

FOUNDATION, EXPANSION AND DECLINE OF DELHI SULTAN

Unit Structure:

- 1.1 Objectives
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.2 A) Socio-Economic And Political Condition Of India On The Eve Of The Turkish Invasion
- 1.3 Economic Condition Of India On The Eve Of The Turkish Invasion
- 1.4 Political Condition Of India On The Eve Of The Turkish Invasion
- 1.5 B) Rise And Decline Of Slave Dynasty, Khilji Dynasty
- 1.6 Iltutmish (1211a.d. -1236a.d.)
- 1.7 Questions
- 1.8 Raziya Sultana (1236-1240)
- 1.9 Ghiyasuddin Balban (1266-1287)
- 1.10 Conclusion
- 1.11 Questions
- 1.12 Alauddin's Rise To Power
- 1.13 Alauddin's Accession To The Throne Of Delhi
- 1.14 Dream Of World Conquest:
- 1.15 Imperial Expansion
- 1.16 Deccan Campaigns Of Alauddin Khilji
- 1.17 Kingdoms Of The Deccan And The South
- 1.18 Mongol Invasions
- 1.19 Conclusion
- 1.20 Questions
- 1.21 (C) Tughlag, Sayyid And Lodi Dynasty
- 1.22 Sayyid Dynasty (1414-1451)
- 1.23 Lodi Dynasty (1451-1526)
- 1.24 Conclusion
- 1.25 Questions

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit you will be able:

- To understand the Social condition on the eve of the Turkish invasion.
- To analyse the Economic Condition on the eve of the Turkish Invasion.
- To know the Political Condition on the eve of the Turkish Invasion.
- To understand the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate at the turn of the thirteenth century.
- To know the invasions of Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad Ghori on India.
- To explain the functioning of Slave Dynasty in India.
- To examine the role of Raziya Sultana as a first woman to rule Delhi.
- To understand the role of Balban as a *de facto* ruler of Delhi.
- To elaborate the administration of Balban as a *de jure* ruler of Delhi.
- To trace Alauddin's accession to throne of Delhi.
- To know Alauddin's expansion of the Sultanate.
- To understand Southern expeditions of Alauddin.
- To understand the Muhammad Bin Tughlaq.
- To know the reign of Sayyid Dynasties.
- To study the period of Lodi Dynasties.

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The invasion of the Turks at the turn of the eleventh century from Central Asia had far-reaching consequences on the history of India. The Turks established the politico-military control over major regions of the country and promoted the religion-Islam that they professed and introduced and nurtured the Islamic culture in all spheres. These factors led to the emergence of the Muslim community with a well-defined religion and its own socio-cultural moorings. Unlike the invaders of ancient India, the Turks and the Indian converts to Islam maintained their distinct religio-cultural identity. In order to understand the reasons behind the Turkish invasions and the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, it is important to analyze the socio-economic and political conditions that prevailed in India on the eve of the Turkish invasion.

One of the significant events in the history of India was the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate at the turn of the thirteenth century. The invasions of Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad Ghori not only resulted in the plunder of rich cities and destruction and desecration of temples but also to the introduction of a new political factor in India. The campaigns of Muhammad Ghori paved the way for the rule of the Turks and the Afghans. While Mahmud of Ghazni targeted the North Indian temple cities for wealth and iconoclastic fervour, Muhammad Ghori nurtured political ambition in addition to these motives. He desired to make northern India part of his Ghorian Empire. Thus, following his successful campaigns, Muhammad Ghori nominated his trusted and prominent slave, Qutbuddin Aibak as his representative to govern the newly conquered regions in India.

Delhi became the center of the Turkish and Afghan power. By its strategic position Delhi seemed to be the ideal seat of power. From Delhi access to the Gangetic plains as well as to the central and western regions was possible. Besides, Delhi was the convenient location on the route from Afghanistan. The Turkish power was not only concentrated at Delhi but radiated in different directions from there. The Turkish rule from Delhi came to be known as the Delhi Sultanate. The phrase 'Delhi Sultanate' is applied to the history of Northern India extending from 1206 to 1526. However, it is important to note that 'Delhi Sultanate' does not mean that a particular dynasty ruled throughout this period. It is a general phrase ascribed to the rule of five successive dynasties. These dynasties were (1) The Slave Dynasty (1206-1290), (2) The Khilji Dynasty (1290-1320), (3) The Tughlaq Dynasty (1320-1414), (4) The Sayyid Dynasty (1414-1451) and (5) The Lodi Dynasty (1451-1526).

Iltutmish died in 1236 A.D. after expressing his conviction that among his children his daughter, Raziya alone was fit to succeed him. He was conscious of the problems caused by an indefinite law of succession. In order to avoid a civil war among his children and to save the infant Delhi Sultanate from disintegration, he wanted to nominate his successor and train him in affairs of government during his own lifetime. Initially he chose his eldest son Nasiruddin Mahmud and appointed him as the governor of Lahore and subsequently of Awadh and later of Bengal. However, the premature death of Nasiruddin jeopardized Iltutmish's plans.

Following the end of the slave dynasty in 1290, a new dynasty, known as the Khilji dynasty (1290-1320) came to power at Delhi. The founder of the Khilji dynasty was Jalaluddin Firuz Khilji. He overthrew the last of the slave sultans, Kaiqubad. However, the greatest ruler of this dynasty was Alauddin Khilji under whom the Delhi Sultanate expanded far and wide in the Indian sub-continent.

Following the death of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq, the founder of the Tughlaq dynasty under tragic circumstance, his eldest son, Fakhruddin Muhammad Jauna Khan, who was also given the title of *ulugh khan*, ascended the throne of Delhi in 1325 with the title of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq. His reign is one of the most striking epochs in the history of the sultanate. It was during his reign that a major part of the Deccan and South India passed under the direct

rule of the Delhi Sultanate. It marked the climax of the territorial expansion of the Delhi Sultanate. Paradoxically, the decline of the sultanate also began at this time.

1.2 A) SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONDITION OF INDIA ON THE EVE OF THE TURKISH INVASION

1.2.1 Division of the Society into Caste System:

Since ancient times the Indian society was divided into four hierarchical castes with prescribed privileges and disabilities. The four major castes were: the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and the Sudras. The division of the society into castes and sub-castes had created sharp differences between different sections of the society. This in turn had weakened the society. The Brahmins and Kshatriyas commanded the highest respect in the society while the position of the Sudras and the Chandalas had become worse than before. The *Smriti* writers of the period ascribed exaggerated the privileges to the Brahmins. On the other hand the Sudras were condemned to rigorous social and religious disabilities. Besides the traditional four castes, there was a large section of the people called *antayaja*. The hunters, the weavers, the fishermen, the shoemakers and other people who engaged in such professions belonged to this section. They occupied a position lower than the Sudras. Still lower in social status were the Hadis, Doms, Chandalas etc. who performed duties such as lifting the dead cattle, cremating the dead people, scavenging etc. They were forced to live outside the cities and villages. They were treated as outcastes and untouchables.

With the passage of time the caste system had become very rigid. Marriages between different castes were forbidden. According to a writer Parasara, eating a Sudra's food, association with a Sudra, sitting alongside a Sudra, and taking lessons from a Sudra are acts which drag down even a noblest person. The position of the lower castes in the society can be imagined by the fact that even the Vaishyas were not allowed to study the religious texts. According to Al-Beruni if any one dared to study the religious texts his tongue was cut off.

One of the important features of the Hindu society on the eve of the Turkish invasion was the emergence of new castes such as the *Kayastha* caste. Originally, people from different castes, including Brahmins and Sudras, who worked in the royal establishments, came to be known as *Kayastha*. With the passage of time, they crystallized into a distinct caste. As Hinduism was spreading it absorbed not only the Buddhists and Jains but also many indigenous tribes and foreigners who embraced Hinduism during this period. These groups came to be organized in new castes and sub-castes. In most of the cases they continued their own social customs and traditions in relation to marriage etc. They even continued to worship their own tribal gods and goddesses. The caste system and the proliferation of additional sub-castes with their distinct social customs and position in the caste hierarchy made the Hindu society more complex and divided on the eve of the Turkish invasion.

1.2.2 Deterioration of the Position of Women:

The position of women in the Indian society had been gradually deteriorating over the years since ancient times. Women were generally considered mentally inferior. The women were regarded as objects of enjoyment by men and a means to procure children. They were required to be subservient to their husbands. The *Matsya Purana* gave power to the husband to beat his erring wife with a rope or a split bamboo. The women were denied education. They had no right to study the Vedas. Child marriage was a common practice. The *Smriti* writers laid down that girls were to be given away in marriage by their parents between the ages of six and eight or between their eighth year and attaining puberty. In general remarriage of the widows was not permitted. As women were distrusted they were kept in seclusion and their life was regulated by the male relations such as father, brother, husband and son. However, within the family, the women occupied an honourable position. Polygamy was practiced in the society. The practice of *Sati* among women of higher castes was becoming quite widespread. It was made obligatory by some writers, but condemned by others. An Arab writer, Sulaiman mentions about the practice of *Sati*. According to him, wives of kings sometimes burnt themselves on the funeral pyre of their husbands. However, the choice was left to the wives. It seems probable that to avoid property disputes after the death of polygamous feudal chiefs the rite of *Sati* tended to spread.

1.2.3 Emergence of Feudalism:

Emergence of the Feudalism was one of the most noteworthy socio-economic and political phenomena in the Indian sub-continent on the eve of the Turkish invasion. The common feature of a feudal society is that those who drew their sustenance from land without working on it held the dominant position in society. The feudalization of the society was due to the growing power of a class of people who were called *samanta*, *rank*, *rautta* etc. Some of them were government officials who were assigned revenue-bearing villages in lieu of cash salary. Some others were defeated chiefs and their supporters who continued to enjoy the revenue of limited areas. Military adventurers, local hereditary chiefs, and tribal or clan leaders were also the components of the feudal society that prevailed during this period. The feudal chiefs were included within the kingdoms. Their assignments were passed on to the succeeding generations and assumed the nature of hereditary fiefs. The hereditary chiefs gradually began to assume many of the functions of the government. They maintained law and order, assessed and collected revenue and administered justice.

The growth of a feudal society had disastrous effects on the Indian socio-political system. Socially, the feudal class represented parasitical exploiters of their tenants. Politically, feudalism weakened the position of the ruler. The ruler became increasingly dependent on the feudal chiefs who maintained their own military forces. Feudalism discouraged trade and commerce and promoted economic self-sufficiency within a village or region. The feudal system also weakened village self-government.

1.2.4 Religious and Moral Decline:

Buddhism and Jainism continued to decline during the period under our study. Meanwhile there was a revival and expansion of Hinduism. There was a growing popularity of Siva and Vishnu. The worship of the Sun and Brahma gradually declined. The worship of *Shakti*, the female creative energy became popular in eastern India. Buddhism was gradually confined to eastern India. The Pala rulers patronized Buddhism. Jainism continued to be popular in western and south India especially among the trading classes. In the south, a series of popular movements arose which popularized the worship of Siva and Vishnu. This was the origin of the *Bhakti* movement that turned people away from Jainism. Another popular movement that arose during the twelfth century in Karnataka was the *Lingayat* movement founded by Basava and his nephew Channabasava. The *Lingayats* are the worshippers of Siva. They strongly opposed the caste system and rejected feasts, fasts, pilgrimages and sacrifices.

In spite of these developments, deterioration of religion and morality was increasingly damaging the social fabric on the eve of the Turkish invasion. Shankaracharya had tried to safeguard Hinduism from the influence of both Buddhism and Jainism by developing a common philosophy known as *Advaita*. However, he could not get rid of the evils that had crept into Hinduism. Different religious sects made their appearance in different regions of India. A new sect known as Vamamarga *Dharma* had become popular especially in Kashmir and Bengal. The adherents of this sect indulged in wine, flesh, fish and women. The great *mathas*, which had been centers of learning and piety gradually, degenerated into centres of luxury and idleness. The other evil that can be traced to this period was the *devadasi* system. Most of the important temples employed a number of unmarried girls dedicated to the service of the deity. They were required to please the deity of the temple by their dance. This custom gradually degenerated into temple prostitution. According to U.N. Ghoshal nearly four thousand temples in Gujarat contained more than twenty thousand dancing girls.

The literature and art during this period assumed obscene character. The cult of the erotic had entered not only the literature but also the temple sculpture and the Tantric rituals. The craze for sensuality had also dominated Indian art of this period. The erotic sculptures of the Khajuraho temples built by the Chandelas are a testimony of the sensuality of the contemporary rulers, artists and the people in general.

1.2.5 Insular Character of the Indian Society:

The insular character of the Indian society made it ignorant of the various developments that were taking place beyond the natural frontiers of the Indian sub-continent. Indians were ignorant of the political, military, social, cultural, religious and scientific progress of their neighbouring countries. The upper castes of the Indian society developed a false sense of pride in their superiority. Al Beruni, who accompanied Mahmud Ghazni to India in the course of the invasions made the following observations about the Indian society: "The Hindus believed that there is no country like theirs,

no nation like theirs, no king like theirs, no religion like theirs, no science like theirs..." This account of Al Beruni indicates that the Indians did not desire to learn anything from others. Further Al Beruni writes: "The Hindus did not desire that a thing which has once been polluted should be purified and thus recovered." This complacency naturally prevented the Indians from rising above their fossilized, narrow-minded existence, which ultimately led to their weak resistance against the foreign invaders.

Check Your Progress:

1. What was the Social Conditions of India on the eve of the Turkish Invasion?

1.3 ECONOMIC CONDITION OF INDIA ON THE EVE OF THE TURKISH INVASION

1.3.1 Self-sufficient Village Economy:

On the eve of the Turkish invasion, as in the past, Villages were based on a self-sufficient economy. Local production, either agrarian or handicrafts was sufficient to meet the local requirements. No attempt was made at producing surplus, which could be used for trade or exchange. The peasants did not make any attempt to produce surplus, as it would have led to a demand from the landowner for a larger share. There was lack of incentive towards surplus production and subsistence level production was the order of the day.

1.3.2 Economic Stagnation:

Limited production and lack of trade led to a decrease in the use of coins. The emergence of a wide range of weights and measures further hampered the trade. The feudatories and the ruling class did not invest their surplus wealth in any kind of productive activity. They neither promoted agriculture nor craft production nor trade. They used their surplus wealth for conspicuous consumption. They built richly ornamented palatial homes. A large part of their income was spent in building magnificent temples. These wealthy temples became the prime targets of the Turkish invaders. Their iconoclastic religious zeal of destroying idols was less than their greed for plunder.

1.3.3 Diffusion of Income through Intermediary Taxes:

The multiplication of the sub-feudatories in the feudal structure resulted in a wider diffusion of the income from the land. The diversion of income into the hands of the intermediaries weakened the position of those at both ends of the scale, the cultivator and the king. With an increase in the number of intermediaries the peasant was forced to pay taxes additional to the basic land tax. The land tax was quite high. Some peasants paid as much as one-third of the total produce to the landowner although the most usual assessment was one-sixth. Under the feudal system, the feudal tenants were required to pay separate taxes distinct from the land revenue to maintain public works such as roads, irrigation, etc. The temple authorities also collected additional dues from the peasants. As the land

grants to the Brahmins were tax free, the loss of revenue from these lands had to be reimbursed from other sources. These taxes, together with the obligation to provide free labour reduced the cultivators to a miserable condition. Goods produced by the craftsmen were also taxed. The Chauhan inscriptions throw light on a variety of taxes. The condition was the same in most of the contemporary feudal kingdoms.

