahadur Khan, Mughal governor of the Deccan to attack Bijapur in 1672 CE but, received a rebuff at the hands of Bijapuris who closed their ranks to fight the common enemy. Aurangzeb recalled him and sent Diler Khan, the next Mughal governor of the Deccan. He resorted to diplomacy and intrigued with Sidi Masud, the minister of Bijapur, and succeeded in concluding a treaty with Bijapur. As per the treaty Bijapur accepted the suzerainty of the emperor and the Sultan's sister was sent to Delhi to be married with Prince Azam, son of Aurangzeb as a price for peace with Mughals. But, later on Diler Khan and Sidi Masud quarreled among themselves when Masud made a pact with Shivaji. Diler Khan, therefore, attacked Bijapur in 1679 CE. Bijapur was subjected to pillage and plunder and yet it would not yield. Aurangzeb recalled Diler Khan from the Deccan and in 1680 CE deputed Prince Azam in his place.

Prince Azam fought against Bijapur with determination, greatly weakened it and, ultimately, besieged the fort of Bijapur in April 1685 CE. The siege lasted for nearly thirteen months and did not bring any success to the besieging force. This prompted Aurangzeb to take the field in person. At last after fifteen months of heroic resistance the besieged garrison surrendered the fort on September 22, 1686 CE. Sikander Shah met Aurangzeb personally. He was satisfied with the title of Khan and an annual pension of rupees one lakh by Aurangzeb. Bijapur was thus annexed to the Mughal Empire and Adil Shahi dynasty came to an end. The fine frescos and paintings in Sikander's palace were destroyed. Bijapur became almost a desolated and deserted city. Sikandar Shah was imprisoned in the fort of Daulatabad where he died at the age of thirty-two in April 1700 CE.

Conquest of Golconda (1687 CE)

Golconda enjoyed freedom from the Mughal attack for nearly thirty years. Abul Hasan Qutub Shah was the ruler of Golconda and he was not in the good books of Aurangzeb. He was an easy-going and pleasure-loving ruler. The control of administration slipped into the hands of his Brahmin ministers, Madanna and Akanna. Golconda had supported Bijapur as well as the Marathas against the Mughals from time to time. It was necessary to conquer Golconda if the Marathas were

to be subdued. Besides, its conquest was a part of Mughal policy to capture entire India. Aurangzeb was further dissatisfied with it as its rulers were Shias. But, Golconda enjoyed freedom from the Mughal attack for about thirty years, the Sultan paying his tribute regularly. However, when Aurangzeb reached the Deccan he decided to conquer it. In 1685 CE, he sent Prince Muazzam to attack Golconda with the firm resolve to annex the state. He was opposed by an army of Golconda at Malkhed. The army of Golconda had to withdraw as its commander, Mir Muhammad Ibrahim defected to the Mughals as he was bribed by Aurangzeb. It so disheartened the Sultan that he fled away from Hyderabad and found shelter in the fort of Golconda. The Mughals promptly occupied Hyderabad and looted it savagely. Hard-pressed, the Sultan opened negotiation for peace on whatever terms demanded by them. Some nobles in agreement with some influential ladies of the harem conspired against the ministers, Madanna and Akanna. They were murdered on the streets of Golconda in 1686 CE and their heads were sent to Prince Muazzam who returned to Aurangzeb with proposals of peace. Aurangzeb rejected the offer and laid siege to the fort of Golconda in 1687 CE. But the fort was really impregnable. It stood the siege well for nearly eight months as it was well stocked with food and necessary ammunition. The defenders repulsed the attacks bravely. When valor and arms failed Aurangzeb made use of the golden key to capture Golconda. He won over one of the Qutb Shahi nobles, Abdulla Pani by bribing him. He opened the main gate of the fort on October 2, 1687 CE which enabled the Mughals to enter the fort. But one loyal Golconda noble named Abdur Razzak Lari spurned the offer of money by the emperor and fought single-handedly till he fell covered with as many as seventy wounds. The Mughals nursed him back to recovery and appointed him to a high rank under the emperor. Abul Hasan was imprisoned in the fort of Daulatabad and was given an annual pension of rupees fifty thousand while Golconda was annexed to the Mughal Empire in September 1687 CE. The fate of Qutub Shahi dynasty was finally sealed 'not by force of sword and spear' but by the treachery of its own commanders. The annexation of Bijapur and Golconda was the greatest and the last achievement of Aurangzeb as the imperial ruler of India. It extended the boundaries of the Mughal Empire to the maximum dimensions.

Aurangzeb and the Marathas

During the reign of Aurangzeb, Shivaji, succeeded in establishing an independent kingdom of his own in Maharashtra. His father Shahji Bhonsle had assigned him the small jagir of Poona where he spent his early life with his mother Jija Bai and under the guardianship of Dadaji Konddev. He faced challenge from Bijapur as well as from the Mughals. In 1656 CE, he came in conflict with the Mughals for the first time when he attacked Ahmadnagar and Junar. However, he entered into treaty with them in 1657 CE. The war of succession among Shahjahan's sons gave some relief to Shivaji from the side of the Mughals. He utilized this time in extending the territory under him at the cost of Bijapur. In 1659 CE, he murdered the noble of Bijapur, Afzal Khan, who had taken an oath to kill Shivaji. In 1660 CE Shivaji was compelled to fight against Bijapur as well as against the Mughals. Bijapur captured Panhala from him while the Mughals conquered Poona, Shivpur, Chakan etc. But Shivaji continued his struggle against them. In 1663 CE, he made a surprise night attack on Shaista Khan, the Mughal governor of the Deccan, when he was encamped at Poona for rest. However, Shaista Khan managed to save his life. In 1665 CE, Aurangzeb deputed Raja Jai Singh against him. Jai Singh forced Shivaji to sign the Treaty of Purandhar in 1665 CE. Shivaji attended the Mughal court at Agra in 1666 CE on the advice of Jai Singh. Although he was placed under detention, he managed to escape to his headquarters in the Deccan. Thereafter, he signed a treaty with the Mughals and there remained peace between the two parties for nearly three

years. In 1670 CE, Shivaji started attacking the Mughals again and succeeded in regaining those territories and forts which he had lost by the Treaty of Purandhar. The Mughals could not subdue him. On June 16 1674 CE, he held his coronation at Raigarh and assumed the title of *Chattrapati* (King). He died on April 14 1680 CE but before his death, he was successful in establishing quite an extensive empire of the Marathas in the Deccan.

After the death of Shivaji, Aurangzeb carried on the struggle against Shivaji's son Sambhaji. In 1681 CE, Durga Das along with Prince Akbar reached his court to seek assistance. But Shambhaji was an indolent youth. He failed to support Akbar. In 1682 CE, Aurangzeb reached the Deccan and attacked Shambhaji from all sides. He failed to gain any success for nearly two years. Finally, peace was signed between the two parties. But, it could not last long and fighting between the two started the same year.

In 1689 CE Aurangzeb, arrested Sambhaji and got him killed. His son Sahu was put in prison where he remained till 1708 CE. It completed the conquest of South India by Aurangzeb. However, the success of Aurangzeb proved to be very short-lived. Thus, Aurangzeb did not succeed against the Marathas. It resulted in the failure of his Deccan policy, his own failure and the failure of the Mughal Empire.

Consequences of the Deccan Policy of Aurangzeb

The Deccan policy of Aurangzeb had far-reaching consequences.

- (i) Napoleon could say that "It was the Spanish ulcer which ruined me," Aurangzeb could also say that the Deccan campaigns not only undid his own work but also those of his predecessors. Historian V.A. Smith remarks that the Deccan was not only the grave of his body but also of his Empire. Aurangzeb's Deccan conquests were more shadowy than real. It was unwise on the part of Aurangzeb to have conquered the states of Bijapur and Golconda. It is true that their rulers were Shias, but Aurangzeb should have subordinated his religious zeal to statesmanship. He should have known that in practical politics many things are done by statesmen which are hardly approved of by them. Nevertheless, the annexation of Bijapur and Golconda destroyed the check on the Marathas. It was difficult for Aurangzeb to deal with the Marathas from so distant a place as Delhi. He had to spend the rest of his life in the Deccan to subdue the Marathas. It was a fatal step which Aurangzeb took. On account of his absence from the north for nearly 25 years, the administration of the country was thrown out of gear. As a result Aurangzeb could see his own empire breaking up. A lot of money was wasted in the Deccan campaigns. Moreover, when money was most needed to carry on wars in the Deccan, not much could be realized from the various provinces on account of the weakening of the central authority. It was during this period that the Jats and the Sikhs got an opportunity to consolidate.
- (ii) The military operations of the imperial armies led to a total destruction of forests and grass. The mighty Mughal forces, totaling 1, 77,000 consumed everything green. The Maratha raiders destroyed whatever they could not carry. They grazed their horses on the standing crops and burnt the houses and property which they could not carry on account of their weight. When Aurangzeb retired in 1705 CE, the country presented a scene of utter desolation. The total deforestation harmed agriculture. Everything the common man produced or stored up was swept away by the hordes on both sides. Consequently, when famine or draught came, the peasants and landless laborers perished helplessly. Trade almost came to a stand-still in the Deccan during this period. The Provincial Governors enriched

themselves at the cost of the traders by snatching away their goods and making unreasonable demands on them. The Madras coast was so unsettled due to the struggle between the Marathas and the Mughals between in the last decade of the 17th century that the English and French factors found it difficult to get enough cloth for loading their European-going ships. This resulted in the economic impoverishment of India. It also lowered the mechanical skill and standards of Indian civilization.

- (iii) During their attacks the Mughal army destroyed the crops on the way and the government did not compensate the peasants for their losses. The servants, day-laborers and other persons who moved with the Mughal armies were the worst oppressors of the peasants. The *Banjaras* defied the authority of the petty officers of the government and very often looted the people on the wayside and fed their cattle on the crops. Even the royal messengers who carried Government letters, reports of spies and, baskets of fruits for presentation to the Emperor robbed the people of the villages on the way. The land stewards of the rival jagirdars of the same village were a menace to the people.
- (iv) Constant warfare in the Deccan weakened the financial condition of the Mughal Empire so much so that it was on the verge of bankruptcy. Hundreds of soldiers and several officers fell into arrears for three years. The starving men created scenes in the court of the Emperor. Sometimes they abused and beat the business manager of the General. The government made reckless promises of money grants, it was virtually impossible to fulfill them. The interval between the order and the actual possession of the jagir was long enough to turn a boy into a grey-bearded man. Aurangzeb spent a lot of money in bribing the Maratha officers in charge of hill-forts. It was impossible for the Mughal treasury to meet all the demands.
- (v) The spirit of the Mughal army in the Deccan was absolutely broken. Soldiers grew sick of the endless and futile war. The most trusted officers of Aurangzeb became homesick. Nobleman offered the emperor a bribe of Rs. 1 lakh for transferring him to Delhi.
- (vi) Aurangzeb could not even get an iota of success in crushing down the Maratha nationalism. On the other hand, with more pressure from the emperor, Maratha nationalism emerged stronger and more consolidated than before.
- (vii) Sir Jadunath Sarkar has made the following observation regarding the effects of Aurangzeb's Deccan campaigns. He writes that whatever seemed to have been gained by Aurangzeb was actually lost. It was the beginning of his decline. The Mughal Empire grew too large to be ruled by single man or from one center. Aurangzeb's enemies rose on all sides. There was lawlessness in many parts of Northern and Central India. The old Emperor in the far-off Deccan lost all control over his officers in Hindustan and the administration was out of gear. The chiefs and zamindars defied the local authorities and asserted themselves, filling the country with tumult. Due to the withdrawal of royal patronage art and learning decayed. The endless war in the Deccan exhausted the state's treasury. The government turned bankrupt. The soldiers deprived of salary rose in revolt. During the closing years of his reign the revenue of Bengal, regularly sent by the able Diwan Murshid Quli Khan, was the only support of the emperor's household and army and its arrival was eagerly looked forward to.

On the parallel of Spain becoming the Napoleonic ulcer, the Deccan became Aurangzeb's ulcer and there is no doubt that it debilitated the Mughal Empire and became one of the important causes for its decline.

