
Lesson - 4 Expansion of Delhi Sultanate (1290–1320)

With Special Reference to the Reforms of Alauddin Khilji

Lesson Structure

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4.0 Introduction

The rule of the Khilji dynasty was established in Delhi after the end of slave dynasty in 1290. Khiljis were basically Turkish but since they had settled for a long time in the Helmand valley of Afghanistan, they had the Afghani dress and culture. Many Khiljis came and settled in India where they got creative jobs in the army and administration. Taking advantage of the confused political situation after the death of Balban, Jalaluddin Feroz Khilji established the rule of Khilji dynasty. The foundation of the Khilji rule marked the end of the prevailing system and beginning of a new system. Sultan Alauddin Khilji happened to be the most influential and competent among rulers of the Khilji dynasty. He not only expanded the boundary of Delhi Sultanate empire but also introduced various reforms. He is known for his market reforms in Indian history. Sahabuddin Umar Qutubuddin Mubaraq Shah and Nasiruddin Khusro Khan were the rulers after Alauddin. After them came the fall of Khiljis. After assassinating Khusro Khan in 1320 Giasuddin Tughlaq established a new dynasty which came to be known as the Tughlaq dynasty in Indian history.

4.1 Objective

The main objective of this lesson will be to examine how Delhi sultanate was expanded and what was the result of the market reforms introduced by Alauddin Khilji. The Khiljis tried to demonstrate the difference between politics and religion. For the first time Khilji influence extended to South India.

After two centuries of confused wrangle for power and prestige during the early Muslim rule in India, there came a brief period of comparative stability and prosperity. Indeed, its author was Alauddin Khilji. It was in fact from his time onwards that the imperial period of the Sultanate began.

Alauddin was a ruler of vaulting ambitions and adventure. He began his career as the Governor of Kara. While he was simply a governor, he conquered Malwa and Deogiri. He ascended the throne after assassinating Jalaluddin Firoz Khilji in 1295.

4.2 Alauddin Khilji

After consolidating his position Alauddin ventured some of his most remarkable reforms and his undying passion for territorial expansion. The early victories of Alauddin had turned his head. He began to entertain megalomaniac ambitions. He even desired to establish a new religion and aspired to imitate the exploits of Alexander the great. But Gazi Alaul Mulk, the Kotwal of Delhi and a close friend of Sultan, pointed out the serious flaws of such ambitious designs and regarding his territorial ambition pacified the Sultan by saying that in the absence of the Sultan there was no teacher like Aristotle to govern the state. He further pointed out that many kingdom within India itself remained to be subjugated apart from the Mongol menace which must be dealt with first.

Now Alauddin decided to conquer rest of India in a planned manner. A strong army of about five lakhs in number, equipped with latest arms and ammunitions, was organized. With the help of this mighty army the Sultan won many victories within India. In the first attempt Northern Indian states were annexed. He sent his brother Ulugh Khan and his Wazir Nusrat Khari to conquer Gujrat. After Gujrat's conquest, Sultan's attention was drawn towards Ranthambhor. But it was not an easy task. When the early attempts proved futile, the Sultan himself went in person. Ranthambhor was captured in 1301 after a siege of one year. Ulugh Khan was given the charge of the fort.

Now it was Mewar's turn. After a gallant fight Chittor submitted to the Sultan. After the conquest of Mewar, an army was sent against Malwa which was conquered in 1305. Thereafter, the Sultan conquered Ujjain, Mandu, Dhar, and Chanderi in quick succession. Thus by the end of 1305 practically the whole of North India was conquered by Alauddin Khilji and the newly conquered territories were subjugated by the empire and directly ruled by the centre. Alauddin's northern conquests were much in conformity with the acts of any ambitious ruler of India. The main aim of his northern campaigns was territorial expansion of the Delhi Sultanate.

However, the most notable military achievement of Alauddin was the conquest of the Deccan. The credit for the successful Deccanese campaigns goes to his slave general Mali kafur. By that time

there was live lost among the Hindu kingdoms of the south. Even when Alauddin attacked Deogiri, the ruler unsuccessfully sought the help of other kings of the Deccan.

Alauddin desired to conquer the Deccan with mainly two motives — territorial expansion and economic exploitation of the rich Deccanese kingdoms. Perhaps another reason was religious in nature and the Sultan desired expansion of Islam in the south in 1307 Malik kafur led an expedition against Raja Ramchandra Deo of Deogiri on the pretext that he had withheld the payment of the tribute and given shelter to the fugitive ruler of Gujrat. Deogiri was badly defeated. Ramchandra Deo was forced to make peace with the Sultan on his terms. Emboldened by this victory another expedition was sent against the Kaktiya rulers of Warangal, a kingdom which had repulsed an early Turkish attack. In this campaign the imperial also army was assisted by the king of Deogiri. The ruler of Warangal surrendered and Kafur carried back with him an immense booty on a thousand camels to Delhi.

These successes further intoxicated Alauddin. In 1310 an army was sent against the Hosalya kingdom. The king was taken by surprise and surrendered all his treasures. The next expendition was carried on against the Pandya ruler of Malabar. Kafur was again successful. The next compaign in Deccan was undertaken in 1312 against hostile ruler of Deogiri. Shanker Deo, the son and successor or Ramchandra Deo. He was defeated and killed. Thus that whole of south acknowledged the suzerainty of Alauddin.

Ibn Batuta mentions that the successful invassions of Alauddin made a great impact on the people of Deccan. The conquests disturbed the whole political equilibrium of India and even Deccan was brought into the vortex of political whirlpool of Medieval India. The rulers of Deccan had no alternative but to submit to the mighty force of the invader. From the Deccan Alauddin amassed huge wealth which he utilized in other developmental works. Alauddin is credited with being the first Muslim ruler who crossed the Vindhya and got his suzerainty acknowledged by the Deccanese kingdoms. Incidentally, we have to note that these achievements of Alauddin were not his own, because he was actively assisted by important generals like Zaffar Khan, Ulugh Khan and Malik kafur.

4.3 Theory of Alauddin Khilji

While discussing Alauddin's imperialism, we cannot ignore his efforts to maintain law and order throughout the Sultanate by subdueing the intrigues and rebellions of hostile nobles and by carrying on an effective North-Western policy against the Mongols. In fact, in the beginning of his reign Alauddin had to suppress a number of rebellions. The Mongols menace was at its height when the Sultan ascended the throne. The Mongols invaded India under their great leaders like Kadar Khan, Daud Khan, Saldi, Kutlag Khwaza, Tardi, Alibeg, etc. Naturally, therefore, Alauddin desired to consolidate his North-Western frontier by establishing new garrisons and forts, increasing the number of soldiers and by appointing competent generals in that region.

Alauddin touched the apex of his glory by the end of 1312. The military achievements of the Sultan are in no way less important. He brought peace and order throughout the Sultanate, annexed the whole of North India and forced the Hindu rulers of the Deccan to acknowledge his sovereignty. The importance lies in the fact that he was the first Muslim ruler of India who successfully extended the authority of the Sultanate in the Deccan. His measures against the Mongols were important and effective. However, Alauddin's territorial gains could not prove long-lasting.

4.4 Reforms of Alauddin Khilji

A great military genius as he was, Alauddin was no less a greater consolidator and reformer. He brought significant reforms in political administrative and social fields. But above everything else were his economic reforms and market control policy. In fact, the economic reforms of Alauddin Khilji including land revenue administration and the price-control scheme are very significant topics of Medieval Indian history. He was the first Sultan who gave thought to the problems of land revenue administration and introduced important changes in it. For the study of his economic reforms, our main sources is the writing of Berni, Tarikh-e-Firozshah. But Berni's account is cryptic on certain points and he also uses certain technical terms whose meanings should be properly understood for a comprehensive and complete understanding.

The main defect of the existing revenue administration was that the able did not pay and the weaker section was overburdened. Again the Revenue Department itself had become corrupt. The main remedy adopted by Alauddin was that two regulations were passed. First every one must cultivate according to the measurement and the second, that the rate of tax was increased to 50 percent of the gross produce. Separate pasture land was fixed and separate pasture tax was to be collected from the peasants.

Alauddin removed the privileged position of the intermediary group which collected the tax on behalf of the state namely the Khunts; Mukaddams and Choudharies. By taking away the work of collection from them and by making them pay at the same rate as the others. Alauddin wanted to reduce their financial powers and political influence. As a result of these measures the Sultan was brought into direct contact with the cultivators and a large number of government officers such as the Amin, Muhassil and Nawisinda were appointed for the bulk of revenue collection. The department was put under the control of a separate minister, Serf quaini. The remedy, however, created its own problems it led to large scale corruption in the revenue department, in spite of the fact that the salaries of the revenue officers had been increased. This led to severe, action against the revenue officers so much so that Berni remarks that service in the revenue department came to be feared and people did not like to marry their daughters to the revenue officers. This system of direct tax collection prevailed largely in the Punjab, Delhi and Doab areas. The Rais and Ranas Paid a fixed amount of tribute in

their territories. The tax was collected mostly in grain and was stored in the state granaries which were established under the price-control scheme.

The significant feature of Alauddin's revenue reform is the introduction of the system of measurement of land as the basis of assessment. As we know, the old established system was the sharing of the produce. But under Alauddin the system of measurement was introduced for the first time. This was a step of great significance.

The sum up, Alauddin was the first Sultan to give comprehensive thought to the problem of land and land revenue administration and introduced two new significant reforms namely assessment by measurement and direct tax collection by the State as far as possible. These two basic ideas were further developed by Shershah and Akbar subsequently.

The economic regulation of Alauddin and particularly the price-control scheme represent an attempt to do certain new things which had not been attempted by the state in the medieval period. Alauddin broke new grounds by his new economic reforms which indicate his political and administrative genius. Our main source of it is again Berni. Amir Khusro had also shed light on it. Another source is Kairu Majalis, a sufi tract. It also gives an account of the origin of the scheme of Alauddin.

Under this scheme, the prices of different articles of use, ranging from food grains and clothes to small miscellaneous items, were fixed and separate markets were established. Of these four were important — grain market, cloth market, slave and horse market and market for miscellaneous items. Separate rules were made for controlling and supervising these markets.

The real problem after the fixation of price was to make available the commodities at that price and it is here that Alauddin's real success lies. Regarding the food grains the government directed the transport merchants to bring their food grains from the interior areas and to supply them to the city merchants. The state obtained the grain in form of taxes from the Khalise land. As a precautionary step the families of the transport merchants were taken as hostage for their good conduct. The grain brought from the villages were stored in the state granaries established in different areas of the capital. These arrangements were put under the control of a special officer Shahna-e-Mandi. He was assisted by a number of reporters and spies who kept him informed about the violation of rules. Such persons who violated the rules were badly punished.

In regard to the cloth market which was situated at a place called Sarale-Adil, the problem was of a different nature. Some varieties of cloth were imported. So their prices could not be fixed unilaterally. In this case the state gave loans to the Multani merchants who had perhaps specialized in cloth import business and supplied them to the local dealers.

The horse, slave and the cattle markets and the same problem as the cloth markets because horses and slaves were also brought from outside. Alauddin's efforts in this field were to regulate the amount of profit by the brokers. However, his attempts in this regard were not successful. Obviously fixing the price of different commodities was not so easy. But Alauddin achieved a great success in this direction.

Berni mentions that the purpose behind the price-control was to maintain a big army at a small cost. Another contemporary source Khair-ul-Majalis gives a different account of the origin of the scheme. According to it Alauddin wanted to perpetuate his memory by doing something good so that the people could always remember him. Dr. K. S. Lal refers to it and characterises it as a sophisticated interpretation of the scheme. Actually from Berni's account it also appears that the scheme was not for supplying cheap commodities to the army only. Among the articles whose prices were fixed, there were articles needed by the soldiers as well as the common masses. A contemporary work of Amir Khusro refers to this scheme and says that it was beneficial both the residents of the city and the villages in the period of famine. It appears that the scheme was primarily for the object of maintaining a large army at a small cost but it had a vital effect on the general masses as well. Berni himself in his other work *Fatwa-e-Jahandari* discusses the point as to why prices should be fixed and writes that the ruler should try to reduce the prices of the requirements of the army such as horses and arms as well as the prices of corn and cloths which affect the livelihood of the soldiers as well as the common people.

Another important point to be noted is that Alauddin did not attempt to take over completely under government control the food grains and clothes markets. What he tried to do was to regulate and control the fluctuation of prices of food grains cloths etc. Thus his objective was limited. There was nothing like nationalization of trade. However, his attempt to control the price was a marvel of the period concerned.

Berni only refers to the markets of Delhi. Few others are of the opinion that the scheme was meant for the whole sultanate. But it appears that both these views are incorrect. The scheme must have covered at least other garrison cities as well, because the main object of the scheme was to give relief to the soldiers. Naturally it could not have been limited to Delhi only.

In this opinion of modern scholars, the scheme of Alauddin was marvellous and a wonder of the medieval age. It proved to be a great success. Alauddin deserves all credit and praise for his novel scheme. The price-control scheme favourably affected the life of his subjects. However, it adversely affected the farmer and traders. They had no incentive and hence there was decline in agricultural produce as well as in trade and commerce. The nobility was also adversely affected because certain conditions were laid down for them in the purchase of luxury goods. Besides, the scheme failed to be lasting much due to the fact that it was based on naked force of the sword and not on the will and sympathy of the masses in general. Despite all these shortcomings, the market regulation and price-control scheme of Alauddin may well be described as wonders of the age.

4.5 Summary

We have presented an account of the rise and fall of the Khilzi dynasty. They ruled from 1290-1320. The establishment of the Khilzi dynasty marked the beginning of a new era. The imperialism and tyrant monarchy was at its peak. He was the first sultan to have extended his influence in South India. Alauddin Khilzi was the fore most among rulers of the Khilzi dynasty.

4.6 Key Words

1. Khuta	– Intermediary Officer
2. Mukaddama	– Intermediary Officers
3. Chaudharies	– Intermediary Officer
4. Amin, Muhassil and Nawisinda	– Officers responsible for collection of tax.
5. Serf-quaini	– Head of the Dept. of tax collection.
6. Rais and Rana	– They paid fix tax to the king
7. Khalis	– Land which paid tax inform of grains.
8. Shahna-e-Mandi	– Officer in charge of State Grainary.

4.7 Questions for Exercise

1. Write a short essay on Khilzi imperialism.
2. Estimate the military achievements of Alauddin Khilzi.
3. Critically examine the Deccan conquest of Alauddin Khilzi.
4. Discuss the market and price control scheme of Alauddin Khilzi.
5. Discuss the economic reforms of Alauddin Khilzi.

4.8 Suggested Readings

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| 1. Habib and Nizami | : | The Delhi Sultanate |
| 2. A.B.H.Habibullah | : | The foundation of Muslim Rule in India. |
| 3. K.S.Lall | : | The Twilight of the Khilzis. |

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Lesson - 5 **Tughlaq Dynasty : Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq and Firoz Tughlaq**

Lesson Structure

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5.0 Introduction

After the fall of Khiljis the throne of Delhi was occupied by Tughlaq who played an important role in Indian history. They were the last among Turks to rule over Delhi. After them came the Afghans. The Tughlaqs ruled from 1320 to 1414. The period of Tughlaqs was full of contradictions. On the one hand the prestige of Sultanate reached zenith, on the other hand the process of decline and disintegration set in. It led to the emergence of regional powers who were destined to play vital role in Indian history. The tyranny of Khiljis was replaced by liberal despotism. Religious tolerance and fundamentalism both can be seen together.

5.1 Objective

Our objective is to apprise the readers of different aspects of the Tughlaq dynasty. Geyasuddin Tughlaq founded the dynasty. Md. Bin Tughlaq and Firoz Shah Tughlaq were the most prominent among them. Their military campaigns were coupled with the interval reforms. Our objective will be to review the activities of Md. Bin Tughlaq who was the most controversial among Tughlaq rulers.

5.2 Giasuddin Tughlaq

Giasuddin Tughlaq who was the founder of this dynasty ruled from 1320 to 1325. His reign period was brief. His original name was Ghazi Malik. The prestige of Sultan had been shattered. Forces of disintegration and disorder were at work. He controlled the result of Telangana. In 1323 he controlled Warangal, which was annexed in his empire. In 1324 he campaigned against Jainagar (Orissa) He got much wealth from Jainagar. By his administrative reforms he provided stability to the Tughlaq dynasty.

5.3 Muhammad Bin Tughlaq

A ruler with a mind always haunted by great plans of administrative reforms, Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq was the most promising of the Sultans of Delhi. That he still proved to be a miserable misfit and a tragic flop is a mysterious paradox of history. A man of intellect and imagination, he was fond of experimentation, which, however, either failed or had to be abandoned before they yielded results. The failures brought to the fore the foibles that frustrated all schemes. Still, a few laurels can not be denied to this adventurous Sultan.

Transfer of capital from Delhi to Deogiri was the first experiment of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq. Historians have forwarded divergent reasons behind the project. According to Barni, the Sultan was anxious to have a centrally located capital and Deogiri satisfied this need as it was, according to him, equidistant from all the important towns of the empire. The Baturah says that the Sultan was enraged at the pasquinades of the Delhi people and this was the best way he deemed to punish them.

As a matter of fact, with the accession of Tughlaq the centre of gravity of the empire had shifted from the North to the South. Delhi was too northern to be the capital of an empire, which had its base in the South and then close to Rajputana, it was exposed to danger from the most was like people. Moreover, the South was recently annexed to the Delhi Sultanate. The Hindu Rajas had not completely reconciled to Muhammad's domination and a recurrence of rebellion and intensive strife would easily to keep a firm hold over the south. It was well-nigh impossible to do it from Delhi whereas Deogiri was an apt place for it.

The implementation of the scheme has raised much controversy. Barni says that all the people were ordered to proceed to Deogiri. Dr. Mehadi Hussain has pointed out that the transfer was neither compulsory nor complete. The complete evacuation of the city does not really seem possible. In whatever number the people moved to Deogiri, they had to trudge along distance of seven hundred miles in those days of scanty means of communication. Many died of fatigue and exhaustion. The remark of Barni that "On all the four sides of Daulatabad there were grave-yards of Muslims" is revealing enough even though hyperbolic. The Sultan ultimately realised his mistake and the people were ordered to move back to Delhi.

Obviously, the scheme failed disastrously despite the commendable arrangements that the Sultan had made for the people. He got the road repaired from Delhi to Daulatabad. Markets were

established at convenient distances, where all necessary articles could be secured. Those who were short of funds for establishing in Daulatabad were permitted to sell their Delhi house to the Sultan. But the Sultan failed to realize that these facilities would hardly be a compensation for the troubles the people experienced. To many it appeared as a chastisement. They encountered serious difficulties, first in abandoning their loved homes and secondly in setting at a distant and unfamiliar place.