The aristocracy lived on the revenue from the land without participating in the cultivation of it themselves. The Brahmin landholders employed cultivators, as caste laws forbade them to cultivate land. The cultivation activity was usually carried on by the peasants who generally belonged to the Sudra caste.

1.3.4 Decline of Trade and Commerce:

Between seventh and tenth century trade and commerce received a serious setback. The economic self-sufficiency of the villages led to a decline in trade, which in turn affected the growth of towns. Arab geographers have pointed out the existence of fewer towns in India as compared with China. Continual wars among the neighbouring kingdoms also hampered trade. The collapse of the Western Roman Empire also contributed to the decline of Indian trade. The rise of Islam leading to the collapse of old empires such as the Sassanid Empire of Iran, also affected India's foreign trade, especially the overland trade. India's favourable trade which had led to the coming back of gold and silver in the form of surplus was hampered too.

The North Indian overland trade with China through Central Asia gradually declined with the opening up of Central Asia to Persian and West Asian traders. Besides, the conflict between the Tibetans, Turks, Arabs and Chinese made the overland route to China unsafe. Under these circumstances the sea-route between India and China became more and more important. The Indian overland trade with China practically came to an end in the thirteenth century when the Mongol invasions cut India off from Central Asia.

1.3.5 Overseas Trade in South Indian Coasts:

In the coastal areas of Indian peninsula maritime trade still supported prosperous port towns, especially in regions such as Gujarat, Malabar and the Tamil coast, which still had a large overseas trade. The prosperity of coastal towns was due partly to the settlements of foreign merchants who controlled most of the trade between India and the West Asia. Arab merchants attempted to eliminate the Indian middlemen in the trade between India and China by proceeding directly to China and to Southeast Asia. The Arab geographers mentioned ports like Debal in the Indus delta, Cambay, Thana, Sopara, and Kaulam (Quilon) on the west coast. Arab ships chiefly frequented these ports and carried to the West goods either produced in India or brought by Indian merchants from China or Southeast Asia. On the eastern sea coast of India trade with China and Southeast Asia kept up the prosperity of the coastal towns.

1.3.6 Decline of Guilds:

Though the internal trade had not disappeared it was at a minimum level. Artisans worked both in the villages and towns. A large number of artisans worked in towns, where professional associations or guilds were recognized. However, these associations had lost their previous dominant position and influence in urban centres. There was a gradual shift of power from these craft associations to the landowning class in rural areas. However, in South India there did exist some powerful guilds.

1.3.7 Emergence of the Class of Money-lenders:

While the peasants and craftsmen were living at a subsistence level, and internal trade was at a minimum level, the class of moneylenders was raking in prosperity during this period. The Moneylenders charged fifteen per cent on the money lent to the needy peasants or craftsmen. However, the Chauhan records indicate much higher interest such as thirty per cent charged by the moneylenders. In the Rashtrakuta Kingdom the interest was as high as twenty-five per cent. It has been pointed out that the decline of trade and the unavailability of money were the likely reasons for higher rates of interest.

1.3.8 Affluence of the Feudal Class:

Though the vast majority of the Indian peasants lived at the subsistence level with self-sufficient village economy under the feudal structure, the country had enormous wealth accumulated for generations. The royal families, courtiers, feudal class, and aristocracy lived affluent and luxurious lives. The affluent classes manifested their wealth by building grand palaces and constructing huge temples, which were the repositories of wealth. The concentration of wealth in the hands of the royalty and in the abodes of gods, tempted the Turkish invader Mahmud Ghazni at the turn of the eleventh century and Muhammad Ghori during the last quarter of the twelfth century to invade India and break the political power of the ruling class and plunder the temples.

Check Your Progress:

1. Explain the Village economy under the feudal Structure.

1.4 POLITICAL CONDITION OF INDIA ON THE EVE OF THE TURKISH INVASION

The Indian subcontinent was a mosaic of many kingdoms of varying size and strength. The neighbouring kingdoms constantly indulged in warfare for the extension of their territories. Political disintegration in North and Central India can be traced to the death of Harshavardhana (647). On the ruins of the Vardhana Empire a number of new kingdoms came into existence. These kingdoms were not bound by any principle of unity. Though some of these kingdoms were quite extensive and powerful they could not present any tangible opposition to the Turkish invaders as they weakened themselves due

to internal strife and external conflict. The chief kingdoms that existed on the eve of the Turkish invasion were the following:

1.4.1 The Arab Kingdoms of Sindh and Multan:

The Arab invasion of Sindh in 712 under the leadership of Muhammad bin Qasim resulted in the establishment of the Arab rule over Sindh and Multan. Initially, the Arab rulers of Sindh owed their allegiance to the Caliph of Baghdad. However, since 871 they asserted their political independence from the Caliph. However, for diplomatic reasons they offered nominal allegiance to him. On the eve of the invasion of Mahmud Ghazni, the Arabs ruled over Sindh and Multan and were under the control of Fateh Daud who was a Karmathian. However, it is important to note that the Arab conquest of Sindh did not help in any way in the establishment of the Turkish rule in India. The Arabs remained confined to Sindh and Multan as the sprawling deserts of Rajasthan and the existence of powerful kingdoms beyond restricted their advance into northern and central regions of the country.

1.4.2 The Brahmin Hindushahi Kingdom:

The Brahmin dynasty of the Shahiyas ruled over an extensive territory spread from the river Chenab to Multan including the Northwestern Frontier. The Hindushahi kingdom had played an important role in resisting the advance of the Arabs in North India for nearly two hundred years. With the rise of the Ghaznavid Empire in Afghanistan, the Hindushahis were forced to give up a part of their kingdom including Kabul and shift their capital to Wahind on the right bank of river Indus. The Hindushahi Kingdom was the first victim of the Turkish invasion. The struggle between the Ghaznavids and the Hindushahis lasted for about forty years. The Hindushahi ruler at the turn of the eleventh century was Jayapala who had to face the initial onslaught of Mahmud Ghazni.

1.4.3 The Kingdom of Kashmir:

Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* (12th century) gives a detailed account of the kingdom of Kashmir. After the death of emperor Ashoka Kashmir became an independent kingdom. The greatest ruler of Kashmir was Lalitaditya (725-755) who defeated Yashovarman the ruler of Kanauj in 740. There were a number of dynastic successions in Kashmir. Kshemagupta was the king of Kashmir towards the end of the tenth century. However, his queen Dida was the *de facto* ruler. Eventually, she crowned herself as the queen and ruled Kashmir till 1003.

1.4.4 The Pratihara Rulers of Western India:

The origin of the Pratiharas is shrouded in mystery. A number of scholars are of the opinion that they were the descendants of the Gurjara race. The Pratiharas established a powerful kingdom in the western regions of India. Vatsaraja was one of the prominent rulers of the dynasty who acquired the title of *Samrat*. He defeated Dharmapala, the ruler of Bengal and gained control over Kanauj, which had been the imperial

capital of Hardhavardhana and Yashovarman. There was tripartite struggle for the control of Kanauj between the Pratiharas, Palas of Bengal and the Rashtrakutas of the Deccan. Nagabhata II was another important Pratihara ruler. He conquered Malwa and parts of central India and even resisted the advance of the Arabs. He also defeated the Pala ruler Dharmapala. Later the Pratihara king, Mahipala was defeated by Indra III, the Rashtrakuta king. The Pratiharas even lost control over Kanauj. As the Pratihara power declined its hold was restricted to the upper Ganga valley and parts of Rajasthan and Malwa. Gradually, their feudatories such as the Chandelas of Bundelkhand, the Chalukyas of Gujarat and the Paramaras of Malwa became independent. Mahmud Ghazni defeated the last of the Pratihara king, Rajyapala in 1018.

1.4.5 The Palas of Bengal:

The Pala kingdom was founded in Bengal in the middle of the eighth century. The Pala dynasty lasted for four centuries and had seventeen rulers. The Pala kingdom included considerable regions of Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Assam. The Pala influence extended to Tibet and Southeast Asia. The greatest ruler of the Pala dynasty was Dharmapala. The struggle for mastery over Kanauj began during his reign. At first Vatsaraja, the Pratihara ruler defeated Dharmapala and gained control over Kanauj. As the Pratiharas were weakened due to conflict with the Rashtrakutas, Dharmapala recovered from his defeat, reconquered Kanauj and installed his own nominee on the throne. Mahipala I, who ruled in the first quarter of the eleventh century, was a contemporary of Mahmud Ghazni. Due to its distance, the Pala kingdom was not affected by the invasions of Mahmud Ghazni. However, at the turn of the eleventh century the decline of the Pala power could not be prevented as powerful vassals began to assert their independence.

1.4.6 The Rashtrakutas of Malkhed:

The Rashtrakutas were the feudatories of the Chalukyas of Badami. Following the downfall of the Chalukyas, one of their vassals, Dantidurga laid the foundation of Rashtrakuta power in 750 with Malkhed near Sholapur as capital. The Pratiharas and the Palas were the contemporaries of the Rashtrakutas. The Rashtrakuta rule in the Deccan lasted for almost two hundred years till the end of the tenth century. They came into conflict with the Pratiharas for the control of Gujarat and Malwa. The Rashtrakutas also went to war against the Palas of Bengal, the eastern Chalukyas of Vengi, the Pallavas of Kanchi and the Pandyas of Madurai. Indra III (914-922) and Krishna III (939-965) were the most powerful Rashtrakuta rulers. Krishna III was engaged in a struggle against the Paramaras of Malwa, the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi and the Cholas of Tanjore. He defeated the Chola king, Parantaka I and annexed the northern part of the Chola empire. The death of Krishna III was followed by struggle for succession among his sons and the decline of the Rashtrakuta power. The Paramaras of Malwa took this opportunity to avenge their defeat. The Paramara ruler, Siyak attacked the Rashtrakutas, advanced on the capital, Malkhed and sacked it. This marked the end of the Rashtrakuta empire and the emergence of their feudatories as independent kingdoms.

1.4.7 The Rajput Kingdoms:

With the break-up of the Pratihara empire, a number of Rajput kingdoms came into existence in North and Central India. On the eve of the Turkish invasions, the Rajputs ruled major parts of northern and central India. Where and how the Rajputs originated is still a mystery. According to some scholars, the Rajputs were of foreign origin. This is suggested by the efforts that were made by the Brahmins to give them royal lineage and grant them the *Kshatriya* status. They were provided with genealogies, which connected them either with the solar or lunar race. In this way royal respectability was conferred on them.

The Rajputs rose to political importance in the ninth and tenth centuries. They were divided into a number of clans of which four claimed a special status. These were the Pariharas, the Chauhans, the Chaulukyas (Solankis) and the Paramaras. These four clans claimed to be the *Agnikula* or Fire Family. According to a legend these clans claimed their descent from a mythical figure that arose out of a vast sacrificial fire-pit near Mount Abu in Rajasthan. On the eve of the Turkish invasion, besides these *Agnikula* clans; other Rajput clans were also ruling different regions of northern and central India. The chief among them were:

1.4.7.1. The Chaulukyas of Anhilwara:

Mulraj founded The Chaulukya kingdom in the middle of the tenth century. It was the most important Rajput kingdom in western India. Under Jayasimha Siddharaja and Kumarapala, the Chaulukya kingdom became the most powerful state in western India. Its territories included Gujarat, Saurashtra, Malwa, Nadol and Konkan. The Chaulukyas weakened themselves due to a prolonged struggle against the Chauhans of Ajmer. Their feudatories reasserted their independence leaving only Gujarat and Kathiawar under their control. Mulraj II was the contemporary of Muhammad Ghori.

1.4.7.2 The Chauhans of Aimers:

The Chauhan kingdom was the most important Rajput power on the eve of the invasion of India by Muhammad Ghori. The Chauhan principality emerged as a powerful political entity during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The Chauhans extended their territories by waging wars against their neighbours including the Chaulukyas of Gujarat and the Paramaras of Malwa. Taking advantage of the decline of the Ghaznavid power in the Punjab the Chauhans annexed the territory between the Sutlej and the Jamuna. They also captured Delhi from the Tomaras. Under Prithviraja III (1178-1193) the Chauhans became a predominant power. The Chauhans and the Gahadavalas of Kanauj were on hostile terms. Prithviraja III and the Gahadavala ruler, Jaichandra were bitter enemies. Chand Bardai's epic *Prithviraja-Raso* describes the career and achievements of Prithviraja III. In the course of Muhammad Ghori's invasion, Prithviraja led the Rajput confederacy to victory against the invader in the First Battle of Tarain (1191). However, in the Second Battle of Tarain (1192) Prithviraja was defeated by Muhammad Ghori. The defeat and death of this illustrious king led to the decline of the Chauhan power.

1.4.7.3 The Gahadavalas of Kanauj:

Following the decline of the Pratiharas, the Rajput dynasty of the Gahadavalas occupied Kanauj during the first quarter of the eleventh century. The Gahadavalas had the responsibility of protecting the Hindu holy cities of Kashi, Ayodhya, Kanauj and Indrasthana. During the twelfth century the Gahadavalas collected a special tax known as *Turushka-danda*. This imposition was meant to maintain an army to defend the region from the attacks from the Ghaznavids stationed in the Punjab. Jaichandra (1170-1193) was the last important ruler of the dynasty. He was a rival of the Chauhan ruler, Prithviraja III. Following the defeat and death of Jaichandra in a war against Muhammad Ghori led to the downfall of the Gahadavalas.

1.4.7.4 The Tomaras of Delhi:

The Tomaras, who were the feudatories of the Pratiharas ruled in the Haryana region surrounding Delhi. In 1043, Mahipala Tomar captured Hansi, Thaneshwar and Nagarkot. However, he failed in his attempt of capturing Lahore. The city of Dhillika (Delhi) was founded by the Tomaras in 736. As the Tomaras were constantly attacked by other Rajput neighbours, especially the Chauhans, they entered into some kind of an alliance with the Muslims. However, the Tomaras were overthrown by the Chauhans in the twelfth century.

1.4.7.5 The Paramaras of Malwa:

The Paramaras of Malwa began as feudatories of the Rashtrakutas but revolted against their overlords at the end of the tenth century and became independent with Dhar as their capital. The Paramaras became powerful under their greatest ruler Bhoja (1010-1055). He was a contemporary of Mahmud Ghazni. His achievements were considered to be greater in the field of literature and arts due to his generous patronage than in political and military spheres. It is believed that the decline of the Paramara dynasty began during the reign of Bola. During the twelfth century a considerable portion of the Paramara territory including Ujjain, was occupied by the Chaulukyas of Gujarat.

1.4.7.6 The Chandelas of Bundelkhand:

The Chandelas established their control over Bundelkhand, the region to the south of Kanauj. They assumed prominent position in the tenth century in the region of Kajuraho. The most important ruler of the Chandela dynasty was Vidhyadhara. He was responsible for the defeat and death of Rajyapala, the last ruler of the Pratihara dynasty of Kanauj who had failed to resist Mahmud Ghazni. The Chandela ruler, Kirtivarman, resisted an invasion of his territory by a Ghaznavid army from the Punjab. The Chandela dominion comprised of Mahoba, Kajuraho, Kalinjar and Ajaigarh. In spite of various attempt to annex the kingdom by the Delhi Sultanate, the Chandelas existed as a political entity till the beginning of the fourteenth century.