Causes of Aurangzeb's Failure in the Deccan

The chief cause of Aurangzeb's failure in the Deccan is to be found in the contrast between the characters of the Mughals and the Marathas. If the Mughals had been the same hardy warriors that Babur led from the valleys of the Hindukush or if the Rajputs had supported them with all their strength, the Marathas would have been allowed short shrift. However, Aurangzeb had disaffected the Rajputs and they were not prepared to risk their lives for him against the Hindus. Moreover, three or four generations of court life had ruined the manliness of the Mughals. Instead of hardy swordsmen, they had become padded dandies. They were wadding under their heavy armor. They were living a luxurious life. They were adorned for procession when they should have been in rough campaigning out-fit. Their camp was as grand and luxurious as if they were on guard at the Palace at Delhi. The Mughal soldiers complained if their tents were not furnished as comfortably as in the quarters at Agra. Their requirements attracted an immense crowd of camp followers twenty times as many as the effective strength. About Aurangzeb's camp at Galgala in 1695, Dr. Careri made the following observation: "I was told that the forces in this camp amounted to 60,000 horse and 100,000 on foot, for whose baggage there were 50,000 camels and 3,000 elephants; but that the sutlers, merchants and artificers were much more numerous, the whole camp being a living city having five millions of souls and multifarious not only in provisions but in all things that could be desired. There were 250 markets, every Amir or general having one to serve his. In short, the whole camp was 30 miles about." Thus, it cannot be denied that such an army was like a plague of locusts in a country and it ate up everything. Whenever the supplies of Mughal armies were cut by the Marathas, famines followed.

The slow tactics of the Mughal generals were also responsible for their failure. It is pointed out that Zulfikar, the best of the officers of Aurangzeb, held treacherous meetings with the enemy and intentionally delayed a siege in the hope that the aged emperor would die at any moment and leave him in command of the troops. Apparently, such generals and soldiers were no match for the Marathas. Undoubtedly, the Mughals were far more in numbers and resources and they could defeat the Marathas in pitched battles but the Marathas followed guerilla tactics and tried to avoid pitched battles. It is also true that the Mughals could conquer a fort by their lengthy sieges, but the Marathas had many forts and as a result, this advantage of the Mughals was not of much help. Since the Marathas avoided fighting decisive battles, fighting with them was one long sequence of petty victories followed by great losses.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 When was Bijapur annexed to the Mughal Empire?
- Q.2 Where was Sikandar imprisoned by the Mughals?
- Q.3 Who was the ruler of Golconda during the time of Aurangzeb?
- Q.4 Who were Madanna and Akanna?
- Q.5 When were Madanna and Akanna murdered in the streets of Golconda?
- Q.6 When the state of Golconda was annexed to the Mughal dominions?
- Q.7 When did Shivaji murder Afzal Khan?
- Q.8 Who said that it was the Deccan ulcer that ruined Aurangzeb?

24.4 Summary

- The main purpose of Aurangzeb's Deccan policy was to conquer Bijapur and Golconda. He was a great imperialist and he desired to extend the frontiers of his kingdom on all sides.
- The existence of the Shia rulers of Bijapur and Golconda was an eyesore to Aurangzeb. Control over the nascent Maratha kingdom was also one of the motives of his Deccan policy.
- Since Bijapur at that time was a weak state, Aurangzeb annexed the kingdom of Bijapur in 1686 CE. Its ruler Sikandar Shah was imprisoned in the fort of Daulatabad where he died at the age of thirty-two in April 1700 CE.
- Abul Hasan Qutub Shah was the ruler of Golconda at the time of Mughal attack. However, due to his pleasure loving habits the control of administration slipped into the hands of his Brahmin ministers, Madanna and Akanna.
- Some nobles in agreement with some influential ladies of the harem conspired against the ministers, Madanna and Akanna and got them murdered. Golconda was annexed to the Mughal Empire in 1687 CE.
- Aurangzeb's conflict with Marathas continued from 1687 to 1707 CE. He spent most of his time in Deccan and could manage to keep the region under Mughal control. However, after his death in 1707 CE, they reasserted independence and succeeded.
- Aurangzeb's Deccan conquests were more shadowy than real. He could not crush Maratha nationalism.
- His Deccan campaigns exhausted the state's treasury, involved the terrible loss of men and spelt economic ruin all round. Incessant wars threw agriculture and daily life of the people out of gear.
- According to Sir Jadunath Sarkar it was the Deccan ulcer that ruined Aurangzeb.
- His Deccan policy became an important cause for the decline of the Mughal Empire.

24.5 Glossary

Artificer: A skilled worker who practices some trade or handicraft.

Banjaras: Banjara is a *North Indian word for a wanderer, nomad or member of any gypsy tribe.*

Chattrapati: It is an Indian royal title. It is often taken to be the equivalent of king or emperor, and was used by the Maratha.

Jagir: A tract of land assigned by the state, assignment of land or land revenue held by an official in lieu of state service.

Sutler: A person who followed an army and sold provisions to the soldiers.

24.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

Ans.1 1686 CE

Ans.2 In the fort of Daulatabad

Ans.3 Abul Hasan Qutub Shah

Ans.4 Madanna and Akanna were two Brahmin brothers who rose to prominence in the 17th century in the final two decades of the Golconda Sultanate.

Ans.5 1686 CE

Ans.6 1687 CE

Ans.7 1659 CE

Ans.8 Sir Jadunath Sarkar

24.7 Suggested Readings

1. Abraham Eraly, 2007, "The Mughal World", London: Weidenfeld Nicholson.
2. Irfan Habib, 1963, "*The Agrarian System of the Mughal India*", New Delhi.
3. J.N.Sarkar, 1964, "*Fall of the Mughal Empire*", 4 vols, Calcutta.
4. M.Athar, 1966, "*Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb*", Bombay.
5. Satish Chandra, 1981, "*Medieval India: Society, The Jagirdari Crisis and the Village*", Delhi.
6. Will Durant, 1993, "*The Story of Civilization: Our Oriental Heritage*", Simon & Schuster.

24.8 Terminal Questions

1. Discuss the motives behind the Deccan policy of Aurangzeb.
2. How did Aurangzeb annex the Deccan states of Bijapur and Golconda?
3. Give an account of Aurangzeb's struggle with the Marathas.
4. "The Deccan ulcer ruined Aurangzeb". Analyze the consequences of the Deccan policy of Aurangzeb in light of this statement.
5. What were the causes for the failure of the Deccan policy of Aurangzeb?

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UNIT-25

DECLINE OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

Structure

- 25.1 Introduction
- 25.2 Objectives
- 25.3 Causes of the Decline of the Mughal Empire

25.3.1 Interpretations of the Mughal Decline

Self-Check Exercise-1

25.4 Summary

25.5 Glossary

25.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

25.7 Suggested Readings

25.8 Terminal Questions

25.1 Introduction

Babur laid the foundations of the Mughal Empire in India in 1526 CE which consolidated itself during the reign of Akbar, Jahangir, Shahjahan and reached its pinnacle of glory under Aurangzeb. The Mughal Empire ruled over a large part of India for nearly 300 years, but a drastic decline in its power and prestige came about by the first half of the 18th century. Not only did the political boundaries of the empire shrink, the decline also witnessed the collapse of the administrative structure. Due to the collapse of the Mughal power, a number of independent principalities emerged in all parts of the empire. The death of Aurangzeb in 1707 CE was the signal for the disintegration of the Mughal Empire. Certainly, the Mughal emperors ruled till 1857 CE, but only in name. Aurangzeb's successors, called the Later Mughals, lost control over the empire and independent kingdoms emerged in all parts of the empire. Most of the Later Mughal emperors were merely puppets in the hands of their powerful nobles or pensioners of the Marathas and, later on, of the British. The last Mughal ruler, Bahadur Shah II, was deposed by the British after the revolt of 1857 CE and deported to Rangoon where he died as a prisoner. Several factors contributed to the downfall and extinction of the Mughal Empire.

Historians have given several explanations for the rapid collapse of the Mughal Empire. It has also been a subject on which scholarly opinion is more sharply divided than on any other aspect of the history of the Mughals. The historiographical perspective on the Mughal decline can be divided into two broad Units. First, the Empire-Based Approach, i.e., historians attempt to identify the causes of the decline within the structure and functioning of the empire itself. Secondly, the Region-Centric approach where the perspective goes out of the confines of the empire into the regions to look for the causes of turmoil or instability in different parts of the empire.

25.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Causes of the decline of the Mughal Empire.
- Interpretations of the Mughal decline.

25.3 Causes of the Decline of Mughal Empire

The twilight of the Mughal rule set in 1707 CE after the death of Aurangzeb and the decline and disintegration of the Mughal Empire saw its logical end in 1761 CE and the empire continued only in name till 1857 CE. Several political, social, economic and institutional factors were responsible for the decline of the Mughal Empire.

War of Succession

Wars of succession are noticeable phenomena in the history of the ancient and medieval world. The Mughals did not believe in the law of primogeniture, where the eldest son inherited the father's estate. Instead, they followed the Mughal and Timurid tradition of coparcenary inheritance in which each son had an equal share in the property of his father. It usually meant a war of succession among the sons of the dying emperor in which the military leaders of the time took sides. Erskine commented, 'The sword was the grand arbiter of right and, every son was prepared to try his fortune against his brothers'. The fratricidal conflict among the four sons of Shahjahan is well-known. War of succession subsequent to the death of Aurangzeb was caused by the uncertainty of the law of succession. However, such a system also had advantages. It provided the country with the ablest son of the dying Emperor as the ruler. But the new principle that emerged in the later Mughal period was 'the survival of the weakest instead of 'survival of the fittest'. The Mughal princes became inactive while the leaders of rival factions fought wars using the royal princes as nominal leaders. Authoritative nobles acted as kingmakers. The wars of succession thus seriously undermined the stability of the Mughal Empire, divided the country, disorganized the government, and caused untold misery and sufferings to the people.

Weak Successors of Aurangzeb

Historians such as Sir Jadunath Sarkar opined that it was the crisis of personality and the weak successors of Aurangzeb were responsible for the decline of the Mughal Empire. If they had been capable, they could have stopped the decline that had set in the time of Aurangzeb. Unfortunately, all of them proved to be worthless. They were busy in their luxuries and intrigues and did nothing to remedy the evils that had crept into the Mughal polity. However, other historians such as T.G.P. Spear have pointed out that in the 18th century India there was no dearth of able personalities. Sayyid brothers, Nizam-ul-Mulk, Murshid Quli Khan, Raja Sawai Jai Singh were some of the able politicians and generals. Unfortunately all these were preoccupied more in self-aggrandizement and had very little concern for the fate of the empire. As a result, they could not provide leadership during the times of crisis.

Vastness of the Empire

The Mughal Empire extended over entire Northern India, from coast to coast, and comprised Kabul and some areas in the Deccan under Akbar's reign. But the process of expansion reached at its peak under Aurangzeb. He succeeded in establishing perhaps the biggest empire in Indian history. However, expansion without consolidation was meaningless. This unwieldy expansion of the empire made its governance almost an impossible task, particularly under weak and inefficient rulers. Moreover, the means of communication and transport were not so much developed at that time. Such a vast empire was required to be divided into a number of provinces under the provincial governors who were to be controlled. Some of the provincial governors were strong enough to declare their independence from the central authority. At that time there were neither sufficient economic resources nor an effective bureaucracy to administer such a vast empire. As a result, the vastness of Mughal Empire created more difficulties than it was able to cope. Consequently, chaotic conditions prevailed all over the Mughal Empire which prepared a fertile ground for the forces of disintegration.

Administrative Weakness

During medieval times in India, the administration was personal and autocratic. The king was the fountainhead of all power. His powers were delegated to the governors of provinces and faujdars who often misused their power. Although Aurangzeb worked hard to keep the

administration intact and personally also devoted himself to discharge administrative responsibilities yet he failed to avert its break down. Oppression, tyranny, corruption, slackness and inefficiency were the features of the day to day administration.

Aurangzeb's Responsibility

Although the expansion of the Mughal Empire reached its zenith under Aurangzeb's reign, it only resembled the inflated balloon. It was beyond his ability to govern such a vast empire. His intention was to restore the Islamic character of the Mughal state which according to him was disturbed by his predecessors. His religious bigotry proved counter-productive and provoked general discontent and the same exhibited itself in the form of revolts in different parts of the empire.