The other reason for the failure of the scheme was the forceful enforcement of it. The Sultan, being an autocrat to the back bone, could not tolerate non-compliance of his orders. The account of his punishments of all people who disobeyed his orders, as given by Barani, Ibn Batuta and Isami, many be exaggerations but at the same time they can not be dismissed as baseless. They represent the general disgust of the people against the Sultan for the measures and thus explain to some extent their failure.

The scheme of the transfer of the capital was the result of political exigencies. But when implemented it came to be called the whim of an unbalanced despot. Tughlaq had, in fact, taken up an ill-conceived plan, whose failure was necessitated by its impetuous implementation.

Next comes the experiment with the token currency. It was not an original device. Towards the close of the 13th century, Qubla Khan, the Mongol Emperor of China, had encouraged and developed in his dominion the use of paper currency called the Chao. A similar experiment was tried by Gai Khatu, the ruler of Persia, with these examples to goad him on, Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq gave practical shape to the theory.

Muhammad's desire for the experiment was born out of the fact that there was scarcity of silver all round. The non-availability of silver was the real cause, and not the desire to replenish the Treasury which was drained, as many have suggested, owing to the expenditure in the transfer of the capital, famine and failure of taxation policy in the Doab. Had it been so, the Sultan could not have offered gold tankas in exchange for the token coins when the scheme collapsed. Again, all authorities are unanimous on the fact that the Sultan had no personal desire behind the experiment.

Guided by a genuine motive, the Sultan introduced his token currency. Copper tokens were issued and a royal decree proclaimed they should be used in all transactions and at par with gold and silver coins. To enforce the acceptance of his new currency, he had recourse not to force, but to dictates of religion. The people were asked to obey because "he truly obeys God who obeys Sultan Muhammad Tughlaq". Thus the state tried to give every proof of its sincerity. Still the experiment failed and the Sultan was compelled to withdraw the token currency and to take from the royal treasury gold and silver pieces in exchange for copper coins.

There were many reasons behind the dismal failure of the Sultan's experiment it was absolutely essential for the success of the innovation that none but the state should issue the token, but the state failed to make the issue of the new coins, a monopoly of its own. Every goldsmith struck copper coins in his workshop. The design and the finish of the coins turned out by the royal mint were not such that they could not be imitated. No precautions were taken to prevent or check the imitation.

The scheme failed also on account of ignorance, prejudice and backwardness of the people. The Sultan's device based on his unassisted calculation took the people with surprise and his measures because of their sheer novelty provoked disgust and resentment. The Sultan was much ahead of the time and the people failed to appreciate his ideas.

So far as other measures of Muhammad are concerned he for the first time maintained a detailed register of income and expenditure of the state for which data were collected with great care. This proved very helpful in administrative work.

With a view to augmenting revenue and keeping the turbulent Hindu chieftains under control, the Sultan enhanced the land tax in Doab, area to fifty percent. However, this measure of Sultan also failed. Infact, at that time Doab was virtually in the grip of famine. What to talk about the payment of enhanced tax, farmers of Doab were not even in position to pay their regular tax. Revolts also took place in certain parts of Doab area. Perhaps Sultan knew nothing about the worse situation in Doab. This is why, as soon as Sultan came to know about it he not only withdrew his new order but also exempted the farmers from payment of land tax at old rate and took measures to provide relief to the people of this area. But it was too late and the failure of his measure made the Sultan all the more unpopular and weakened his position.

Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq established a new department of Diwan-i-Kohi and an ideal farm near Delhi with the intention of bringing about improvements in agricultural production. Unfortunately this scheme of Sultan also misfired. The reason for failure were selection of barren land, impatience of Sultan and the corrupt bureaucracy. The failure of this scheme proved very harmful from economic point of view.

Muhammad also failed in his foreign policy. His misguided ambition to capture Trans Oxiana and the organization of a big army for this purpose were the indication of his wrong ambition and shortsightedness. It cost him much in man power and money. His so called Chinese invasion also proved disastrous. His Deccan policy also proved to be failure.

None of the projects of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq were mere figment of fancy or outcome of wanton caprice. They had certain justified ends to serve, but the Sultan had neither patience nor prudence, his disappointment reached the verge of frenzy and he wreaked his wrath ruthlessly upon unhappy offenders, who could not keep pace with the flight of his imagination. It was this frivolity that brought upon him the charge of wanton cruelty and insanity. No wonder, despite his earnest efforts concerning noble plans, all he achieved was a fiasco.

5.4 Firoz Shah

Firoz, a pious, God-fearing, generous and indulgent monarch, was a total misfit in tackling the problems which confronted the Delhi Sultanate. The fantastic schemes of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq had thrown the empire out of gear; and this weak and vacillating successor worsened the situation

further. As remarked by Sir Wolseley Haig, he lacked all the essential qualities that were needed of a king in the 14th century when necessity was the law, expediency, morality, and might, right.

With regard to Firoz's character, it must be admitted that he was essentially a man of peace. Welfare was the watch word of his administration. His personal life was also praise worthy. He denied from the earthen instead of gold and silver plates. He was pious but puritanic to the point of getting pictures banned even from banners and ensigns kindly to the Hindus. He sternly forbade public worship of idols and painting of portraits and taxed the Brahmins who had hitherto been exempted. This is to say his natural prety has to be qualified by the remark that he was not capable of a truly religious toleration. As it happened, the success of any state in India depended on its eclecticism which Firoz lacked.

Though admired by all for his liberal attitude to the erring, Firoz carried it to the extent of a weakness when he showed undue indulgence to undeserving blackguards. He also betrayed his inability to take decisions at the right time. In critical moments, during his military campaigns, he withdrew all to avoid the shedding of blood of his coreligionists. This weakness led him on many occasions to abandon pursuing an obvious advantage to a fruitful conclusion.

Keeping in view this picture of his personality, we will proceed to analyze Firoz Shah's achievements immediately after his accession, he remitted all accumulated debts and mortgages. Those who had received monetary loans during the famine at the time of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq were excused from repayment. Instead, they were asked to pardon the dead Sultan for all the unjust acts of oppression.

In addition to this, the master passion that Firoz showed for public works speaks of his nobility heart. Irrigation canals were constructed, as for example, one from Jamuna and another from Sutiej. He employed skilled, engineers to super-intend, examine and report on them. The income that accrued from the reclamation of wasteland was spent on religious and educational purposes. He founded the town of Jaunpur, Fatehabad, Hissar and Ferozabad, He also constructed a great number of mosques, palaces, sarais, reservoirs, hospitals, public baths and bridges. He caused 1,200 gardens to be laid near Delhi. Commenting on this activity. Sir Wolseley Haig remarks that his passion for building that of Roman Emperors like Augustus.

Now, let us enumerate the points which speak for his kindness. In the name of religion, he abolished the cruel types of torture like amputation of limbs, pouring of molten lead into the throats, driving iron nails into the body, sawing men as under and such others. The administration of justice was according to the Quranic law. He established an employment bureau to help find work suitable to each man's capacity and merit. A charity bureau, too, was established. The bureau gave monetary aid for the marriage of Muslim girls and for widows and orphans. A hospital was founded where medicines and food were given free of cost. Further, after the conquest of Nagarkot (one of his three

victories, the other two being Jainagar and Orissa) he caused the 500 volumes in Sanskrit to be translated into Persian.

Firoz Shah's administration, too, was permeated with the same streak of kindness. To conciliate the nobles and the officials he revived the Jagir system. He abolished many vexatious taxes. He imposed the four quaranic taxes-Kharaj (one tenth of the produce of lands), Zakar (alms), Jizya (poll tax on the non-Muslims) and Khams one fifth of the spoils and the produce of the mines). There was a special irrigation tax of 10% of the produce. Merchants gained much because they were relieved from a great number of irregular and oppressive octrol duties. The Sultan strictly instructed officials not to demand anything more than the prescribed dues. The net result of these measures was increased prosperity of the people. Modern commentators like Moral agree that there was general prosperity of the people in the time of Firoz.

In spite of these good qualities, Firoz exhibited certain shortcomings which ultimately proved detrimental to the empire. His attitude towards the Caliph was obsequious. He was the first Muslim King in India to style himself the Caliph's Deputy and struck coins in his name. He encouraged his subjects to embrace Islam. It is said that not only Hindus but even Muslims dissenters did not escape his zeal. At one time Firoz said, "I seized them all and I convicted them of their errors. On the most zealus I inflicted capital punishment, and the rest I visited with censure, and threats of public punishment. I burnt their books in public and by the grace of God, the influence of this sect (Shias) was entirely suppressed."

In addition to religious intolerance, he betrayed lack of political insight which also contributed to the ultimate decline of the Sultanate. At the time the throne was offered to him at Thatta, he accepted it with great reluctance, Bengal assumed independence under Ilyas. Firoz defeated him but did not annex his kingdom. His Court Chronicler says that due to the onset of rains he retreated but the remarks of Thomas that the invasion resumed only in a confession of his weakness is more correct. Another attempt was made by him to reduce Bengal to submission by brushing aside all treaties and promises, but all in vain. Secondly, when he tried to reconquer Sind, his army suffered greatly due to famine and disease. He was misled by guides and he ended up in the sands of Kutch. Fortunately, he has rescued by the reinforcements that came from Delhi. Finally, he made no attempts to bring the Bahmani kingdom under the Sultanate and thereby accelerated the break-up of the empire.

Firoz Shah's army administration was far from commendable. The Army was organized on a feudal basis. The regulars received Jagirs and the irregulars were paid salaries. Much worse the granting of transferable assignments on the revenue to those who did not get either. The army was quite a large one. It consisted of 80 or 90 thousand cavalry. But it was far from being efficient. According to a regulation, a solder who became incapable of service could appoint his son-in-law or a slave to step into his place.

Before we conclude, we have to make a note of the system of slavery which was one of the causes for the bankruptcy of the state. The number of slaves increased tremendously in his time. The fief-holders made presents of slaves to the Sultan and thereby they were saved from paying the whole tax to the government. It is said that they numbered 1,80,000. The most favoured slave was Makbul Khan (a Hindi convert) who kept 2,000 ladies in his harem, Olive Greeks to Saffron Chinese. Therefore the institution of slavery was a great drain on the central treasury.

5.5 The Summary

Thus an assessment of Firoz Shah has of necessity to be cautious and moderate both in praise and blame. That he was kind by disposition is easily conceded, but he was by no means tolerant. As an administrator he lacked drive, as a military general, he lacked perseverance, as a monarch he looked beyond India to the Caliphate for inspiration, and as a ruler, he was foolishly indulgent to the corrupt and the criminal. There is indeed much in his reign to be praised, but no impartial historian can approve of the religious bias, the revival of the Jagir system and his undue lenience towards rebels. His benevolence was indiscriminate, as he was indulgent to the corrupt officials and also to the indigent husbandman. Probably his passion for construction works was as much as a result of his vanity as that of benevolence. In general, his grand-motherly administration proved detrimental to the state in the end. If goodness is greatness, he is undoubtedly great.

5.6 Key Words

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| 1. Sultan | – The King |
| 2. Cheo | – The paper currency |
| 3. Diwan-i-Kohi | – A new department established by Md. Bin Tughlaq |
| 4. Kharaj | – One tenth of the produce of land as tax. |
| 5. Zakat | – As good as Zaziya |
| 6. Khums | – One fifth of the spoils and produce of the mines. |
| 7. Tughlaqnama | – A book written by Amir Khusro. |

5.7 Suggested Readings

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|----------------------|--|
| 1. Habib and Nizami | – The Delhi Sultanate |
| 2. A.B.M. Habibullah | – The foundation of Muslim rule in India |
| 3. Irfan Habit (Ed.) | – मध्यकालीन भारत |

5.8 Questions for Exercise

1. Form an estimation of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq as a ruler.
2. Discuss the various reforming measures of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq. Why did he fail ?
3. Estimate Muhammad bin Tughlaq on the basis of his reforming measures. How far was he responsible for the decline of the Delhi Sultanate ?
4. Firoz Shah was a great ruler. Do you agree with his view ?
5. Form an estimation of Firoz Shah as a ruler. How far was he responsible for the decline of the Sultanate ?

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Lesson - 6 Rise of the Vijayanagar Empire and the Bahmanis

Lesson Structure

- 6.0 Introduction**
- 6.1 Objective**
- 6.2 Political history of the Vijayanagar Administration of the Vijayanagar empire**
- 6.3 Administration of the Vijayanagar empire**
- 6.4 Defects of Vijayanagar administration**
- 6.5 Cultural Activities of the Vijayanagar empire**
- 6.6 Art and architecture in the Vijayanagar empire.**
- 6.7 Rise of Bahamanis**
- 6.8 Administration of the Bahmani empire**
- 6.9 Cultural Activities of the Bahmani empire**
- 6.10 The Bahmani Kings**
- 6.11 Key Words**
- 6.12 Questions for Exercise**
- 6.13 Suggested Readings**

6.0 Introduction

With the decline of the Delhi Sultanate, many regional power started emerging in South India. The Vijayanagar empire founded by Harihar and Bukka and the Bahmani empire founded by Bahman Shah (1347) II are most prominent among regional powers. Vijayanagar empire was centre of Hindu religion and Bahmani kingdom was centre of Islamic religion.

6.1 Objective

The objective of this lesson is to let you know various aspects of the two empires. The religious activities call for our special attention.

6.2 Political History of the Vijayanagar Empire

The story of the Vijayanagar Empire, which set itself up as a barrier to check the onrush of the armies of Islam is one of singular interest. The Empire came into existence during the confusion of Muhammad Tughlaq's reign.

There are several theories about the origin of the great Deccan Kingdom. Sewell, in his valuable history of Vijayanagar, mentions seven traditionally accounts of its origin. But it is definite that the foundation of the Vijayanagar Empire on the South-West coast of India was laid in 1336 by two brothers, Harihara and Bukka two of the five sons of Sangama of the Yadava race.

Both Harihara and Bukka were ministers in the State of Kampili which soon fell in to the hands of Muhammad Tughluq. The two brothers were not only taken prisoner but were forced to embrace Islam. When the people of Kampili raised the standard of revolt against the authority of Muhammad Tughlaq, the latter sent Harihara and Bukka to suppress it. They failed in their mission because inspired by the spirit of independence the people of Kampili had put up stiff resistance. The success of Kapaya Nayaka of Warangal of the Hoysala King, Ballal III, in liberating the Andhra of Dravidian Countries inspired the two brothers to lead the liberation movement of the Hindus in the South-West. With the help of the founder saint of scholar Vidyaranya, they again came into the fold of Hinduism. In 1336, Harihara founded the independent kingdom of Hampi-Hastinavati and was crowned as the first king of the Sangama Dynasty. He founded the capital city of Vijayanagar. This small state grew up as a mighty kingdom of Vijayanagar afterwards.

Harihara (1336-1356 A.D.) embarked upon a career of conquests and gradually succeeded in extending the boundaries of his little kingdom in spite of strong opposition from his neighbours. So great was the success that it strengthened Harihara's arms. Within his life time the kingdom of Vijayanagar extended from the Krishna in the North to the neighbourhood of the Kaveri in the South.

Harihara was succeeded by his brother, Bukka I. (1356-1379 A.D.) who extended further the territories of the kingdom. He conquered Tamil Nadu and snatched the Krishna — Tungabhadra Doab from the Bahmani ruler. Muhammad Shah I. His most remarkable conquest was that of Madura, as a result of which his empire extended upto Ramesh Waram in extreme south.

Bukka's son, Harihara II, (1379-1404 A.D.) was the first king of the dynasty who assumed imperial titles and called himself "**Maharajadhiraj**" (King of Kings). He conquered Kanara Mysore. Trichnapali, Kanchi and forced the king of Ceylon to pay him Tribute. He attacked Konkan and north Kamataka as a result of which the parts of Chaul of Dhabal as well as Goa fell into his hands. Thus he became master of the whole west coast of the Deccan.

There were eight more rulers of this dynasty, which came to an end in 1486 A.D. After the Sangama dynasty, the Vijayanagar empire witnessed the rule of three more dynasties which came to rule one after another—

1. Saluva Dynasty (1486-1505), founded by Saluva Navasinha, the most powerful noble in Karnataka and Telengana.
2. Tuluva Dynasty (1505-1570), founded by Naresa Nayaka, the general of the last ruler of the Saluva dynasty.
3. Aravidu Dynasty (1570-1614), founded by Tirumala.

The most distinguished or powerful ruler of the Vijayanagar Empire was Krishna Deva Raya (1509-1530 A.D.) of the Tuluva Dynasty. His reign inaugurated a new epoch in the history of Vijayanagar, which attained under him a height of greatness of prosperity, never reached before.

After ascending the throne he set himself to the task of enlarging his dominions by means of conquest. He subdued the whole country of Ganga Raja, the chief of Ummatur (Mysore Distt.) Who has revolted against the authority of the empire. The fortresses, of Siva Samudram of Srirangapatam also fell into the hands of the Vijayanagar force. Next he captured Warangal and snatched away the forts of Udaygiri, Kondavid, of Kondepali from King of Orissa.

Though the Bahmani Kingdom had been split into five independent states by now, yet all of them were determined to destroy Vijayanagar. Krishna Deva Raya defeated all of them one by one. But the most crushing defeat that he gave were to Adil Shah of Bijapur. It diminished the prestige of Adil Shah so much that he ceased to think of further conquest in the South.

Thus Krishna Deva Raya defeated all his enemies and recaptured all territories and forts of the Vijayanagar Empire which had been lost by its previous rulers. The extent of his empire was considerably widened. The empire reached to Cuttack in the east and Salsette in the west. Towards the South it touched the extreme border of the peninsula. Krishna Deva Raya also maintained friendly relations with the Portuguese.

Krishna Deva Raya was not only a great soldier and general but was a great administrator also. He reorganized the administration of the empire. He was always anxious to promote the welfare of his subjects. He made liberal grants for relieving human want of misery. The name of his charity spread all over the country.

He was a cultured monarch. There is no ruler among the sovereigns of the Deccan both Hindu and Muslim, who can stand comparison with Krishna Deva Raya. Although a Vaisnava himself he tolerated other forms of religion and gave the fullest liberty of worship. He extended his kindness without distinction of creed or colour to foreigners who showered high praises on Krishna Deva Raya for his liberality. He was undoubtedly, the greatest king not only of Vijayanagar but in the entire history of India.

With the passing away of Krishna Deva Raya, the Vijayanagar empire entered upon its downwards trend. The last king of the Tuluva Dynasty was Sadisiva. He was a more figure head and

the real power was in the hands of Ram Raja Saluva, son of Krishna Deva Raya's famous minister Saluva Timma. Ram Raja was an able administrator but was not a good statesman. He gave needless provocation to his friends as well as opponents by his proud and arrogant behaviour. He tried to create dissensions among the Muslim States which once formed the Bahmani kingdom. But unfortunately this policy failed of the Muslim states united themselves against Vijayanagar in the name of Islam. The combined armies of Ahmadanagar, Bijapur, Golkunda and Bidar attacked Vijayanagar and the famous battle of Talikota took place on 23rd January 1565. The battle ended not in a defeat but a complete rout. It sounded the death-knell of the Hindu empire in the south.