1.4.7.7 The Kalachuris of Chedi:

The main branch of the Kalachuris ruled from Tripuri near Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh. The most important ruler of this dynasty was Gangeya Vikramaditya (1019-1041) who extended his territories in the northeast up to Benaras and a part of Bihar. The Kalachuris fought for supremacy against the Chandelas as well as the Paramaras. The history of the Kalachuris had been like other Rajput neighbours, a saga of conflict and eventual decline and absorption within the growing Delhi Sultanate.

1.4.7.8. The Sena Kingdom of Bengal:

Following the downfall of the Pala Empire, the Sena Kingdom was established in Bengal. During the eleventh century, one of the members of the Sena family named Vijaya Sena (1097-1159) established a principality in East Bengal. He extended his power by scoring victories over the rulers of Kamrupa (Assam), Kalinga and South Bengal. His successor Ballala Sena was responsible for the final collapse of the Pala power in North Bihar. He also captured a part of Bihar from the Gahadavalas. Lakshman Sena (1178-1205) was a contemporary of Muhammad Ghori. He extended the Sena power by defeating the kingdoms of Kalinga, Pala and Kamrupa. He had to face the invasion under Bakhtiyar Khilji, the military commander of Muhammad Ghori. However, the conflict with the Turks did not result in the extinction of the Sena power. The Turks ruled over the western and northern parts of Bengal, while the Senas were confined to East Bengal who ruled the region till 1245.

Check Your Progress:

1. Who was the founder of Chalukya kingdom in the middle of the tenth century.

1.5 B) RISE AND DECLINE OF SLAVE DYNASTY, KHILJI DYNASTY

The Slave dynasty ruled from Delhi from 1206 to 1290 A.D. The first ruler of the Slave dynasty, Qutbuddin Aibak could be considered as the real founder of the Turkish rule in India. Though Muhammad Ghori included the regions conquered by him in India to his empire in Afghanistan, his centre of power was not in India. He remained the Sultan of Ghor. Following the assassination of Muhammad Ghori, his representative in India, Qutbuddin Aibak, with great foresight separated the kingdom of Delhi from the non-Indian territories of the Ghorian empire and gave it an independent status. This led to the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate.

1.5.1 Background of Qutbuddin Aibak:

Qutbuddin Aibak was born to Turkish parents in Turkistan. He belonged to the tribe of Aibek. He was sold as a slave in his boyhood and finally came under the possession of Muhammad Ghori. Due to his capability Aibak rose to prominence and became his trusted lieutenant. After the Second Battle of Tarain (1192), Aibak, the confidant of his master

practically became the ruler of the latter's conquests with power to extend them. Further, he captured Meerut and Delhi and co-operated with his master in the defeat of Jayachandra, the Gahadavala ruler of Kanauj in the Battle of Chandwar. Next Aibak captured Koil (Aligarh) and proceeded to Ajmer to suppress the rebellion of the Rajputs. He captured the fortress of Ranthambhor. He plundered Anhilwara. After a short interval Aibak took Kalinjar and Mahoba in Bundelkhand in 1203. But two years later the Chandelas recovered Kalinjar. Aibak was greatly responsible for the success of Muhammad Ghori's last expedition to India for suppressing a rebellion in the Punjab. Thus, Qutbuddin Aibak practically became the de facto ruler of Northern India.

1.5.2 Qutbuddin Aibak becomes the Ruler of Delhi:

Following the assassination of Muhammad Ghori, Qutbuddin Aibak, supported by the chiefs in India, proclaimed himself as the ruler of Delhi. However, according to the law of Islam no slave could become the sovereign of an Islamic state and his master did not manumit Aibak. Being aware of this shortcoming, in his inscriptions Aibak described himself as malik or sipahsalar, though he exercised all powers of a sovereign.

Before consolidating his position at Delhi, Qutbuddin Aibak had to solve a number of problems. He failed in his attempt of bringing Ghazni under his control and it remained a separate kingdom under another slave of Muhammad Ghori, Tajuddin Yaloz. Aibak had also to deal with Rajput revolts following the death of Muhammad Ghori. The achievements of Aibak as a monarch were not as impressive as those as a viceroy. During four years of his rule Aibak made no fresh conquests. On the contrary the Rajputs recaptured some of their strongholds, which they had lost to the Turks. Aibak also could not establish a sound system of administration. This was due to paucity of time. His administration was purely military. The local administration was left in the hands of native officers who followed the traditional revenue rules. At the capital and provincial towns Muslim officers were placed in charge of administration. Administration of justice was ill organized. Thus, Aibak did not lay the foundation of a sound structure of civil administration. He had very little time as an independent ruler. He died in 1210 due to a fall from his horse while playing chaugan (horse-polo). He was buried at Lahore, which had been his chief center of activity.

1.5.3 An Estimate of Qutbuddin Aibak:

Qutbuddin Aibak was the most capable slave of Muhammad Ghori. Muhammad Ghori rewarded his loyalty by appointing him as his agent in India to consolidate his conquests. He had fine qualities of head and heart. According to Prof. Habibullah, Qutbuddin combined the intrepidity of the Turk with the refined taste and generosity of the Persian. The contemporary historians appreciated his virtues of loyalty, generosity, courage and sense of justice. His generosity earned him the title of Lakh Buksh (giver of lakhs). He patronized art and literature. His court included famous scholars such as Hasan Nizami and Fakhre Mudir. He built two

mosques known as Quwat-ul-Islam at Delhi and Dhai Din Ka Jhonpara at Ajmer. Despite the stories of his power, generosity and love of justice Qutbuddin Aibak could not establish a strong government in India. However, in spite his shortcomings, Sir Wolsley Haig and a number of other scholars regard him as the real founder of Muslim dominion in India.

Check Your Progress:

1. Who was the founder of Delhi Sultanate?

1.6 ILTUTMISH (1211A.D. -1236A.D.)

The death of Qutbuddin Aibak in 1210 brought to the forefront the inherent defects of the ill-cemented sultanate. It raised the problem of controlling the ambitious provincial governors and partisan nobles. The spirit of provincial insubordination and assertion of authority by the nobility were the chief difficulties that the Delhi Sultanate faced throughout its period of existence.

1.6.1 Accession of Iltutmish:

Following the death of Qutbuddin Aibak, the Turkish nobles of Lahore, who wanted to give the city the status of capital of the sultanate, raised Aram Shah to the throne. According to some historians Aram Shah was the son of Aibak, whereas others were of the opinion that he was a person of obscure origin. However, the nobles of Delhi, fearing the eclipse of their importance and loss of the imperial status of Delhi refused to acknowledge Aram Shah as the sultan. Thus, the Turkish nobles of Delhi proved stronger than any other faction and favoured Iltutmish, the slave and son-in-law of Qutbuddin Aibak as the next sultan. Iltutmish accepted the invitation of the nobles of Delhi. Aram Shah, who was unwilling to give up his claim as Iltutmish near Delhi defeated the successor of Aibakin 1211.

Shamsuddin Iltutmish was born to noble Turkish parents of the Ilbari tribe of Central Asia. He was sold as a slave when he was still young. Having served many masters he was finally purchased by Aibak. By virtue of his merit and hard work, Iltutmish won the confidence and trust of his master. He held in succession the fiefs of Gwalior and Baran (Bulandshahr). Later, he was appointed as the governor of Badaon. He also married a daughter of Aibak.

1.6.2 Difficulties faced by Iltutmish:

After assuming power at Delhi Iltutmish had to face a number of difficulties and problems. The chief among them were:

(1) Apart from the supporters of Aram Shah he had to deal with a number of Turkish amirs (nobles) in Delhi and its neighbourhood. They were unwilling to accept his authority in spite of his victory over Aram Shah. (2) Iltutmish had also to contend with his powerful rivals like Tajuddin Yaldoz and Nasiruddin Qabacha. Yaldoz, the ruler of Ghazni, nurtured an ambition to exercise his authority over the Turkish dominions in India. Qabacha,

another slave of Muhammad Ghori, who was in possession of Sindh and Multan aimed at setting up an independent principality in the Punjab. He advanced from Sindh towards Lahore. (3) In the east, many Turkish nobles and Hindu chiefs defied the authority of the sultan. (4) The Rajput chiefs, who had been subjugated by Muhammad Ghori and Aibak, became rebellious. They recovered Jalor and Ranthambhor from the control of the Turks. Even Ajmer, Gwalior and the Doab repudiated the authority of the Turks. (5) The Khilji governor of Bengal, Ali Mardan asserted his independence from Delhi. (6) Added to these political problems, Iltutmish had to face certain personal difficulties as well. Technically he had been a slave of Qutbuddin Aibak who in turn was a slave of Muhammad Ghori. Thus, Iltutmish was a slave of a slave and freeborn Turks considered it humiliating to submit to him.

1.6.3 Establishment of authority in Delhi and the Doab:

Confronted with these manifold difficulties Iltutmish faced the situation boldly with a great deal of courage, intelligence, power and determination. As a prelude to subsequent wars and conquest, Iltutmish proceeded to establish his authority on a sound footing in the surrounding regions of Delhi and the Doab. He decided to wipe out any possible challenge to his position and power. In a campaign lasting for many months, Iltutmish suppressed the Turkish and Hindu chiefs of Delhi, Badaon, Awadh, Varanasi and Tarai region and forced them to accept his sovereignty. With his position secure at Delhi and the surrounding regions, Iltutmish could plan the subjugation of his powerful rivals and enemies.

1.6.4 Suppression of Yaldoz:

The security of the northwestern frontier was of paramount importance for the safety of the Delhi Sultanate. To achieve this Iltutmish had to resist the claims of Yaldoz over the Turkish possessions in India and suppress the rising power of Qabacha. Yaldoz advanced his claims of sovereignty over northern India and ascribed to Iltutmish the position of a vassal. Iltutmish shrewdly and diplomatically recognized the overlordship of Yaldoz and accepted from him the royal insignia in the form of canopy and mace. In a similar manner Yaldoz decided to assert his authority over Qabacha. He invaded the Punjab and occupied Lahore.

Meanwhile a new development in the politics of Central Asia posed a great danger to the position of Iltutmish. In 1214, The Shah of Khwarizm (Khiva) conquered Ghazni and expelled Yaldoz. These developments had far reaching implications. Firstly, having lost Ghazni, Yaldoz might proceed to the Punjab and even lay a claim on Delhi. Secondly, the Shah of Khwarizm might claim Hindustan as a dependency of Ghazni. Thirdly, the Shah of Khwarizm might proceed to India in pursuit of Yaldoz and having expelled him from the Punjab might advance on to Delhi.

In order to face his enemies, Iltutmish began military operations. As anticipated the Shah of Khwarizm occupied Ghazni and Yaldoz fled to Lahore. Asserting his sovereignty over Iltutmish, Yaldoz advanced towards Delhi. Iltutmish had already proceeded at the head of a powerful army and

inflicted a crushing defeat on Yaldoz in the plains of Tarain. Yaldoz was sent as a prisoner to Badaon where he either died or was killed a little later.

1.6.5 Defeat of Qabacha:

After the defeat of Yaldoz, Qabacha reoccupied Lahore. Outwardly he accepted the suzerainty of Iltutmish but secretly he schemed against the sultan. In 1217, Iltutmish sent an army for the conquest of Lahore. Following his defeat Qabacha fled from Lahore. Iltutmish appointed his eldest son, Nasiruddin Mahmud as the governor.

1.6.6 Invasion of Chengiz Khan:

The external danger to the Delhi Sultanate chiefly came from the repeated Mongol invasions through the northwestern frontier. This perpetual danger of great magnitude was first felt in 1221. The Mongols of Central Asia were pagans who became Muslims in the fourteenth century. Under their great warrior leader, Temujjin, popularly known as Chengiz Khan (1162-1227), who prided in calling himself 'the scourge of God', the Mongols advanced deeper into Central Asia. With their advance the Muslim states began to crumble and fall with great rapidity.

The Mongols destroyed the Khwarizmi empire in 1220. Having failed to check the advance of the Mongols and suffering a defeat at their hands the Shah of Khwarizm fled towards the Caspian Sea. However, his son and crown prince Jalauddin Mangbarni crossed the Indus and entered the Punjab. Driving out the agents of Qabacha he occupied Lahore. Mangbarni sought an alliance with Iltutmish against the Mongols. But Iltutmish shrewdly avoided being dragged into a conflict with the Mongols. He even demanded the evacuation of the Punjab by Mangbarni so as to avoid Chengiz Khan's advance in pursuit of the fugitive. Having failed to find favour with Iltutmish, Mangbarni sought the assistance of the Khokhars. He married a Khokhar princess and tried to extend his influence in the Punjab. With the help of the Khokhars, Mangbarni drove away Qabacha and occupied Sindh and the neighboring regions and later fled to Persia in 1224. The wise policy of Iltutmish of refusing asylum to an alliance with Mangbarni against the Mongols saved the feeble and disorganized Delhi Sultanate from their scourge. Chengiz Khan, who perhaps did not desire to violate a neutral state returned from Afghanistan.

The fall of Yaldoz, the providential escape of the Delhi Sultanate from the Mongol scourge and the destruction of Qabacha's power due to Mangbarni's activities in the Punjab and Sindh enabled Iltutmish to consolidate his power at Delhi.

1.6.7 Conquest of the Punjab:

The Khokhars of the Punjab had been a source of trouble to Iltutmish. They had supported Mangbarni during his sojourn in the Punjab. Besides, the Khokhars allied themselves with Saifuddin Qarlugh, who was trying to maintain Mangbarni's authority over the western Punjab. After a prolonged fight against the Khokhars, which lasted for several months, Iltutmish

annexed a part of their territory. Besides Lahore, Iltutmish captured Sialkot, Jalandhar and Nandana. He garrisoned the forts with the Turkish and Afghan soldiers. They were assigned Khokhar villages as jagirs. The conquest of the Punjab and the creation of outposts were aimed at the security of the northwestern frontiers of the sultanate.

1.6.8 Restoration of Bengal:

Following the death of Qutbuddin Aibak, the Khilji governor of Bengal, Ali Mardan had declared himself independent from the authority of the sultan of Delhi. As he was a tyrant and his rule proved to be oppressive, the people of Bengal rose in revolt against him. In 1212 Ali Mardan was deposed and put to death. Hisammudin Iwaz, who assumed the title of Sultan Ghiyasuddin, captured the throne of Bengal. He was an able and popular ruler. He annexed Bihar and exacted tribute from the neighboring Hindu states of Jajnagar, Tirhut, Vanga and Kamrupa.

After securing the northwest frontier of the sultanate, Iltutmish turned his attention towards the recovery of Bengal. He would not tolerate the existence of an independent ruler in a province, which had originally been a part of the Delhi Sultanate. As a prelude to the recovery of Bengal, Iltutmish sent an army to occupy south Bihar. In 1225, Iltutmish personally proceeded against Ghiyasuddin. The latter accepted the sovereignty of the sultan and agreed to pay an indemnity and annual tribute. Iltutmish was satisfied with this arrangement and returned to Delhi. He appointed Alauddin Jani as the governor of Bihar.