(i) The Revolt of Jats

The revolt of Jats of Mathura was the first organized revolt against the religious policy of Aurangzeb. The Jats were infuriated by the destruction of Kesava Dev temple at Mathura and a few of the Hindu temples. Abdul Nabi, the local Muslim officer, destroyed a Hindu temple and raised a mosque on its ashes. Gokla, the Jat zamiindar of Tilpat, collected a small force of nearly 20, 000 and defeated a few small Muslim forces sent against him. However, he was defeated and put to death in the Battle of Tilpat.

In 1686 CE, the Jats rose in revolt under the leadership of Rajaram and caused serious trouble to the Mughals. However, he was also defeated and killed in 1688 CE. The Jats then continued their struggle under Rajaram's nephew Churaman, which dragged on till the death of Aurangzeb. Eventually they succeeded in forming their own independent kingdom with Bharatpur as their capital.

(ii) The Revolt of Bundelas

The Bundela Prince Chhatrasal was originally a mansabdar in the Deccan army of Aurangzeb. He was inspired by Shivaji. Taking advantage of the popular discontent with Aurangzeb's religious policy in Malwa and Bundelkhand, he led a revolt and won many battles against the Mughal forces. He succeeded in carving for himself an independent kingdom in the Eastern Malwa, with Panna as the capital. He died in 1731 CE.

(iii) The Satnami Revolt

The Satnamis were originally a militant sect of the Hindu devotees. Their primary centers of functioning were Narnaul (Punjab) and Mewar (Rajasthan). Though they dressed like sanyasis, they carried on trade and agriculture. A number of them carried weapons or arms. They broke into revolt in 1672 CE due to a quarrel between a Satnami peasant and a Mughal soldier. Further, there was resentment against Aurangzeb's religious policy. A few small forces sent by Aurangzeb were defeated. Then Aurangzeb sent a large force against them. Though the Satnamis fought valiantly, they were defeated in a battle.

(iv) Struggle with Rajputs

Aurangzeb committed the blunder of not realizing the value of the alliance of the Rajputs who had formerly contributed so much to the growth of the empire, especially during the reign of Akbar. Instead, he started rubbing them on the wrong sides. The wars between Aurangzeb and Rajputs proved to be disastrous for the Mughal Empire. Several thousands of lives were sacrificed

and enormous amounts of money were squandered away without any lasting success or benefit to the emperor. The result was highly damaging to the imperial prestige

(v) Conflict with Sikhs and Marathas

The Sikhs in Punjab and the Marathas in Maharashtra rose in revolt against the Mughal Empire. The conflict of Mughals with Sikhs occurred during the reign of Jahangir. However, open fighting began during Aurangzeb's reign. Guru Gobind Singh, and later Banda Bahadur, kept large areas in the Punjab disturbed. However, the Sikhs were crushed by 1716 CE, and their power did not revive till after 1761 CE.

From the zenith of his power in 1687 CE, Aurangzeb could never anticipate that a small principality, brought into existence by Shivaji would not only defy the Mughal army but also pose a serious threat to the Mughal Empire. The Marathas played a formidable role in bringing about the decline of the Mughal Empire. Thus, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the Marathas as well as the Sikhs as powerful forces were largely the creation of Aurangzeb.

(vi) Deccan Policy of Aurangzeb

The Deccan policy of Aurangzeb turned out to be another great blunder. He was bent upon crushing the power of the Marathas. However, Deccan became his undoing in a manner similar to Napoleon's failure in Spain. For almost twenty years he labored in the Deccan for no useful purpose, letting lose all the centrifugal forces in the heart of his empire in the North. It drained the resources of the empire.

(vii) Aurangzeb's Character

Aurangzeb's own character has a part to play in bringing about the downfall of the Mughal Empire. Aurangzeb was a man of suspicious nature. He did not trust even his own sons. As a result, whenever he sent an expedition, he put two persons in charge of the same. The object was to put a check on the power of both. However, that led to the division of responsibility. It proved to be absolutely suicidal from the point of view of efficiency and success. Aurangzeb remained very lonely and could not turn to anybody in a time of distress.

Degeneration of the Mughal Nobility

The degeneration of the Mughal nobility during the 18th century had a large share in hastening the decline of the Mughal Empire. The history of India of the time of Akbar, Jahangir and Shahjahan was made by nobles such as Bairam Khan, Munim Khan, Muzaffar Khan and Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khana, Itmad Ud daulah and Mahababat Khan, Asaf Khan and Saadulla khan. However, the nobility in the 18th century became selfish and eager for self-aggrandizement and personal ascendancy. They never hesitated to plunge the country into suicidal civil wars, disastrous conspiracies, and hopeless confusion and anarchy. Sir Jadunath Sarkar points out that if a nobleman's achievements were recorded in three pages, that of his son filled a page, that of the grandson only a few lines such as nothing worthy of being recorded.

Foreign Invasions

The growing military and political weakness encouraged the foreign invaders to hawk upon the crippling Mughal Empire. The bold Iranian adventurer, Nadir Shah, invaded India in 1739 CE. This invasion gave a death blow to the tottering Mughal Empire. It forced the Mughal Emperor Muhammad Shah to accept a humiliating treaty. This invasion exposed the growing helplessness and weakness of the dying Mughal Empire. The process of disintegration was almost complete. And

whatever little remained was shattered by invasions of the Afghan invader, Ahmad Shah Abdali. His victory at the Third battle of Panipat (1761 CE) reduced Mughal Emperor into a symbol of past glory. Moreover, these invasions proved disastrous for trade and industry.

Economic Bankruptcy

Shahjahan's wars in Central Asia and Qandahar and his wasteful expenditure on the construction of buildings had depleted the treasury. Aurangzeb's long wars in the South had further drained the state's exchequer. As a result, they increased the tax to one-half of the produce of the soil and as the revenue demand rose, the production fell in the same proportion. The peasants began deserting their fields but they were compelled by force to carry on the cultivation. The contractors oppressed the peasants to get maximum revenue from them. Bankruptcy began to stare the Mughal government in the face during times of Aurangzeb and his successors who had to fight many wars to gain the throne and retain it. The economic collapse surfaced during the reign of Alamgir II (1754- 1759 CE) who was starved and the revenues even of the royal privy purse-estate were seized by the corrupt Wazir, Imad-ul-Mulk. A month and a half after his accession to the throne, Alamgir II had no suitable convenience to enable him to ride in procession to the Idgah and he had to walk on foot from the harem to the stone mosque of the Fort. Describing the economic hardships of the royal family during the reign of Shah Alam II (1759-1806 CE) Sir Jadunath Sarkar writes, "No fire was kindled in harem kitchen for three days, and one day the princess could bear starvation no longer and in frantic disregard of purdah rushed out of the palace to the city, but fort gates being closed, they sat down in the man's quarters for a day and night, after which they were persuaded to go back to their rooms". The wonder is that the bankrupt Mughal government lasted for another half a century.

Military Weaknesses

The Mughal army had inherent defects. It was organized along feudal lines in which the common soldier was loyal to the mansabdar instead of the emperor. Besides, such an army could be effective only under a capable commander. Perhaps the absence of a regular standing army was the greatest defect of the Mughal army. The Mughal emperors started the practice of taking their wives, concubines and slave girls on the battlefield. This practice was followed by their nobles and then the soldiers started taking the prostitutes on the battlefield. This not only led to the moral degradation of the Mughal army but also seriously affected its mobility and its determination to fight in times of adversity. Consequently, the Mughal army became weak under Akbar's successors. The Mughals gave no attention to scientific, technical and new military inventions. Later on, the weak Mughal army could not face the foreign invaders and the European navy.

The Advent of the Europeans

In the prevailing conditions of lawlessness, European companies profited immensely. These companies outshined the Indian princes in every sphere whether it was trade, commerce, diplomacy or war. The static and stationary Indian society was faced with challenges from the dynamic and progressive West. While the spirit of the renaissance had given an expansive touch to European energies, the Indians stepped in divinity and drew sustenance from the philosophy of escapism. India lagged far behind in the race for civilization.

Absence of any Spirit of Nationalism

There was an absence of any spirit of nationalism during this period. The nobles and the individuals were prepared to join anyone if they happened to line up with their personal interests.

The loyalty of the common people did not extend beyond their family, village or region. People fought for dynasties or individuals, not for any high ideals or principles. Therefore, the death or desertion of a single individual altered the whole course of the campaign or engagement.

Intellectual Bankruptcy

It is believed that the Mughals suffered from intellectual bankruptcy. They failed to evolve an educational system that could fulfill the requirements of the modern age. There was progress during their rule due to political stability and their personal protection. However, both these factors were inexistent in the century under consideration. As a result, the Indians failed to make any progress in any field of life. There was no intellectual progress in the 18th century. The British were far advanced not only in science and technology but also in intellectual caliber.

25.3.1 Interpretations of the Mughal Decline

Different interpretations related to the decline of the Mughal Empire have been propagated among historians from time to time. However, the historiographical perspective on the Mughal decline can be divided into two broad categories—**Empire-Based approach and the Region-Centric Approach**. The Empire-Based Approach makes an effort to look for the causes of decline within the structure and functioning of the Empire itself. The region-Centric Approach, however, tries to identify the root causes of the turmoil in different regions of the empire outside its boundaries.

Empire-Based Approach

This approach for explaining the decline of the Mughal Empire has gone through several stages. To begin with, the theories concentrated on individual rulers and their policies. William Irvine and Sir Jadunath Sarkar attributed the decline to the Emperor's and their noble's deteriorating characters. Aurangzeb was considered to be the main culprit by Sir Jadunath Sarkar. He claimed that Aurangzeb was a religious fanatic. He discriminated against some members of the nobility and officials on the basis of religion. As a result, the nobility became deeply resentful. He believed that the successors of Aurangzeb and their nobles were nothing more than pale imitations of their predecessors and therefore unable to undo the evils of Aurangzeb's legacy.⁴

(i) Crisis in Jagirdari System

Satish Chandra scrutinized the working of two Mughal institutions—Mansabdari and Jagirdari in his publication, *"Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court"*. He opines that the decline of the Mughal Empire has to be seen in the failure to maintain the system of the mansabdar-jagirdar towards the end of Aurangzeb's reign. As this system went into disarray, the empire was bound to collapse. M. Athar Ali in his work, *"The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb"* mentions that the sudden increase in the number of nobles caused due to the expansion of the Mughal Empire into the Deccan and Maratha territory led to the shortage of jagirs. The nobles competed for better jagirs, which were increasingly becoming rare due to the influx of nobles from the South. Consequently, there was erosion in the political setup which was based largely on jagirdari.

Historian S. Nurul Hassan opines that the agrarian relations that developed during the Mughal rule gave rise to an authority structure that worked similarly to a pyramid. Consequently, the bulk of the revenue demand of the state was transferred on to the cultivators. In the 18th century,

⁴ <https://egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/20287/1/Unit-35.pdf>

with the decline of the Mughal authority, and with pressure on jagirs, there was a crisis in the agrarian economy.

As a class, the zamindars were quite loyal to the state. However, in the kind of agrarian crisis, the conflict between them and the state could not be checked. This often resulted in law and order problems and decimated the state's authority. The situation deteriorated after the death of Aurangzeb and led to the collapse of the system.

(ii) Agrarian Crisis

Historians have worked very hard to identify the reasons for the decline of the Mughal Empire. They have attempted to examine the various aspects as to how the empire operated. Gradually, the attention shifted away from the personalities and policies of individual rulers to larger and broader developments that were weakening the Mughal Empire.

In his book, *"The Agrarian System of Mughal India"*, Professor Irfan Habib attempted to make an in-depth analysis of the decline of the empire. He found faults with the system of collection of land revenue under the Mughals. The Mughal government followed a policy of fixing the revenue at the highest rate possible for increasing the strength of the army. They had a tendency to squeeze the maximum from the jagirs, even at the expense of the local peasantry and its ability to generate income.

Since the jagirs of the nobles were liable to be transferred frequently; they did not see the need to pursue a long-term strategy for agricultural development. The peasantry frequently lost access to their very means of survival as they were overburdened. Consequently, they were left with no other choice but to protest this overt exploitation. Irfan Habib believes that these peasant protests damaged the political and social fabric of the empire.

(iii) Review of the Crisis

Some other historians such as J.F Richards, M.N Pearson and P.Hardy lay emphasis on the involvement of Mughals in the Deccan and their struggle with the Marathas in their explanation of the decline of the Mughal Empire. They, however, are not in agreement with the Aligarh historians in their understanding of the nature of the Mughal Empire. According to Pearson, the Mughal rule was indirect. It was local ties and norms which governed the lives of people and not the state. He laid emphasis upon the absence of impersonalized bureaucracy. Once Mughal patronage loosened, the personalized bureaucracy showed signs of distress which led to the decline.