The power of the empire, though crippled, was not entirely destroyed. In 1570, Tirumala, brother of Ram Raja, laid the foundation of the Aravidu Dynasty. Venkata I was the most remarkable prince of this Dynasty. His successors were weak and powerless and under them the Dynasty gradually dwindled into insignificance. The Muslims seized much of the territory of the empire and the Naiks of Madura and Tanjore built principalities for themselves out of its fragments.

6.3 Administration of the Vijayanagar Empire

The Vijayanagar Empire was the outcome of that revolutionary movement which had begun in the Deccan for driving away the Muslims from that country. The Kings of Vijayanagar tried to introduce the elements of settled administration with a view to make their newly founded power strong and efficient. They evolved institutions which made Vijayanagar a centre of civilization, wealth and culture more splendid than any that had hitherto existed in the south.

Central Govt. — The rulers of Vijayanagar followed the traditions of the Hindu polity in administration. The empire was a vast feudal organization and the king was the apex of the whole system. He was the fountain head of all power in the state. He as king of Vijayanagar wielded the power of an autocrat, he was not a tyrant. The Vijayanagar rulers were benevolent despots who undertook the happiness of the welfare of their subjects to be their primary duty. Hence they commanded love and obedience from their subjects.

Council of Ministers — The Vijayanagar rulers were aided and advised in the discharge of their royal functions by a council of ministers. They were appointed and dismissed by the king of held office at the pleasure of the latter. The functions of the council were purely advisory in nature.

The principal officers of the state were the prime-minister, the chief treasurer, the custodian of the jewellery and the perfect of the police, who were assisted by a number of lesser officials. The prime-minister was the king's chief adviser on all important questions. The perfect of police corresponded to the Mughal Kotwal who was responsible for maintaining order in the city. According to Nuniz, the perfect had to give account of bribery which was not looked upon as an abominable vice in those days.

Provincial Govt. — The empire, when at the height of its glory, was divided roughly into more than 200 provinces — They were again subdivided into districts, called "**Nadus**" or "**Kothams**" which were again subdivided into small groups of villages of town. Each province was held by a victory called "**Prantpati**" or "**Nayaka**". He was either a prince of the royal family or a powerful noble of the state, or some representative of the old ruling dynasty. The governors enjoyed autonomous power in their internal administration. They kept their own armies held their own court, and made charitable grants. But they had to give accounts of their income and expenditure to the Central Government. In times of war, they were required to provide military assistance to the king. They were severely punished when they behaved treacherously towards their king or oppressed the people.

Local Govt.—The lowest unit of the administration was the village which was self-sufficient. The village '**Panchayats**' looked after the administration of the village through the hereditary officers called the '**Ayagars**'. These officers were paid either by grants of land or by a fixed portion of the crops of the cultivators. The central administration maintained contact with the village through an officer, called "**Mahamaya Kachariya**".

Revenue System — The main source of income of the state was the land. Revenue-land was classified as wetland dry land, orchards of woods or assessment was made according to the situation of fertility of the land. Generally $\frac{1}{6}$ th of the produce was fixed as the state demand. Besides the land tax, the Government laid a number of taxes such as grazing tax, marriage tax, import and export duties on merchandise, customs duty on articles of ordinary consumption such as grains, fruits vegetables, and animals of all kinds. According to Abdur Razzaq even the prostitutes were not exempted from taxation. The income from this despicable source amounted to 12,000 '**fanams**' the taxation was rather light but there was no extortion. Taxes were realized both in cash and kind.

These source must have yielded a considerable income to the state which spent a large portion of it upon the maintenance of royal pomp and splendour. The accounts of the foreign travellers testify that a light level of prosperity prevailed in the Vijayanagar empire.

Justice — The king was the supreme court of justice. There were also regular courts. The judges were appointed by the king. Justice in civil cases was dispensed with according to the principles of Hindu law and the usage of the country. The criminal law was very harsh theft, adultery and treason were punished with death on mutilation. The Brahmans were exempted from capital punishment. For ordinary offences, the punishment was fine or confiscation of property or ordeal. The local authorities were invested with judicial powers and a great many cases were decided by the "**Nayaks**" and the "**Gandas**" the ruler of the town".

Military Organisation — The military organisation of the empire, like the civil, was of a feodal character. Besides the king's personal troops, the provincial governors supplied their quota in time of war. Numiz writes that the king could collect as many soldiers as they wanted and their abundant wealth, enabled them to do so without much difficulty. The numerical strength of the Vijayanagar

armies has been variously estimated by various writers and it is difficult to accept any figure as definitely correct.

The army was composed of elephants, cavalry and infantry — The military establishment was under the management of the commander-in-chief who was assisted by a number of subordinate officials. But the efficiency of the huge army was not proportionate to the numbers of the force. It was inferior in the strength, persistence and endurance to the Muslim armies. It is apparent from the crushing defeats which were inflicted upon them by the latter.

Religious Toleration — The Vijayanagar kings were deeply religious people. They were devotees of Vaishnavism. But they adopted a policy of religious toleration towards all and did not discriminate between their Hindu and Muslim subjects. All forms of worship were tolerated within the empire. Barbora writes, "The king allows such freedom that every man may come or go and live according to his own creed without suffering any annoyance and without any enquiry whether he is a Christian/Jew, or Moor or Heathmen."

6.4 Defects of the Vijayanagar Administration

The administration of the Vijayanagar empire, however, suffered from some defects. The most glaring was the great power enjoyed by the provincial governors. When the central authority became weak they declared their independence and thus proved to be the cause of the disintegration of the empire. Secondly, their military organization was weak and inefficient. Thirdly, the Vijayanagar rulers committed a blunder in allowing the Portuguese to settle on their western coast for their commercial benefit.

Lastly, the rulers "failed to develop a sustained commercial activity in spite of various facilities.

Despite all these defects, the administration of the Vijayanagar empire was well organized and just.

6.5 Cultural Activity of the Vijayanagar

The empire had light cultural and artistic activities to its credit. The Vijayanagar monarchs were great patrons of education and learning. The period of their rule saw 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 under the inspiring leadership of Bukka, the second ruler of Sangam dynasty. Scholars of Sanskrit, experts in Hindu religion and philosophy, poets and artists, flocked to the court of Vijayanagar. The Vijayanagar court extended patronage to all the scholars, men of letters and artists without any regional or sectarian prejudice. All of them worked in perfect harmony with one another, which resulted in the production of the synthetic culture of South India. This was by far the greatest cultural achievement of the Vijayanagar of the Vijayanagar empire.

Sanskrit — A galaxy of Sanskrit scholars, headed by Sayana. (who died in 1387 A.D.) reproduced religious scriptures and rewrote commentaries on all the four Vedas and some of the Sayana's brother Madhava of Vijayanagar, was also a scholar of repute.

"Brahmans" and "Aranyakas" — Sayama's brother Madhava Vijayanagar, was also a scholar of repute. Most of the Vijayanagar rulers and other members of the royal family were well educated and some of them actually made literary contributions. Krishna Deva Raya was himself a scholar and author of note. The literary activity reached its zenith under him. He attracted the most talented men of his age to his court and provided them the best opportunities for the display of their literary and artistic skills. His court like that of Chandragupta Vikramaditya of the north was adorned by eight celebrated poets, who were known as **"asta diggaja."** His reign has been rightly called, "the dawn of a new era in the literary history of South India." He is said to have contributed live books in Sanskrit, besides the one in Tamil entitled **"Amuktamalyada"**, He gave generous grants of land and money to scholars.

The tradition of the court was carried on by Krishna Deva's successors. The example of the king was followed by members of the ruling family and by the nobles and well-to-do people. Many works on music, dancing, drama, grammar, logic, philosophy and other branches of knowledge were produced.

Tamil — During the Vijayanagar empire profuse literature was produced in Tamil also. The Shaivites, Vaishnavites and the Jain scholars made great contributions to the religious Tamil literature. It consisted of the translation of ancient and Tamil and commentaries there on; recasting of the Puranic literature and some works on religious philosophy. The **"Shiva nama Sittiyar"** of Arunandi is considered to be a great classic of Shiva doctrine in Tamil. Svarupanand Desikar and his pupil Tattu Varayar, the two scholar saints, prepared two anthologies on the Advaita philosophy, entitled **"Sivaprakasa Perudirattu"** and **"Karun Dirattu"**, in the beginning of the 15th century. In the field of secular literature, **"Tanjay Varam Kovai and Nalavenba"** of Poyyamoli and Pugalindirespectively are worth mentioning. In 1400 A.D. Villiputturar wrote **"Bhartam,"** and epic of great merit. It tells the whole story of the Mahabharata in 4,350 Tamil verses.

Telugu — Vemana and Virbhadrar were the famous scholars of Telugu-Virbhadrar translated Kalidasa's **"Shakuntala"** in Telugu. More original and standard works in Telugu were produced during the reign of Krishna Deva Raya. His court was adorned by Allasani Peddanna, on whom the royal title of **"Andhra Kavita-pitamaha"** (the Grandfather of Telugu poetry) was conferred.

The Vijayanagar empire also witnessed great development of Kannada and Malayalam languages. Madhura who wrote **"Dharmanathapurana"** in 1385 was the first Kannada scholar of this age. Mallanarya, who flourished at the court of Krishna Deva Raya, produced valuable literature in Kannada and Sanskrit. In 1604 A.D. Bhatta Kalanka Deva was composed.

"Karnataka Shabdanusasma" is the most comprehensive grammar of Kannada. A new class of Malayalam literature, called **"Chakkiyar Kuttu"** was introduced by the Nambudiri Brahmans during this period. The Puranic stories and other literary traditions of the past formed the themes of this literature Rama Pannikar, described the critics and **"Chancer of Malayalam,"** composed **"Ramayana,"** **"Savitri Mahatmyam,"** **"Bhagavad Gita"** from Sanskrit into Malayalam goes to Madhava Pannikar.

6.6 Art and Architecture of the Vijayanagar Empire

The kings of Vijayanagar from the beginning of their rule were distinguished as great builders. They had a great enthusiasm for building Council Chamber's public offices, irrigation work, aqueducts, temples and palaces which prevailed throughout the city and the large tanks in which water was stored. Inside the royal citadel there were numerous palaces, chambers and pleasure-gardens, within the enclosure meant for the royal ladies there was a large number of buildings, the most beautiful of which was the Lotus Mahal. It was a fine example of Indian architecture.

As the declared object of the Vijayanagar rulers to preserve and develop all that had remained of Hinduism against the onslaughts of Islam, temple building activities received great impetus. The partially secured temples were repaired and enlarged and given new face life. New temples were constructed on very elaborate plans over the ruins of the old and elsewhere. The newly built temples were usually of massive structure, lofty stature, and very extensive in dimensions. Among the new additions to the temple architecture may be mentioned. The "Kalyanamandapa" or ornate pillared pavilion, varied and most artistic use of the pillars for the extension of buildings construction of huge audience halls and profuse ornamentation.

The most remarkable temple was the "Vithal temple", described by Fergusson as the most characteristic specimen of the Dravidian style. Through the decoration work on the pillars and walls has been damaged by Muslim invaders, it is still the "finest building of its kind in Southern India" and in the words of Fergusson "show the extreme limit in florid magnificence to which the style advanced." The famous "Hazara Temple", built by Krishna Deva Raya, has been described an art critic as "one of the most perfect specimens of Hindu temple architecture in existence." Most of the famous temple of modern India, situated to the south of Tungabhadra, were constructed during the reign of the Vijayanagar rulers.

The last phase of the Vijayanagar architecture is represented by the Madura style which continued to flourish even after the fall of empire. The specimen temples of this style are found at Madura, Rameshwaram, Srirangam, Tiruvalur, Chidambaram, Tinnevely and many other places in the extreme South.

Fine Art — The Vijayanagar rulers gave patronage to all the ancient fine arts as sculpture, painting, music, dancing. These arts engaged the whole hearted attention of the Vijayanagar court. Arts acquired considerable proficiency in sculpture and painting as is shown by the accounts of the Portuguese chronicles and the Persian envoy, Abdur Razzaq. The scenes from the Ramayana, sculptured on the walls of the Hazara temple are much admired. Music too was greatly encouraged. The art was not forgotten.

In short, the history of the Vijayanagar empire was marked by an outburst of a great literary and artistic activity. The Vijayanagar empire occupies a remarkable place in Indian history because of

its polity, economy administration and cultural progress. "It served a high historical purpose by acting as a champion of Hindu religion and culture against the aggression of the Muslims in Southern India."

6.7 Rise of the Bahmanis

The decline of the Sultanate of Delhi, as an all India power, started under Sultan Muhammad Tughlaq. During the course of its disintegration, it gave birth to a number of provincial and regional states and the two mighty kingdom of South India — the Bahmani Kingdom of Gulabarga and the Vijayanagar empire. The two kingdom came into existence almost simultaneously. The ruling dynasty of the Bahmani kingdom came into existence almost simultaneously. The ruling dynasty of the Bahmani kingdom was provided by the Muslim ruling elite of the erstwhile Sultanate of Delhi while the monarchs of Vijayanagar were Hindus of the indigenous stock. Together they determined the destinies of South Indian for about two centuries and provided a long era of peace and prosperity to their subjects when the inhabitants of Delhi had been suffering under the misrule of their Sultans. Age of the Bahmanid and Vijayanagar kingdoms constitutes a distinct epoch in the socio-cultural history of Southern India.

The founder of the Bahmani kingdom was Hasan a brave and war-like soldier, who assumed the royal title of Abul Muzaffar Alauddin Bahman Shah. He ascended the throne on 3rd August, 1347 and made Gulbarga his capital. The Bahmani court was shifted from Gulbarga to the newly constructed township at Bidar by Sultan Ahmad Shah in 1429.

There are different stories about the origin and name of the dynasty. According to Firishta, Hasan was in his early life a servant of a Brahman, named Gangu who treated him well. As a mark of respect and gratitude to his previous master, he assumed the titled of Bahman Shah, modern researches have established that Brahmanical myth. The author of Burdan-i-Masir states that has an traced his descent from the famous Persian Bahma, son of Isfandiyar. He is suggested by highly trustworthy authorities like Nizamuddin Ahmad, the author of 'Taboat-i-Akbari' Ahmad Amin Razi, the author of 'Haft Iqlim' and Hazi-ud-Dabir the author of the famous Arabic History of Gujarat. This conclusion is supported by the evidence of inscriptions and coins which leave little room for doubt as to the origin of the dynasty.

Bahman Sah was a capable and ambitious ruler. He embarked upon a brilliant career conquest. Brilliant success attended the arms of Islam everywhere. Bahman Shah secured several victories over. Hindus and Muslim princes who compelled to pay their tribute. He succeeded in making his kingdom a powerful State during his life-time. Towards the close of Bahman Shah's reign, his dominions extended from Daultabad in the West to Bhongi in the East, and from the river Wainganga in the North to the river Krishna in the South. He was an efficient administrator. He was a tender-hearted king. His subjects and army passed their time in perfect ease and contentment.

Bahman Shah's successors were mostly debauches and inhuman tyrants whose policy was ill-adopted to the real ends of government. The administration was never efficient except during the

ministry of Mahmud Gawan who deserves a high place among the greatest statesmen of medieval history. He had a glorious record of military triumphs to his credit. He was appointed wakil-us-Sultanate (Wazir) of the kingdom during the reign of Muhammad Shah III (1463-1482) with a singleness of aim which had no parallel in the history of the Bahmani dynasty, he devoted himself to the service of the State. He subjugated the Hindu ruler of Konkan, captured the fort of Khalna from the king of Sangameshwar, plundered part of the Vijayanagar kingdom and snatched away the part of Goa from it. He also conquered the forts of Rajamundry and Kondavir and successfully plundered the state of Orissa. He served the Bahmani rulers for three generations. He increased the Bahmani dominion to an extent never reached before.

The success and influence of Mahmud Gawan provoked jealousy among the Deccani Nobles who succeeded in getting death order for him from the king when he was drunk. With him departed all the cohesion and power of the Bahmani kingdom. The cruel murder of such a great and useful public servant accelerated the ruin of the Bahmani kingdom. The conflict between the foreign Muslim nobles became very sharp after his death which ultimately led to the disintegration of the Bahmani kingdom. The last nominal Bahmani ruler was Kalimullah Shah who died in 1526. With his death ended the Bahmani dynasty after a glorious career of 179 years. The provincial governors declared their independence one after another and set up five separate kingdoms or Sultanates, namely the Adil Shahi dynasty of Bijapur the Qutub Shahi dynasty of Golkunda, the Nizam Shahi dynasty of Ahmadnagar, the Imadshahi dynasty of Berar and the Barid Shahi dynasty of Bidar.

6.8 Their Administration

The Bahmani rule implied the establishment of foreign domination by military adventures from central Asia. Following in the foot-steps of the Sultans of Delhi, the Bahmani established an Islamic State in which all the powers were concentrated in the hand of the Muslim nobility. The Bahmanids were despotic rulers. The Sultan was the head of the Central government. He was the fountain of all the powers of the state. He was his own Chief Judge, administrator and commander-in-chief. The Sultan had unlimited powers. He regarded himself as a representative of God.

There were several ministers to assist the Sultan in the administrative work. The prime-minister was known as 'Wazir' or 'Vakil' Amir-i-Jumla' was the finance-minister. 'Sadr-i-Jahan' was the head of the ecclesiastical and judicial departments. 'Wazir' acted as the deputy, finance minister in big towns there was the 'Kotwal'. He was the head of the police department and responsible for the maintenance of law and order.

The ministers were appointed and dismissed at the sweet-will of the Sultan. They could only advise the king. They were responsible to the sultan for all their deeds. In other words, the Sultan was the centre of all the power in the state. His wish was regarded as the final order.

The Bahmani kingdom was divided into four provinces called 'Tarafs' with their head quarters at Gulbarga, Daultabad, Bear and Bidar. Each province was entrusted to an 'amir' called 'Tarafdar' who received a 'jagir' in lieu of his services. The administration was based on feudal principles. The provincial governors recruited their own army and rendered service to the centre at the time of need. Mahmud Gawan had raised the number of provinces to eight. The Sultan had full control over the governors. The provincial officers were transferred by the Sultan. The Sultan went on tours to look after the work of the governors.

The lowest unit of the administration was the Pargana.

Historians like V. A. Smith have drawn a very dark and gloomy picture of the rule of the Bahmanids. According to them there is much in the history of the Bahmanids that deserves the strongest condemnation. The Bahmani dynasty contained in all 18 kings out of whom 5 were murdered 3 were deposed, two were blinded, with a few exceptions all the rulers were blood-thirsty tyrants, ferocious and cruel. The Hindus were treated with needless severity. They persecuted the Hindus and glorified in their slaughter. They fought ceaselessly against the neighbouring Hindu states of Vijayanagar. The Hindus had to pay 'Jazia' and suffer from some social and civil disabilities. The temples of the Hindus were desecrated. No doubt the Hindus were employed in the subordinate branches of the administration because they were indispensable by reason of their better knowledge and experience. But the door of higher office was shut against them. The fertile conversion embittered the feelings between the rulers and their non-Muslim subjects. Several of the Sultans were drunken debauches. They indulged in disgraceful orgies which were a common feature of the court life at Gulbarga.