As soon as Iltutmish returned to Delhi, Ghiyasuddin reasserted his independence, drove Alauddin Jani out of Bihar and appointed his own governor. Following the rebellion of Ghiyasuddin, Iltutmish dispatched his son, Nasiruddin Mahmud, then governor of Awadh to punish the former. Nasiruddin captured Lakhnauti, the capital of Bengal in 1226 and defeated and killed Ghiyasuddin. However, following the premature death of Mahmud the affairs of Bengal once again fell into confusion leading to revolts in Lakhnauti. Iltutmish led a second expedition to Bengal in 1230, suppressed all opposition and once again appointed Alauddin Jani as the governor of Bengal. He remained loyal to the sultanate throughout the reign of Iltutmish.

1.6.9 Suppression of the Rajputs:

Following Qutbuddin Aibak's death the Rajputs made vigorous attempts to overthrow the authority of the Turks. The Rajput rebellions in different regions of western and central India had resulted in the recovery of a number of their strong holds, which had been occupied by the Turks. Up to 1225, Iltutmish was pre-occupied with the problems of the northwest frontier and the subjugation of the Turkish nobles of the east. Thus, till that time he did not wage any war against the powerful Rajput rulers to bring them under his rule. His campaigns were confined to the suppression of the Hindu chiefs of the Doab and Awadh.

Iltutmish began his major offensive against the Rajputs in 1226, when he first attacked and captured Ranthambhor. After re-garrisoning the fort, Iltutmish

advanced to Mandu, the capital of the Paramaras, which was recovered and garrisoned. By 1230 the authority of the sultanate was firmly established over Jalor, Ajmer, Bayana, Tahangarh and Sambhar. However, the Solankis of Gujarat and the Guhilots of Nagda resisted the Turkish armies and succeeded in retaining their independence. In 1231, Gwalior was besieged by the Turkish armies. The Parihara ruler, Malayavarmadeva put up a gallant fight against the Turkish invader for a year. However, he could not continue the defensive war any longer. He gave up and the Turks soon captured the fort.

Besides these conquests, Iltutmish sent his armies against Chandelas in 1233 to conquer Kalinjar. The Chandela ruler, Trilokyavarma could not resist the Turkish invaders and left the fort that was plundered. However, the Turks could not achieve much success as they were overwhelmed by the Chandelas and had to withdraw. Iltutmish also sent expeditions towards Bhilsa and Ujjain in 1234-1235. But he did not achieve appreciable success in these regions.

When Iltutmish occupied the throne of Delhi there was every danger of the disintegration of the sultanate. However, it goes to his credit that he not only reasserted his authority but also safeguarded the sultanate from external danger and internal rebellions. Gradually, he regained all the territory, which had one time formed a part of Muhammad Ghori's empire. He also added some regions towards the south. By bringing the Rajputs under submission he made them realize that the sultanate was a power to be reckoned with. He appointed his personal followers as governors in the conquered regions to curb the rebellious tendencies of the Rajputs and assert his authority.

1.6.10 Administrative Policy of Iltutmish:

Prior to Iltutmish, the Turkish state in India was not properly organized. The government was essentially military in nature. The strategic forts were occupied and garrisoned. Every military commander was expected to realize annual tribute from the local Hindu chiefs and landlords, if need be by the use of force. The rural masses had no contact with the Turks. Thus, a sense of loyalty towards the alien government of the Turks was lacking among the people. The rule of the Turks was, thus, essentially based on military strength. Realizing these defects, Iltutmish introduced a number of measures to improve this state of affairs and give stability to the Delhi Sultanate.

1.6.10.1 The 'Group of Forty':

Iltutmish realized the need to put the status and dignity of the sovereign beyond anybody's challenge. As the Qutbi and other nobles were unwilling to accept his over lordship, Iltutmish was convinced that he could command the obedience of his subordinate officers only when almost all the high offices were granted to his own favourites. Thus, he organized a 'group of forty' and distributed all high offices among them. This 'group of forty' also known as turkan-i-chahalagni became a new order of nobility that enhanced the prestige of the Sultan. The 'group of forty' became the basis of his

power and strength. To give greater stability to the state, Iltutmish selected able persons both foreigners and local inhabitants.

Foundation, Expansion And
Decline Of Delhi Sultan

1.6.10.2 Administration of Justice:

Iltutmish made adequate provision for dispensing justice promptly and impartially. According to an account of Ibn Battuta, there were statues of two lions at the palace gate bearing chains in their mouths. When someone pulled the chain, a bell rang at the other end. Thus, the aggrieved person could get prompt attention from the royal officials. Perhaps this arrangement was meant for the night. During the day a plaintiff could be recognized by his red garment. Iltutmish had made provision for prompt redressal of the grievances. Amirdads were appointed in all important towns. In the imperial city of Delhi there were a number of qazis to dispense justice.

1.6.10.3 New Currency (the Tanka):

Iltutmish was the first Turkish ruler to introduce a purely Arabic coinage. His silver coin called the tanka weighed 175 grains. It had an Arabic inscription on it. It was meant to replace the former Hindu coins. The issue of the tanka in both gold and silver indicated that the Delhi Sultanate had acquired stability and continuity.

1.6.10.4 Acquisition of the Letter of Investiture:

In order to justify his claim to the throne of Delhi Iltutmish secured a letter of investiture from the Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad, Al-Mustansir Billah. Thus, Iltutmish initiated a fully sovereign and legally constituted Sultanate of Delhi. He became the first legal sovereign of the sultanate and may be described as the real founder of the Delhi Sultanate.

1.6.10.5 An Estimate of Iltutmish:

Iltutmish can be regarded as the real consolidator of the Turkish conquests in north India. At the time of his accession he had to face a number of difficulties and challenges. With shrewd diplomacy and military maneuvering he not only subjugated his rivals but also consolidated the power of the Delhi Sultanate over the Rajputs and even the distant province of Bengal. By following wise administrative policy, such as maintaining law and order, dispensing evenhanded justice, introducing new currency and finally acquiring the letter of investiture from the Caliph of Baghdad, Iltutmish attempted to provide permanency to the Turkish rule in India. In this sense Iltutmish could be considered as the real founder and consolidator of the Delhi Sultanate.

Check Your Progress:

1. Who was the founder of 'Group of Forty'?

1.7 QUESTIONS

1. Examine the role of Qutbuddin Aibak in the foundation of the Delhi Sultanate.
2. Give an account of the career and achievements of Iltutmish.
3. Discuss the role of Iltutmish in the consolidation of the Delhi Sultanate in northern India.
4. Write short notes on the following:
 - (a) Qutbuddin Aibak
 - (b) Military campaigns of Iltutmish
 - (c) Administrative policy of Iltutmish

1.8 RAZIYA SULTANA (1236-1240)

1.8.1 Iltutmish nominates Raziya as his successor:

Ruknuddin was the eldest among the surviving sons of Iltutmish. But he was indolent, feeble-minded and given to sensual pleasures. In spite of getting an opportunity to correct him, Ruknuddin could not develop the sense of responsibility. Hence, Iltutmish seriously considered of leaving the throne to his daughter Raziya. He gave her an opportunity to prove her ability by associating her in administration of the central government. During the year 1231-1232, when the sultan was away on the Gwalior campaign, Raziya was left in charge of the government at Delhi. During this period, Raziya gave evidence of her ability, intelligence and sagacity. On his return from the campaign Iltutmish made up his mind to nominate Raziya as his successor superseding all his sons. However, the Turkish nobles opposed his move as improper and derogatory to their pride. But Iltutmish overbore all opposition and managed to ensure the approval of his nobles and ulemas.

1.8.2 Raziya ascends the throne of Delhi:

Following the death of Iltutmish, the Turkish nobles who were opposed to the nomination of Raziya ignored her claim to the throne and selected Ruknuddin as the next sultan. The wazir, Junaidi and the provincial governors lent their support to Ruknuddin. As the new sultan was a debased sensualist, his mother, Shah Turkan, directed public affairs. Originally she had been a maidservant in the royal seraglio and had embittered her relations with the great ladies of the realm. Later Iltutmish had elevated her to the rank of a queen. With the accession of her son Ruknuddin, Shah Turkan got an opportunity to wreak vengeance on her old enemies.

Under these circumstances the 'group forty' felt that for preserving the dynasty and the good name of their master, Ruknuddin must be deposed. The governors of Multan, Lahore, Hansi and Badaon collected their forces

and marched upon the capital. The wazir, Junaidi also joined them. When Ruknuddin attempted to deal with the situation and left Delhi with an army to oppose his detractors, his own troops deserted him. Meanwhile rebellion broke out in the capital itself. Shah Turkan's attempt to kill Raziya had angered the citizens of Delhi. They attacked the palace, threw Shah Turkan into prison and raised Raziya to the throne. When Ruknuddin returned to Delhi he found that a bloodless revolution had already taken place. He was arrested and thrown into a dungeon and was put to death later.

1.8.3 Initial difficulties of Raziya:

Soon after her accession Raziya found herself confronted with numerous difficulties. (1) The wazir and the provincial governors were keen to replace Ruknuddin by a person of their choice whom they could control and influence. (2) The orthodox Muslims resented the enthronement of a woman as a sultan. (3) Added to these problems was that a number of sons of Iltutmish were still alive. They had their own supporters and partisans among the nobles and people of Delhi. (4) The Rajputs, taking advantage of the prevailing confusion and uncertainty had started their offensive against the sultanate.

1.8.4 Raziya strengthens her position:

The hostile provincial governors of Badaon, Hansi, Lahore and Multan ably supported by wazir Junaidi, who felt isolated and ignored, mustered their troops near Delhi. Realizing the difficulty of organizing a matching army, Raziya avoided a military encounter with the rebels and instead resorted to diplomacy. She entered into a secret alliance with Salari and Kabir Khan. Thereafter she spread rumours that a number of rebels had joined her. This caused suspicion and distrust among the rebel chiefs who withdrew from the capital quietly. Raziya's stratagem succeeded and her prestige was enhanced. The provincial governors submitted to her authority.

Raziya adopted a number of measures to strengthen her position and to increase the power and prestige of the monarchy. She distributed important offices of the state amongst her supporters. The naib wazir, Muhazzab-uddin was put in charge of the wazarat. Her partisan Kabir Khan was appointed to the governorship of Lahore. Tughril Khan, the governor of Lakhnauti (Bengal) was rewarded with vice-royalty for not joining the rebels.

In an effort to break the monopoly of the Turkish nobles to high offices, Raziya adopted the policy of appointing non-Turkish nobles to higher posts. A number of Indian Muslims were appointed as qazis. An Abyssinian, Jamal-ud-din Yaqut was elevated to the position of amir-a-khur (master of the horses). As a result of these measures, according to Minhaj-us-Siraj, "From Debal to Lakhnauti, all the maliks and amirs manifested their obedience and submitted." Raziya also organized a campaign against the Rajputs. Ranthambhor was besieged and captured.

Like her father Iltutmish, Raziya was determined to assert the authority and establish an independent and absolute monarchy. Besides suppressing the Turkish nobles, who challenged her authority, Raziya governed the

sultanate in a befitting manner. Bold and courageous, she gave up purdha (veil), held open court, listened to the grievances of her subjects and exercised general control over the administrative departments. In battles, Raziya rode at the head of her armies. Thus, she proved her ability, love of justice and capacity for hard work.

1.8.5 Defeat and death of Raziya:

By consolidating her position against the Turkish nobles, Raziya drove them to group themselves and conspire against her. They could not tolerate a powerful and despotic monarch who was pursuing the policy of imposing her will on them. They resented the undue importance given to the non-Turkish nobles, specially the Abyssinian officer, Yaqut with whom Raziya was romantically linked. Besides, there was a section of people who could never tolerate the notion of a woman being the head of the state. Raziya had given offence to the orthodox Muslim opinion by casting off female attire and the seclusion of the harem.

These factors led to a conspiracy against Raziya. The Turkish nobles at the court and in the provinces subscribed to a secret plot to depose Raziya and to replace her with a puppet ruler who would abide by their wishes. The leader of this conspiracy was Aitigin, who was the amir-i-hajib (queen's chamberlain). Other prominent members included Malik Altunia, governor of Bhatinda and Kabir Khan, governor of Lahore, who was once her partisan.

Aitigin was of the opinion that a palace revolution was not possible due to Raziya's vigilance and popularity amongst her subjects of Delhi and also loyalty of her troops. Thus, the conspirators wanted to decoy her to a distant place and liquidate her there. An attempt was made to put this plan into effect when Kabir Khan, the governor of Lahore revolted early in 1240. However, Raziya was swift enough to put down the revolt. Within a fortnight of the suppression of Kabir Khan's rebellion, Altunia, the governor of Bhatinda raised the standard of revolt against Raziya. Though she immediately proceeded to crush the fresh challenge to her authority, luck did not favour her. In her absence, Yaqut was captured and beheaded by Aitigin and fellow conspirators. Being defeated in the encounter, Raziya was captured and imprisoned at Bhatinda.

Following the imprisonment of Raziya, the conspirators elevated Bahram, the third son of Iltutmish to the throne. Entrusting Raziya to the charge of Altunia the other conspirators returned to Delhi. In the redistribution of posts and offices, Altunia did not figure anywhere. Being away from Delhi, it seemed that nobody bothered to safeguard his interests. Thus, he decided to avenge himself. He released Raziya from the prison, married her and proceeded with her to Delhi to capture it by force. But Bahram's army defeated them and both Altunia and Raziya were killed.

1.8.6 An Estimate of Raziya:

The brief reign of Raziya extending over a period of barely three and a half years was too short to consolidate the sultanate. However, within this short span of time she proved superior to other sons of Iltutmish. As the only

woman who sat upon the throne of Delhi, she never allowed her sex to eclipse the efficiency of the state. Minhaj-us-Siraj describes Raziya as “a great sovereign and sagacious, just, beneficent, the patron of the learned, a dispenser of justice, the cherisher of her subjects and of war like talent and endowed with all admirable attributes and qualifications necessary for kings.”

1.8.7 Successors of Raziya:

For four years following the death of Raziya, there was no effective government. The brief reigns of Bahram (1240-1242) and Masud (1242-1246), former, brother of Raziya and the latter her nephew (son of Ruknuddin), witnessed the rise of the ‘Group of Forty’ to the height of power. The Turkish nobles once again dictated the state policy and held sway over the puppet rulers. This led not only to the weakening of the monarchy but also to corruption and inefficiency in the administration and general lawlessness. To the problems of internal disorder were added the danger of Mongol invasions. Once again another son of Iltutmish, Nasiruddin Mahmud and his ambitious mother hatched a conspiracy. With the active support of Balban, Masud was deposed and Nasiruddin Mahmud ascended the throne of Delhi in June 1246.

Check Your Progress

1. Who was the first women emperor of India?

1.9 GHIYASUDDIN BALBAN (1266-1287)

The struggle between the monarchy and the Turkish nobility had been the chief feature of the early years of the Delhi Sultanate. Iltutmish and to a certain extent Raziya managed to keep the nobles under check. However, the succession of weak rulers following the death of Raziya led to the ascendancy of the Turkish nobility in state affairs. Finally, Balban one of the members of the elite ‘Group of Forty’, worked his way up in the political hierarchy during the reign of Nasiruddin Mahmud. He strengthened his position and became the de facto ruler. Following the death of the sultan he ascended the throne and established a strong monarchy.