J.F Richards believed that the absence of jagir was the major cause of Mughal decline. He opines that the increase in revenue resources of the empire due to the annexation of the Deccan states hardly kept pace with the expansion of the nobility during the later phase of Aurangzeb's reign. Therefore, Richards holds the view that the crisis was artificial and not the result of deficiency of resources.

Dr.Satish Chandra believes that the jagirdari crisis did not occur as a result of the increase in the number of nobles and the corresponding decrease in the revenues, but due to the non-functionality of the jagir system. According to him, there was a tri-polar relationship between the peasants, zamindars and the mansabdar-jagirdar which formed the base on which the Mughal structure rested. Any factor which could disturb this neat balancing of this relationship would ultimately cause the decline of the empire.

Satish Chandra opines that the rapid development of the agricultural and non-agricultural economy was the only manner that could have delayed the jagirdari crisis. The medieval social

system, which restricted agricultural growth, was the fundamental basis of the jagirdari crisis. The remaining factors were contributory to the growth of the crisis.

Karen Leonard propagated the 'Great Firm' theory of Mughal decline which suggested that the indigenous banking firms were essential allies of the Mughal state and the great nobles were directly dependent upon these firms. When these banking firms started rerouting of their economic and political support toward local rulers, this led to bankruptcy, a series of political crisis, and the decline of the Mughal Empire. This theory, however, did not receive adequate support from the current studies of Mughal economy and polity by Philip Calkins and M.N Pearson.

Region-Centric Approach

Some learned scholars such as Muzaffar Alam and Chetan Singh have propagated a region-based approach in their writings to explain the decline of the Mughal Empire. Muzaffar Alam has compared the developments in the Mughal provinces of Awadh and Punjab while Chetan Singh has conducted a thorough study of the regional history of 17th century Punjab. Their research is noteworthy in that they throw new light on both the nature of the Mughal Empire along with the process of its weakening and eventual decline in the 17th and early 18th centuries.

(i) Centre-Region Relationship

According to Muzaffar Alam the Mughal decline in the 18th century was due to its failure to maintain checks and balances between mansabdars, jagirdars and the local indigenous elements. He believes that the decline and disintegration of the Mughal Empire was a very complex process as a number of factors, including empire-centric and region-centric were collectively responsible for bringing together the core and periphery and for the emergence of regional identities in the Mughal successor states. Finally, he says that the decline of the Mughal Empire was manifested both in Awadh and Punjab in a type of political transformation and in the emergence and formation of the elements of a new subedari. The seeds for the rise of independent regional UNITs were found in both provinces. However, it resulted in chaos in Punjab while Awadh experienced a stable dynastic rule.

(ii) Contours of Regional Politics

The work of Muzaffar Alam was continued by Chetan Singh. His book "*Region and Empire*" gives a fresh perspective on the regional history of North India during the Mughal rule. He argues that although the Mughal administrative infrastructure undoubtedly connected the region to the Mughal administrative center yet this conventional form of integration had its limitations. Due to a variety of stresses that local and politics were under, the administrative structure responded by disobeying the formal administrative divisions and sub-divisions of the Mughal governmental structure. This was true both of the general administration as well as of revenue administration. As time progressed, some norms and conventions helped to maintain the stability of the Mughal Empire.

By the late 17th century, however, the silting of the Indus river led to a gradual decline of the highly commercialized economy of Punjab. Punjab experienced social unrest due to the loosening of its socio-economic structure. Chetan Singh, however, argues that since the benefits of trade and commerce had been unevenly distributed in the region, the distresses caused by the decline of trade varied in different areas of Punjab. Thus, he concludes that long-term processes were the cause of the social unrest that eventually led to the dissociation of Punjab from the Mughal Empire.⁵

⁵ <https://www.studocu.com/in/document/sikkim-manipal-university/history/decline-of-the-mughal-empire/30417809>

Therefore, Chetan Singh's research adds a new dimension to the problem under consideration. He observes the process at work during the zenith of the empire, contrary to Muzaffar Alam's study of Mughal Awadh and Punjab, which traces the region's separation from the Mughal Empire from the early 18th century. Hence, a different picture emerges from the perspective of the regional history of Punjab.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 Who was the last emperor of the Mughal Empire who was exiled by the British to Rangoon?
- Q.2 Under whose leadership the Jats rose in revolt against Aurangzeb in 1686 CE?
- Q.3 When did the Sattnamis revolt occur?
- Q.4 When did Nadir Shah invade India?
- Q.5 Name the two categories under which the historiographical perspective of the Mughal decline may broadly be divided.
- Q.6 Which historian opines that the decline of the Mughal Empire has to be seen in the failure to maintain the system of the mansabdar-jagirdar towards the end of Aurangzeb's reign?

25.4 Summary

- The Mughal Empire ruled over a large part of India for nearly 300 years, but a drastic decline in its power and prestige came about by the first half of the 18th century.
- Due to the collapse of the Mughal power, a number of independent principalities emerged in all parts of the empire.
- The death of Aurangzeb in 1707 CE was the signal for the disintegration of the Mughal Empire.
- The causes for the decline and disintegration of the Mughal Empire have been a debatable topic among the scholars of medieval Indian history.
- War of succession, weak successors of Aurangzeb, vastness of the empire, degeneration of the Mughal nobility, foreign invasions, economic and intellectual bankruptcy, administrative and military weaknesses, advent of the Europeans, absence of the spirit of nationalism, all led to the decline of the Mughal Empire.
- Sir Jadunath Sarkar, who had analysed the developments in the empire in the context of law and order, is of the view that Aurangzeb was mainly responsible for the decline and disintegration of the Mughal Empire. He believed that by his religious fanaticism Aurangzeb alienated the support of the Hindus to the empire.
- Aurangzeb's Deccan policy was also responsible for the Mughal decline.
- The historiographical perspective on the Mughal decline can be divided into two broad Units—Empire-Based Approach and the region-Based Approach.
- In the pre-independent period, the historians such as Jadunath Sarkar, Stanley Lane-Poole followed the Empire-Based Approach. It attempts to identify the causes of the decline within the structure and functioning of the empire itself.

- In the post-independent India, historians such as Satish Chandra, M.Athar Ali, Irfan Habib followed the Region-Centric approach where the perspective goes out of the confines of the empire into the regions to look for the causes of turmoil or instability in different parts of the empire.
- Satish Chandra, M.Athar Ali, S.Nurul Hasan and Irfan Habib believes that crisis in the jagridari and agrarian system was mainly responsible for the Mughal decline.
- According to Irfan Habib defective mechanism of revenue collection led to the protest of the peasants which weakened the political and social fabric of the empire. However, historians such as J.F Richards, Pearson and Hardy re-examined the crisis and differed in their conclusions.
- On the basis of developments in the Mughal provinces of Awadh and Punjab, scholars such as Muzaffar Alam and Chetan Singh propagated the Empire-Centric Approach to explain the Mughal decline.
- According to Muzaffar Alam, the empire declined because of its failure to maintain checks and balances between the mansabdars, jagirdars and the local elements.
- Chetan Singh, however, concludes that long-term processes were the cause of the social unrest that eventually led to the dissociation of Punjab from the Mughal Empire.

25.5 Glossary

Contours: The shape of the outer surface of something.

Fratricidal: Relating to or denoting conflict within a single family or organization.

Idgah: A place set apart for public prayers on the two chief Muslim feasts.

Mansabdar: *The term mansabdar means a person having a mansab. It was a military UNIT within the administrative system of the Mughal Empire introduced by Akbar.*

25.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Ans.1 Bahadur Shah II
- Ans.2 Rajaram
- Ans.3 1672 CE
- Ans.4 1739 CE
- Ans.5 Empire-Based Approach and Region-Centric Approach
- Ans.6 Satish Chandra

25.7 Suggested Readings

1. Bipin Chandra, 1979, “*Nationalism & Colonialism in Modern India*”, New Delhi: Orient Longman.
2. B.L Grover & Alka Mehta, 2010, “*A New Look at Modern Indian History (From 1707 to the Modern Times)*”, S Chand & Company Ltd.

3. Irfan Habib, 2001, "*Economic History of Medieval India: A Survey*", New Delhi: Manohar Publishers and Distributors.
4. J.A Hobson, 2005, "*Imperialism: A Study*", New York:" Cosimo.
5. Richard Swedberg, 1991, "*The Economics and Sociology of Capitalism*", Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
6. Shekhar Bandopadhyay, 2010, "*From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*", Orient BlackSwan.

25.8 Terminal Questions

1. Describe the causes of the decline of the Mughal Empire.
2. How far do you think that Aurangzeb was responsible for the downfall of the Mughal Empire?
3. Explain in detail the Empire-Based Approach regarding Mughal decline.
4. What is the Region-Centric Approach used by historians to explain the decline of the Mughal Empire?
5. Write a short note on Agrarian Crisis during the Mughal rule.
6. Summarize J.F Richard's main argument on jagirdari crisis.
7. Discuss the explanation offered by Muzaffar Alam for the decline of the Mughal Empire.
8. What impact did the economy of Punjab experienced as a result of the silting of Indus river towards the close of the 17th century?

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UNIT-26

EMERGENCE OF REGIONAL POWERS IN THE 18TH CENTURY

Structure

- 26.1 Introduction
- 26.2 Objectives
- 26.3 Successor States

26.3.1 The New States

26.3.2 Independent Kingdoms

26.3.3 Weaknesses of Regional Polities

Self-Check Exercise-1

26.4 Summary

26.5 Glossary

26.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

26.7 Suggested Readings

26.8 Terminal Questions

26.1 Introduction

After the decline of the Mughal Empire, the territories under its reign witnessed chaos and were fragmented into small princely states. The local rulers who had till now harbored the dreams of throwing out the Mughals started asserting their independence. Throughout the 18th century, the Mughal Empire gradually fragmented into numerous independent regional states. Mainly there were three types of regional powers or states which emerged in the 18th century—the states which broke away from the Mughal Empire, the new states established by the rebels against the Mughals and the independent states.

26.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Learn about the emergence of Mughal provinces as regional power—Hyderabad, Bengal and Awadh,
- Understand the rise of new states—Maratha, Sikhs, Jats and Afghans,
- Trace the history of Mysore, Rajput states and Kerela as independent principalities.

26.3 Successor States

The provincial governors under the Mughals established independent states of Hyderabad, Bengal and Awadh. The non-alignment from Delhi occurred in stages - the revolt of individuals followed by that of the social groups, commUNITies and finally regions. The revolt of Zamindars in the provinces against imperial demands prompted the breakaway. Governors did not receive support from the center and attempted to secure support of the local elites. However, contact with the center was maintained and Mughal tradition continued. When the Iranian invader Nadir Shah invaded Delhi, the states of Awadh and Hyderabad came to the help of the Mughals. As a result of their relations with factions of nobles, the provincial chiefs were often strong enough to control the center. Hence the changes in the polity in this period may more appropriately be called as a transformation rather than a collapse. Within the Mughal institutional framework, a new political

order was formed. The downfall of the all-India polity did not lead to generalized economic decline. The regional picture was very diverse. The economy of Punjab was disrupted by foreign invasions but Awadh underwent economic growth. On his accession to the throne Safdar Jang, Nawab of Awadh, paid Rs. 3 crores to Nadir Shah. On the basis of prosperity, a stable polity developed in Awadh while the states established in Punjab collapsed.

Hyderabad

The independent state of Hyderabad in the Deccan was founded in 1724 CE by Chin Qilich Khan, titled Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah, a prominent noble at the time the Saiyids who controlled the court at Delhi. He helped the Mughal Emperor Mohammed Shah in overthrowing the Sayyids and in return was assigned the office of Subedar of the Deccan.

He restructured the administration and reorganized the revenue system. After a brief tenure as wazir at Delhi from 1722 to 1724CE, he returned to the Deccan to establish a state which was independent in practice, though he continued to declare loyalty to the Mughal emperor. The formation of a regional elite gave stability to this independence. Reorganization of the revenue system, subduing of Zamindars, and tolerance towards Hindus were among his wise policies.