The huge armies were little better than armed mobs, eager to murder tens of thousands of helpless peasants. They were extremely inefficient in warfare. That is why they were routed by quite small forces of active assailants.

But it would be unfair to judge the Bahmanid's conduct from the standards of our own days. In the 14th century European rulers burnt alive the Christian heretics. The Bahmanids acted similarly in dealing with the people whose religious beliefs and practices were vastly different to their own.

Some of the Bahmani rulers were undoubtedly benevolent despots who earned the goodwill of the subjects because of their public welfare activities. The founder of the dynasty (Hasan) was a just king who cherished his people and practiced piety. Muhammad Shah II (1378-1397) had high idea of kingship. He enunciated a doctrine which is thoroughly modern that kings were only trustees of the divine wealth, and that careless or unnecessary expenditure amounted to a breach of trust. He was the father of the poor and helpless. He showed a great interest in the welfare of his subjects. Once when a famine broke out he employed ten thousand bullocks to carry grain from Malwa and Gujarat to mitigate its severity. He was given the title of Aristotle by the Deccanese for his wise administration.

Firoz Shah (1397-1422) was without an equal as a ruler and many records of his justice still remain on the pages of time.

Though Alauddin II (1436-1457) was a pleasure seeking Sultan he did not neglect the interests of his subjects. He built mosques, established public schools and other charitable institutions, the most important of which was a hospital at Bidar. Skilful physicians were employed there to cure the ailments of the poor people.

During the ministry of Mahmud Gawan, the administration was very efficient. He organized the military department of the State and entrusted the central of the entire army to the king with a view to curtail the power of the noble who tended to become very powerful. He introduced several reforms in the administration. No department escaped his attention. He organized the finances, improved the administration of justice and instituted a survey of village land to make the state demand of revenue just and equitable. The agriculturists were given the option of paying the revenue either in cash or kind. The system of revenue collection was improved. Corrupt practices were put down. The guilty were called to account.

The system of village government continued as before even when the Bahmanids waged war against their political and religious forces, they did not disturb the ordinary husband man in the country who was occupied in tilling his lands and who cared little for the politics of Bidar of Vijayanagar.

The army was reformed. Better discipline was enforced and the prospects of the soldier were improved. On the whole the armed mobs of the Muhammad and Sultan were a little more efficient than those of their Hindu opponents, and in consequence usually were victorious.

Athanasius Nikitin, a Russian merchant who happened to reside for a long time at Bidar and travelled in the Bahmani kingdom between the year 1470-1474 in the reign of Muhammad Shah III says that the country was populous, the land well-cultivated, the road safe from robbers and the capital of the kingdom a magnificent city with parks and promenades.

All the Bahmani rulers were not fanatics some of them were very liberal, Bahman Shah had adopted a liberal policy towards the Hindu landlords. Those who acknowledged his suzerainty and agreed to pay daziya to the state, were allowed to retain their girds. Firoz Shah (1397-1422) was the first ruler who gave extensive offices to Brahmins who were probably the only learned men among the Hindus. It was he who took the bold step of offering the Hindus positions of honour and responsibility in the royal court. The Sultan appointed Rai Narshingh of Kerala as a peer of the Bahmani kingdom. Once the gates of higher civil and military services were thrown open to the Hindus, there was no going back. Before long, the Hindus fought shoulder to shoulder with the Muslim nobles in their conflict with the foreigners.

Thus some of the Bahmani rulers and ministers successfully maintained peace and tranquility in the kingdom on the whole, the Bahmanids were very successful rulers according to the Medieval standards.

6.9 Cultural Activities

It is completely wrong to say as Dr. V. A. Smith has done, that no definite benefit was conferred upon India by the Bahmani dynasty. The contribution of the Bahmanids, in the cultural sphere were most remarkable. The Bahmani court at Bidar acquired a unique cultural personality of its own due to the intermixture of south India Hindu and exotic Muslim tracts in every respect. The trade and commerce was already in the hands of the Hindu bankers and businessman. The Hindu traders had monopoly over the overseas trade. They supplied horses for Ormuz elephants from Ceylon, and musk from China to the court of the Bahmani rulers. The Bahmanids had become 'Dakhnis' from all points of view.

6.10 The Bahmani Kings

sometimes even the most tyrannical of them- were great patrons of art and letters. Some of the rulers were themselves accomplished scholars. Education in Persian and Arabic was extended as much as possible by village schools, which were endowed with lands, sufficient for their maintenance.

Muhammad Shah II (1378-1397) was not only proficient in Persian and Arabic but was also a poet. He wrote some elegant verses. In response to his invitation. Hafiz, the Shirazi poet of world-wide fame started for India but the fear of the sea and its untold dangers' led him to abandon his intention. The poet, however, sent an ode which greatly pleased the Sultan who bestowed upon the former a reward of the thousand pieces of gold. In appreciation of the poetic power of Fazullah Anju, the Sultan loaded him with wealth and distinction before his retirement to his native country. The Sultan established schools in several cities of his dominions for the education of orphans and bestowed ample endowments for their maintenance.

Though Ahmad Shah (1422-1435) was a ferocious bigot and a cruel tyrant, he loved the society of learned men. Muhammad-a-Makhzemi, an authority on Arabic language and literature, migrated to the Deccan from Gujarat during his reign. The Sultan not only gave several towns and villages and extensive lands near Gulbarga as grants to Sayyid Muhammad Gesu Daraz, but also built a magnificent cottage for him. He awarded 7,00,000 Deccani 'Tankas' to Shaikh Azari for composing two verses in praise of the Sultan's palace at Bidar. He gave 25,000 'Tankas' more for defraying the expenses of his journey to his native land.

Muhammad Shah III's reign (1463-1482) is famous for the literary magnificence of the great Bahmani Waqir Mahmud Gawan. He was a very learned man, well-versed in the science of medicine, a good writer both in prose and verse, and had few equal in his knowledge of mathematics. Firishta ascribes to him the authorship of two works— 'Ruzat-ul-Insha' and 'Diwan-i-Ashr', which prove that he was a versatile genius. He loved the society of learned men. He used to send every year valuable presents to several learned men in Khurasan and Iraq. It is said that his literary beneficence was so widespread that there was hardly a town or a city the learned men of which had not been benefited by him.

Mahmud Gawan spent a large part of his personal wealth in building his famous 'Madrasa' (college) at Bidar, the remains of which are still extant. The 'Madrasa' was equipped with a library for the use of its student, containing 3000 books.

It is said that the Bahmanids did not build any magnificent buildings like some other Muslim rulers. The builders at Gulbarga have been described as being heavy, gloomy and roughly constructed'. But the city of Bidar, the capital from about 1470 A.D., is highly praised by contemporary observers as a place full of beautiful and spacious buildings are much superior both in design and workmanship. The Bahmanids encouraged architecture by founding cities and buildings, mosques and fortresses.

One of the major architectural activities of the Bahmani rulers was the construction of forts. They showed unrestricted and unbiased use of all sorts of architectural concepts and technology, indigenous and foreign, 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' alike. Therefore, they form a special class of military architecture which shows free mingling of all the best that was available to the Bahmanids on the spot. According to Meadows Tayer, the fortresses, built by the Bahmanids were 'perhaps their greatest and most indestructible monuments and far exceeded any of the same period in Europe.' He describes the forts of Gawilgarh and Normullary as 'choice specimens of the grandeur of design appropriate to maintain fortresses and of the executed in good taste' with magnificence disregards of cost. The forts of Parenda and Ausa deserve mention because of their strategic position.

Among the tombs the best is that of Sultan Ahmad Shah I (1422-1432 A.D.) at Bidar which set fashion of the later tombs. Its exterior has a lofty and impressive entrance archways on each side. The main features of this tomb are the decorations of its interior which is adorned with paintings in bright gold, vermillion and green colours.'

The 'Madrasa' of Mahmud Gawan is an inspiring building of the Bahmani period which in its design is a unique monument of its kind in India. It is remarkable for the perfect symmetry and proportion of its various parts. Its front side was lavishly decorated with encaustic tiles of various colours and designs. The minarets were also adorned with glazed tiles arranged in zig-zag pattern.

The mosque at Gulbarga and Bidar are noble specimens of Deccan art. The 'Solah Khamba' Mosque (i.e. containing sixteen pillars) of the Bidar fort is one such building.

Thus it is very hard to concur in the wholesale condemnation of the Bahmanids which is to be found in the pages of the admirable History of India by that eminent scholar, Dr. V.A. Smith. There is much in the Bahmani rule that deserves to be praised. It would be worthwhile to quote the observations of a European gentleman who had first hand knowledge about the vanished glories of the Bahmani kings as well as their emblems still survive in the ruined monuments they have left behind. He writes, 'If we cannot compare the Bahmani kings with their European contemporaries from Edward III to Henry VIII, yet there can be no doubt that high civilization according to the standard of Muhammedanism existed.

6.11 Key Words

1. Maharajadhiraja
2. Nadu W Kothams – Districts
3. Nayak – Head of the provincial govt.
4. Panchayats
5. Ayagars – The hereditary officer of the Panchayat
6. Mahamaya Kachariya – An officer who maintained contact with villagers
7. Janams – Currencies
8. Shivanam Sittiyar – A Tamil Classic
9. Bharatam – The Mahabharata in Tamil

6.12 Questions for Exercise

1. Throw light on the history of Vijayanagar empire.
2. Show your acquaintance with the history of Bahmani dynasty.
3. Describe the causes, nature and effects of the Vijayanagar - Bahmani Conflict.
4. Briefly describe the main features of administration of Vijayanagar empire.
5. What do you know about Krishna Deo Rai ?

6.13 Suggested Readings

1. K.A.N. Shastri – A History of South India
2. T. V. Mahalingam – Administration & Social life under Vijayanagar
3. T. V. Mahalingam – South Indian Polity.

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Lesson - 7 **Lodi Dynasty, Decline of the Delhi Sultanate**

Lesson Structure

- 7.0 Introduction**
- 7.1 Objective**
- 7.2 Bahlol Lodi**
- 7.3 Ibrahim Lodi**
- 7.4 Causes of Decline**
- 7.5 The Summary**
- 7.6 Questions for Exercise**
- 7.7 Key Words**
- 7.8 Suggested Readings**

7.0 Introduction

The Lodis ruled over the Delhi empire for three quarters of a century. Brave and ferocious and endowed with immense self-pride, their Afghan origin unlike the Turks, remained tribal in concept. Their loyalties were limited to their respective tribes and the various Afghans who came to India did not belong to the same tribe but were a loose conglomeration of a number of tribes.

7.1 Objective

After reading the lesson, you will be able to know (a) the political achievements of the Lodi dynasty (b) a list of the kings etc.

7.2 Bahlol Lodi

Bahlol Lodi (1451-1489) belonged to the Lodi clan of Afghanistan. Overtly ambitious, brave and far-sighted, he exploited the existing turbulence to his utmost advantage and soon became an indispensable governor to the Sayyids and ultimately secured the throne for himself. Given the nature of Afghan policy ascending the throne itself was not enough. It needed the diplomacy and shrewdness of a mastermind to consolidate the rule. Bahlol attempted this by preserving to win over the goodwill and services of the Afghan chiefs.

He has tended to please them by inviting them to share his victories. Instead of acceding the throne by himself, he in fact built a large platform 'Masnad' where all the prominent leaders including Bahlol, sat together. They were addressed as Masnad-i-Ali. This is corroborated by 'Tarikh-i-Daudi' which mention that Bahlol maintained a brotherly intercourse with all his chiefs and soldiers. Further, he distributed Jagirs amongst them in respect of the other Amirs, he was more high-handed. Thus he got rid of Hamid Khan by cleverly manouvering against him and threw him into prison.

On the western brothers, the Rajputs under Raha Khumba of Mewar, the Towars of Gwalior, as also the Raja of Malwa were becoming exceedingly powerful and posed a serious threat to the Delhi kingdom. On the eastern borders, Mahmud Shah, the Sharqui ruler of Jaunpur proved an equally dangerous opponent. Also as they were closely related to the Sayyids by marriage, the Jaunpur rulers considered themselves to be the rightful claimants to the Delhi throne. Moreover, since they were religious bigots, they won over the loyalties of the Hindu zamindars and chieftains of Rewa, Anantgarh and of Vindhya region. The provincial, too, threatened to declare independence.

Within a year of Bahlol's accession, Mahmud Shah of Jaunpur attacked Delhi Bahlol was away to Sirhind but he rushed back. On the way, Bahlol's cousin Qutb Khan Lodi convinced Darya Khan Lodi, the head of Mahmud's detachment to desert Mahmud. The proved ruinous for Mahmud's army and he was compelled to recede. The peace, however, was established only temporarily. There was frequent warfare with even gains on either side, Finally, in 1486 Bahlol marched up to Jaunpur, annexed the kingdom and placed it under his son Barbak Shah, who was appointed its governor. Bahlol next suppressed the provincial chieftains of Sambhal, Koil, Mainpuri, Rewari, Etawah and the other districts of Doab. His last expedition was planned against Gwalior but he fell ill and died near Jalali in July 1489.

As founder of a new dynasty who also attempted to restore to Delhi sultanate to its glory. Bahlol proved far superior to his predecessors. Just and generous, he strictly followed the law and strengthened his empire within the framework of the Afghan tribal concept.

The Afghan Amirs after Bahlol's death, elevated his son Nizam Khan to the throne who assumed the title of 'Sikandar Shah'. He was, however, opposed by a group of Amirs who looked down upon his Hindu lineage. Instead, they advocated the cause of Barbak Shah, the governor of Jaunpur and another son of Bahlol Lodi. Ultimately Sikandar Shah outmanouvered Barbak's advocates and proclaimed himself as the king on 17 July 1489.

The first to feel Sikandar's powers was Barbak Shah. At first, Sikandar sent on emissary and attempted to establish peace, Barbak, unfortunately, incited by Hussain Sharqui, the ex-ruler of Jaunpur, showed no enthusiasm, Sikandar next led an army and defeated Barbak but restored the latter as the nominal sovereign of Jaunpur. He, however, divided Jaunpur into chiefs amongsts his followers. The peace proved short-lived. The zamindars, instigated by Hussain Sharqui revolted and forced Barbak Shah to flee to Lucknow. Sikandar again crushed the rebellion and restored Barbak Shah for the

second time. When the latter continued to prove an incapable administrator, he was removed and Jaunpur was annexed to the empire.

Sikandar Shah unlike Bahlol, was determined to demarcate the status and the powers the Sultan vis-a-vis the Afghan Amirs. Consequently he introduced a series of regulations of court etiquette. He ordered a throne for himself which was symbolic of the elevated status of the monarchy. The Amirs had to walk four or five miles to receive the Royal farmans and had to acknowledge the Royal sanctity by placing their documents on his forehead. If the farman was read in a public place, the Amirs had to stand at a lower level than the messenger who represented the king.

To further strengthen his hold over the Amirs, Sikandar ordered a complete review of the whole administration, with special emphasis on the auditing of account. Whenever discrepancies were detected, high or low were punished evenly. Thus Mubarak Khan Lodi, responsible for the revenues of Jaunpur, was made to replenish the embezzled amount. When some Amirs resented such encroachment of their privileges and planned conspiracy which was divulged, they were severely punished.

In addition, Sikandar Shah rejuvenated the espionage system and posted news writers even in the houses of the nobility. This is corroborated by *Tarikh-i-Daubdi* which mentions that the Sultan daily received an account of what happened in the different districts of the empire and the prices of all things. After annexing Jaunpur, Sikandar, in 1494 fought a severe battle against Hussain Sharqui, near Banaras, Sharqui fled away and Bihar was resented by Alauddin Hussain Shah of Bengal who considered Bihar as a part of his dominion. War was averted when both the Sultans preferred to reach an agreement.

In order to strengthen central administration, Sikandar preferred to locate his headquarters at Agra from where he could exercise effective control over the neighbouring provinces of Etawah, Biyana, Koil, Gwalior and termed as the best of the skilled soldiers of his time, Sikandar seemed determined to conquer the provinces of Dholpur and Gwalior as also suppress the Rajputs. While some modern historians like A. B. Pandey have accredited him with victories, *Tarikh-i-Daudi* categorically states that he did not add to his father's dominations.

Towards his subjects Sikandar proved a just, benevolent and charitable Sultan who worked for the welfare of the poor. He abolished corn duties and encouraged agriculture. Roads were cleared of robbers and commodities were even cheaper than during the Khalji regime. Sikandar's religious outlook, however, blemished his otherwise just character. His Hindu lineage infused in him a guilt complex and he spent his later years his ardent devotion to Islam. Consequently he destroyed numerous temples as also the sacred image of the Jwalamukhi temple at Nagarkot and built mosques at Mathura, Narnol and Chanderil. Like Firoz Tughluq, he too encouraged conversion.

Strikingly handsome, brilliant in arms and intellect Sikandar definitely proved to be the ablest of the Lodi rulers. After his death in December 1517 his son, Ibrahim Lodi faced similar problems of far greater intensity.

7.3 Ibrahim Lodi

Ibrahim Lodi, the eldest son of Sikandar Lodi, ascended the throne with the unanimous consent of the Afghan nobility. By a combination of tact and diplomacy, and by sheer strength of his personality Sikandar Lodi had become very popular. Ibrahim, on the other hand, proved inferior to his forefather. Ibrahim felt that monarchy was his birth right consequently, unmindful of the Afghan reaction, Ibrahim introduced certain radical court customs.

All the nobles were obliged to attend the royal court and were to remain standing with folded hands throughout the court proceedings. Ibrahim, thus inadvertently earned the nobles antagonism which was further inflamed by his extreme short temper and harshness. He tried to emulate his father's policy of suppressing the various rebel chiefs. The provincial governors on the other hand, proved more defiant and powerful than ever before. Ibrahim, therefore, needed greater tact, forbearance and patience than his forefathers to effectively suppress them. The Sultan sent a force under Azam Humayun, who successfully captured the fortress of Gwalior.

The Gwalior conquest encouraged Ibrahim to send another expedition against Malwa where the valiant Rana Sangram Singh was ruling. The Amirs, however, were like a house divided among itself. Consequently some of them even sided with Rana Sanga. Even the loyalty of Azam Humayun was not above approach. The rest of Ibrahim's reign was marked by a series of revolts.