1.9.1 Balban’s rise to power:

Like Iltutmish, Balban was also an Ilbari Turk. In his early youth Balban was captured by the Mongols and sold into slavery. Finally he became a slave of Iltutmish. His ability and enterprise came to the notice of the sultan, who promptly enrolled him as the member of the famous ‘group of forty’. Balban became instrumental in deposing Masud and raising Nasiruddin Mahmud to the throne in 1246. He became the adviser of the new sultan and was given the new title of ulugh khan and was appointed to the coveted office of naib-i-mumlikat. To strengthen his personal hold over the sultan, Balban shrewdly gave his daughter in marriage to Nasiruddin.

1.9.2 Balban assumes de facto power:

Balban attempted to extend his control over different organs of the administration by appointing his close relatives and partisans to key posts. In this way Balban gradually succeeded in assuming de facto power. Indirectly, Nasiruddin Mahmud was responsible for allowing Balban to exercise unrestricted power and authority. According to Minhaj-us-Siraj, Nasiruddin was a man of amiable and pious disposition. He lived the life of a good Muslim in accordance with the Quran. He was an expert calligrapher, who spent his time in copying the Quran. Thus, the sultan's other worldliness made Balban the de facto ruler.

The success of Balban excited the jealousy of the nobles, specially the non-Turki amirs. A leading Indian Muslim, Imad-ud-din Raihan became their leader. Failing in their efforts to murder him, the anti-Balban faction persuaded the sultan to exile him to Dipalpur and Bhatinda (1253). There was a general redistribution of offices. Raihan took the place of Balban and became the Prime Minister. Being an Indian Muslim he manifested his hostility towards the Turkish nobles and ordered their removal from key appointments in the administration. Raihan's nominees filled those vacancies.

The Turkish nobles at the court and in the provinces were not prepared to accept an Indian Muslim as the de facto head of the government. They rallied around Balban and decided to take action. Sensing danger of a possible coup d'état, Nasiruddin quickly shifted sides, reinstated Balban to his original position and transferred Raihan to Badaon and from there to the outlying province of Bahraich.

The recall and reinstatement of Balban led to the investiture of absolute authority on him. He resumed the policy of consolidating the authority of the monarch. He continued the policy of suppressing rebellions of scheming Muslim rivals and revolts of the Hindus. A Mongol invasion of Sindh was frustrated in 1257. Two years later the robber menace was wiped out from the vicinity of Delhi by indiscriminate massacre. Through these measures Balban not only consolidated his own position in the state and safeguarded the security of the sultanate but also paved the way for his own accession as the next sultan.

1.9.3 Accession of Balban:

Following the death of Nasiruddin Mahmud in 1266, Balban who had been the de facto ruler became the de jure ruler. Like Qutbuddin Aibak and Iltutmish, Balban too started life as a slave and rose to become the sultan. His long reign of twenty-one years (1266-1287), is a remarkable epoch in the history of the sultanate.

1.9.4 Difficulties faced by Balban:

On his accession, Balban had to face a number of crucial problems.

- 1) During thirty years following the death of Iltutmish, the affairs of the state had fallen into confusion due to the incompetence of his successors.
- 2) A large part of the state revenue was spent in maintaining huge army.
- 3) Recurrence of revolts in different parts of the sultanate, defence against the Mongols and suppression of lawlessness and disorder had also led to heavy expenditure.
- 4) Defiance of the governors of distant provinces, refractory tendencies of the Turkish nobles and the guerilla tactics of the people of Mewat, Kathehar and Doab had affected the state revenue.
- 5) The select band of the Turkish nobles the 'group of forty' had become leaders of the forces of disintegration since the death of Iltutmish. In order to assert his supremacy, Balban had to liquidate the 'Group of Forty'.
- 6) Balban had to ensure the security of the sultanate by suppressing all those Hindu chiefs who continued to defy the authority of the sultan.
- 7) Doab and surrounding regions were infested with robbers and dacoits who disrupted supplies and even entered the capital in broad daylight and plundered the city.
- 8) In Rajasthan and Central India, the Rajputs were becoming bold enough to defy the authority of the sultan.
- 9) Besides these internal problems, the Delhi Sultanate was exposed to the menace of recurring Mongol raids.
- 10) Describing the condition of the sultanate, Barani paints a pessimistic picture. According to him during the last days of Nasiruddin's reign the office of the sultan enjoyed no prestige and that people had lost all fear of and respect for the king. "Fear of the governing power, which is the basis of all good government and the source of the glory and splendour of the state, had departed from the hearts of all men and the country had fallen into a wretched condition", remarks Barani.

1.9.5 Balban strengthens the power and prestige of the Monarchy:

Balban was determined to set up 'fear of the governing power as the best remedy against the evil of turbulence.' Thus, he decided to exalt monarchical prestige and power till it became synonymous with despotism.

1.9.5.1 Theory of Divine Right:

To enhance the prestige and power of the monarchy, Balban believed in the theory, which resembled the theory of Divine Right of Kings. He expressed his views to his son Bughra Khan. He said, "The heart of the king is the special repository of God's favour and in this he has no equal among mankind." He emphasized the sacredness of the king's person. He had an inherent despotic disposition. He was convinced that unalloyed despotism alone could exact obedience from his subjects and ensure the security of the state. Balban strengthened his claim to the throne by asserting that he was a descendent of the mythical Turkish hero, Afrasiyab.

1.9.5.2 Splendour of the Court:

Balban established a pattern of court etiquettes, traditions and customs that built a halo of splendour around him and his court and held all the nobles in awe of his personality. According to Barani no sovereign had ever before exhibited such pomp and grandeur in Delhi. For the twenty-one years that Balban reigned he maintained the dignity, honour and majesty of the throne in a manner that could not be surpassed. On his accession, Balban gave up drinking wine and kept himself in studied aloofness and dignified reserve. He prohibited drinking of wine by his courtiers and officials, prescribed for them a special dress and a fixed ceremonial from which no deviation was permitted. He introduced the *sijda* (prostration) and *poibos* (kissing the monarch's feet) in the court as normal forms of salutation. To heighten the splendour of the court, Balban regulated the court ceremonies on the model of the Persian court. He introduced the annual celebration of the Persian New Year, *Nauroz*. He appointed tall and fearsome bodyguards, who were to stand round the king's person with their swords drawn and dazzling in the sun.

1.9.5.3 Promotion of the Turkish Nobility:

In order to strengthen his claim to the noble blood, Balban stood forth as the champion of the Turkish nobility. Important government posts were granted to only those who belonged to the noble family. Lower officers had no access to him except through the higher dignitaries. He maintained a grave demeanour in the court. No one was allowed to laugh or even smile in his court. Thus, Balban infused dignity into monarchy and by rigid ceremonies and dignity, he succeeded in restoring the prestige and power of the court.

1.9.5.4 Suppression of the 'Group of Forty':

While claiming to act as a champion of the Turkish nobility, Balban was not prepared to share power with anyone, not even with members of his own family. He realized that one of the great obstacles in the way of the sultan's absolute despotism was the select group of leading Turkish nobles, the 'group of forty', who had reduced the crown to a mere figurehead. In order to make the throne safe for himself and for his successors, Balban decided to destroy the 'Group of Forty'. To reduce the importance of the 'Group of Forty', Balban promoted junior Turks to important positions. To win the confidence of the public, he administered justice impartially. He inflicted

severe punishment on the members of the 'Group of Forty' for even slight faults so as to repress them and reduce their importance in the eyes of the people.

1.9.5.5 Appointment of Spies:

To keep himself informed of all happenings in the kingdom and of the movements of the Turkish amirs and refractory Hindu chiefs, Balban organized an extensive espionage system. He appointed secret news-writers at every level of administration. They were required to transmit to him daily report of all important events and movements. He paid special attention to ascertain the character and loyalty of the news-writers. He gave them good salaries and made them completely independent of the provincial governors. If the news-writer failed in his duty, he was given exemplary punishment. The well-established and efficient espionage system became one of the important means of Balban's despotism.

1.9.6 Organization of the Army:

For safeguarding his personal security and also that of the state, Balban decided to reorganise the army on a sound footing. Balban did not abolish the old practice of assigning lands in lieu of military service, but took care to see that only such persons who were capable of rendering active military service were given such assignments. Balban placed the cavalry and infantry under officers of experience, who had given proof of their courage and loyalty in battles. He put the army under the charge of Imad-ul-Mulk, a very competent and loyal officer and made him *diwan-i-ariz* (Minister in charge of the Army). He was made independent of the ministry of finance. Imad-ul-Mulk took special interest in matters relating to recruitment, training, equipment and salary of the troops. Under Balban the army became a powerful instrument of force and the basis of his despotism.

1.9.7 Suppression of the Mewatis:

The law and order situation in the area around Delhi and the Doab had deteriorated since the death of Iltutmish. In the GangaJamuna Doab and Awadh, roads were poor and were infested with marauders. Barani describes their menace in these words, "At night they used to come prowling into the city giving all kinds of trouble, depriving the people of their rest.... the western gate of the capital had to be closed during the afternoon prayer..." The Mewatis had become so bold as to plunder people even on the outskirts of Delhi.

Having strengthened the position of the monarchy and reorganization the army, Balban directed his attention to the suppression of lawlessness in the Doab and the other neighbouring regions. He took stern measures and suppressed the brigands and marauders. He also put an end to the state of insecurity, which had been prevailing for some time in the Doab and Awadh regions.

1.9.8 Mongol incursions:

The Mongol problem gave the greatest anxiety to Balban. The Mongols had made the northwestern regions of India their happy hunting ground. Lahore, Multan and Sindh were exposed to their repeated incursions. To deal with the Mongol danger, Balban set up a line of garrisons along the northwest frontier and manned them with sturdy Afghans. He placed the entire region under the charge of his cousin, Sher Khan, who resisted the Mongols for quite some time. Following his death in 1270, the command of the frontier garrisons was shared between the two sons of Balban, Muhammad Khan and Bughra Khan. The elder prince, Muhammad Khan, died while fighting the Mongols. He was an able soldier and competent administrator. Besides, he was a man of literary taste. Two of the greatest poets of India, Amir Khusrau and Amir Hasan were in his service. Prince Muhammad Khan's death was a great blow to the future plans of Balban.

1.9.9 Subjugation of Tughril Khan (1279):

Tughril Khan, the governor of Bengal, who had been one of the slaves of Balban, took advantage of the old age of the sultan and his pre-occupation in the northwest frontier to raise the standard of revolt. He assumed the title of sultan, struck coins and read the *Qu'uran* in his own name. Balban sent three armies in succession against the rebel governor but none of them, succeeded in suppressing Tughril Khan. At last, Balban personally led a large army, two lakh strong and accompanied by his son Bughra Khan, reached Lakhnauti, the capital of Bengal. At the approach of the sultanate army, Tughril Khan fled to East Bengal. Balban pursued the rebel and put him to death. Returning to Lakhnauti, Balban ordered a general massacre of those suspected of participating in the rebellion. According to Barani, "On either side of principal bazar, in a street more than two miles in length, a row of stakes was set up on which the adherents of Tughril Khan were impaled upon them. None of the beholders had ever seen a spectacle so terrible and many swooned with terror and disgust."

Following the suppression of the rebellion of Tughril Khan, Balban entrusted the governorship of the troublesome province to his second son, Bughra Khan with this warning, "Understand me and forget not, that if the governors of Hind or Sindh, Malwa or Gujarat, Lakhnauti or Sonargaon, shall draw the sword and become rebels to the throne of Delhi, then such punishment as has fallen upon Tughril and his dependents will fall upon them and their wives and children and all their adherents." After a remarkable career Balban died in 1287.

1.9.10 An estimate of Balban:

Balban was one of the chief architects of the sultanate of Delhi. He showed great political foresight in avoiding schemes of territorial expansion through new conquests. He confined his energies in consolidating the Delhi Sultanate. His government was despotic and he did not introduce any administrative innovations. But he gave the sultanate peace and security. Through various measures Balban enhanced the prestige and power of the monarchy. He was strict in the administration of justice. As far as possible,

Balban scrupulously followed the principles of Islam. He discoursed frequently on the doctrines of Islam and came in constant contact with Muslim divines.

Foundation, Expansion And
Decline Of Delhi Sultan

Check Your Progress

1. Which emperor destroys 'group Forty'?

1.10 CONCLUSION

Balban patronized many learned men. He gave good reception to Madhava, the Acharya of Dvaita philosophy. Balban's court was a center of Islamic culture and learning. Throughout his long reign, first as the deputy of Nasiruddin Mahmud and later as the sultan, Balban strived to consolidate the Delhi Sultanate and enhance its prestige.

1.11 QUESTIONS

1. Examine the career and achievements of Raziya.
2. Trace the circumstances that led to the rise of Balban.
3. Discuss the measures adopted by Balban to enhance the power and prestige of the Monarchy.
4. Make an estimate of Balban's contribution to the consolidation of the Delhi Sultanate.

1.12 ALAUDDIN'S RISE TO POWER

Alauddin was the nephew and son-in-law of Jalaluddin Firuz Khilji. He was appointed as the governor of Kara-Manikpur near Allahabad. He was a very active and spirited soldier and known to be ambitious. As the governor of Kara-Manikpur, Alauddin made satisfactory arrangements for the administration of the province. After obtaining the approval of Jalaluddin Firuz Khilji, Alauddin attacked Bhilsa in Malwa and systemically plundered the treasures of the temples and rich merchants. He sent a part of the loot to the sultan. As a mark of his appreciation, the sultan appointed Alauddin as ariz-i-mumalik and granted the governorship of Awadh in addition to that of Kara-Manikpur.

Encouraged by his success against Bhilsa, Alauddin planned an expedition to Devagiri, the capital of the Yadava kingdom in the Deccan. With an army of eight thousand cavalry Alauddin proceeded towards Devagiri. Alauddin swept across the Yadava territory and appeared all of a sudden in the northern frontier of Devagiri. In spite of gallant resistance the Yadava ruler Ramachandra Deva was defeated and was forced to make peace with the invader. The Yadava king surrendered to the invader huge amount of gold, pearls and other precious articles. On his return from the southern expedition Shankara Deva, son of Ramachandra Deva, contrary to the advice of his father, attacked Alauddin's army. However, he could not withstand the superior forces of the invaders. Alauddin compelled

Ramachandra Deva to cede to him the province of Elichpur and to pay a very huge indemnity. With this unprecedented success and colossal war booty, Alauddin returned to Kara

1.13 ALAUDDIN'S ACCESSION TO THE THRONE OF DELHI

Alauddin Khilji ascended the throne of Delhi by treacherously murdering Jalaluddin Firuz Khilji, who was also his uncle and father-in-law. After overcoming all opposition to his accession Alauddin entered Delhi and was formally crowned in the Red Palace of Balban on 3 October 1296. He conciliated the nobles and the people by lavishly distributing gold and wealth brought from Devagiri. He took severe measures against the family of the late sultan so that they should not have political ambitions. Alauddin secured the loyalty of his followers by distributing gold, offices and honours to them. In this manner he commanded unstinted loyalty and support from Ulugh Khan, Alap Khan, Zafar Khan and Nusrat Khan. Titles, higher posts and increments in salary were granted to others. A large invading army of the Mongols was defeated on the bank of the Sutlej in 1298. Alauddin eliminated some of the old nobles who had deserted the sultan and joined his rank. He believed that such people who could desert one master and join another were not trustworthy. Due to his severe measures, Alauddin succeeded in overcoming the initial difficulties and establishing himself on the throne of Delhi.