Nizam-ul-Mulk died in 1748 CE. Confusion ensued in the Deccan after his death. It exposed Hyderabad to the conspiracies of the Marathas and later the foreign companies. The Marathas invaded the state at will and levied *Chauth* upon the helpless people. Nizam-ul-Mulk's son, Nasir Jang and grandson, Muzaffar Jang, contested for the throne and took the help of English and French respectively which led to increased influence of those powers in the affairs of the state. The interference of Marathas in Deccan politics and the rise of the state of Mysore under Haider Ali created further complications for the rulers of Hyderabad. In 1798 CE, the Nizam of Hyderabad entered into a subsidiary alliance with the English and became their subordinate ally.

Bengal

The rule of the Nawabs of Bengal was marked by independence in practice and allegiance to the Mughal Emperor. Murshid Kuli Khan who started his career as Diwan of Bengal under Aurangzeb became Governor of Bengal in 1717 CE. However, he regularly sent tribute to the Mughal Emperor. Shuja-ud-din became the Nawab in 1727 CE and ruled till 1739 CE. Alivardi Khan deposed the family of Murshid Quli Khan and assumed the charge of Nawab in 1739 CE. Siraj-ud-daula became the Nawab of Bengal after the death of his grandfather Alivardi Khan in 1756 CE.

The Nawabs of Bengal brought peace and stability and promoted agriculture, trade and industry. Both Hindus and Muslims were given equal opportunities and there was no discrimination on religious grounds. The Nawabs were independent and kept strict control over the foreign companies trading in their dominions. Fortifications were rightly not permitted in the French and English factories at Chandernagar and Calcutta, nor did the Nawab grant them special privileges. The sovereignty of the ruler was maintained despite the military threats of the British East India Company.

The Nawabs, however, suffered defeat at the hands of the British because of their weak and inadequate army and their underestimation of the danger posed by the company. The British victory at Plassey against Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah in 1757 CE inaugurated a new phase in British relations with India. It paved the way for the subjugation of Bengal as well as India.

Awadh

Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-Mulk was appointed as the subedar of Awadh in 1722 CE. He aspired to play an important role in the imperial politics. However, he failed in that design and he gradually secured the independence of Awadh. The decline of the Mughals provided him the desired opportunity to establish his own authority in the region. The main problem that he faced in Awadh was the rebellion of zamindars who not only refused to pay land revenue but behaved like autonomous chiefs with their forts and armies. Saadat Khan crushed them and introduced a new land settlement which provided protection to the peasants from the zamindars. The Jagirdari system was reformed and jagirdaris were granted to the local elites, who were also given positions in the administration and army. There emerged a "regional ruling group", which consisted of Shaikhzadas, Afghans and Units of the Hindus.

26.3.1 The New States

Another group of regional states were the 'new states' or 'insurgent states' which came into existence as a protest against the Mughals. These were the Marathas, Sikhs, Jats and Afghans. The first three started as popular movements of peasant insurgency. The leadership was not with the nobility but with 'new men', often from lower orders, e.g. Hyder Ali, Sindhiya and Holkars.

Marathas

Among the various provincial states that emerged during this period the State of Maratha was the most prominent one. Shivaji (1627-1680 CE) developed a stable kingdom with the help of powerful warrior families (*deshmukhs*). Groups of peasant pastoralists (*kunbis*) provided the backbone of the Maratha army. Shivaji used these forces to encounter the Mughals in the peninsula. After the death of Shivaji, effective power in the Maratha state was exercised by a family of Chitpavan Brahmanas who served Shivaji's successors as Peshwa (or Prime Minister). Poona became the capital of the Maratha Empire.

The Marathas developed a very successful military organization under the Peshwas. Their success lay in evading the fortified areas of the Mughals, by attacking cities and by engaging Mughal armies in areas where their supply lines and reinforcements could be easily troubled.

The Maratha Empire expanded between 1720 and 1761 CE. It gradually contended the authority of the Mughal Empire. By the 1720s, Malwa and Gujarat were captured from the Mughals. By the 1730s, the Maratha king was recognized as the overlord of the entire Deccan peninsula. He possessed the right to levy *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* in the entire region.

The frontiers of Maratha kingdom expanded rapidly after raiding Delhi in 1737 CE. It extended from Rajasthan and Punjab in the North to Bengal and Orissa in the East and into Karnataka and the Tamil and Telugu countries in the South. These were not formally included in the Maratha kingdom, but were compelled to pay tribute as a way of accepting the sovereignty of the Marathas. Expansion of the frontiers of the kingdom brought vast resources, but it came at a price. These military campaigns also made other rulers hostile towards the Marathas. Consequently, they were not inclined to support the Marathas during the Third battle of Panipat in 1761 CE.

Apart from numerous military campaigns, the Marathas also developed a system of administration. Once conquest had been completed and Maratha rule was secure, revenue demands were gradually introduced taking into account the local conditions. The Marathas encouraged agriculture and revived trade. As a result the Maratha chiefs such as Scindhia of Gwalior, Gaekwad of Baroda and Bhonsle of Nagpur were able to muster resources to raise powerful armies. Maratha campaigns into Malwa in the 1720s did not challenge the growth and prosperity of the cities in the

region. Under Sindhia's patronage, Ujjain witnessed the expansion and under the Holkars there was the expansion of Indore. These cities were large and prosperous and served as important commercial and cultural centers. New trade routes emerged within the areas controlled by the Marathas.

The absence of a proper administrative hierarchy or a distinct provincial authority did not allow them from consolidating their influence at the rapid pace necessary before the Afghans and British could defeat them. These administrative and financial inadequacies were compounded by their technological backwardness, especially in the military sphere. The latest development in the form of artillery, small arms, especially the flint guns and improved firearms were not adopted.

Sikhs

The organization of the Sikhs into a political community during the 17th century helped in regional state-building in Punjab. Guru Gobind Singh fought a number of battles against the Rajput and Mughal rulers, both before and after the establishment of the Khalsa in 1699 CE. After his death in 1708, the Sikhs rose in revolt against the Mughal authority under the leadership of Banda Bahadur. The Sikhs declared their sovereign rule by minting coins in the name of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh, and established their own administration between the Sutlej and the Jamuna. Banda However, Banda Bahadur was captured by the Mughals and executed in 1716 CE.

Under many capable leaders in the 18th century, the Sikhs organized themselves into a number of confederacies called *jathas*, and later on *misls*. Their combined forces were known as the grand army (*dal khalsa*). The entire body used to meet at Amritsar at the time of Baisakhi and Diwali to take collective decisions known as "resolutions of the Guru (*gurmata*)". A system called *rakhi* was introduced, which offered protection to cultivators on the payment of a tax of twenty per cent of the produce.

Guru Gobind Singh had motivated the Khalsa with the belief that their destiny was to rule (*raj karega khalsa*). Their well-knit organization enabled them to put up a stiff resistance to the Mughal governors first and then to Ahmad Shah Abdali who had captured the rich province of Punjab from the Mughals. The Khalsa declared their independent rule by striking their own coin again in 1765 CE.

The Sikh territories in the late 18th century extended from the Indus to the Jamuna but they were divided under different rulers. In 1799 CE, Maharaja Ranjit Singh reUNITed these groups and established his capital at Lahore.

Jats

The Jats were an agriculturist caste inhabiting the region around Delhi and Agra. Like the other states, the Jats consolidated their power during the late 17th and 18th centuries. Under the leadership of Churaman, the Jats acquired control over territories situated to the West of the city of Delhi, and by the 1680s they started dominating the region between the two imperial cities of Delhi and Agra. The Jats were affluent agriculturists, and towns such as Panipat and Ballabgarh became significant trading centers in the areas dominated by them. The kingdom of Bharatpur emerged as a strong state under Surajmal. Many of the city's notables took refuge there when Nadir Shah sacked Delhi in 1739 CE. Surajmal's son Jawahir Singh had 30,000 troops of his own and hired another 20,000 Maratha and 15,000 Sikh troops to counter the Mughal army.

While the fort of Bharatpur was built in a fairly traditional style, at Dig (in Rajasthan) the Jats constructed an elaborate garden palace combining styles seen at Amber and Agra. Its buildings were modeled on architectural forms first associated with royalty under Shahjahan.

Afghans

A couple of small Afghan kingdoms were also established in North India following the decline of the Mughal Empire. The states of Rohilkhand and the kingdom of the Bangash Pathans were an outcome of the Afghan migration from the 17th century. Large-scale immigration of Afghans into India occurred in mid-18th century as a result of political and economic disruption in Afghanistan. The collapse of authority in North India that followed Nadir Shah's invasion gave an opportunity to Afghan leader Ali Muhammad Khan to set up a petty kingdom of Rohilkhand in the foothills of Himalayas. The Rohilas, as the inhabitants of Rohilkhand were known, suffered defeat at the hands of Jats, Awadh rulers and later the Marathas and the English. Another Afghan Mohammad Khan Bangash had established an independent kingdom to the East of Delhi in the area around Farrukhabad. The use of artillery by the Afghans, especially the flint gun, ended the domination of cavalry since the early medieval ages discovered the stirrup. Politically the role of the Afghans was damaging. Not only did they accentuate the decline of the Mughals but they aided Ahmad Shah Abdali in subduing Awadh, which could have curbed the expansion of the British.

26.3.2 Independent Kingdoms

The third category of states was independent kingdoms. They were neither the result of a breakaway from or rebellion against Delhi. These emerged primarily by taking the advantage of the destabilization of imperial control over the provinces. Mysore, the Rajput states and Kerala fall in this category.

Mysore

Mysore emerged as a significant power in South India in the mid-18th century. Unlike Hyderabad, Mysore was not under the direct control of the Mughals. The Wodeyar Dynasty transformed Mysore from a viceroyalty of the Vijayanagar Empire into an autonomous state. Haider Ali laid the foundations of Mysore's power, which were consolidated by his able son, Tipu Sultan. Though Haider Ali started his career only as a junior officer in the Mysore army, he gradually rose to be a brilliant commander. He rightly realized the significance of a modern army for the development of a powerful state. As a result, he inducted French experts to establish an arsenal and train the troops along western lines. By 1761 CE he was able to overthrow the real power behind the Mysore throne, the minister Najaraj. He extended the boundaries of the Mysore state to include the rich coastal areas of Canara and Malabar. An expansionist at heart, Haider Ali incurred the hostilities of other powers in the region, the Marathas, Hyderabad and the new entrants in the game, the British. In 1769 CE, the British forces were defeated by Haider Ali. With his death in 1782 CE, his son Tipu became Sultan and carried on the task of his father till 1799 CE.

Rajputs

The Rajput rulers strengthened their position by taking advantage of the disintegration of the Mughal Empire. They also attempted to establish independent political authority. None were large enough to contend with the Marathas or the British for the position of a paramount power. They adopted a method of slowly loosening their ties with Delhi and functioning as independent states in practice. They participated in the struggle for power at the court of Delhi and got lucrative and influential governorships from the Mughal rulers.

In the post-Mughal period, the Rajput policy continued to be fractured. All the states adopted a policy of constant expansion absorbing weak neighbors whenever possible. This occurred within the State also, with one faction overthrowing the other in a continuously played game of one-up-manship at the Mughal court. Raja Sawai Jai Singh, the most renowned Rajput ruler, ruled Jaipur from 1699 to 1743 CE.

Kerela

At the beginning of the 18th century, Kerela was divided into a number of small principalities under the control of the local chieftains and kings. The three states of Cochin, Travancore and Calicut together comprised the present state of Kerala. By 1763 CE, the territories of a large number of chiefs and rajas had been incorporated into these states. However, the expansion of Mysore under Haider Ali put Kerala in a very difficult situation. In 1766 CE, Haider Ali invaded Kerala and annexed Malabar and Calicut. Travancore, the southernmost state and by far the most prominent one, escaped from Haider Ali's invasion. Travancore had gained in importance after 1729 CE when its King, Martanda Verma, extended the boundaries of Travancore from Kanya Kumari to Cochin with the help of a strong and modern army organized in Western model and well equipped with modern weapons. The Dutch were overthrown from Kerala and the feudal chiefs were suppressed. His vision extended beyond expansion to the development of his state by various administrative measures. Rama Verma, his successor was responsible for making Trivandrum, the capital, a center of scholarship and art.