Ibrahim Lodi, at the outset committed a diplomatic blunder by agreeing to a partition of his dominions with his brother Jalal Khan, the ruler of Jaunpur. However, when Khan-i-Jahan Lohani pointed to the political dangers on the partition Ibrahim asked Jalal to return to Delhi. Haibat Khan, an eminent Amir was sent to recall Jalal. While he failed to ensure Jalal's return, he manouvered to shift Jalal's headquarters to Kalpi. He also appealed to Azam Humayun to defeat Jalal's army. Together they attacked Awadh. But when Ibrahim marched against them, Azam Humayun once again changed sides and Jalal Khan, left alone, ultimately agreed to surrender. Ibrahim, however, refused to acknowledge peace. Jalal fled to Gwalior and Malwa. Ultimately, he was captured and murdered.

Ibrahim now became suspicious of all Afghan nobles and treated them with utmost cruelty. Azam Humayun and his son Fatch Khan, were thrown into prison while his another son, Islam Khan was deprived of the governorship of Kara. Ibrahim committed another political blunder by imprisoning the eminent Afghan noble, Mian Bhua, who had been a wazir and a great patron of learning. His death in the prison infuriated the Afghan nobles against the Sultan.

Islam Khan, Azam Humayun's son, assumed the command of his father's army rebelled and attacked Ahmad Khan, the governor of Agra. Ibrahim himself marched against the rebels. It was a deadly contested battle. The rebels demanded the release of Azam Humayun which Ibrahim refused to concede. Ultimately Ibrahim secured victory but at a tremendous cost of men and resources. The success turned Ibrahim more bitters and aggressive towards the remaining nobles. Instead of placating

and pardoning them, Ibrahim attempted to completely annihilate them and thus, brought about this own ruin.

Azam Humayun was executed. His execution set in a chain of reaction. Dariya Khan Lohani, the Governor of Bihar, Khan-i-Jahan Lodi and Hussain Khan fearing a similar, fate openly rebelled. Hussain Khan was assassinated and after Dariya Khan's death, his son Bahar Khan proclaimed himself theking, assumed the title of Muhammad Shah and occupied the country from Bihar to Sambhal.

The final act of the tragedy commenced when Ibrahim ill treated Ghani Khan, the son of Daulat Khan Lodi and the governor of Punjab. He warned his father of a similar treatment. Daulat Khan as a result, invited Babar, the ruler of Kabul to invade India. In 1526 the two forces met at the famous battle ground of Panipat Ibrahim Lodi was defeated and slain. The Delhi Sultanate came to an end and gave place to Mughal rule under Babar.

7.4 Causes of Decline

The empire which Bahlol and Sikandar had reared up with labour was rolled up by a single attack of Babar. This was the outcome of Ibrahim's defeat. The tactics of Babar were utterly unknown to Indians and they possessed no arms which could be a match for Babar's artillery. The archers of Babar and specially the 'Tulughma' charges by them also contributed to Babar's success. The soldiers of Ibrahim were not satisfied with him. Afghan were a house divided among themselves and Ibrahim was no able general. If his spies had been efficient, he should have surrounded the camp of Babar and cut off supplies instead of making a frontal attack on him. But Ibrahim was utterly innocent of even the existence of some defensive arrangement. He was equally bad as a diplomat. Even in a crisis, he could not rope in the support of Daulat Khan, Muhammad Shah or Rana Sanga so that Babar found practically no difficulty in occupying Punjab. Fortunately for Babar, his central Asian neighbourers caused him no distraction so that he could confidently pursue his plans in India. If the Afghan nobles had been a little less selfish and if the Sultan had been a little more tactful general, the occupation of India by Babar would not have been so easy. The fault of the Sultan and the nobility combined to shake the empire to its foundations and made the task of the invader easy. This led to the sudden collapse of the first Afghan Empire in India.

7.5 The Summary

The Lodi dynasty consisting of Bahlol Lodi, Sikandar Shah and Ibrahim Lodi played important role in Indian history. Of all the Lodi rulers Sikandar definitely proved to be the ablest among Lodi rulers.

7.6 Questions for Exercise

1. Which clan did Bahlol Lodi belong to ?
2. Who were the contemporary powers who posed a serious threat to Bahlol Lodi ?

3. What were the causes of decline of the Lodi dynasty ?

7.7 Key Words

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Masnad | – | A big platform where Lodi rulers sat. |
| 2. Tarikh-i-Daudi | – | A book on contemporary |
| 3. Farman | – | Royal order history. |

7.8 Suggested Readings

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|------------------------|---|---|
| 1. A. B. N. Habibullah | – | The foundation of Muslim Rule in India. |
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7.1 Causes of Decline

The empire which Babur and Sikandar had reared up with labour was rolled up by a single attack of Babur. This was the outcome of Ibrahim's defeat. The tactics of Babur were utterly unknown to Indians and they possessed no arms which could be a match for Babur's artillery. The archers of Babur and especially the Turbans, charges by them also contributed to Babur's success. The soldiers of Ibrahim were not satisfied with him. Aghans were a house divided among themselves and Ibrahim was no able general. If his spies had been efficient, he should have surrounded the camp of Babur and cut off supplies instead of making a frontal attack on him. But Ibrahim was utterly innocent of even the existence of some defensive arrangement. He was equipped as a diplomat. Even in a crisis, he could not hope in the support of Daulat Khan, Muhammad Shah or Rana Sanga so that Babur found practically no difficulty in occupying Punjab. Fortunately for Babur, his central Asian neighbours caused him no distraction so that he could confidently pursue his plans in India. If the Afghan nobles had been a little less selfish and if the Sultan had been a little more tactful general, the occupation of India by Babur would not have been so easy. The fault of the Sultan and the nobles combined to shake the empire to its foundations and made the task of the invader easy. This led to the sudden collapse of the first Afghan Empire in India.

7.5 The Summary

The Lodi dynasty consisting of Barid Lodi, Sikandar Shah and Ibrahim Lodi played important role in Indian history. Of all the Lodi rulers Sikandar definitely proved to be the ablest among Lodi rulers.

7.6 Questions for Exercise

1. Which clan did Barid Lodi belong to ?
2. Who were the contemporary powers who posed a serious threat to Barid Lodi ?

Lesson - 8 Central Administration under Delhi Sultanate

Lesson Structure

- 8.0 Introduction
- 8.1 Objective
- 8.2 Features of the Delhi Sultanate
- 8.3 Delhi Sultans and Caliphate
- 8.4 The Sultan
- 8.5 Central Administration
- 8.6 Local Administration
- 8.7 The Summary
- 8.8 Key Words
- 8.9 Questions for Exercise
- 8.10 Suggested Readings

8.0 Introduction

The state set up by the Turks towards the end of the twelfth century in northern India gradually developed into a powerful and highly centralised state which, for some time, controlled almost the entire country extending as far south as Madurai. The Delhi Sultanate, disintegrated towards the beginning of the fifteenth century and a series of independent states were set up in different parts of the country. However, the administrative system of the Sultanate had a powerful effect on many of them and also influenced the Mughal system of administration which developed in the sixteenth century.

8.1 Objective

After reading the lesson you will be able to know.

1. The relationship between the Delhi Sultans and the caliphate.
2. The status of Delhi Sultans viz-a-viz their powers.
3. The features of central administration.
4. The features of local administration under the Delhi Sultanate.

8.2 Delhi Sultans and the Caliphate

Although the Turkish Sultans in India were independent, they considered themselves a part of the Islamic world. To emphasise this point, Iltutmish requested and obtained a better of investiture (mansur) from the Abbaside Caliph, recognising him "the lieutenant of the faithful." This happened in 1229 towards the end of Iltutmish's reign. He had established himself securely on the throne by that time. The Caliph's letter of investiture was thus, Dejure the recognition of the defects. Recognition by the Caliph was desired by the early Turkish rulers in India because they felt it would strengthen their position in the eyes of ordinary Muslims and also enable them to deal diplomatically with other Muslim states on a footing of equality. Even when Halaku, the grandson of Changez, killed the Abbaside Caliph in 1258 and ended the Caliphate at Baghdad, the sultans in India continued to style themselves as lieutenants of the Khalifa on their coins, and to read his name in the Friday prayers. Seventy-five years later, Muhammad Tughluq removed the name of the Caliph who was living in Egypt. When a relation of the Egyptian Caliph came to visit the sultan at Daulatabad, all the nobles were asked to come out of the city to receive him. Firoz Tughlaq also requested and on two occasions received letters from the Egyptian Caliph. Thereafter, the practice of seeking such investigators from the Caliph disappeared in India. The Mughals refused to recognise anyone outside India to be superior to them in position and authority, claiming a position of equality with the rulers of Iran, Turkey, Egypt, etc. in the Delhi Sultanate, the Caliph had only a moral position; he could not be called the legal ruler in India because in the Islami law any person who ascended the throne and who was accepted by the community was the legal ruler.

8.4 The Sultan

The Sultan's office was the most important in the sultanate, and political, legal and military authority was vested in him. He was responsible for the safety and security of the state. As such, he was responsible for administration and was also responsible for administration and was also the commander-in-chief of the military forces. He was also responsible for the maintenance of law and justice. To discharge his function, he appointed judges. The sultan acted as a court of appeal from the judges. A direct appeal could be made to him against the high-handedness for any of his officials. The dispensation of justice was regarded as a very important for any ruler. We have referred to the stern manner in which Balban dispensed justice, not sparing even the high officers of state. Muhammad Tughlaq applied this even to the religious classes. (ulama) who had previously been exempted from harsh punishments.

No clear law of succession developed among Muslim rulers. The Islamic theory adhered to the ideal of the election of the ruler, but accepted in practice the succession to the throne of any son of a successful ruler. However all the sons of a ruler were considered to have an equal claim to the throne. The concept of primogeniture was found acceptable neither by the Muslims nor by the Hindus fully. Some rulers did try to nominate one of the sons, not necessarily the eldest, as the successor. Iltutmish

even nominated a daughter in preference to his son. But it was for the nobles to accept such a nomination. While the Muslim opinion generally adhered to the ideal of legitimacy, there was no safeguard against the usurpation of the throne by a successful leader, as happened more than once in the Delhi Sultanate. The army was posted in different parts of the country a strong contingent remaining with the ruler in the capital. Balban kept his army in good trim by making it march over long distances on the pretext of undertaking hunting excursions. Of all the Delhi rulers, Alauddin Khilji had the largest standing army. The strength of his army is estimated at 300,000 by Barni which appears to be an exaggeration. Alauddin was also the first Sultan who paid his soldiers fully in cash. Earlier the Turkish soldiers had been assigned a number of villages in the dab for the payment of their salaries. These soldiers had begun to look upon these assignments as hereditary, and were not prepared to give up their posts though many of them had become too old and feeble to serve. Balban tried to resume these holdings, but modified his order due to the agitation cleared by these soldiers and the pleading of his old friend, the Kotwal of Delhi. But Alauddin abolished these holdings by a stroke of the pen. He paid 238 tankas to a trooper and 78 tanka more to one who maintained 10 horses. The efficiency of Alauddin's army was the main factor in his ability to contain the Mongol invasions while conquering the Deccan at the same time.

Muhammad Tughlaq tried to organise his army on the decimal system. We hear of commanders of 100 and 1000 in his time. Probably, he tried to copy this system from the Mongols.

The Turks also maintained a large number of elephants which were trained for war purposes. A corps of sphers and the main factor in succession to the throne. However, public opinion could not be ignored. For fear of public opinion, the Khilji could not dare to enter Delhi for a long time after deposing the successor of Balban, but built a new town called Siri.

8.5 Central Administration

At first, the Turkish administration in India was essentially military. The country was divided into a number of tracts called Iqtas which were parcelled out among the leading area, and collected land revenue due to the government. Out of the money they collected they defrayed the cost of administration, including the salaries of the contingent of troops they were supposed to maintain for the service of the state. A certain sum was allowed to them for their personal expenses and the balance, if any, was to be sent to the sultan.

The Iqtadars were not the owners of the land assigned to them. They held the assignments as long as they enjoyed the confidence of the ruler. The Iqtadars could also be transferred from one place to another. However, it was not easy for the Turkish ruler to implement this idea in practice. The historian, Barni, tells us that after the death of Iltutmish each of his nobles wanted to enjoy the income of a large Iqta and to rule over it with independent authority. It needed a great effort on the part of Balban to establish the principle that every Iqtadar was subordinate to the ruler and could not act

independently. In checking the accounts of the Iqtadars, sometimes harsh methods were adopted in order to realise the surplus due to the sultan.

The sultan was assisted by a number of ministers who were chosen by him and remained in office at his pleasure. The powers and functions of the ministers varied from time to time. A definite system of administration developed towards the end of the thirteenth century. The key figure in administration was the Wazir. In the earlier period, the Wazirs were primarily military leaders. In the fourteenth century, the Wazir began to be considered more an expert in revenue affairs, and presided over a large department dealing both with income and expenditure. Muhammad Tughlaq paid close attention to the organisation of the revenue department. His Wazir, Khwaja Jahan, was widely respected and was left in charge of the capital whenever Muhammad Tughlaq went out to quell rebellions. There was a separate Auditor General for scrutinizing expenditure, and an Accountant General for inspecting income worked under the Wazir. Although quarrels between different officers hampered the smooth functioning of the department, the revenue department under Muhammad Tughlaq was able to cope with the affairs of the largest empire that had come into existence in India since the break-up of the Maurya empire. Khan-i-Jahan, a converted Tailan Brahman who was chosen by Firoz Tughlaq as his wazir, enjoyed full authority in the revenue department. His long spell of 18 years as wazir is generally considered the high water-mark of the wazir's influence. In accordance with Firoz's policy of making officers and Iqtas hereditary, Khan-i-Jahan II to play the king-maker after the death of Firoz and the failure of the attempt resulted in setback the wazir's position. The importance of the wazir could revive only under the Mughals.

The most important department of state, next to the wazir's was the Diwan-i-arz or the military department. The head of this department was called the Arizimulalik. The Ariz was not the commander-in-chief of the army, since the sultan himself commanded all the armed forces. In those days, no king could have survived on the throne if he entrusted the command of the armed forces to someone else. The special responsibility of the Ariz's department was to recruit, equip and pay the army. It was Balban who first set up a separate Ariz's department in India. He, and later Alauddin Khilji, paid close attention to its working. Alauddin insisted upon a regular muster roll of the armed forces. He also introduced the branding system (dagh) of the horses so that the soldiers might not bring horses of poor quality to the muster. A descriptive role of each soldier was also maintained, miners were also attached to the army for clearing the roads and removing the obstacles for the march of the army. The Turkish and Afghans predominated in the cavalry which was considered prestigious. The Hindus were employed both in the cavalry and the infantry at the time of the Ghaznavies. They continued to be employed but largely in the infantry in the subsequent period.

There were two other important departments of state — The Diwan-i-risalat and the Diwan-i-insha. The former dealt with religious matter, pious foundations and stipends to deserving scholars and men of piety. It was presided over by the chief Sadar, who was generally a leading Qazi. He was generally also the chief Qazi. The chief Qazi was the head of the department of justice. Quzis were

appointed in various parts of the empire, particularly on those places where there was sizeable Muslim population. The civil law based on the Muslim law (sharia). The Hindus were governed by their own personal laws which were dispensed by Panchayats in the villages, and by the leaders of the various castes in the cities. Criminal law was based on regulations framed for the purpose by the rulers.

The Diwan-i-insha dealt with state correspondence. All the correspondence, formal or confidential, between the ruler and the sovereigns of other states, and with his subordinate officials was dealt with by department.

There were a number of other departments in addition to these. The rulers posted intelligence agents called Barids in different parts of the empire to keep them informed of what was going on. Only a nobleman who enjoyed the fullest confidence of the ruler was appointed the chief Barid. The ruler's house-hold was another important department of state. It looked after the personal comforts of the sultan and the requirements of the large numbers of women in the royal household. It also looked after a large number of karkhanas or depots in which goods and articles needed by the king and the royal household were collected. Sometimes, these articles were manufactured under royal supervision. Firoz Tughlaq had set up a separate department of slaves, many of whom were employed in these royal "workshops". The officer in charge of all these activities was called Wakilei-dar. He was also responsible for the maintenance of proper decorum at the court, placing nobles in their proper order of precedence of formal receptions. Firoz also set up a separate department of public works which built canals and many of his public buildings.

8.6 Local Administration

The empire was divided into a number of provinces and tributary states. Little attempt was made to interfere in the internal affairs of the tributary states as long as they behaved loyally and did not threaten the safety of the empire. The provinces were divided into Shiqs and below it Parganas. The Pargana comprised of a number of villages and was headed by the Amil. The Shiq was under the control of the Shiqdar. The village remained the basic unit of administration and continued to enjoy a large measure of self government. It seems as the most important official in the village was the headman or the Muqaddam.

8.7 The Summary

It may be seen that the system of administration under the Delhi Sultanate had a number of similarities with the system of administration existing in the country earlier. In both cases, the ruler was supposed to be the head of the executive wing and the armed forces as well as the fountain head of justice in both cases, he was to be assisted by a council of ministers. In the working of the administration hardly any change was made in the system at the lower level. Thus, revenue continued to be collected in the same manner more or less by the same set of people. This was one of the major reasons why the Turks were able to establish their authority in the countryside so quickly.

8.8 Key Words

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|--------------------|---|--|
| 1. Tanka | – | The contemporary currency |
| 2. The Iqtadars | – | Life holders |
| 3. Wazirs | – | Revenue officers, later president of a large department. |
| 4. Diwan-i-arz | – | Military department |
| 5. Diwan-i-risalat | – | Department dealing with religious matter. |
| 6. Diwan-i-Insha | – | Dept. dealing with state correspondence. |
| 7. Qazi | – | The judge |
| 8. Wakilee dar | | |
| 9. Muqaddam | – | Village headman |

8.9 Questions for Exercise

1. What is muqaddam ?
2. Define Diwan-i-risalat and Diwan-e-Insha.
3. Describe salient features of the central administration under the Delhi Sultanate.
4. What do you about the status of Sultan in the Delhi Sultanate ?

8.10 Suggested Readings

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|-------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Satish Chandra | – | Mediaeval India. |
| 2. Imtiaz Ahmad | – | Madhyakalin Bharat - Ek Sarvekshana |
| 3. K.A.Nizami | – | Mediaeval Indian History & Culture. |

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Lesson - 9 Society and Economy During the Sultanate Period

Lesson Structure

- 9.0 Introduction
- 9.1 Objective
- 9.2 Features of the Society
 - 9.2.1 The Muslims
 - 9.2.2 The Governing Aristocracy
 - 9.2.3 Ulemas or Theologians
 - 9.2.4 Awami-e-Khalq
 - 9.2.5 The Slaves
 - 9.2.6 Life in the Cities
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- 9.3 Economy during Sultanate Period
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9.0 Introduction

The observations of the contemporary chronicles, such as Barni, Afif, Yahiya, Sarhindi, Rashid-ud-din and Shihabuddin, the authors of '**Fatawa-i-Jahandari**' and '**Tarikh-i-Firushahi**', '**Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi**', '**Jan-ul-Tawarikh**' Jahandari' and '**Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi**', '**Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi**' and '**Masalik-ul-Abasar**', respectively thrown a significant light on the social and economic life of the Sultanate period. The accounts of the foreign travellers, such as Iban Batuta, Al-Qalhandi and others are also of much value in this connection.