1.14 DREAM OF WORLD CONQUEST:

The initial success against the rebels and the Mongol invaders fired the ambition of Alauddin Khilji. Being confident of his inherent ability he dreamt of imitating Prophet Muhammad and Alexander the Great by founding a religion and conquering the world. Alauddin sought the advice of Ala-ul-Mulk, the kotwal of Delhi and uncle of historian Barani, for his grand project. Ala-ul-Mulk boldly but politely gave his opinion that prophetic and royal functions were mutually exclusive to each other. Instead of dreaming of world conquest, the kotwal advised Alauddin to think of conquering the unsubdued Hindu princes of Northern India and the independent Hindu states outside the frontiers of the Delhi Sultanate and to secure the northwestern frontiers of India by resisting the Mongol invasions. It goes to the credit of Alauddin that he accepted the frank counsel of Ala-ul-Mulk. However, he could not resist the temptation of calling himself the 'Second Alexander' on his coins. Ala-ul-Mulk advised the sultan not to dabble in religion but concern himself with the welfare of his subjects. The sultan gave up the idea of starting a new religion. He separated religion from politics by reducing the influence of the ulemas.

Check Your Progress

1. What was the name of Alauddin's uncle?
2. How did Alauddin ascend the throne of Delhi?

1.15 IMPERIAL EXPANSION:

The imperial expansion of the Delhi Sultanate begins with the accession of Alauddin Khilji. He was of the opinion that defence, expansion and consolidation could be undertaken simultaneously. Since the death of Iltutmish serious attempts to annex new territories to the sultanate had not been undertaken. Alauddin set his eyes on the conquest of Northern India. The armies of the sultanate once again began to march in different directions to conquer and plunder.

1.15.1 Gujarat:

Gujarat was flourishing kingdom with its capital at Anhilwara. Fertility of the soil and a liberal policy towards trade and industry had made the region very prosperous. Arab and Persian traders frequented the ports of Gujarat and carried Indian goods to West Asia and the Mediterranean ports. For the conquest of Gujarat, Alauddin planned a two-pronged attack. An army under Nusrat Khan proceeded across Rajasthan. Another army led by Ulugh Khan advanced from Sindh. Meeting near the frontier of Gujarat, the joint army advanced towards Anhilwara. The Vaghela ruler of Gujarat, Rai Karan along with his four years old daughter Devala Devi fled to Devagiri. His queen Kamala Devi was taken as a captive to Delhi and was later added to the harem of the Sultan. The invading armies plundered the rich merchants of Cambay Surat, Anhilwara, Cambay and Somnath. In the course of loot and arson many temples including the famous shrine of Somnath were desecrated. The lingam in the Somnath temple, erected as a substitute for that broken by Mahmud Ghazni, was sent to Delhi. Towns and villages were laid waste and thousands of people were killed or enslaved. Following the conquest and plunder Gujarat became a province of the Delhi Sultanate and Alap Khan was appointed its governor.

1.15.2 Ranthambhor:

In 1299, Alauddin turned his attention towards the conquest of Rajasthan. As a prelude to the imperial expansion into Rajasthan, he decided to capture the fortress of Ranthambhor, which was formerly a Muslim outpost in that region. At that time Ranthambhor was ruled by Hamir Deva, the Chauhan ruler. The pretext to the invasion of Ranthambhor was the asylum given by Hamir Deva to some of the rebellious 'New Muslims.' However, the real reason was the strategic importance of the fort. A powerful army commanded by Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan was dispatched to Ranthambhor. The fort was besieged. In the course of the siege, Nusrat Khan was killed and the Rajputs succeeded in recapturing the fort. Following these reverses, Alauddin proceeded to Ranthambhor in person. In spite of his presence the siege of Ranthambhor continued for a year. Hamir Deva's prime minister, Ranmal and his general Ratipal betrayed their master. Finally, the fort was captured in July 1301. Rana Hamir Deva and his family were put to death. After appointing Ulugh Khan in charge of the fort, Alauddin returned to the capital.

1.15.3 Mewar:

Following his success against Ranthambhor Alauddin turned his attention towards the conquest of Mewar. The Guhilots of Mewar had come into conflict with the sultans of Delhi at different times during the thirteenth century. However, prior to Alauddin no serious attempt was made to annex this small Rajput kingdom. Mewar, with its capital at Chittor was well protected by nature with a long chain of hills and deep forests. The fort of Chittor, cut from a rock located on top of a hill was considered to be impregnable.

The conquest of the fort of Chittor was important to the Delhi Sultanate as it lay on the route to Gujarat. With a powerful army Alauddin invaded Mewar and besieged the fort of Chittor. The fort could be captured after a siege of eight months. The ruler of Mewar, Rana Ratan Singh put up stiff resistance. But in the face of an onslaught of Alauddin the Rana was forced to submit. The women performed the jauhar to save their honour. Incensed at the strong resistance of the Rajputs, Alauddin ordered the general massacre of the civilian population. According to Amir Khusrau, who was an eyewitness, nearly 30,000 Rajputs were killed in one day. After the conquest of Chittor Alauddin appointed his eldest son, Khizr Khan as the governor of the fort, which was renamed as Khizrabad.

One of the chief motives ascribed to Alauddin for the invasion of Mewar was his desire to acquire the possession of Padmini, the peerless queen of Rana Ratan Singh. In his *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan* a summary of the Rajput chronicles, Tod maintains that the principal motive of Alauddin Khilji's invasion of Mewar was to secure the beautiful wife of Bhim Singh, the Rana of Mewar. However, the name of Rana was Ratan Singh and not Bhim Singh. It is also important to note that the legend of Padmini was a literary imagination of Malik Muhammad Jayasi, the author of *Padmavat*, written in 1540. He attempted to give the Padmini episode a historical interpretation. Modern writers, like G.H. Ojha, Dr. K.S. Lal and others have rejected the historical relevance of the Padmini episode. However, Dr. A.L. Srivastava is inclined to accept the correctness of the Jayasi legend.

1.15.4 Central India:

The brilliant victories of Alauddin Khilji over Ranthambhor and Chittor frightened other states of Rajaputana into a willing submission to the sultan. They agreed to pay an annual tribute to Delhi. In 1305, Alauddin sent a military force for the conquest of Malwa. Initially the ruler of Malwa, Mahlakdeva resisted the invaders. But the superior forces of Delhi overpowered Mahlakdeva and conquered the region. Following the annexation of Malwa to the Delhi Sultanate Alauddin appointed Ain-ul-Mulk as the governor of the province.

After the conquest of Malwa, Alauddin led an army against the ruler of Siwana, Raja Sataldeva. The siege of Siwana lasted for a long time. Finally, the Rajputs were defeated and a large part of the kingdom was annexed to the Delhi Sultanate. Malik Kamaluddin was given the charge of Siwana. In 1311, Alauddin sent an expedition to Jalor for its annexation.

Initially the sultanate army suffered some reverses. But with the arrival of reinforcement the Rajputs were defeated and Jalor was annexed to the Delhi Sultanate.

Alauddin completed the conquest of Northern India. According to Tod, "The entire agnikula race of the Rajputs, from Anhilwara to Deogiri accepted the Khilji suzerainty." Alauddin's imperial power extended over the whole of the northern region except Kashmir, Nepal, Assam and parts of northwestern Punjab.

Check Your Progress

1. Name the ruler of Ranathabhor at the time of invasion by Alauddin Khilji.
2. What is Padmini episode?

1.16 DECCAN CAMPAIGNS OF ALAUDDIN KHILJI

Alauddin Khilji did not confine his conquest to the North India only. After achieving unprecedented success in his expeditions against the Rajput states of northern India, Alauddin decided to carry arms beyond the Vindhyas into the Deccan and South India. However, his southern campaigns were not intended to stretch the frontiers of the sultanate. Alauddin did not wish to supersede Hindu rule in the south by Muslim administration. His southern campaigns were mainly plundering raids. His chief motive was to utilize the resources of the south to further his imperialist ambition in the north. Thus, Alauddin Khilji's invasion of the south was a continuation of his Devagiri adventure of 1294.

wanted to impress upon the Hindu rulers of the south his own power and might and by doing so he desired to check their possible hostility to his work and consolidating Muslim rule in northern India. Alauddin's objective was clear from the instructions that he issued to Malik Kafur, the commander-in-chief of the southern expeditions. "If the Rai consented to surrender his treasure and jewels, elephants and horses, and also to send treasure and elephants in the following year, Malik Naib Kafur was to accept these terms... If he could not do this, he was... to bring the Rai with him to Delhi." These instructions indicated that Alauddin was not an annexationist with regard to South India. He did not want to multiply centers of dissatisfaction and rebellion by pursuing a policy of territorial expansion in the south. He also realized that he would not be able to rule the Deccan from his base in the north. This manifests to statesmanlike quality of Alauddin Khilji.

4.17 KINGDOMS OF THE DECCAN AND THE SOUTH

There were four principal kingdoms in the south when Alauddin invaded that region. The Yadavas, with their capital at Devagiri ruled the modern Maharashtra region south of the Vindhyas. They had subjugated the entire

territory up to the river Krishna. Raja Ramachandra Deva was the Yadava ruler, who was a contemporary of Alauddin Khilji. The Kakatiyas were the southeastern neighbours of the Yadavas. Their capital was Warangal. The contemporary ruler was Pratap Rudra Deva II. To the south of Devagiri lay the kingdom of the Hoysalas whose capital was Dwarasamudra. At the time of Alauddin's invasion of the Deccan, Vira Ballala III was the Hoysala ruler. In the far south there was the kingdom of the Pandyas with its capital at Madura. The contemporary ruler was Kulashekhar.

The kingdoms of the Deccan and the south had become weak due to mutual warfare. Like the northern kingdoms, they had neglected the defence of their frontiers. Thus, it was easy to attack them. These kingdoms were rich and prosperous. The royal treasuries were full of gold and precious stones. Merchants and craftsmen had also grown rich. The temples had large amount of accumulated wealth due to strong religious sentiments of the people. It was, therefore, natural for a powerful ruler of the north to covet the wealth of the south and plan its conquest in the same way as the adventurers beyond the northwest frontiers of India had carried on plundering raids in Northern India.

1.17.1 Subjugation of the Yadavas of Devagiri:

The Yadava ruler, Ramachandra Deva had stopped paying annual tribute since three or four years. Besides, he provoked Alauddin by giving asylum to the ousted Vaghela ruler of Gujarat, Rai Karan and his daughter, Devala Devi. In order to subjugate the Yadavas of Devagiri, Alauddin dispatched Malik Kafur, one of the greatest generals of Alauddin at the head of a large army in 1301. Marching to the Yadava kingdom through Dhar in Central India, Malik Kafur reached Devagiri. After a feeble resistance Ramachandra Deva was compelled to sue for peace. A huge amount of booty along with the Vaghela princess, Devala Devi was sent to Delhi. The princess was later married to Khizr Khan, the eldest son of Alauddin in 1314. Their love is immortalized in the verses of Amir Khusrau. After the defeat and submission, Ramachandra Deva was taken to Delhi. He was treated well by Alauddin Khilji. The sultan conferred on him the title of rai-i-ryan and the district of Navasari in Gujarat was assigned to him as jagir. He was given one lakh gold pieces as gift by Alauddin. On his return to Devagiri, Ramachandra Deva remained a loyal vassal of Delhi. By conciliating the Yadava ruler, Alauddin Khilji found a reliable and suitable base for his imperial penetration of the south. Ramachandra Deva rendered valuable service to Malik Kafur during his southern expedition.

1.17.2 Invasion of Warangal:

In 1303, Alauddin Khilji had sent an army from Delhi to invade and plunder Warangal. But the Kakatiya ruler, Prataprudra Deva II, defeated the sultanate army. Alauddin was anxious to wipe out the disgrace of the defeat of his army. In 1309, after the pacification of the Yadava kingdom, Alauddin ordered Malik Kafur to subdue the Kakatiya kingdom of Warangal. Malik Kafur marched to Warangal in 1309. Ramachandra Deva of Devagiri rendered him useful service. On arrival at Warangal, Malik

Kafur besieged the fort. The siege of Warangal continued for a long time. Ultimately Prataprudra Deva surrendered and paid a huge tribute of 100 elephants, 7000 horses and precious articles. He promised to send an equal amount of tribute in future years as well. Amongst the precious stones was the famous kohinoor. After his success against Warangal, Malik Kafur returned to the capital in 1310 laden with war-booty which, according to Amir Khusrau, “a thousand camels groaning under the weight of the treasure.”

1.17.3 Expedition to Dwarasamudra:

Malik Kafur's third expedition in the Deccan was directed against Dwarasamudra. In 1311, passing through Devagiri, where Shankara Deva (Singhana) had succeeded his father, Ramachandra Deva. After establishing a garrison at Jalna on the Godavari to protect his line of communication with Delhi, Malik Kafur reached Dwarasamudra. The Hoysala ruler, Vira Ballala III, who had gone to the south to participate in the civil war raging in the Pandya kingdom, was taken by surprise. On receiving the news of the invasion of his kingdom by Malik Kafur, he hastily returned and offered resistance. He found that he was no match to the invaders from the north. Vira Ballala III made peace with Malik Kafur and agreed to pay tribute to the sultan.

1.17.4 Campaign to Madura (Mabar):

The Muslim historians referred the Pandya kingdom as Mabar. The ongoing civil war between the Pandya princes gave an opportunity to Malik Kafur to invade the kingdom. The civil war was between the two sons of the Pandyan king, Kulashekara, Sundar Pandya, his legitimate son and Vira Pandya, his illegitimate but favourite son. Sundar Pandya murdered his father and seized the crown for himself. However, Vira Pandya who sought Malik Kafur's help defeated him. Malik Kafur agreed to intervene and proceeded to Madura, the capital of the Pandyas in April 1311. But Vira Pandya had already evacuated the capital. Malik Kafur ransacked the city, plundered and desecrated the temples. From Madura, Malik Kafur proceeded up to Rameshwaram on the island of Pamban. He destroyed the temple there and built a mosque and named it after Alauddin. After his successful campaign in Madura, Malik Kafur returned to Delhi with an immense booty. The subjugation of the Pandyan kingdom signified the fall of the last of the southern kingdoms and the establishment of the Khilji paramountcy all over India.

1.17.5 Last expedition to Devagiri:

Following the death of Ramachandra Deva in 1312, his eldest son Shankara Deva succeeded him. He was strongly opposed to the submission to Delhi. He also had a personal grudge against Alauddin for seizing and taking away to Delhi, Devala Devi whom he wanted to marry. On his accession, Shankara Deva withheld the tribute to Delhi and thus, declared his independence. Alauddin once again dispatched Malik Kafur to the Deccan in 1313 to subjugate Shankara Deva. Malik Kafur defeated Shankara Deva, who was probably killed in the course of the battle.