26.3.3 Weaknesses of Regional Polities

These states were strong enough to destroy Mughal power but none of them was able to replace it by a stable polity at an all-India level. According to some scholars, this was because of some inherent weaknesses in these regional polities. Though some of them attempted to modernize, particularly Mysore, overall they were backward in the field of science and technology. These states failed to do anything about the deteriorating Mughal economy. The Jagirdari crisis deepened as income from agriculture was reduced and the number of contenders for a share of the surplus increased. Trade, internal and foreign, prospered but the rest of the economy deteriorated.

However, recently some historians have questioned the above analysis of weaknesses of regional polities. For example, Satish Chandra argues that it is incorrect to talk of generalized economic decline and social stagnation. The resilience of the economy was in sharp distinction to the ease with which the polity collapsed. For example, Bengal superbly endured the ravages of early colonial rule. The economy of Bengal stabilized after the 1770s.

The social structure did not deteriorate. It changed and low castes moved upwards and "new men" gushing forward became a common feature all over India. Muzaffar Alam gives a regionally varied picture, with some areas (Awadh) experiencing economic prosperity and other areas stagnation (Punjab). Polities remained regional because no state system emerged indigenously with enough surplus for an all-India system similar to the Mughal Empire.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 When was the independent state of Hyderabad founded and by whom?
- Q.2 When did the Nizam of Hyderabad entered into a subsidiary alliance with the British?
- Q.3 Who became the governor of Bengal in 1717 CE?
- Q.4 When Siraj-ud-daula did became the Nawab of Bengal?

- Q.5 Who was appointed as the subedar of Awadh in 1722 CE?
- Q.6 Which are the two main taxes levied by the Marathas?
- Q.7 Who founded the Khalsa and when?
- Q.8 When was Banda Bahadur captured by the Mughals and executed?
- Q.9 Name the ruler of Kerela who was responsible for making Trivandrum as a center of scholarship and art.

26.4 Summary

- After the decline of the Mughal Empire, the territories under its reign witnessed chaos and throughout the 18th century, the Mughal Empire gradually fragmented into numerous independent regional states.
- Mainly there were three types of regional powers or states which emerged in the 18th century—the states which broke away from the Mughal Empire, the new states established by the rebels against the Mughals and the independent states.
- The provincial governors under the Mughals established independent states of Hyderabad, Bengal and Awadh.
- The independent state of Hyderabad in the Deccan was founded in 1724 CE by Chin Qilich Khan, titled Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah.
- . Murshid Kuli Khan who started his career as Diwan of Bengal under Aurangzeb became Governor of Bengal in 1717 CE.
- The British victory at Plassey against the Bengal Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah in 1757 CE, inaugurated a new phase in British relations with India. It paved the way for the subjugation of Bengal as well as India.
- The independent state of Awadh was founded by Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-Mulk in 1722 CE.
- The states of Marathas, Sikhs, Jats and Afghans emerged as a result of protest against the Mughals.
- Shivaji developed a stable kingdom of Marathas with the help of powerful families. The Marathas developed a very successful military organization under the Peshwas.
- The organization of the Sikhs into a political community during the 17th century helped in regional state-building in Punjab.
- Guru Gobind Singh fought a number of battles against the Rajput and Mughal rulers, both before and after the establishment of the Khalsa in 1699 CE.
- After Guru Gobind Singh's death in 1708 CE, the Sikhs rose in revolt against the Mughal authority under the leadership of Banda Bahadur.
- The Jats consolidated their power during the late 17th and 18th centuries under the leadership of Churaman. The kingdom of Bharatpur emerged as a strong state under Surajmal.
- A couple of small Afghan kingdoms were also established in North India following the decline of the Mughal Empire.

- Rohilkhand was established by Ali Muhammad Khan and Farrukhabad was set up by Mohammad Khan Bangash.
- Mysore emerged as a significant power in South India in the mid-18th century. The Wodeyar Dynasty transformed Mysore from a viceroyalty of the Vijayanagar Empire into an autonomous state.
- Haidar Ali laid the foundations of Mysore's power, which were consolidated by his able son, Tipu Sultan.
- The Rajput rulers strengthened their position by taking advantage of the disintegration of the Mughal Empire.
- Raja Sawai Jai Singh, the most renowned Rajput ruler, ruled Jaipur from 1699 to 1743 CE.
- At the beginning of the 18th century, Kerela was divided into a number of small principalities under the control of the local chieftains and kings.
- The three states of Cochin, Travancore and Calicut together comprised the present state of Kerala.
- Martanda Verma and Rama Verma were the famous rulers of Kerela.
- These regional states were strong enough to destroy Mughal power but none of them was able to replace it by a stable polity at an all-India level. According to some scholars, this was because of some inherent weaknesses in these regional polities.
- However, recently some historians have questioned the above analysis of weaknesses of regional polities.

26.5 Glossary

Chauth: It was a regular tax or tribute imposed by the Maratha Empire in the Indian subcontinent. It was one-fourth of the assessed revenue of the place.

Khalsa: It means the purified and reconstituted Sikh commUNITY instituted by Guru Gobind Singh on March 30, 1699 CE.

Polity: A polity is a recognizable political entity—a group of people with a collective identity, who are organized by some form of institutionalized social relations, and have an ability to mobilize resources.

Sardeshmukhi: It was an additional levy of 10 percent demanded from areas outside the Maratha kingdom.

26.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

Ans.1 1724 CE by Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah or Chin Qilich Khan

Ans.2 1798 CE

Ans.3 Murshid Quli Khan

Ans.4 1756 CE

- Ans.5 Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-Mulk
- Ans.6 Chauth and Sardeshmukhi
- Ans.7 Guru Gobind Singh in 1699 CE
- Ans.9 1716 CE
- Ans.9 Rama Verma

26.7 Suggested Readings

1. J.Stewart Gordon, 1998, “*The New Cambridge History of India: The Marathas 1600-1818*”, Cambridge University Press.
2. Paul Baines, 2004, “*The Long 18th Century*”, London: Arnolde
3. P.J Marshall, 1998, “*The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Eighteenth Century*”, Vol. II. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
4. S.N Singh, 2003, “*The Kingdom of Awadh*”, Mittal Publications.
5. Y.Vaikuntham, 2002, “*State, Economy and Social Transformation: Hyderabad State (1724-1948)*”, Manohar.

26.8 Terminal Questions

1. What were the stages in the breakaway of Mughal Provinces from the center?
2. Name the major territories acquired by the Marathas from 1740 to 1761.
3. What were the major states established by the rebels against the Mughals?
4. Trace the history of Mysore, Rajput states and Kerela as independent principalities in the 18th century.
5. Discuss the weakness of regional polities in the early 18th century.

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UNIT-27

RISE OF THE MARATHA POWER: SHIVAJI AND HIS ADMINISTRATION

Structure

- 27.1 Introduction
- 27.2 Objectives
- 27.3 Rise of the Maratha Power: Theoretical Framework

27.3.1 Rise of the Maratha Power: Polity

27.3.2 Administration of Shivaji

Self-Check Exercise-1

27.4 Summary

27.5 Glossary

27.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

27.7 Suggested Readings

27.8 Terminal Questions

17.1 Introduction

With the decline of the Mughal Empire, the Maratha chiefs became the strongest rulers in the country in the 18th century. The territory which included the modern state of Bombay, Konkan, Khandesh, Berar, part of Madhya Pradesh, and nearly one-third of Hyderabad state was called *Marathavad*. Later on it was called Maharashtra. The Marathas rose to power within this territory. The rise of Marathas was the result of the efforts of the entire Maratha people who on the basis of their language, literature, commUNITY, and homeland gave birth to Maratha nationalism and desired to create an independent state of their own. The history of the rise of Marathas is the history of the rise of an organized group of people inhabiting the territory of Maharashtra.

27.2 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the causes of the rise of the Marathas,
- Learn the rise of Marathas under Shahji,
- Know about the rise of Maratha power under Shivaji,
- Examine the administrative system of Shivaji.

27.3 Rise of the Maratha Power: Theoretical Framework

The rise of Maratha power has been a subject of debate among scholars and historians. Grant Duff opines that it was the result of 'conflagration' in the forests of Sahyadri. However, according to M.G. Ranade, it was much more than mere accidental circumstances. He labels it as a national struggle for independence against foreign rule. This opinion is disputed on the ground that if the Mughals were foreigners then Bijapur and Ahmadnagar rulers were also equally outlandish. If the Marathas could accept the rule of one power then why not of the Mughals?

Historians Jadunath Sarkar and G.S. Sardesai highlighted the emergence of Maratha power as a 'Hindu' reaction against the religious policies of Aurangzeb. Yet, one finds Shivaji applauding Akbar's policy of *sulh-i-kul*. In fact, this argument also does not seem to have any sound base. The Muslim rulers of Bijapur and Ahmadnagar were the earliest patrons of Marathas. Apart from this, one does not find Shivaji fighting for the cause of Hindus and their welfare outside Maharashtra.

Even within Maharashtra he never undertook social reforms. It is argued that Shivaji's assumption of the title *Haindava dharmoddharak* at the time of his coronation was not novel in those times.

Andre Wink has seen the rise of Marathas in the growing Mughal pressure on the Sultans of Deccan. Even Grant Duff admits the Mughal factor in their rise. But it was perhaps more than that. Satish Chandra emphasizes on the socio-economic factors in the rise of the Marathas. The success of Shivaji lay in his ability to mobilize the peasants in his region. It is claimed that he discontinued the jagirdari and zamindari systems and established direct contact with the peasants thus emancipating them from exploitation. However, Satish Chandra believes that he did not do abolish the system at all. Instead, he curbed the powers of big *deshmukhs*, reformed the abuses' and established necessary supervisory authority. Hence, he made the old system work better. Besides, their power was also regulated by limiting their armed retainers. This is the main reason that Shivaji's military strength did not comprised 'feudal levies' of the bigger *deshmukhs*. Petty landholders, who were often at the mercy of bigger *deshmukhs*, were benefitted by this policy. In fact, Shivaji's strength lay in these petty landlords. For example, the first to rally to Shivaji's side were *deshmukhs* of Malve who were petty landholders. Also, his emphasis on extension and improvement of cultivation benefitted the peasants as well as the petty landholders.

There was struggle for control over land among bigger, middle, and smaller *deshmukhs*, *mirasis* and the *uparis*. It was an "all-absorbing passion" to expand one's territory. At that time political authority also depended on control over land. Irfan Habib indicates the relation between the rise of the Maratha power and the rebellious mood of the oppressed peasantry.

Social factors also influenced the Maharashtra movement. Shivaji attempted to elevate the status of his family by forming matrimonial alliances with Shirkes, Morays and Nimbalkars--the leading *deshmukh* families. Thus he followed a dual policy of restricting the political power of the bigger *deshmukhs* and entering into matrimonial alliances with them for claiming equal status. His coronation not only put him higher in status among other Maratha clans but also put him at par with other rulers of Deccan. His assumption of the superior status of *suryavamsi kshatriya* with the help of the leading brahmans of Benaras, Gagabhat, was a step in this direction. Shivaji not only got compiled *suryavamsi kshatriya* geneology of his family connecting it with Indra, but also claimed the high-sounding title of *Kshatriya kulavatamsa* (the ornament of Kshatriya families). Thus, by sanctioning higher status among the Maratha families he claimed exclusive right to collect *sardeshmukhi* which was previously enjoyed by other Maratha families.

This evidently emphasizes the social tensions that existed in the Maratha society. The Marathas were mainly agriculturists and also formed a fighting class. Yet, they were not kshatriyas in status. Thus the social movement started by Shivaji aided in welding together the Marathas and the *kunbis*. Large numbers of Kunbis, holis and other tribals of Maval region who rallied round Shivaji were also motivated by the desire to raise their status in the social order. Thus, the rise of Maratha power was not just a result of a desire to overthrow the alien rule: it had innate socio-economic reasons.

The bhakti movement held sway over the minds of the Hindu masses during the large part of medieval India. It provided the intellectual and ideological framework for the rise of Marathas which got crystallized into "Maharashtra dharma". It also aided in providing cultural identity to the Marathas. The stress of the bhakti saints on egalitarianism provided ideal background *vis-a-vis* justification for the mobility in the varna scale by individuals and groups.