9.1 Objective

After reading this lesson you will be able to know (a) features of the Society (b) condition of the Muslims (c) The governing aristocracy (d) the position of ulemas (e) about awami-Khalqs and the slaves (f) about life in the cities (g) position of women, foods & drinks and dresses (h) their economic condition.

9.2 The Muslims

The Muslim were the favoured children of the state. They were given a preferential treatment as everything depended upon their value and strength. The foreign Muslims such as the Turks, the Persians, the Arabs, the Afghans and the Abyssinian, constituted the ruling class. They were the most respected and privileged action of the society. The Turks claimed and maintained their supremacy over the others upto the 13th century. Some of the king were appointed many but men of noble birth to high officers Balban openly disposed low-born non-Turks and on the occasion refused large gift from a man named Fakhuru who had amassed a large fortune by means of usuary and monopolies with the advent of superior position. It was Alauddin Khilji who for the first time in the history of the Sultanate, adopted the policy of associating Indian converts with the administration. This gave rise to a heterogenecus ruling class.

Indian Muslims : They were mostly low-caste Hindus who had embraced Islam. They had no place in the aristocracy of the ruling class and had very little share in the administration of the country. Throughout the Sultanate period only few Indian Muslims could get high officers of the State. Though there was some improvement in their status from the beginning of the 14th century, yet they could never claim equality with foreign Muslims. Ilutmish treated Indian Muslims with contempt.

9.3 The Governing Aristocracy

Besides the official governing class, the sons and relatives of the ruler formed a special and privileged class of the governing aristocracy. They were at the top of the social order. They monopolised all the key posts. They were graded into 'Khan', 'Malik' Amir, Sipahasalar and Sarkhail. The Khan occupied the highest place. They tried to initiate the ways of the kings and sometimes they assumed airs and emblems of royalty. They lived in magnificent palaces, used costly dresses and were surrounded by a large humber of servants. There was an element of show and display and a sense of competition intheir philanthropy. However, some of the nobles extended their patronage to men of pity and learning.

Alauddin Khilji did his utmost to repress the nobles but their position revived after his death. The nobility regained its previous position under the Tughlaqs. The nobles were allowed to bequeath there property to their sons. They bought lands on which they built gardens, orchards, markets etc. Thus a new type of landed gentry began to develop.

9.2.3 Ulemas or Theologians : They also found a class of the privileged people. They occupied a commanding place both in secular and religious affairs because they claimed to be the only interpreters of Islamic laws. They constituted the Muslim clergy. The 'Ulemas' were men both of liberal and narrow view, of spiritual and mundane outlook. Generally the offices of *Sadar-i-Jahan*, *Shaikh-ul-Islam*, *Qazi* and *Mufti* were filled by them. They practically monopolised judicial ecclesiastical and educational services. A large number of them were 'Imams', *Khatibs*, *Muhtabibs* and *Qazi*. Almost all literary men belonged to this group.

9.2.4 Awam-i-Khalq : Between the governing nobility and slaves were the mass of the people. The most prosperous of them were the merchants. Below the merchants, came the artisans, the wage-earners, landless workers and petty businessmen like bakers, confectioners, goldsmiths and jewellers, blacksmiths, tailors, shawl makers, cap-makers and stockings, bow-makers, potter, carpenter etc.

9.2.5 Slaves : The slave was at the bottom of the social ladder. Every king, noble and well-to-do man, whether a Hindu or a Muslim, owned slaves. To keep slave girls was a recognized portion of the time. The slaves did numerous and varied types of work. They were employed in household work and in various royal 'Karkhanas'. The slaves of the Muslims were better off than those of the Hindus. The condition of a slave was better than that of domestic servant because the master of the former provided him food and shelter while a free govern may die of starvation. The Sultans and nobles gave their training and opportunity to rise in their lives. Slaves of ability, like *Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul* could rise to the highest position in the State. Setting a slave free was considered a good act among the Hindus and the Muslims.

9.2.6 Life in Cities : During this period, the Muslims were mostly confined to cities and very few lived in villages. In towns the Muslim nobles led a life of Ostentration. Life in the cities was comfortable. The majority of the people in towns and villages led a simple life. They had limited desires and limited means to fulfil them.

During the Sultanate period, food stuffs were cheap in the towns. In the reign of *Alauddin Khilji*, a *maliud* (about 15 Kg.) of wheat was sold for 7½ Jittals, barley for 4 and rice of 5 Jittals. It is difficult to form an ideal about the cost of living in towns. According to a modern historian, during the reign of *Firoz Tughluq*, a family consisting of a man, his wife servant and one or two children could live on 5 tankas for a whole month". But this did not apply to the artisans and workers in the same way.

9.2.7 The Hindus : They formed the vast majority of the population. They were divided into traditional four castes. In order to safeguard themselves from the Muslim onslaughts, the Hindus further strengthened the bonds of their caste. It resulted in the formation of new sub-castes and further divisions among them. Each sub-caste claimed superiority over others. Members of different sub-castes refused to interdine and intermarriage with each other. Thus the caste system became very rigid. According to Dr. A. L. Srivastava, the Brahmins gradually liberalized, their attitude towards the Sudras and permitted them to listen to the recitation of the Puranas and engage themselves to trade of certain articles.

Politically and socially the Hindus had to suffer deeply during this period. They were treated as second rate citizens. High offices of the state were denied to them and had to pay higher taxes as compared to the Muslims. Yet they were in possession of most of the land. There were many well-to-do chiefs or autonomous Hindu Rajas among them who enjoyed a high standard of life. They had a great hold on the lower branches of administration, specially the Revenue and Finance Department. They had monopolised the banking and money-lending professions. The 'Khuts', Chaudharies' and 'Muqaddam', the hereditary revenue officers in the local areas, belonged to Hindu caste. The principal merchants, businessmen and traders as well as petty shopkeepers were mostly Hindus. According to Barani, the Multani traders provided loans to the extravagant and luxurious nobles of the time. Sometimes they relieved the Sultan of the financial worry. A large number of Hindus were agriculturists.

Men believed in superstitious beliefs and practices. They had great faith in astrology, palmistry, magic and secrecy. People wore armlets on their arms for averting calamities. But the Hindus in general were religious minded. Simple and of noble character. Loans taken were invariably repaid. They maintained a high standard of truth and honour and preserved intact their intellectual greatness. Rashid-ud-din, the author of *Jam-ut-Tawarh* is all in praise of the Hindus. He says. The Indians are naturally inclined to justice, and never depart from it in their actions. Their good faith, honesty and that people flock to their country from every side, hence the country is flourishing and condition is prosperous.

9.2.8 Position of Women : Dependence of women on their husbands or other male relatives was a prominent feature of social life among the Hindus and the Muslims. But they enjoyed a position of respect. They generally remained confined. In their homes and the 'Purdah' system became more elaborate both among the Hindus and Muslims. It adversely affected their education and movement in society. Child-marriage became common. Barring the low caste people, widow remarriage was unthinkable in that age. The practice of Sati could not be performed without obtaining the King's permission. Normally monogamy was prevalent in the society but the rich could keep many wives.

The birth of a girl was looked upon as an inauspicious event. Amir Khusaru laments over the birth of daughter.

The education of women was not altogether neglected. Ibn Batuta was surprised to find 13 schools for girls and 23 for boys at Hanaur. Since women, belonging to upper classes, cultivated arts science.

The Hindu women could now own certain type of property besides what is called 'Stri Dhan' (property of the wife).

As regards the Muslim, polygamy was widely prevalent among them. As compared to their Hindu sisters, they were better placed in certain respects. They could divorce their husband's remarriage, could share in the property of their parents and there was no practice of Sati among them.

In short, the women were looked at with great respects.

9.2.9 Food and Drinks : In general, while the Hindus were mostly vegetarians the Muslims were non-vegetarians. Except warlike castes the Hindus used wheat, rice, pulses, grams, vegetables, milk and articles made of milk, as their staple food. Meat was an important item of food with the Muslims. According to the author of 'Masalik-ul-Absar', the general food of the Indian Muslims consisted of beef and goat-fish and chicken. The Sufis avoided meat and their diet was very simple.

The cured milk formed an important part of peasant's diet. People took lemon juice, milk, curd, cheese and sweets.

Among the fruits, the well-known were pomegranates, grapes, melons, oranges, figs, mangoes. Khirnis, Jamuns, Indian dates etc.

Betel : It was widely prevalent habit to chew betel leaves. It was a sort of social courtesy to offer betel. Baba Farid and his chief disciple, Nizamuddin Aulia many other, were very fond of betel leaves.

Intoxicants : During drinking wine in convivial parties and in the company of friends appear to have been common practice during the Sultanate period. Qutubuddin Aibak and Iltutmish indulged in it. Not only the drunkard and voluptuous Sultans like Kalqubad Mubarak Khilji, but also puritanical and orthodox Sultans like Firoz Shah was also addicted to wine people.

9.2.10 Dress : It varied from region to region and people to people. Men of lower status were simply dressed which was barely sufficient to cover their bodies. The costumes of rich were embroidered. They had separate robes for winter and summer. The Sultan, Khans, Maliks and other army officers wore Tartaric gowns and Islamic Qaba of Khwarizm, buckled in the middle of the body and short turbans. Their head-dress was four-cornered in shape and ornamented with jewels and mostly inlaid with diamonds and rubies. The 'Ulemas' wore 'dastar', 'amaina', 'Kulah' (cap) and 'Shwab' on their heads, 'aba' (a long gown), 'qaba' (a kind of cloak), 'jabba' (a kind of long vest resembling a shirt) for covering their body. The Sufi saints wore 'Khu' (worn out garments), 'Khirka' (mendicants, cloak made of numerous patches). They wore 'lugni', mirzal (a jacket with sleeves), and 'taqia' (a fillet worn under a head-dress). The rich people used shoes, slippers and stockings while the Sufis used shoes, with wooden sole.

The average dress of a Muslim woman consisted of a sheet of cloth called 'Chadar', Veil called 'naquab', 'pairahan' (a kind of loose waist shirt), shalwar, maqna (worn over head reaching to the ground). They also used 'Orhnis' (scarf of Hausparent Muslim). Choli (vest bodies), 'ghagra'. In Bengal women wore 'Kanchuli' (Cervical).

Ornaments : Both the Hindus and the Muslims used ornaments to decorate various parts of the body. All types of ornaments from head to toe were used by both males and females. The ornaments of the kings and nobles were made not only of gold and silver, but also of pearls, diamonds and other precious stones.

Cosmetics : 'Surma' and 'Khizab' were used for painting the head and the beard. Woman used 'gulfan' and 'ghaza' (red colour with which women painted their faces) and 'sapalda' as articles of cosmetics. Collyrium was used on the eye-lids. Cosmetics and scented lotion was applied to the body. 'Übtan' (paste) was applied and hair were decorated with flowers. Women used betel leaves to redden their lips. Hands and feet, were coloured with 'Hena'. They also used vermillion. Perfumes of different kinds were also used.

The needs of poorer classes in respect of food, drinks, cosmetics, toilets, ornaments and other habits were very small.

Entertainments : The people engaged themselves in all sorts of entertainments. Among the outdoor games mentioned may be of 'Chaugan' (horse-polo), wrestling, archery, horse-race and fighting' among animals. The indoor games, included chess, 'Qamarbazi, (a game of hazard), 'mard, and 'girahbazi', which might mean pigeon flying.

The gardens and the meadows, public tanks and hauz were places of relaxation. Public entertainments were held on the Sultan's return to the capital after a victory, the accession of the Sultan, and on the occasion of the birth and marriage of royal princes.

Music and dance were also popular means of entertainment. There was hardly any festive occasion in which music did not play its part.

Festival : Different fairs and religious festivals, both among the Hindus and the Muslims also provided source of pleasure and entertainment to the people. The principal festivals of the Hindus were Holi, Diwali, Dussehra, where as Id, Bakrid, Shabe-Barat, 12th Rabi I (i.e. the birthday of the Prophet of 'Nauroz') were the important festivals of the Muslims.

Houses : The lower middle and poor classes lived in thatched house. The rich lived in palatial building, which were well-furnished with cushions, silk carpets, hanging curtains, soft beds, mattings, big pillows and quilt and other articles of luxury. The houses were plastered with different colours and sometimes given coating of gold and silver.

Furniture : The house hold furniture included chairs, tables, couch and bed-steads.

Hospices : Building of hospices was regarded as an act of charity. The king and members of the royal family or aristocracy, and religious orders maintained hospices or houses for travellers. Free food was provided to the poor travellers at these rest houses.

Moral Tone of Society : It is difficult to form a correct idea about the general moral tone of society during the Sultanate period. References are found to prostitution, gambling and wine drinking. There are also instances of greed, lust, official oppression, arrogance and the habit of scratching wealth from the suffering masses. But there were some men who were inspired by the Hindu ideal of compassion, liberality, truth and purity. They tried to improve the moral tone of the society.

In short, though there were a few vices connected with the passion of wine and women the general standard of social life was high. It was marked by charity of other virtues.

9.3 Economy During the Sultanate Period

It is very difficult to form an accurate idea of the economic condition of vast number of the people of India under the Delhi Sultanate because the historians of the period were more interested in events at the royal court than in the lives of the ordinary people. Some attempts have, however, been made recently in this connection by collecting stray references from chronicles, folklore and fiction, poetry and ballads, the writings of Hindu and Muslim mystics the account of foreign travellers and some official and private correspondence.

The country was then famous for her untold wealth. The main causes of this economic propensity was agriculture. The fertility of the soil, copious rainfall and sufficient means of irrigation both natural and man-made and the labour of the Indian peasants, resulted in good agricultural production.

Cereals, pulses, fruits, vegetables were produced in almost all parts of the country. Ibn Batuta says that soil was fertile that it could produce two crops every year, rice being sown three times.

Rich crops, such as wheat, cotton, rice, sugarcane, oil seeds, indigo, barley, maize, spices, poppy etc., ginger, betel-leaves, betel-nuts, were produced on large scale.

Fruits of various varieties like mangoes, orange, black berries, were produced in different parts of the country. A large portion of the revenue of Firuz Tughluq came from gardens.

Rice of Sarsuti, sugar of Kanauj, wheat and betel-leaf of Malwa, wheat of Gwalior, ginger and spices of Malabar, grapes and pomegranates of Daultabad were famous and popular even outside India. According to Barbosa, agriculture, animal husbandry and fruit gardening were in a very advanced stage in the bahmani kingdom. There was abundance of all kind of articles in Gujarat and they were available at cheap rates. Wassaf describes Gujarat as a rich and popular country where cultivation was prosperous. He says that the vineyards yielded crops for several years in succession. Marco Polo also speaks of extensive cotton plants spread their branches like willows and yielded crops for several years in succession. Marco-Polo also speaks of extensive cotton cultivation and says that the cotton trees were full size paced high and attained to the age of twenty years. Pepper, ginger and indigo were produced in large quantities. Orissa was famous for its animal husbandry and fruit gardens. Barbosa writes that Bengal produced rice and sugarcane cotton and ginger, in a large scale. Mahuan, an interpreter attached to the Chinese envoy Cheng. Ho, who visited Bengal in 1406 A.D., thrown much light on the economic condition of the country. He says that two crops of rice in a year were produced. Wheat, sesamum, all kinds of pulse, millet, ginger, mustard, onion, hemp, brinjals and vegetables of many kinds grew in the country in abundance. They had seven kinds of fruits, including plantain. Fermented liquor was prepared from coconut. and sold in the market.

Thus agriculture was in a most advanced and prosperous state in every part of India.

During the Sultanate period, animal husbandry was also in an advanced stage. The country had extensive pastures and forests. There was such a large quantity of production of everything that it not only sufficed for the consumption of its people but was surplus for foreign export.

9.3.1 Industries : Through agriculture formed the occupation of the population, there were some important industries in the urban as well as rural areas of the country. India industries were quite advanced in those days. In spite of the lack of state guidance these industries survived the snock of foreign invasions of internal revolution.

The textile industry was the primary industry of India at that time. Silk, cotton and woollen clothes of different quality and colours were produced on a large scale. The clothes were studded with gold, silver, pearls, diamonds and other precious articles.

The other important industries were sugar industry, Paper industry, metal work stone-cutting, pearl diving out of the sea, ivory and sandlwoodwork, enamelling etc.

There were some minor industries such as carpet weaving, cup-making, amnufacturer of arms, especially bows and arrows, manufacture of scents, spirits and liquors, brass and other metal industries and clay industry.

Though the textile industries were to be found in every province, yet Bengal and Gujarat were particularly favous for the manufacture of textile goods Amir Khusrau and foreign travellers such as Mahuan, Barbosa who came to India during the early part of the 16th century, (1603-1528 A.D.) and Barbosa who came here about 1518 A.D. have highly praised the exellence of Bengal goods. Among local manufacturers, Mahuan mentions five or six fine cotton fabrics, and says that silk handkerchiefs and caps, embroidered with gold, painted ware, basins, cups, steel, guns, knives and scissors were all manufactured in the country. A kind of white paper was also made form the bark of tree which was smooth and glossy like the skin of deer.

The state gave liberal encouragement to industry. The Sultans of Delhi and other rulers of the provincial dynasties, had run their workshops (Karkhanas) where different articles, were manufactured according to the needs of the Sultan, nobles and other rich people. According to the author of Masalik-ul-Absar, there was a state manufacturing in which 400 silk weavers were employed and all kinds of stuff was prepared. There were also 500 manufacturers of gold tissues in the service of the Sultan who wore gold brocades for the royal household and the nobility.

There were no large acale industrial organisations such as we have today. Mostly the manufacturer dealt directly with the traders through sometimes they disposed off their goods at fairs.

The industrialist were organised into guilds which helped them in many ways. It resulted in the growth of Indian industry.

9.3.2 Trade : Though the State government did not adopt a comprehensive economic policy with a view to improving the material condition of the people, yet the volume of trade both internal and external, carried on the Indians, was enormous. Different cities were famous for different articles and

they were well connected with each other by road. Ibn Batuta describes Delhi as the foremost trading centre of the world. Daultabad was famous for its pearl-trade. Brass was imported at the port of Dabol from where, it was distributed all over India. All sorts of articles from china and Mallacca islands were received at the port of Rander in Gujarat from where they were sent to all parts of India. On the western sea-coasts of India, there were the important ports of Goa, Diu-Chaula, Calicut, Cochin and Quilon. These were equally important ports on the eastern sea costs.

India had commercial relations with the outside world. The sea-route connected her commercially with the distant regions of Europe, the Malay Islands and China and other countries of the Pacific ocean. She had intercourse through land route with central Asia, Afghanistan, Persia, Tibet and Bhutan.

The main items of Indian export were cotton and silken cloth, opium, indigo, sea-pearls, sandal-wood, saffron, ginger, sugar, coconut etc. Her chief imports were horses mules and articles of luxury for the royal family and the nobility.