From Devagiri, Malik Kafur proceeded to Gulbarga and captured it. Next, he occupied the territory between the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers and established garrisons at Raichur and Mudgal. Thereafter he advanced westwards and took the seaports of Dabhol and Chaul. Malik Kafur also seized parts of Hoysala and Kakatiya territory. After his victories, Malik Kafur had no intention of returning to the north. He wanted to establish an independent kingdom in the south after the death of Alauddin. This was chiefly due to his quarrels with Khizr Khan and his mother Malika Jahan. However, Alauddin summoned Malik Kafur to Delhi.

Recognizing Harpala Deva as the next ruler of Devagiri, Malik Kafur returned to Delhi in 1315.

Check Your Progress

1. Who was the head of Alauddin's Southern campaigns?
2. Who was ruling Devagiri at the time of Kafur's invasion?

1.18 MONGOL INVASIONS:

According to contemporary accounts Alauddin repulsed more than a dozen Mongol invasions. Alauddin was fortunate to have the service of trusted and dedicated generals who were put in charge of the strategic northwest frontier. One of his ablest generals, Zafar Khan met the first three Mongol challenges boldly and repulsed the invaders in 1296, 1297 and again in 1299. However, in the last encounter, Zafar Khan lost his life. In 1303, another Mongol army, 1,20,000 strong, led by Targhi Khan invaded India. Alauddin, then engaged in the siege of Chittor, hastened back to Delhi but was unable to save the capital and its vicinity from the Mongol raids. Fortunately for the sultan the Mongols retreated as suddenly as they had appeared. It is said that Alauddin had beseeched Nizamuddin Auliya, the famous Sufi saint, to offer prayers to avert the crisis. Barani attributed the sudden withdrawal of the Mongols to the prayers of Nizamuddin Auliya.

The advance of the Mongols up to the vicinity of the capital made Alauddin to realize the urgency of strengthening the northwest frontier. He repaired the old forts, set up new garrisons at strategic points in the Punjab, Multan and Sindh. He also entrusted the responsibility of guarding the frontier to a special unit of the army. Though these special measures improved the defense on the frontier they could not prevent the reappearance of the Mongols for the fourth time under the command of Ali Beg in 1305. Malik Kafur and Ghazi Malik who succeeded in inflicting heavy losses on them intercepted the Mongols on their way back from the Punjab. A large number of Mongols were taken prisoners.

The last Mongol invasion took place in 1306 under Iqbalmandi and Kubak. However, their attempts were foiled by Malik Kafur and Ghazi Malik who first inflicted a severe defeat on Kubak and captured him. Next they turned against Iqbalmandi and attacked him in such vehemence that the entire army was almost exterminated and he could barely save his life.

1.19 CONCLUSION

The last days of Alauddin Khilji were clouded with trouble and disappointment. Due to failing health, neglected by his wife and sons, he became more and more dependent on Malik Kafur. Being ambitious, Malik Kafur exploited the situation by poisoning the sultan's mind against the queen and Prince Khizr Khan. Conspiracies and murders led to the weakening of the central government, which in turn led to rebellions and mutinies. The army in Gujarat rose in mutiny following the murder of Alap Khan due to the conspiracy of Malik Kafur. The rulers of Chittor and Devagiri lost no time in proclaiming their independence. In the midst of this confusion and court intrigue Alauddin died on 2 January 1316.

Following the death of Alauddin the Khilji dynasty began to decline. Court intrigues and murders became a common feature. Malik Kafur desired to usurp the throne of Delhi after exterminating Alauddin's family. However, Malik Kafur was not destined to enjoy his power. He was murdered at the instigation of Mubarak Khan, the third son of Alauddin, who became the sultan with the title of Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah (1316-1320). He was too addicted to pleasure. His only need appeared to be beautiful dancing girls and attractive eunuchs. He assumed the title of 'Supreme Pontiff and Vice-regent of God of heaven and earth'. He resigned his authority to Khusrau Khan, a low caste Hindu converted to Islam, who acted as the prime minister. Khusrau Khan, who was ambitious, conspired against his master, murdered him and proclaimed himself the new sultan in April 1320. Khusrau Shah's regime was short lived. He was defeated, captured and beheaded by Ghazi Malik, the 'warden of the marches' and the governor of Dipalpur in September 1320. Ghazi Malik ascended the throne of Delhi with the title of Giasuddin Tughlaq. This marked the end of Khilji dynasty and the beginning of new dynasty, the Tughlaq dynasty.

1.20 QUESTIONS

1. Give an account of Alauddin's rise to power.
2. Discuss the imperial expansion of the Delhi Sultanate under Alauddin Khilji.
3. Trace the expansion of the Delhi Sultanate in Northern India under Alauddin Khilji.
4. Examine the imperial policy of Alauddin Khilji towards the kingdoms of the Deccan and South India.

1.21 (C) TUGHLAQ, SAHYAID AND LODI DYNASTY

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq (1325-1351)

1.21.1 Campaigns and Expeditions

1.21.1.1 Rajputs:

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq's policy towards the Rajputs was not particularly successful. His preoccupation in other regions or the apprehension of the organized strength of the Rajputs might have been the reasons for not attempting to subjugate the Rajput states. Mehdi Hussain is of the opinion that Muhammad did not attack the Rajputs because he was charitably disposed towards the Hindus. But the sultan's relation with other Hindu rulers does not justify such an observation. Most probably, knowing that the previous sultans had failed to fully subjugate the Rajputs, Muhammad did not entangle himself with the difficult task of subduing them. He wanted to conquer and annex other regions of India and extend his empire.

1.21.1.2 Mongol Invasion:

The northwest frontier of the sultanate was threatened by a series of Mongol invasions, which occurred after Muhammad Bin Tughlaq had ordered the transfer of the capital to Devagiri. In about 1327, the ruler of Trans-Oxiana, Tarma Shirin, son of Daud, who had tried to conquer and annex India during the reign of Alauddin Khilji, led a Mongol invasion to India. According to an account of Firishta the Mongols overran Laghman and Multan and advanced towards Delhi. Muhammad Bin Tughlaq was taken by surprise and finding resistance impossible made peace by paying a large sum of money to the invaders. The Mongols withdrew after having plundered vast areas in Gujarat and Sindh. The Neglect of the security of the northwest frontier was a serious flaw in the policy of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq.

1.21.1.3 Plan for the Conquest of Khurasan:

Shortly after the withdrawal of the Mongols, the sultan formed an ambitious plan of sending an expedition of Trans-Oxiana, Khurasan and Iraq. For this purpose, according to Barani, Muhammad Bin Tughlaq collected 3, 37,000 troops who were paid the whole year's salary in advance from the public treasury. But the army did not leave Delhi and the troops were disbanded. It would have been extremely difficult for the troops to pass through the snow bound passes and to make adequate provisions for transport and supplies. The situation within the country was also not conducive for Muhammad Bin Tughlaq to dream of such foreign adventure. A number of rebellions distracted the government. A severe famine was stalking the land in the Doab, and the sultanate army neither had competent leaders nor did it possess necessary experience and training for operations in a foreign land like Khurasan. Hence, the abandonment of the Khurasan

adventure was inevitable. But it caused incalculable financial losses to the treasury. Disbandment of the army led to unemployment and loss of prestige to the sultan.

Foundation, Expansion And
Decline Of Delhi Sultan

1.21.1.4 Nagarkot:

In 1337, Muhammad Bin Tughlaq led an expedition against the fort of Nagarkot in the Kangra Valley. Nagarkot had defied the authority of the Turks since the days of Mahmud Ghazni. Even though Alauddin Khilji had conquered the entire country, the fort of Nagarkot had remained in the hands of a Hindu ruler. When Sultan Muhammad besieged the fort its Raja offered stiff resistance. But he was defeated and compelled to submit to the authority of Delhi.

1.21.1.5 Quarchal:

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq directed an expedition against Quarchal situated in the Kumaon hills. According to Ibn Battuta, Quarchal was situated at ten stages from Delhi. The Quarchal expedition was directed to quell the hostilities of the hill tribes on the northern frontier, who must have defied the imperial authority. The initial attack by the sultanate army was successful. But the mountainous region and the incessant rains paralyzed the supplies to the troops and the army suffered heavy casualties. However, the military disaster was not politically fruitless. Muhammad Bin Tughlaq was able to obtain from the *raja* of Quarchal the promise of a tribute. But for this, an unnecessarily heavy price had to be paid in terms of loss of human lives.

1.21.1.6 Relation with China:

During the reign of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq the power of the Mongol rulers of China was on the decline. Consequently, many of them tried to establish friendly relations with the sultan of India. The Mongol emperor of China, Toghan Timur sent an envoy to Delhi in 1341 seeking Muhammad's permission to re-build Buddhist temples in the Himalayan region. The soldiers of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq had demolished these Buddhist temples during the Quarchal expedition. The sultan reciprocated by sending Ibn Battuta as his special envoy to the imperial court of China in 1342. Regarding the reconstruction of the Buddhist temples, the sultan sent a word to the Chinese emperor that according to the laws of Islam no permission could be granted for their rebuilding unless *jizya* was paid.

1.21.1.7 The Deccan:

In 1326 the governor of Sagar near Gulbarga and the cousin of the sultan, Bahauddin Gursasp rebelled against the sultan. The wind of rebellion spread across Anegundi and Dwarasamudra. Muhammad Bin Tughlaq took advantage of these rebellions to extend the frontiers of the sultanate to the western sea-cost and the far south. In the course of suppression of these revolts, the sultan annexed Anegundi, Dwarasamudra and Mabar and incorporated them as provinces of the sultanate. In this way, the entire Indian sub-continent came under the direct rule of the sultan. But the

territorial expansion of the Delhi Sultanate to the far south proved disastrous to the sultan and the sultanate. His Deccan and South Indian adventure left Muhammad Bin Tughlaq physically exhausted politically dissipated and financially ruined. The process of assimilation without taking into account the prevalent realities aroused the hostility and suspicion of the local people. In the absence of faster means of communication it was impossible to secure a permanent hold over the Deccan and South India.

1.22 SAAYID DYNASTY (1414-1451)

The founder of the Sayyid Dynasty was Khizr Khan (1414- 1421). According to the contemporary writer Yahya Sirhindi, author of the *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi*, Khizr Khan, the founder of the Sayyid dynasty descended from the Prophet of Islam, and was hence styled a Sayyid. He did not assume the title of a sovereign and preferred to regard himself as the deputy of Shah Rukh, the son and successor of Timur. Throughout his reign Khizr Khan was engaged in putting down rebellions in the provinces nominally dependent on Delhi, particularly in the Doab.

Mubarak Shah (1421-1434) succeeded his father, Khizr Khan. He assumed the royal title. He had to face a number of revolts. He sent expeditions against the Khokhars in the Punjab, the Hindus of Katehar, the Doab, Mewat and Gwalior. As an administrator, Mubarak Shah proved a kind and merciful king. He patronized scholars. Yahya Sirhindi's *Trarikh-i-Mubarakshahi* is a valuable source of history of this period. Mubarak Shah was murdered at the instigation of his ambitious *wazir*, Sarwar-ul-Mulk in 1434.

Muhammad Shah (1434-1445), the nephew and adopted son of Mubarak Shah was elevated to the throne by the rebel *wazir*, Sarwar-ul-Mulk. For about six months all power was usurped by the *wazir*, who had received the title of *khan-i-jahan*. A loyalist plot, however, overthrew the notorious minister. Still the political situation worsened due to rebellions and the aggressive policy towards Jaunpur and Malwa. Bahlol Lodi, the Afghan governor of Sirhind helped Muhammad Shah in this crisis and gained his favour. As he was ambitious, Bahlol Lodi suddenly turned rebel and made a fruitless attempt to seize Delhi.

The last Sayyid ruler was Alauddin Alam Shah (1445-1451), son of Muhammad Shah. He proved more incompetent than his father and only hastened to collapse of the Sayyid dynasty. In 1451, he handed over the throne of Delhi to Bahlol Lodi and retired to Badaon where he spent the rest of his life in pleasure.

1.23 LODI DYNASTY (1451-1526)

The Lodis ruled over the remnants of the Delhi Sultanate for 75 years. They were Afghans by race and were endowed with bravery, ferociousness and immense self-pride. The Afghans were divided into a number of clans. Lodi was one of them. The Afghans were enrolled in large numbers in the army of the Delhi Sultanate in the second half of the thirteenth century. Some of them

occupied important positions in the government and army during the Khilji and Tughlaq periods.

Foundation, Expansion And
Decline Of Delhi Sultan

The Afghan concept of government was democratic. The idea of a sovereign king, superior to them in status and power was anathema to them. They, at the most regarded the tribal head as *primus inter pares*, that is 'first among the equals'. Thus, the position of monarchy was inherently weak in such a tribal organization as powerful tribal chiefs always coveted the throne.

1.23.1 Bahlol Lodi (1451-1489):

The founder of the Lodi dynasty was Bahlol Lodi. He put an end to the Sayyid dynasty and foundation of the first Afghan or *Pathan* kingdom in India. Although Bahlol was capable and ambitious, he had the practical sense to realize that it was impossible to restore the former power and prestige of the sultanate. He visualized the difficulty of reconquering the provinces, which had become independent. However, he suppressed rebellions in Multan, Mewat and Doab. The most significant achievement of Bahlol Lodi was the conquest of the Sharqi kingdom of Jaunpur. The other areas over which Bahlol Lodi was able to extend his sway were Kalpi, Dholpur and Gwalior.

Bahlol Lodi conducted himself on terms of apparent equality with the Afghan nobles and kept them under control and succeeded in retaining his throne. Bahlol was a good and charitable person, pious and humane, just and sincere. He disliked the pomp of royalty and discarded vain display of dress and jewellery. In spite of his lack of scholarship, he appreciated the company of savants and patronized them.

1.23.2 Sikandar Lodi (1489-1517):

The second surviving son of Bahlol Lodi, Nizam Khan ascended the throne of Delhi under the title of Sikandar Shah. Soon after his accession, Sikandar Shah consolidated his position by reducing his rivals to submission. Sikandar Shah conquered Bihar and Tirhut and concluded an alliance with the sultan of Bengal. In 1505 he founded Agra.

Sikandar Shah, unlike Bahlol Lodi, was determined to increase the power and prestige of the sultan. Consequently, he introduced a number of regulations and court etiquettes. To further strengthened his hold over the *amirs*. Sikandar ordered a complete review of the entire administration, with special emphasis on the auditing of accounts. For discrepancies harsh punishments were given either to high or low. Besides, the sultan reorganized the espionage system and posted news-writers even in the houses of the nobles.

Sikandar Shah was a vigilant administrator. He encouraged agriculture and trade and secured the safety of the public roads. He was just, benevolent and charitable and worked for the welfare of the poor. He was himself a Persian scholar. He patronized a translation of a medical work in Sanskrit into Persian. He was the greatest of the Lodi rulers. However, the outstanding

defect of his character was his religious intolerance. He destroyed numerous Hindu temples. Like Firuz Shah Tughlaq, he too encouraged conversion. He also persecuted numerous Hindus and imposed a number of restrictions on them. A Brahmin who maintained that his religion was as good as Islam was asked to choose between Islam and death. On his refusal to give up Hinduism the Brahmin was put to death. This bigotry alienated his Hindu subjects.