The success of the movement is exemplified by the rise of Marathas of such humble origins. During this time, a large number of groups raised their status in the varna hierarchy and legitimized their right to political power. According to M.G. Ranade and V.K. Rajwade it was 'Maharashtra dharma' that led to the political independence of the Marathas. He described it as *jayshnu* (aggressive) Hinduism as against the *sahishnu* (tolerant) Hinduism. Credit goes to a 17th century saint-poet Ramdas who expressed an unfavorable opinion about the Turko-Afghan-Mughal rule. Shivaji used it to his advantage. He used this popular ideological chant of Maharashtra dharma against the Deccanis and the Mughals. The religious feelings of the Marathas revolved around the goddess Tulaja Bhavani, Vithoba and Mahadeva. The war-cry of the Marathas "*Har Har Mahadev*" moved the sentiments of Maratha peasantry. However, P.V. Ranade rightly points out that "Hindu hostility to Muslim hegemony was neither the primary motivating factor nor the dynamic element of medieval Indian political scene". The hollowness of the ideology is quite evident when the Marathas collected *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* (a legalized plunder) across the boundaries. It served as a "psychological tonic" to mobilize the peasantry in the early phase of Maratha expansion. It is also difficult to admit that Shivaji wanted to carve out a '*Hindu Swarajya*'. Rather it should be seen more as a regional reaction against the centralizing tendencies of the Mughal Empire. The Marathas desired to expand their empire, for which an ideal background was provided by the disintegration of the Nizam Shahi power of Ahmadnagar and the introduction of the Mughals as a new factor. Its characteristic socio-economic contradiction also aided in mobilizing the local petty chieftains.

27.3.1 Rise of the Maratha Power: Polity

The early 17th century witnessed the emergence of the Marathas in the Deccan as soldiers in the army of the states of Bijapur, Ahmadnagar and Golkonda. They controlled the hill-forts in the Deccani states although more important forts were staffed by Muslim *qiladars*. The Marathas were often conferred with the titles of *raja*, *naik* and *rao*. Ibrahim Adil Shah, the ruler of Bijapur, employed the natives of Maharashtra as *bargirs* and frequently used them against the Nizam Shahi rules of Ahmadnagar. He even employed Brahmins and the Marathas in the accounts department.

Shahji

Under the Ahmadnagar rulers some members of house of Bhonsle, to which Shivaji belonged, were patels. Shivaji's grandfather Maloji was related to Jagpal Rao Naik Nimbalkar, the deshmukh of Phultun, by matrimonial alliance (his sister Deepa Bai was married to Maloji). In 1577 CE, Maloji joined the service of Murtaza Nizam Shah as bargir at the instigation of Lokhjee Jadav Rao of Sindkher. However, in 1599 CE a misunderstanding between the two over the question of marriage between Shahji and Jija Bai forced Maloji to leave. But Maloji emphasized his position at beginning of the 17th century, and again joined the Nizam Shahis with the aid of the Nimbalkars and got the title of Maloji Raja Bhonsle. He received the charge of the forts of Shivneri and Chakun and in return got the jagirs of Poona and Sopra. When he got connected with Jadav Rao Sindkher in 1604 CE, his prestige was enhanced. The latter married his daughter Jija Bai to Maloji's son Shahji. In the meantime, there were Mughal encroachments in Ahmadnagar which completely shattered its stability. Internal strifes also emerged which resulted in total chaos and confusion. Taking advantage of this situation, Jahangir succeeded in winning over the favor of many Maratha sardars to his side in 1621 CE. Out of these Lokhjee Jadav Rao, the deshmukh of Sindkher, and the father-in-law of Shahji was the most important one. After the accession of Murtaza Nizam Shah II in 1629 CE, Lokhjee Jadav Rao shifted his allegiance to the Nizam Shahi ruler, but was treacherously murdered in 1630 CE.

Under the service of the Mughals, Shahji Bhonsle received the rank of 6000 zat and 5000 sawar in 1630 CE. Shahji's cousin Kheloji also joined the Mughal service. However, in 1632 CE, Shahji defected to Bijapur and joined the service of Adil Shah. Shahji succeeded in controlling almost 1/4th of the Nizam Shahi dominion by 1634 CE. However, the Mughal onslaught in 1636 CE compelled Shahji to surrender all his gains and he was shifted towards Konkan as a Bijapur noble. It was at this time that Shahji got an opportunity to impress Morar Punt (Morari Pandit). He joined Randaulah Khan in his Kamatak campaign and performed excellently for which Muhammad Adil Shah granted him 24 villages as jagir in Kurar (Satara district).

Shivaji

Shivaji belonged to the Bhonsle clan of the Marathas. The people of this clan were peasant proprietors of Verul (Ellora) and a few other villages near Daulatabad.

Early Life

Shivaji was born at in the hill-fortress of Shivner, in the estate of Poona, on April 10, 1627 CE. He was the youngest son of Shahji and Jija Bai. In his early childhood there was hardly any interaction between Shahji and Shivaji for the former was busy in his Kamatak campaign as Bijapur noble (1630-36 CE). Shivaji was thus brought up at Poona under the affectionate care of his mother and was devotedly attached to her all through his life. Jijabai was a highly talented and virtuous lady. In 1636 CE, with Shahji's surrender of Shivner, one of the seven forts surrendered by Shahji, Shivaji along with his mother had to shift to Poona under the guardianship of Dadaji Konddev. In 1640-41 CE, Shivaji got married to Sai Bai of the Nimbalkar family and Shahji delegated the charge of his Poona jagir to him but under Dadaji Konddev's guardianship. After Dadaji Konddev's death 1647 CE, Shivaji became his own master at the age of twenty.

Conquests

Shivaji intended to establish an independent kingdom of his own right from the beginning of his career. Shivaji took the advantage of the confusion that prevailed in the Sultanate of Bijapur. Shivaji started his first military conquest at the age of 16 under the guidance of Konddev by attacking and capturing the hill forts near Poona against his wishes. From 1647 CE, Shivaji started his adventures on a wider scale. He took forced possession of the hill fort of Torna, a border post of Bijapur. He also acquired Raigarh and Kondana from the ruler of Bijapur. Adil Shahi ruler had realized the danger involved and pressurized Shahji to deter his son from such anti-Adil Shahi activities. Fearing Shivaji, the Bijapur Sultan Mohammad Adil Shah reprimanded Shahji and put him under arrest. As a counter measure, Shivaji negotiated with prince Murad, the viceroy of Deccan, and expressed the wish to join the Mughal service. This diplomatic move of Shivaji not only alarmed the Bijapur sultan but also made him to liberate his father. From 1649 to 1655 CE, Shivaji concentrated on the consolidation of his power and re-organizing administration. After 1655 CE, Shivaji renewed his in roads deep in to the state of Bijapur.

Shivaji doubled his territorial possessions and resources in 1656 CE when he conquered Javali fort from the Maratha chief Chandra Rao More by securing the murder of the latter through treachery. The occupation of Javali fort made him the master of the entire Maval country which was the feeder for his army. It brought a qualitative change in his economic position, for he secured the treasure hidden in the fort. By using this treasure, he increased the strength of Maval foot soldiers and conquered a series of hill forts located near Poona which formed part of the Bijapur Sultanate.

Episode of Afzal Khan

The capture of Javali by Shivaji alarmed the Adil Shahi authorities. The Sultan of Bijapur then grew suspicious of the rising power of Shivaji in the Deccan and decided to crush him. Therefore, in 1659 CE a huge army of 12,000 including cavalry and infantry was sent under Afzal Khan, one of his best commanders, with instructions to capture him either alive or dead. Afzal Khan is said to have boasted in the court that he would bring Shivaji in chains to Bijapur ‘without having to dismount from his horse even once’. He tried to infuse terror in Shivaji by the wholesale desecration of temples, agriculture and massacre. But he could not make further progress on account of the mountainous nature of the country. Treachery was common in those days, and both Afzal Khan and Shivaji resorted to use the same. Afzal Khan opened negotiations with Shivaji through a Maratha Brahman Krishnaji Bhaskar. He sent an invitation to Shivaji for a meeting, promising a favorable settlement with the court of Bijapur. The two adversaries met on the small plateau of Pratapagarh. Both of them had come to the meeting with bad intentions. Shivaji murdered Afzal Khan in cunning and daring manner in 1659 CE. The Maratha forces, lying hidden in the nearby jungle now attacked the leaderless army of Bijapur, defeated and forced it to flee. This event brought tremendous fame as well as booty to Shivaji. His feats made him a legendary figure. His name became a household name. People flocked to him from the Maratha region to join his army. Even the Afghan mercenaries who were in the service of Bijapur rallied round him. The Bijapur Sultan attempted thrice to check Shivaji but in vain. Eventually the Sultan concluded a treaty with Shivaji according to which Shivaji was recognized to be the *de facto* ruler of the territories occupied by him. It marked a great victory for Shivaji.

Shivaji and the Mughals

After concluding peace with the Sultan of Bijapur Shivaji diverted his attention to the Mughal territories in the Deccan and this made him to come into conflict with Aurangzeb. This opened a new phase, known as **Mughal-Maratha relations**.

Aurangzeb served as the viceroy of the Deccan twice and was engrossed with the reorganization of Deccan affairs as also with the affairs of Bijapur. Shivaji came into conflict with the Mughals first in 1657 CE when he helped the Bijapur sultan to check the Mughals from making inroads into the Deccan. In May 1657 CE, Shivaji conducted a night attack on the Mughal fortress of Junnar and got innumerable booty from it. Later, he appeared before Ahmadnagar and was partly successful in raiding it. Shivaji strengthened his position in Konkan because Aurangzeb left the Deccan to secure the throne. After consolidating his hold over the throne, the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb appointed his maternal uncle Shaista Khan to the viceroyalty of the Mughal Deccan and instructed him to invade the dominions of Shivaji. The emperor also instructed the Sultan of Bijapur to aid the Mughal viceroy. Thus, the combined forces attacked and occupied Panhala. Shaista Khan captured Poona in 1660 CE and established his permanent military headquarters there for conducting his operations against Shivaji. Then the Mughal forces occupied Konkan possessions of Shivaji. For three years (1660-63 CE), Shivaji was so hunted from all directions that he became a homeless wanderer. On April 14, 1663 CE, Shivaji launched a very daring night attack at the well-guarded sleeping chambers of Shaista Khan who was wounded in the attack, and his son was killed. This incident was a setback to the Mughal prestige in the Deccan. Aurangzeb was very angry to know of it and it led to the recall of Shaista Khan and the appointment of Aurangzeb’s son, prince Muazam as viceroy in the Deccan. The Mughal prestige received another blow when Shivaji sacked Surat in 1664 CE, which was followed by plunder of Ahmadnagar.

Treaty of Purandhar

In 1665 CE, Aurangzeb Raja Jai Singh of Amber to deal with Shivaji. Jai Singh was indeed one of the ablest commanders and diplomats in the Mughal service. He was very tactful and proceeded cautiously against the clever Maratha chief. He launched an all-out offensive against the Marathas. The Mughal army overran the Maratha country like a steam-roller, carrying everything in sweep. The Maratha forts fell one after another until Shivaji himself was besieged in the impregnable fort of Purandhar. Driven to desperation after months of deadly struggle, Shivaji sued for peace and the result was the Treaty of Purandhar which was signed on June 24, 1665 CE. It was ratified by Aurangzeb through his farman on September 5. As per the terms of the treaty, Shivaji agreed to surrender as many as 23 of his forts and territories yielding an annual revenue of four lakhs of *hun*. He was to keep for himself only 12 forts, including Raigarh, with an annual income of one lakh *hun*. After the treaty of Purandhar, Shivaji visited the Mughal court at Agra with his son Shambaji. The emperor neglected his presence and offered him a place to stand among the 5000 mansab office rankers. Shivaji took it as an insult and left the court without the permission of the emperor. His confinement and escape were well-known facts of history. After returning to the Deccan in 1666 CE, Shivaji took no aggressive measures and devoted a year or two to reorganizing his resources. He remained at peace with the Mughals during the next three years (1667-69 CE) partly because of his health and partly because of political exigency. The Mughal prince Muazam, on the other hand, also adopted a conciliatory policy and Aurangzeb conferred the title of 'Raja' on Shivaji and his son Shambaji was granted a mansab and Jagir in Berar. But the three-year-long peace was broken when Aurangzeb attacked Berar. In 1670 CE, Shivaji renewed his attacks against the Mughal and the Adil Shahi territories, with a second sack and plunder of Surat. Apart from this, he regained his control over the 23 forts which he had surrendered to the Mughals as per the Treaty of Purandhar.