Thus affluent agricultural and industrial production and foreign trade enriched India. The author wood, saffron, ginger, sugar, coconut etc. Her chief imports were horses mules and articles of luxury for the royal family and the nobility.

Thus affluent agricultural and industrial production and foreign trade enriched India. The author of 'Masalik-ul-Absar' writes, 'Merchants of all countries never cease to carry pure gold into India and to bring back in exchange commodities of herbs and gums.'

9.3.3 Uneven Distribution of Wealth : But the fruits of this prosperity were not enjoyed by all on a just basis. Wealth was concentrated in the hands of a Small group of people. The Sultans and their nobility the high officials, the Rajas and chiefs and top-ranking Hindu merchants and bankers rolled in opulence. The officials and nobles lived in palatial buildings had a large number of attendants and they led a luxurious life. The middle class consisting of the professional men and clerks and merchants was also quite well-to-do. But the masses who formed the bulk of the population, had a very low standard of living. The incidents of taxation weighed heavily on the tillers of the society. Their condition became miserable in terms of famine. Amir Khusrau significantly observes, every pearl in the royal crown is but the crystallised drop of blood fallen from the tearful eyes of the poor peasants'.

It appears that in normal times he did not starve because he had lower needs as compared to our days. As the villages were economically self-sufficient, the simple requirements of the rural populations without being disturbed. The state provided charity and loans to the people in time of famine and other natural calamities.

9.3.4 Cheapness of Prices : As the means of communication were difficult, there was no uniformity in the prices in various parts of the country during the Sultanate period. In normal times, goods were very cheap but in terms of famine and scarcity the prices of goods rose abnormally high. For example, when a severe famine broke out in the reign of Muhammad Tughlaq the price of corn rose to 16 and 17 Jitals per seer. During Alauddin's reign, the prices of most of the articles daily use

were considered as normal. The reign of Ibrahim's time, a man could purchase 10 maunds of grain 5 seers of oil and 10 yards of course cloth for one 'bahlooli' (a coin equivalent of 1/6 the of a 'Jital' in value). On the whole, food and goods were cheap in the Doab area as well in the provinces.

Ibn Batuta observes that how were the things of everyday use cheaper than in Bengal, whereas dirhama were sufficient for the annual expenses of a family of three.

Prices were so cheap that men could go from one place to another with partly emoluments. Afif writes that a man going from Delhi to Firuzabad had to pay four silver jitals for a carriage ride for mule, twelve for a horse and half a tanka for planquin.

The cheapness of prices enabled officials of the State and Amirs to amass large fortunes.

9.4 The Summary

Thus the contemporary sources, both India and foreign, testify the general prosperity of the country during the Sultanate period. The Accounts of the foreign travellers such as Marco Polo, Ibn Batuta, and Mahuan show that both industrially and agriculturally India was a prosperous country. Prices were remarkably low and there was no dearth of the necessities of life.

9.5 Key Words

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Fatwa-i-Jahandari | — | A book |
| 2. Tarikh-i-Firushahi | | |
| 3. Khan, Malik Sarkhaib | — | Aristocrats |
| 4. Imam, Khatibs, Muhatabiles | — | Ulamas or Theologians |
| 5. Awami-i-Khalq | — | A class between nobility and slaves. |

9.6 Questions for Exercise

- Describe the features of society during the Sultanate period.
- Throw light on the condition of slaves during the Sultanate period.
- Evaluate the position of the Ulemas.
- What do you know about the status of Sultan in the Delhi Sultanate ?

9.7 Suggested Readings

- | | | |
|---------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. K.A.Nizami | — | Mediaeval Indian History & Culture |
| 2. Habib and Nizami | — | The Delhi Sultanate |
| 3. I.H.Qureshi | — | Administration of Delhi Sultanate. |



Lesson - 10 Establishment of the Mughal Empire Babar & Humayun

Lesson Structure

10.0 Introduction

10.1 Objective

10.2 The Political Condition of India

10.3 Achievements of Babar,

- ♦ Battle of Panipat 21.04.1526
- ♦ Battle of Khanua 16.03.1527
- ♦ Victory over fort of Chanderi
- ♦ Battle of Ghagra in May 1549

10.4 Evaluation of Babar as a ruler

10.5 Nasiruddin Md. Humayun.

- ♦ His Weaknesses
- ♦ Division of Empire
- ♦ Seize of Kalinjar 1531 A.D.
- ♦ Conflict with the Afghans
- ♦ War with Bahadur Shah of Gujarata.
- ♦ War with Sher Shah

10.6 The Summary

10.7 Key Words

10.8 Questions for Exercise

10.9 Suggested Readings

10.0 Introduction

The Mughal empire in India was established by Babar. Then India was divided into a number of small states under various kings. Babar defeated Ibrahim Lodi and established rule in the country.

10.1 Objectives

After reading this lesson you will be able to learn (1) how many politically sovereign states were existing in contemporary and they were fighting among themselves.

(2) the achievements of Babar and his battles

(3) Humayun.

10.2 Political Condition of India of the Eve of Babar's Invasion and Babar's Achievement

The political condition of India on the eve of Babar's invasion was terribly deplorable. It resembled that of the early years of the 11th century A.D. when India was divided into a number of tiny states. These states were constantly fighting with one another for establishing their individual supremacy. There was no paramount power in the country. Had there been a strong ruler like Alaaddin Khilji, it would have been very difficult for Babar to establish Mughal rule in India.

Moreover, no government can be established on a secure basis without the force of habit derived from tradition, and the force of will derived from national support. The Turko-Afghan rule in India lacked both. Its military and feudal character was not in accord with the ancient traditional government of the country. The Turko-Afghan rulers could not secure national support. There was also no well regulated administrative machinery under the Turko-Afghan rule. The authority of the central government nobles. Thus there was no mutual attachment between the central government and the masses of the people.

The fall of the Delhi Sultanate was inevitable under such conditions. So long as the rulers were strong they could enforce obedience among the governors and the people. But as soon as the central authority grew weak, the centrifugal tendencies raised their heads and there arose a number of dependent kingdoms on the ruins of the Delhi Sultanate in various parts of the country.

(1) The Kingdom of Delhi :

At the opening of the 16th century the kingdom of Delhi had shrunk considerably in size Ibrahim Lodi's (1517 - 1526 A.D.) sway did not extend beyond Delhi, Agra, the Doab, Biyana and Chanderi. Erskine has described Ibrahim Lodi's position in these words; "The extensive possession, though under one king had no very strong principles or cohesion. The monarchy was a congeries of nearly independent principalities, jagirs and provinces each ruled by a hereditary chief or by a Zamindar or delegate from Delhi and the inhabitants looked more to their immediate governors who had absolute power in the province and in whose hands lay their happiness or misery than in the distant and little known sovereign "The king was regarded their jagirs as of their own right and purchased by their swords rather than as bounty or gift on the part of the sovereign ". According to Lanepoole "The king was regarded by the nobles as their chief, a comrade and admitted leader in arms but he could not give himself superior airs or show want of respect to them"

Ibrahim Lodi was a foolish, headstrong prince who failed to understand the character of his own Afghan Chiefs. By his stern measures, he alienated the sympathies of the Afghan nobility. He

made them freedom loving and proud Afghan nobles to stand in his darbar' with folded hands. Being a blood-thirsty man he had put some of his able chiefs to death. He had imprisoned some of his nobles and murdered them in cold blood. By these foolish acts, Ibrahim drove the Afghan nobility to disloyalty. The nobles of Bidar declared their independence under Darya Khan Lohani. In Janupur, the Afghan nobles rebelled under Nasir Khan Lohani of Ghazipur Maruf, Farmuli and others. The Lodi Kingdom was greatly distracted and Sultan Ibrahim lost much of his prestige.

(2) The Punjab : It was normally a part of the Delhi Kingdom. Its governor Daulat Khan Lodi, was not on good terms with Ibrahim Lodi because the latter had meted out a cruel and harsh treatment to the former's son, Dilawar Khan. Being alarmed at the unbridled tyranny of Ibrahim, he was on the look out for an opportunity to deliver himself from Ibrahim's yoke. Daulat Khan and Ibrahim's uncle, Alam Khan, a pretender to the throne of Delhi invited Babar to invade India. "Thus revenge and ambition, persecution and disaffection, brought about the final collapse of the decadent Delhi Sultanate."

(3) Bengal : It had become independent in the time of Firoz Tughlaq. At the opening of the 16th century it was under the sway of the Hussaini dynasty. Its first ruler Alauddin Hussain Shah (1493-1519) was a man of vigour who greatly enlarged his kingdom by conquest. His son and successor, Nusrat Shah was an able ruler. He patronised art, architecture and Bengali literature. A Bengali version of the Mahabharat was presented under his orders. Babur has mentioned him in his memories as a prince of considerable substance in Hindustan.

(4) Malwa : In Central India, three important states, i.e. Malwa, Gujarat and Mewar, were contending for supremacy. The Kingdom of Malwa became independent under Dilawar Khan Ghori who was a feudal chieftain under Sultan Firoz Tughlaq in 1415, Mahmud Khan, the minister of the Ghori chieftain, usurped power and ascended the throne under the title of Mahmud Khilji. He was a remarkable ruler who fought ceaselessly against Gujarat and Mewar. Before Babur's invasion, Malwa was ruled by Mahmud II (1510-1531). As he was weak and incompetent, the government fell under the control of Medine Rai, the powerful chief of Chanderi. The Rajput influence was an eyesore to the Muslims and they tried to bring about the overthrow of Medine Rai with the help of the Sultan of Gujarat but Medine Rai defeated the Muslim army with the help of Rana Sanga of Chittor. The Rana treated Mahmud II with chivalrous generosity and restored him to his kingdom. As the authority of the kingdom of Malwa had been greatly reduced, Bahadur Shah of Gujarat conquered it in 1531.

(5) Gujarat : The kingdom of Gujarat secured independence in 1396 under Zafar Khan, the son of a Rajput convert; who ascended the throne under the title of Muzaffar Shah. One of the most notable rulers of this dynasty was Mahmud Begarha (1458-1511). He was a brave warrior who had to fight throughout his reign against his enemies. But he succeeded in all his campaigns. In July 1526, Bahadur Shah, the grandson of Mahmud Begarha, became king of Gujarat. He was brave and warlike like his grandfather. He is ranked among the famous rulers of medieval India.

(6) Mewar : It was the most extensive and powerful state in Rajasthan, and had its capital at Chittor. Babar's contemporary ruler on the throne of Chittor was Rana Sangarm Singh a man of great military powers. He was a terror to the Muslim states. A hero of hundred battles, his body bore the signs of eighty wounds. He had lost an eye and an arm and was crippled in one leg. Tod describes him as the fragment of a soldier. He fought successfully against Malwa, Delhi and Gujarat and organised the financial services and the military forces of Mewar with a view to building the superemacy on the break up of the Delhi Sultanate. Thus a contest between him and any other power then trying to establish supremacy on the break up of the Delhi Sultanate. Thus a contest between him and any other power then trying to establish supremacy in northern India was inevitable. As he was ambitious to establish Hindu rule over Delhi he invited Babar to invade India.

(7) Khandesh : The kingdom of Khandesh was situated in the valley of the river Tapti, it became independent under Malik Raje Faruqi in 1388 A.D. It was constantly at war with Gujarat because the latter's rulers were desirous of establishing their supremacy over Khandesh. After 1508, Khandesh was plunged into disorder due to the fights of two rival claimants to the throne. At the time of Babar's invasion it was ruled by Miran Muhammad. Owing to its distance from Delhi and weak condition Khandesh did not play an important part in contemporary politics.

(8) Sindh : The province of Sindh was too far away from Delhi to exercise any influence on the politics of India. It had become independent at the end of Muhammad Tughlaq's reign. In the beginning of the 16th century, the governor of Qandhar, occupied the province in 1520 after defeating the Sumers. His son Shah Hussain annexed Multan and increased the power of the dynasty. At the time of Babar's invasion of India, the power of the Arghuns in Sindh was at its height.

(9) Kashmir : In 1339 a Muslim adventurer Shah Mirza, laid the foundation of a Muslim dynasty in Kashmir. The most notable ruler of Kashmir was Zainul Abdin (1420-70) who followed a policy of religious tolerance. He was an enlightened ruler who did much for the benefit of his subjects. He was a great patron of literature, painting and music. He has been described as "the Akbar of Kashmir". After his death, anarchy spread under the rule of nominal kings.

(10) Orissa : The kingdom of Orissa extended from the mouth of the Ganga to that of the Godavari. This Hindu Kingdom was under powerful rulers. It had not been subjugated so far by any Sultan of Delhi.

Though it did not exercise any great influence on the politics of northern India, Yet it acted as an effective barrier to the expansion of Bengal towards the south.

The Kingdom of the Deccan :

The Afghan empire in India had dwindled into insignificance under Ibrahim Lodi but below the Vindhyas two formidable empires had risen into prominence. They were the Bahmani Kingdom and the Hindu empire of Vijaynagar.

1. The Bahmani Kingdom :

The Bahmani Kingdom which was founded in 1347, stretched from Berar in the north to the river Krishna in the South. After the cruel execution of its famous minister Mahmud Gawain in one after another. These were known after the titles of their founders, as the—

- (a) The Adil Shahi dynasty of Bijapur.
- (b) The Kutub Shahi dynasty of Golkunda,
- (c) The Nizam Shahi dynasty of Ahmadnagar.
- (d) The Imad Shahi dynasty of Berar;
- (e) The Barid Shahi dynasty of Bidar.

The history of these five offshoots of the Bahmani Kingdom is largely a record of almost continuous quarrel with one another and with Vijayanagar. Each wanted to establish its supremacy in the Deccan. It led to internal warfare in the peninsula, like that between the Chalukyas and the Pallavas in the Middle Ages, or between Mysore, the Marathas and the Nizam in the 18th century.

2. The Vijayanagar Empire :

It held key to the political situation of the time. It was one the most important Hindu states in the country. Founded in 1336, this empire soon extended upto Cuttack in the east. Salesette in the west and it reached the extreme border of the Paninsula in the south. Babar's contemporary on its throne was Krishna Deva Raya (1509-1530) under whom the Vijayanagar Empire rose to the highest pitch of glory. He was not only a great soldier and general who extended the boundary of his kingdom, but was also a benevolent King and a great patron of art and literature. Although the Vijayanagar Empire did not exert much influence on the politics of northern India. It served the useful purpose of checking the Muslim expansion southward and preserved the ancient religion and culture of southern India.

The political designs of these two kingdoms of the south brought them inevitably into conflict. Backed by their unlimited zeal, they engaged in wars which caused much suffering and loss to both the parties. They constantly fought with one another for establishing their supremacy.

"India was thus" writes Prof. Ishwari Prasad "a congeries of states at the opening of the 16th Century and likely to be the easy prey of an invader who had the strength and will to attempt her conquest". It provided a golden opportunity to Babar, a man of adventurous and daring spirit, for giving effect to his long cherished ambition of conquering India. It paved the way for the establishment of a new Turkish rule in India.

Achievements of Babar :

Zahiruddin Muhammad Babar, a Chaghatal Turk, who founded the Mughal Empire in India is one of the most romantic and interesting personalities in the history of Asia. He has received high praise at the hands of all historians, contemporary and modern. They have unanimously described him as one of the most brilliant Asiatic princes of his age and worthy of a high place among the sovereigns of any age of country.

Babar, the son of Umar Shaikh Mirza was born on 14th February 1483. He was descended on his father's side from Timmur & was connected on his mother's side with Chingiz Khan. Thus the blood of two great warriors of Central Asia was running into his veins. At the age of eleven (i.e. in 1494), he inherited from his father the small principality of Farghana, now a province of Chinese Turkistan. Though master of Farghana, Babar was surrounded on all sides by formidable enemies. These were his own kinsman and the Uzbek chief Shabani Khan with whom he had to fight for his very existence. He cherished the desire of conquering Samarkand and seating himself on the throne of Taimur. He made two futile attempts in 1497 and 1503 to take possession of Samarkand. He was deprived of his own patrimony Farghana and was compelled to lead the life of a homeless wanderer for one year. Driven from his hew homeland by the Uzbeks, he returned in 1505 to Kabul and there made for himself a small kingdom. In he made one more fruitless attempt to recover his greatancestor's capital.

Being thus unsuccessful in all his attempts in the north-west, Babar decided to try his fortune in the south-east. But it was after years that he got an opportunity of advancing into the heart to India. Like countless earlier invaders, Babar was drawn to India by the lure of its fabulous wealth Babar also felt that he had a legitimate right to some areas in the Punjab which had been conquered by his ancestor, Taimur and which had remained in the possession of Taimur's successors for several generations. Moreover, the political condition of India was suitable for Babar's entry into India. It was then distracted by the ambitions disaffection's, and rivalry of the nobles and the Delhi Sultanate existed in name only.

The vindictive rule of Ibrahim Lodi had generated a feeling of discontent among the Afghan nobles. Ibrahim had made Daulat Khan, the powerful noble of Punjab and against him by meeting out a cruel treatment of the latter's son, Dilawar Khan. Daulat Khan and Ibrahim's uncle, Alam Khan a pretender to the throne of Delhi sent an invitation of Babar to invade India probably Rana Sanga had some negotiations with Babar about this time.

Such an invitation was welcome to Babar who had long cherished the dream of the conquest of India. His early training in the school of adversity had instilled in him the spirit of adventure. He was possessed of great physical powers and courage, of contempt of death, uncommon patience and power of endurance. In, he occupied Lahore and sacked the fortified city of Dipalpur. But his Indian confederates betrayed him when they saw that Babar had no intention of giving up his Indian conquests. Therefore, Babar had to return to Kabul where he began to plan another invasion of India.

Battle of Panipat 21st April, 1526 :

In November, 1525 Babar once more set out of Kabul and soon recovered the Punjab. But the more difficult task was to conquer Delhi. So he proceeded against Ibrahim Lodi the ruler of Delhi, and reached Panipat where the fate of India has been thrice decided. Babar had an army of 12,000 men whereas the numerical strength of Ibrahim Lodi's forces was 1,00,000 according to Babar's estimate. Though outnumbered, Babar had an effective combination of his highly trained cavalry of artillery. Babar was an experienced and a veteran general whereas his enemies according to Babar himself, "was an inexperienced man, careless in his movements, who marched without order, halted or retired without method and engaged without foresight— "Ibrahim Lodi's army fought valiantly but it was utterly defeated within the space of half a day. Sultan Ibrahim died fighting and more than 15,000 of his men perished on the field of battle. Babar quickly occupied Delhi and Agra. He distributed the vast booty that came into his hands among his kinsmen and officers.

The battle of Panipat is regarded as one of the decisive battles of Indian history. The power of the Lodi dynasty was shattered to pieces and the sovereignty of India passed to the Chaghtai Turks. But Babar was not yet firmly seated upon the throne of Delhi. There were other strong powers like the Afghan military chiefs and the Rajputs under Rana Sanga who also aspired to establish political supremacy in India. The magnitude of Babar's task actually began with Panipat. Its real importance lies in the fact that it opened a new phase in the struggle for domination in North India.

Battle of Khanua 16th March : 1527

The most formidable chieftain against whom Babar had still to fight was Rana Sangram Singh, better known to fame as Rana Sanga, of Mewar. He was a veteran and intrepid warrior. A hero of a hundred battles, he had lost an eye and an arm and was crippled in one leg. The establishment of an empire in the Indo-Gangetic Valley by Babar was a threat to the Rana. He hoped that Babar, like Taimur, would withdraw after sacking Delhi and weakening the Lodis. Babar's decision to stay in India completely changed the situation.

Rana Sanga, the hero of Rajput national revival was a more formidable adversary than Ibrahim Lodi. He had under him 120 chiefs, 80,000 horses and 500 war elephants. The rulers of Marwar, Amber, Gwalior, Ajmer, Chanderi, Kotah, Hasan Khan Mati and Sultan Mahmud Lodi, younger brother of Ibrahim Lodi had flocked to his standard.

The reports of Rajput chivalry and martial spirit struck Babar's troops with terror and panic. But being possessed of an indomitable spirit, Babar tried to infuse fresh courage and enthusiasm into their hearts.

He declared a "JIHAD" (holy war) against Rana Sanga. He broke all his drinking vases and poured out his stores of strong drink on the ground. He vowed never to touch wine again and appealed to his men in stirring speech. This produced the desired effect. All his soldiers solemnly swore on the Quran to stand by him.

The two armies came face to face with each other on 16th March, 1527 at Khanua, (a village at a distance of 10 miles from Sikri). Babar employed the same tactics as the Panipat. The Rajputs fought with desperate valour but they suffered a terrible defeat and broke up in panic. The field was strewn with human corpses. The Rana escaped with the help of his followers and died broken hearted after about two years. Babar assumed the title of "GHAZI" Or Champion of the faith.

The battle of Khanua is one of the decisive battles of India history. Its results were more significant than those of the first battle of Panipat. The Rajput dream of turning out the foreign invaders from India was dashed to the ground. It is wrong to say that the Rajputs 'ceased henceforth to be a dominant factor in the politics of Hindustan.' In fact, their retirement from the field of politics was only temporary. They appeared once again after 30 years and exercise profound influence on the Mughal Empire.

But the temporary eclipse of the Rajputs after Khanua facilitated Babar's task in India and made possible the foundation of a new foreign rule. Babar's days of wandering in search of a fortune were now over. Never afterwards he had to stake his throne and life upon the issue of a stricken field. Now doubt, he had to fight for the extension of his power for the reduction of rebels, for the ordering of his kingdom, but it was never fighting for the throne. It is also significant that from henceforth the centre of gravity of his power for the reduction of rebels, for the ordering of his kingdom, but it was never fighting for the throne. It is also significant that from henceforth the centre of gravity of his power shifted from Kabul to Hindustan.

Reduces the Forth of Chanderi 1528 :

His next expedition was to Chanderi, one of the chief stronghold of the Rajputs. It was in possession of the powerful chieftain Medini Rai, who dominated the Muslim Kingdom of Malwa. The fortress was taken by storm. The Rajput defenders died fighting to the last man and their women performed 'JAUHAR' The power of the Rajputs was crushed.

Battle of Ghagra in May 1529 :

But the Afghan danger was not yet over. The Afghan chiefs had not been thoroughly subjugated. The Afghans of Bidar temporarily composed their feuds and assembled under the leadership of Mahmud Lodi the brother of Ibrahim Lodi whose authority was acknowledged throughout Bidar and eastern Punjab. Babar sent his son Askir to suppress the Afghan rising and himself proceeded a little later. On Babar's approach, they army melted away. Several Afghan chiefs of U.P. waited upon him and with Nusrat Shah of Bengal who had married a daughter of Ibrahim Lodi, Babar met the allied forces of the Afghan of Bihar and Bengal on the banks of the Ghagra near the junction of that river with the Ganges above Patna, and inflicted a crushing defeat on the 6th May, 1529.

Thus in three battles, Babar reduced northern India to submission. He became the ruler of a territory extending from the Oxus to the Ghagra and from the Himalayas to Gwalior though considerable

gaps here and there had yet to be filled in. But Babar was not destined to enjoy his hard won empire for long. He passed away on 26th May, 1530 at the age of 47.

From his conquests is evident his fine generalship, military powers, unbending energy, the power to command, to inspire confidence & courage in the heart of his soldiers, only a man like Babar could win through the difficulties of the battles of Panipat and Khanua. He was no ruthless conqueror, exalting. In needless massacres and wanton destruction.

He spent all life in arms. He introduced a new mode of warfare in India. He was one of the first Asian ruler to make an effective use of artillery.

As a Ruler :

Babar displayed the qualities of a firm ruler not only a mature age in India but also in his home land in Trans-Oxiana. He maintained peace and discipline among his subjects. He took steps to protect his subjects throughout the length and breadth of his vast dominions from the oppression of free-booters and external invasions. He gave a sense of stability to the government. The roads were kept (free-booters) safe for communication between the principal parts of his dominions. He set up "KAK CHAUKIS", at intervals of 15 miles, and at each 'DAK CHAUKI' he maintained good horses. Thus he could get news from distant places.

Babar re-established the prestige of the crown which had been eroded since the death of Firoz Tughlak. As Babar had the prestige of being a descendent of Chingiz Khan and Taimur, two famous warrior of Asia, the position of the king was raised so high that even the highest nobles were to behave as his servants. They could not claim a status of equality with him or aspire to his throne.

But Babar had no idea nor ability to improve the moral and material condition of his subjects. He did not leave behind any remarkable public and philanthropic institutions by which his name may be remembered as a benign ruler ever in Afghanistan.

Though Babar tried to organise the administration of the provinces which formed his new kingdom, his system was purely feudal. He followed the time-honoured system of 'JAGIRDARI' and parcelled out his empire into fiefs among his followers who were responsible each within the limits of his fief for the collection of revenue and for all branches of civil administration. The evils of the medieval feudal system could not be eradicated and India was still, as Erskine observes, "rather a congeries of little states under one prince than one regular and uniformly governed kingdom. Many of the hill and frontier districts yielded little more than a nominal submission."

There was no uniformity in the political situation of the different parts of his vast empire. Hardly any law could be regarded as universal. Each kingdom each province, each district and every village was governed, in ordinary manners, by peculiar customs. There were no regular courts of law for the administration of justice. If the village officers failed to settle all differences relating to land, they were

decided by the district authorities, the Collectors, the 'ZAMINDARS' or 'JAGIRDARS'. The higher officers of government exercised not only civil but criminal jurisdiction even in capital cases with little from and under little restraint.

Babar did not take steps to establish a uniform system of revenue for the empire as Sher Shah did after him. No attempt was made to survey the land and fix a uniform demand on the basis of the actual produce of the soil. Babar was also not able to take any steps for the promotion of agriculture.

Babar also did not realise the importance of a sound financial position. He made no attempts to improve the finances of the country. Whatever hoard of wealth he found at Delhi and Agra was squandered away in offering presents and gifts to his followers. It was no act of wisdom to abolish stamp duty on the Muslims before the battle of Khanua. It was an empty treasury that he left to his son and successor, Humayun.

In short, though a successful conqueror, Babar showed a lack of administrative capacity in all spheres. Taking all these defects of Babar's work into consideration. We may agree with Prof. Rushbrook Williams when he says that "he bequeathed to his son a monarchy which could be held together only by the continuance of war conditions; which in times of peace was weak, structureless and invertebrate," In other words "what he had left undone was of greater importance than what he had done."

In spite of these shortcomings, Babar occupies an important place in the history of India. He was the first architect to lay the foundation-stone of the edifice of the Mughal the Great. He was unquestionably superior to the other Muslim rulers of his age.

Humayun :

Nasi-ru-ddin Muhammad Humayun ascended the throne of Hindustan at the age of 23 on the 29th December, 1530, three days after the death of Babar. Though the son of the great Babar his situation was not free from danger and difficulty. He was confronted with several hostile forces on all the side, disguised and so the more dangerous. The difficulties which surrounded the new king were of no mean order.

1. In that age, the right of succession to the throne was unsettled. The law of primogeniture was not strictly followed among the Muslims. Therefore, his three brothers— Hindal, Askari and Kamuran also coveted the throne. Erskine remarks. "The sword was the grand arbiter of right and every son was prepared to try his fortune against his brothers." Every prince of the royal house aspired to dominion.

2. The loyalty of the army could not be relied upon. It was not a national one, connected by common language and country. It was a mixed body of adventures— Chaghtai, Uzbek, Mughal, Persian, Afghan and Indian. No doubt. They fought well but were always quarelling among themselves.

3. There was many powerful nobles at the court who did not consider the acquiring of the throne beyond the scope of their ambition. They had looked upon Babar, as a fellow-adventure, in no way superior to them. They were engaged in machinations for the possession of the throne. Their intrigues might render the position of Babars heir precarious at any moment.

Thus Humayun could not safely count on the support of his relatives, his army, of the court.

4. Babar's legacy to Humayun was of a precarious nature. During his 5 years stay in India, Babar was too busily employed in military expeditions. Therefore, he could not leave behind him a consolidated and well-organised empire. In fact, he had not been able to conquer the whole of Hindustan in the proper sense of the term. Erskine writes, "he had entered the country as a stranger and a spoiler, but the only hold which he or his race had as yet upon the people of India was military force."

5. The Hindus, who formed the majority of the population of India had little unity of feeling with their Muhammendan conquerors. They looked upon them as barbarians.

6. The Rajputs had only been temporarily subdued. They were still powerful.

7. The Afghan chiefs who held fiefs in different parts, had not forgotten about Afghan rule which had been supplemented, only a few years back. Though repeatedly defeated in the field, they were still numerous and powerful. They had also the advantage of a possessing a rallying point in Sultan Mahmud Lodi, brother of Sultan Ibrahim Sher Shah, one of the age had already taken up arms in Bihar and Bengal, towards the close of Babar's reign. He was trying to organise the Afghan into a native ruling power.

8. The growing power of Gujarat under Bahadur Shah was also a serious menace to Humayun.

Thus it was not a bed of roses that Humayun inherited. Such a situation required a ruler of great fact and ability. Humayun was not lacking in physical courage, and had given a good account of himself in his father's campaigns. But his general indolence and generosity frequently spoiled the fruits of victory and deprived him at times of his most valued acquisitions. Though accomplished in certain respects and possessed of intellectual tastes, he was devoid of the fact and discretion of his father as well as his resolution and perseverance. He never made the fullest use of his victories and often began a new plan before executing the one he had already in hand. Lane-Pool writes. 'He was incapable of sustained effort, and after a moment of triumph would busy himself in his harem and dream away the precious hours in the opium eater's paradise whilst his enemies were thundering at the gate. Naturally Kind, he forgave when he should have punished, light hearted and sociable, he revelled at the table when he ought to have been in the saddle'" But according to some modern writes. Humayun was not an opium addict and his inactivity was not due to his habit of taking opium.

Humayun also never cared to introduce settled government in conquered provinces. He would at once assign them to governors whose loyalty was doubtful.

Division of Empire :

Humayun's first blunder was that he tried needlessly to satisfy his brother probably under the dying instructions of his father. Instead of bringing them under control, Kamran was confirmed as governor of Kabul and Qandhar. He also brought the whole of the Punjab under his sway. He also took possession of the district of Hissar Firoza to the east of the Punjab province, thus Humayun struck at the sort of the integrity of Babar's empire. The transfer of the Indus region and beyond to Kamran deprived Humayun of the best recruiting ground for his army. Besides, the cession of Hissar Firoza gave Kamran command of the new military road which ran for Delhi to Qandhar to Askaniya. He gave the province of Samshul and Hindal got the fief of Alwar.

Thus instead of consolidating his empire, Humayun foolishly divided it among his brothers.

Siege of Kalinjar :

Humayun's early military operations were marked with success. Six or seven months after his accession, he led an expedition against Kalinjar in Bundelkhand, on the suspicion that its Raja was in sympathy with the Afghans. But owing to an uprising of the Afghans in the east he made hasty peace with Raja. He retreated after levying a certain amount of money from the Raja. Humayun failed to achieve the purpose for which he had attacked the fort Kalinjar. He could have turned the Raja into a friend by his act of wisdom.

The Afghans :

The Afghan menace engaged Humayun's attention for the time because it was very serious in 1532 he defeated the Afghans at Daurah and drove out Sultan Mahmud Lodi from Jaunpur.

Humayun next laid siege to the fortress of Chunar (February-June, 1533) then held by Sher Shah one of the most powerful of the Afghan chiefs. This was a strong fort which commanded the land and the river route between Agra and the east and was known as the gateway of eastern India. The siege continued for four months. At last at Sher Shah's request, Humayun followed him to retain possession of the fort on the condition that Sher Shah would remain loyal to the Mughals. Thus lost the opportunity of completely suppressing the rising Afghan chief and allowed him free scope to develop his resources and power.

Wars with Bahadur Shah of Gujarat :

One of the most formidable enemies of Humayun was Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. He was an ambitious ruler and was making vigorous efforts to increase his power. He had conquered Malwa of the King of Khandesh, Ahmadnagar and Berar had acknowledged his supremacy. The Portuguese also feared his growing power and paid homage to him. He had various provocations to Humayun. He had openly given shelter and helped many of the Afghan refugees and enemies of Humayun. He openly welcomed some close relations of Humayun. He refused to hand over Muhammad Zaman

Mirza the eldes son-in-law of Babar to Humayun or even to expel him for dominions. This was the immediate cause of the war between Humayun and Bahadur Shah.

Taking advantage of the decline of Mewar, Bahadur Shah besieged the famous Rajput fortress of Chittor. It is said that Rani Karunavati, the widow of Rana Sanga, sought Humayun's help but he paid no need to her request. Instead of attacking Bahadur at once he waited till Bahadur Shah had stumed Chittor. The Rana of Chittor was compelled to terms which were ruinous alike to his pride and his pocket. The story of Rani Karunavati sending a 'RAKHI' to Humayun for seeking his help is not fully accepted by some modern historians. But undoubtedly, Humayun lost a golden opportunity of inflicting a decisive blow upon his enemy Bahadur and at the same time winning the sympathy and support of the Rajputs.

Humayun now moved towards Mandasor, 50 miles from Chittor, Bahadur Shah was defeated by the force of Humayun in April 1535 on the bank of an artificial tank near Mandasor. Humayun pursued Bahadur Shah from Mandasor to Mandi; from Marder to Champanir and Ahmedabad and then to Cambay till he was compelled to take refuge in the island of Diu. By the month of August 1535 the conquest of Central Gujarat was concluded by Humayun.

But this victory of Humayun over the Gujarat ruler was short-lived. The Mughals were so elated with success that they wasted their time in feasting and merriment. His affairs fell into confusion.

After the victory, Humayun placed Gujarat under the command of his younger brother. Askari Being weak and experienced, Askari could not retain Gujarat. Internal dissensions soon broke out among the Mughals. Taking advantage of the situation, Bahadur Shah was able to recover his lost territories. "One year had seen the rapid conquest of the two great provinces (i.e. Malwa and Gujarat—he next saw them as quickly lost" Thus Humayun wasted a year in successful but futile campaign against Bahadur Shah. He failed to establish his authority in the west partly due to his own indecision and partly due to the folly and disaffection of his own men.

War with Sher Shah :

When Humayun was busy fighting with Bahadur Shah of Gujarat, Sher Shah had an opportunity to increase his power. He had made himself the unquestioned master of Bihar. The Afghans from far and near had rallied round him in 1536 he invited Bengal and forced its ruler Mahmud Shah to cede to him the territory from Kiul to Sakrigali 90 miles in length with a breadth of 30 miles. About the middle of October 1537, Sher Shah again invaded Bengal and closely besieged the city of Gaur. After equipping a new army Humayun marched against Sher Shah on the 2nd week of December. Instead of proceeding straight to Gaur where in alliance with the Sultan of Bengal, he might have inflicted a crushing defeat on Sher Shah, he committed a blunder in besieging Chunar. It took him six months to capture this fort. This period afforded a most valuable breathing time for Sher Shah who utilised it in reducing Gaur by April 1538. He also captured the fortress of Rohtas and sent his family and treasures there.

When Humayun heard of Sher Shah's success in Bengal, he advanced towards Gaur but the wise Afghan retreated towards Bihar and eluded his pursuers. The Mughals captured Gaur and named it 'JANNATABAD' (On the Paradise city). Sher Shah tried to compensate himself for this loss by seizing imperial territories in Bihar and Jaunpur and plundered the country as far as Kanauj. As soon as Humayun heard of Sher Shah's activities, he left Gaur for Agra. He was confronted with a difficult situation. Attempts were made to make peace with Sher Shah but in vain.

He was opposed by Sher Shah and his Afghan followers at Chausa near Buxar. The Afghans suddenly fell upon the Mughals. They were completely taken by surprise and were defeated on 26th June 1539. Most of the Mughal soldiery were drowned and captured. Humayun jumped into the Ganges and his life was saved by a water carrier.

For a year both Humayun and Sher Shah were engaged in assembling and preparing their forces for a decisive contest. The army hurriedly assembled by Humayun was no match against Sher Shah. His army was hopelessly demoralised, half-hearted and badly officered. More over as compared to him Sher Shah was a superior general. He was the most skilful general the Afghans ever produced. However the battle was bitterly contested. Sher Shah inflicted a terrible defeat on Humayun at the battle of Ganges or Bilgram commonly known as the battle of Kanauj on 17 May, 1540.

Thus the work of Babar in India was undone and the throne of Delhi passed into the hands of the Afghans. Humayun fled to Agra and taking his family and treasure went to Delhi. He was hotly pursued from one place to another till he was turned out of the country. For about the next 15 years he had to live the life of a wanderer. In 1555, after the break up of the Sur Empire, he was able to recover Delhi after gaining a decisive victory over Sikandar Sur at Sirhind. But the Empire did not live long to enjoy the hours of royalty which he had won by the sword of his arms. On 26th January, 1558, a sudden fall from staircase of his library at Delhi caused his death.

Thus Humayun "tumbled through life and tumbled out of it." The unfavourable circumstances under which he ascended the throne, the treachery of his brother, the opposition of the Afghans who regarded the Mughals as foreigners and the precarious condition of the Mughal Empire which his father had founded but had not consolidated—were mainly responsible for his failure. No doubt, he committed some blunders but he was devoid of some natural talents. His noble nature was marked by the combination of energy of Alexander and the learning of Aristotle. He was a brave soldier; he had to face two formidable foes i.e., Bahadur Shah of Gujarat & Sher Shah at the same time. The latter i.e., Sher Shah was far abler than Humayun. In short, Humayun failed to retain his patrimony, i.e., the Mughal Empire, due more to the baffling political situation which he had before him than to his personal faults and failures.