The power of Shivaji, at this time, reached its zenith. Shivaji celebrated his coronation ceremony at Raigarh on June 16, 1674 CE with great pomp and splendor and assumed the title of '*Maharaja Chhatrapati*' proclaiming the establishment of a sovereign Hindu state and made Raigrah as capital. He went through an elaborate purification ceremony performed by Vishweshwar alias Ganga Bhatta, the renowned Pandit of Varanasi and a host of other Brahmins according to vedic rites. In 1676 CE Shivaji was given a grand welcome by the Qutubshahi ruler, Abdul Hasan, at his capital and a formal agreement was arrived at. The Sultan of Golconda supplied Shivaji a contingent of troops and military help on the condition that the booty gained in Karnataka was to be shared. During the course of Southern campaign Shivaji conquered Ginjee, Tiruvannamalai, Vellore, Tanjavur and the adjoining districts of the Karnataka which formed part of Shivaji's jagirs. He also settled the affairs with his brother, Venkoji, who was ruling at Tanjavur. The expedition to Karnataka is considered to be the last great achievement of Shivaji. Exhausted by long drawn wars and exertions he died in 1680 CE at the age of 53 years. Before his death Shivaji succeeded in establishing an independent kingdom of his own in the Deccan due to his own courage, ability, character and personality.

27.3.2 Administration of Shivaji

Shivaji was not merely a daring soldier and a successful military conqueror but also an enlightened ruler. He was also a great administrator. He laid the foundation of sound system of administration which was essentially derived from the Deccani structure though some of its institutions are Mughal derivatives.

Central Administration

Shivaji's government was an undiluted autocracy, with himself as the supreme head. All the powers were concentrated in him. He was at the helm of affairs. He was the fountainhead of all justice and the supreme commander of all the armed forces. However, despite such heavy concentration of governmental powers in his own hands, Shivaji exercised them with great caution and restraint. He adopted an enlightened policy. His chief objective was the happiness and prosperity of his subjects (*raja kalsya karmaam*).

Ashtapradhan

Though the government was a dictatorial one, to assist the king, there was a council of eight ministers known as *ashtapradhan*, a system already in vogue in the kingdom of Ahmadnagar:

- (i) **Peshwa (Prime Minister):** He was the second best leader of the Maratha after the king. He was the head of both civil and military affairs. He looked after the general administration and welfare of the kingdom.
- (ii) **Amatya or Mazumdar (Finance Minister):** He exercised control over the income and expenditure of the state. He devised ways and means for increasing the revenues, and audited accounts of the provinces as well.
- (iii) **Mantri or Waqia-navis (Royal diarist):** He had to preserve a daily record of king's acts and the proceedings of the court.
- (iv) **Samant or Dabir (Foreign Minister):** He tendered advice to the king
- (v) **Sachiv or Shuru-navis (Superintendent):** He was in-charge of the royal secretariat and he used to take care of the king's correspondence.
- (vi) **Senapati or Sar-i-naubat (Commander-in-Chief):** He was the supreme commander of the armed forces and was in charge of recruitment, organization, discipline, training of soldiers and arranging for their supplies.
- (vii) **Pandit Rao or Danadhyaksha (Ecclesiastical head):** He was the chief religious advisor to the king, fixed dates for religious ceremonies at the court and disbursed royal charities.
- (viii) **Nyayadhish (Chief Justice):** He constituted the highest court of appeal in civil and military cases, next to the king. He held charge of the judicial organization of the entire state.

The ashtapradhan was collectively responsible for the maintenance of law and order and general administration; all the decisions were taken unanimously. With the exception of the senapati, all other ministers were Brahmins. Each ministry had a number of junior officers to assist the minister. Chief among such officers were *diwan*, *phadnis*, *sabnis*, *karkhani*, *chitnis*, *jamdar* and *potnis*. Each minister who acted as the secretary to the king and carried out his orders was in charge of more than one department. Shivaji paid cash salaries to the ministers and all the other servants of the state.

Provincial Administration

Shivaji's kingdom was divided into four provinces, each under the charge of a *subedar* or *mamlatdar*. The provinces were further divided into *parganas* and each *pargana* consisted of a number of villages. Thus, the provincial government maintained direct contact with each and every *pargana* or township of importance and eliminated the district or middle-level administration. Most of the *parganas* had their hillforts which usually served as the administrative headquarters of the region.

Panchayats, headed by the *patels* administered the villages. The *panchayats* enjoyed considerable powers of autonomy in the management of the affairs. Shivaji had abolished zamindari system also. Therefore, his government maintained direct contact with the peasants and collected land revenue on a very rational basis. He scrapped the entire revenue establishment of the bygone days to eliminate corruption and appointed a new set of dedicated revenue collectors who enjoyed the confidence of the local populace. The state income was supplemented by the booty and the collection of taxes such as *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* from the Mughal areas.

Military Organization

Shivaji was a great military leader. He raised a strong and well-organized standing army for the defense and expansion of his kingdom. The cavalry was the most important part of the Maratha army. About 30,000 to 40,000 cavalry was supervised by the *havalgars*. There were two divisions in the Maratha cavalry – (i) *Bargirs* or the regular state cavalry which received horses and weapons from the government and (ii) *Silahgars* maintained by the nobles. They brought their own horses and equipment.

In the infantry, nine privates or *paiks* formed the lowest UNIT under a *naik*. There was a *havalgar* over 5 *naiks*, over two or three *havalgars*, one *jumladar* and over ten *jumladars*, one *hazari*.

The military strength of the Maratha kingdom lay to a large extent on its forts. As they played an important role in the history of the Marathas, great precaution was taken to maintain the garrisons in the forts in an efficient condition. According to the chronicles there were about 280 forts in Shivaji's possession. He spent a lot of money in repairing some of the more important forts like Raigarh, Toranana, Pratapagarh. Every fort was placed under three officers of equal status—*Havalgar*, *Sabnis* and *Sar-i-Naubat*.

During military campaigns, Shivaji maintained a very high moral and ethical standards. As the Mughal historian Khafi Khan writes "...But he made it a rule that whenever his armies went plundering they should do no harm to the mosques, the Book of God or the women of anyone. Whenever a copy of the sacred Quran came into his hands, he treated it with respect, and gave it to some of his Muslim followers, when the women of any Hindus or Muslims were taken prisoners by his men, he watched over them until their relations came with a suitable ransom to buy their liberty."

Shivaji also maintained a navy. After the conquest of the Konkan coast, it became a matter of absolute necessity for him to safeguard his coastal territory from the invasions of the Sidis of Janjira. It is believed that Shivaji had 400 ships of different kinds in his navy. The navy was divided into two parts and each part was commanded by *daria nayak* and *mai nayak* respectively. The Maratha fleet gave considerable trouble to the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British. Shivaji also organized a merchant navy.

Judicial Administration

The Marathas could not develop any organized judicial department. At the village level, civil cases were heard by the *panchayats*. Criminal cases were decided by the patil. *Hazir majalis* was the highest court for civil and criminal cases. The *sabhanaik* (judge president) and *mahprashnika* (chief interrogator) gradually faded away under the peshwas whose duty was to examine and cross-examine the accusers.

Revenue Administration

The revenue system of Shivaji was based on the pattern of the system of Malik Ambar of Ahmadnagar. He restricted the power of the existing *deshmukhs* and *kulkarnis*. He appointed his own revenue officials. The new system was completed by Annaji Datto in 1679 CE. The land was surveyed with the help of measuring rods or *kathi*. The share of the state was fixed at 30% of the produce. The cultivators were free to pay the tax either in kind or cash. The rules of land revenue applied to the territories under the direct rule of Shivaji called *Swaraj*. The areas under Muslim rule were subject to *chauth* (1/4 of land Produce) and *sardeshmukhi* (1/10 of land produce). Loans to agriculturists, called the *takkavi*, were granted by the government for the purchase of cattle and seed.

Self-Check Exercise-1

- Q.1 Who assumed the title of *Haindava dharmoddharak*?
- Q.2 Shivaji belonged to which Maratha clan?
- Q.3 When and where was Shivaji born?
- Q.4 When and between whom was the Treaty of Purandhar signed?
- Q.5 Where and when was Shivaji coronated?
- Q.6 What was the administrative council of Shivaji known as?
- Q.7 What was the title for the Prime Minister in the Maratha administration?
- Q.8 Which were the two main taxes collected by the Shivaji from his subjects?

27.4 Summary

- There has been considerable debate among historians regarding the causes of the rise of Maratha power in the 17th century.
- The Maratha movement was neither a 'Hindu reaction' nor a national war of independence; its strength lay in the socio-economic formations of that period.
- Bhakti movement provided an ideological background.
- The Marathas though served Ahmadnagar and Bijapur rulers as early as 17th century; the decline of Ahmednagar as well as constant Mughal pressure provided an opportunity to them to acquire power.
- The decline of the Deccani kingdoms also helped in destroying territorial integrity.
- The early 17th century witnessed the emergence of the Marathas in the Deccan as soldiers in the army of the states of Bijapur, Ahmadnagar and Golkonda.
- Shivaji's father Shahji served as a mansabdar under the Mughals. However, later on he defected to Bijapur and joined the service of Adil Shah.
- Shivaji was born in Shivner (Poona) on April 10, 1627 CE to Shahji and Jijabai.
- Shahji delegated the charge of his Poona jagir to Shivaji under Dadaji Konddev's guardianship.

- From 1647 CE, Shivaji started his adventures on a wider scale. He captured many forts. From 1649 to 1655 CE, Shivaji concentrated on the consolidation of his power and re-organizing administration.
- Alarmed by the success of Shivaji, the ruler of Bijapur send Afzal Khan to capture him but Shivaji murdered Afzal Khan.
- After concluding peace with the Sultan of Bijapur Shivaji diverted his attention to the Mughal territories in the Deccan and this made him to come into conflict with Aurangzeb.
- In 1665 CE, Aurangzeb Raja Jai Singh of Amber to deal with Shivaji. After a deadly struggle, Shivaji sued for peace and the result was the Treaty of Purandhar which was signed on June 24, 1665 E.
- In 1670 CE, Shivaji renewed his attacks against the Mughal and the Adil Shahi territories. He regained his lost territories and celebrated his coronation ceremony at Raigarh on June 16, 1674 CE.
- Shivaaji was a great administrator. His government was an undiluted autocracy, with himself as the supreme head.
- Though the government was a dictatorial one, to assist the king, there was a council of eight ministers known as *ashtapradhan* (*Peshwa, Amatya, Mantri, Samant, Sachiv, Senapati, Pandit Rao and Nyayadhish*).
- Shivaji's kingdom was divided into four provinces, each under the charge of a *subedar* or *mamlatdar*.
- The provinces were further divided into *parganas* and each *pargana* consisted of a number of villages. *Panchayats*, headed by the *patels* administered the villages.
- Shivaji raised a strong and well-organized standing army for the defense and expansion of his kingdom. He strengthened the forts held by him and also maintained a strong navy.
- The revenue system of Shivaji was based on the pattern of the system of Malik Ambar of Ahmadnagar.

27.5 Glossary

Hun: It was the official gold coin.

Kunbi: It is a generic term applied to castes of traditional farmers in Western India.

Mirasis: Resident owner cultivators were known as mirasis.

Uparis: A category of tenancy tenure under the Marathas.

Kunbis: A generic term applied to castes of traditional farmers in Western India.

27.6 Answers to Self-Check Exercise

Self-Check Exercise-1

Ans.1 Shivaji

Ans.2 Bhonsle

Ans.3 Shivner (Poona) on April 10, 1627 CE

Ans.4 June 24, 1665 CE between Jai Singh, commander of the Mughals, and Shivaji.

Ans.5 At Raigarh on June 16, 1674 CE

Ans.6 Ashtapradhan

Ans.7 Peshwa

Ans.8 Chauth and Sardeshmukhi

27.7 Suggested Readings

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5. Setumadhava Rao Pagadi, 1983, "*Shivaji*", National Book Trust, India.
6. Stewart Gordon, 1993, "*The Marathas 1600-1818*", Cambridge University Press.

27.8 Terminal Questions

1. Can the emergence of the Maratha movement be termed as 'Hindu reaction'? Comment.
2. Critically analyze the causes for the rise of Maratha power in the 17th century.
3. Explain the rise of Maratha power under Shahji.
4. Account for the rise of Marathas under Shivaji.
5. Discuss the administration of Shivaji. How far was it successful?
6. "Shivaji was the founder of the Maratha nation". Discuss.