1.23.3 Ibrahim Lodi (1517-1526):

The last Lodi Sultan of Delhi was Sikandar's eldest son, Ibrahim Lodi. He lacked the virtues of his father and attempted to enforce his authority and make his regal position a reality. His strong temper created chronic misunderstandings between him and his Afghan nobles who were disinclined to submit to a strong central government. While his grandfather Bahlol Lodi had controlled the Afghan nobility by a combination of tact and diplomacy and his father, Sikandar Lodi did the same by sheer strength of his personality, Ibrahim, on the other hand proved inferior to his forefathers. He felt that monarchy was his by right of inheritance. He alienated the proud Afghan nobles by introducing strict practices and denying them many of their privileges. As Firishta writes, "He said publicly that all around be considered as subjects and servants of the state; and the Afghans chiefs, who had hitherto been allowed to sit in his presence, were constrained to stand in front of the throne, with their hands crossed before them." The disaffected Afghan nobles tried to replace Ibrahim by his youngest brother Jalal. But the rebellion of Jalal was suppressed. He was captured and killed. Ibrahim also foiled several other attempts of the nobles to foster rebellion.

Ibrahim Lodi conquered Gwalior, which had defied the attempts of the previous sultans of Delhi including Sikandar Lodi. Encouraged by his success against Gwalior, Ibrahim Lodi planned to conquer Mewar, ruled by the valiant Rana Sanga. According to the Muslim accounts the expedition against Mewar was successful, but the Rajput sources speak of the defeat of the sultan by Rana Sanga.

Ibrahim Lodi came in serious conflict with the Afghan nobility. The cruel murders committed by Ibrahim alarmed the nobles who rebelled everywhere. Bihar became independent under Bahadur Shah. Daulat Khan Lodi, the governor of the Punjab and the uncle of the sultan, Alam Khan, sent envoys to Babur, the ruler of Kabul with an invitation to invade India and to dislodge Ibrahim Lodi. Accordingly Babur invaded India, defeated and killed Ibrahim Lodi in the Battle of Panipat (1526). This marked the end of the Lodi dynasty and downfall of the Delhi Sultanate and the beginning of a new dynasty and empire under the Mughals.

Check Your Progress

1. How many years the Sayyids ruled on Delhi?
2. Who was the last ruler of Delhi Sultanate?

1.24 CONCLUSION

After Alauddin Khilji Tughlaq Dynasty also gave better administration to Delhi Sultanate. Though Muhammad bin Tughlaq was not much successful but his ideas were very novel. He was genius but lacked proper understanding of the situation. His successor Firoz Shah was the benevolent Sultan and introduced so many kinds of public works as like modern times. The Sayyids were not much powerful. The Lodis had internal dissension among their kith and kin which finally led to the destruction of Delhi Sultanate and Rise of Mughal Empire.

1.25 QUESTIONS

1. Make an estimate of the career and achievements of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq.
2. Critically examine the administrative policy of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq.
3. Examine the statement “With the best intentions, excellent ideas but no balance or patience, no sense of proportion, Muhammad Tughlaq was a transcendent failure.” (Lane Poole).
4. Comment on the following:
 - (a) Transfer of the capital by Muhammad Bin Tughlaq
 - (b) Currency reforms of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq
5. Write short notes on the following:
 - (a) Military campaigns of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq Sayyids
 - (b) Lodis



ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE SULTANATE

Unit Structure :

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 A) Central Administration And System
- 2.3 Iqta System
- 2.4 Conclusion
- 2.5 Questions
- 2.6 B) Administrative And Military Reforms Of Alauddin Khilji
- 2.7 C) Reforms Of Firuz Shah Tughlaq
- 2.8 Conclusion
- 2.9 Questions
- 2.10 Administrative Policy
- 2.11 Rebellions And Break Up Of The Sultanate
- 2.12 An Estimate Of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- To understand the central administration of the Sultanate period.
- To analyse the Iqta system during Sultanate.
- To understand the Administrative Reforms of Alauddin Khilji.
- To study the Reforms of Firuz Shah Tughlaq.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The state that came into existence in medieval India under the Turks was theocratic in nature. The term theocracy implies a state governed directly by God or through a priestly class. Throughout the medieval period the state had its own religion, Islam, and it did not recognize other religions such as Hinduism. The state was to be governed according to the Quranic law (*Shariat*) and the resources of the state were to be utilized for the

protection and propagation of Islam. The sultan was not only expected to follow this law in his own personal life, but also to administer it and conduct the state affairs according to the injunctions of the *Shariat*. The Muslim theologians, the *Ulema*, though not ordained clergy, guided the sultans in interpreting and implementing the law. The ideal of the Islamic state in India was to convert India from the land of infidels (*dar-ul-harb*) into Islamic land (*dar-ul-Islam*). Under these circumstances the Delhi Sultanate could be considered as the theocratic state.

Alauddin Khilji was not only a great conqueror but also a brilliant administrator. He was a man of strong will and acted according to his own convictions, unmindful of the consequences. He was not perturbed by the unpopularity of some of his measures. He combined in a remarkable manner his military and civil talents. He possessed much practical ability and looked at questions from the common sense point of view. However, his various administrative reforms manifested neither any philanthropy, such as general welfare of his people; nor they exhibited his love for reforms such as in the case of enlightened despots. They were solely motivated by the need for political and military security of the sultanate and for the enhancement of his personal power.

2.2 A) CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION AND SYSTEM:

2.2.1 Relationship between the Caliphate and the Sultanate:

According to the Quran the master and sovereign of the entire universe is *Allah*. Hence, every one must obey *Allah*. A number of prophets were sent by Allah to preach his message at different times. Muhammad was the last of the prophets. To obey the prophets was to obey Allah, but it is obligatory for the prophet to obey *Allah*. After the death of Muhammad government passed into the hands of the Caliphs. In theory the Caliph was elected by the Muslim brotherhood. To avoid the practical difficulty of election, the Caliph acquired the right to nominate his successor. This prompted the Caliph to nominate his own descendants as his successors. Gradually, this practice led to the hereditary monarchy.

According to the Islamic theory of sovereignty, there is only one Muslim sovereign (Caliph) for the entire Islamic world. As the Caliphs could not govern the far away regions effectively, the practice of appointing governors to these regions came into vogue. Even if a governor asserted his independence or a Muslim adventurer conquered a particular region and established his independent rule, he sought the investiture of the Caliph in order to maintain the theoretical unity of the Islamic world. This practice was continued by the sultans of Delhi and considered themselves as the deputies of the Caliph and acquired letters of investiture from him, inscribed his name on the coins and read the *qutba* in his name. Iltutmish was the first sultan of Delhi to secure a deed of investiture from the Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad. By this investiture, Iltutmish was recognized as an independent sultan. The other two sultans who secured the letters of investiture from the Caliphs were Muhammad Bin Tughlaq from the Abbasid Caliph of Egypt and Firuz Shah Tughlaq who considered it as a great triumph of his reign.

The sultans of Delhi invoked the sanction of the Caliph in order to strengthen their political authority in the eyes of the people. The Muslims in general expected their sultans to show respect to the Caliph. Further, the Muslims were expected to show respect and owe allegiance to the sultan who had been recognized by the Caliph or who called himself his deputy or assistant. Opposition or rebellion against the sultan who had the sanction from the Caliph was considered to be contrary to the Holy Law. Thus, the sultans maintained the myth of subservience to the Caliph in order to exploit this popular sentiment in their favour.

2.2.2 Position of the Sultan:

A number of scholars are of the opinion that the institution of monarchy was not an Islamic institution. It emerged gradually due to various circumstances. The collapse of the Abbasid Caliphate led to the rise of sultans who were only secular rulers. Gradually, the sultan became the center of society and polity. The powers of the state came to be concentrated in his hands and he tended to be an absolute ruler. He became the chief executive and legislator, ultimate court of appeal in all judicial cases and the commander-in-chief of the armed forces. He maintained magnificent court, and had great prestige and honour as patron of scholars, artists and religious men. According to Barani, the heart of a monarch was a mirror of God, that is, it reflected the wishes of God so that the actions of a king could not be questioned. Emphasizing these aspects, Balban assumed the title of *Zill-Allah* (shadow of God) and introduced ceremonies of *sijda* (prostration) and *paibos* (touching the feet of the monarch).

The Muslim jurists assigned the following functions to the sultan: protection of the Islamic faith; settlement of disputes between his subjects; defense of territories of Islam, and keeping the highways and roads safe for travelers; maintenance and enforcement of the criminal code; protection of the frontiers against aggression; waging of holy war against those who act in hostility to Islam; collection of taxes and duties; appointment of officers to help him in his public and legal duties; keeping in touch with public affairs and the condition of the people by personal contact.

Though the sultan was apparently an absolute ruler, in actual practice his authority was limited by certain factors. It has been pointed out that that unrestricted individual despotism is a myth. According to both Hindu and Muslim tradition religion was the major institutional check on the misuse of power by a monarch. He was required to function within the ethical and moral norms prescribed by the religion. The ruler who violated the Quranic Law could be removed from power by the people, supported by the religious leaders. Besides, the power of the sultan rested on the loyalty of the army, support of the nobility, and the co-operation of the Muslim theologians (Ulema).

2.2.3 Ministerial Departments of the Central Government

In the task of administration, the sultan was assisted by a number of ministers. The number of ministers or the departments was not fixed. The number of departments could and did vary. The sultan could seek advice from

any one in whom he had trust and confidence. The ministers did not form a council, as there was no concept of joint responsibility. Each minister was appointed by the sultan, and held office during his pleasure.

2.2.3.1 Deputy Sultan or Naib:

The post of deputy sultan was not a common appointment. Deputy sultan was appointed when the sultan was weak and incapable of governing or a minor. The *naib* enjoyed all the powers of the sultan. This post was usually assigned to a powerful noble. He exercised control over the different departments on behalf of the sultan. He was usually a capable military commander. Alauddin Khilji offered this high office to Malik Kafur as a sign of special favour. He combined the post of *wazir* with the post of *naib-ussultanat*. After the death of Alauddin, Malik Kafur as *naib* tried to act as kingmaker. He was replaced by Khusrau Malik who also took the post of *naib*, and then ascended the throne. The Tughlaqs discontinued the post of the *naib*, but later it was revived by the Sayyid rulers under the title *Wakil-us-sultanat*.

2.2.3.2 Diwan-i-Wizarat:

The *wazir* was the head of this department. He exercised much influence on the administration of the sultanate. Much has been written on the role, powers and qualifications of the *wazir*. He had to be a man of learning rather than a warrior. He was also required to possess wide experience, wisdom and sagacity as his views could be sought by the ruler on any subject. Besides, he had to be a man of tact, as he had to control the nobility without alienating it. The *wazir* gradually became a key figure in the administration of the state. In importance he ranked next to the sultan. In the fourteenth century the office of the *wazir* acquired more importance as he was regarded as an authority on revenue matters. He looked after a large and important department dealing with income and expenditure.

2.2.3.3 Diwan-i-ariz:

It was the military department under the charge of the *Ariz-i-Mumalik*. His chief responsibility was to recruit, equip and pay the army. The *Ariz* was not the commander-in-chief of the sultan's army. The sultan commanded his own forces. However, the *Ariz* was invariably a leading noble, and a warrior in his own right. Balban established the department of *Ariz-i-Mumalik*. He appointed Ahmad Ayaz as the *ariz-i-mumalik*, who held this post for thirty years. Balban gave more importance to this post than that of the *wazir*. However, it was under Alaud-din Khilji that the functioning of this department was properly organized. In order to increase the efficiency of the army new officials and sub-departments were added to the military department. The most important among them were the *Mir-Hajib* (superintendent of the royal stables), the *Daroga-i-Pil* (keeper of the royal elephant stables). The *Ariz* gradually became so important in the sultanate that he acted as a check on the powers of the *wazir*. Thus, the succeeding *wazirs* could not become powerful military leaders who could put their own nominees on the throne, or succeed the ruler themselves.

2.2.3.4 Diwan-i-Insha:

This department dealt with the royal correspondence, especially with the neighbouring and foreign states. Formal letters were sometimes dispatched to neighbouring rulers to register a new succession to the throne or announce a major event, such as a victory. The *Diwan-i-Insha* drafted, copied and dispatched these letters, which were written in flourishing literary style. This department was headed by *Dabir-i-khas* and he was assisted by a number of *dabirs*. The *dabir* was also responsible for drafting orders and communications to the important *muqtis*, and the neighbouring chiefs. As the nature of the correspondence was confidential, only such persons who had the trust and proximity of the sultan could be appointed to the post of *dabir*.

2.2.3.5 Diwan-i-Risalat:

The *Diwan-i-Risalat* is one of the four major ministries mentioned by Barani. However, he has not clearly defined its functions. According to generally accepted notion, the *Diwan-irisalât* was the ecclesiastical (religious) department. The minister in charge of this department was either *Sadr-us-sadur* or *Wakil-i-dar*, who was also called *Rasul-I -dar*. This department dealt with religious endowments, stipends and granting revenue-free lands to Muslim scholars and religious persons. It gave grants in cash for the construction of mosques, tombs, *madrâsas* and *maqtabas*. Maintenance allowance was also granted to the learned, the saintly persons, the orphans and the disabled. The funds for charity were used exclusively for the welfare of the Muslims. This department usually had a separate treasury, which received all collection from the *Zakat*. The chief *Sadr* appointed *muhatsibs* (censors of public morals). These officials were required to check gambling, prostitution and other vices. They also had to ensure that Muslims did not publicly violate what was prohibited in the *shara*. They were also to check weights and measures, and to keep a broad check on prices.

2.2.3.6 Qazi-ul-Quzat:

He was the head of judicial department. Usually the posts of the chief *Sadr* and the chief *qazi* were combined in one person.

2.2.3.7 Barid-i-mumalik:

He was an important minister under the Delhi Sultanate. He was the head of the intelligence department. Spies (*barids*) were appointed to different parts of the empire. It was their duty to keep the sultan informed about all the developments within the empire. Sultans such as Balban and Aluddin Khilji to keep effective control and check on the rebellious nobles used the well-organized espionage system. Only such nobles who enjoyed the sultan's confidence were appointed to this sensitive post. News outposts or *dakchowkis* were under the control of *Barid-i-mumalik*.

2.2.3.8 Royal Household and the Court:

The most important official concerned with the royal household was the *wakil-i-dar*. He controlled the entire royal household. He supervised the payment of salaries and allowances to the sultan's personal staff. He was also responsible for the education of the princes. As the post was of great importance, it was assigned only to those nobles of high rank and confidence.

The *Amir Hajib* (master of ceremonies) was another important official associated with the royal household and the court. He conducted the nobles in the court according to their ranks and precedence. He also checked the official visitors to the court. He took special measure to guard the sultan against any plot or mischief. Other officials included *Amir-i-Shikar*, who organized royal hunts, *Amir-i-majlis*, who made special arrangements for feasts and celebrations, *Sar-i-jandar*, who was the chief of the royal bodyguards. Only trustworthy nobles occupied the post of *Sar-ijandar*.

The royal household was a large establishment. It had to be provided with different types of goods and articles. This task was fulfilled by the Royal *karkhanas*. The *karkhanas* were responsible for the storing and manufacture of all the articles required by the sultan and the royal household as well as the court. This included food and fodder, lamps and oil, clothes, furniture etc. Firuz Shah Tughlaq paid special attention to the *karkhanas*. He trained a number of slaves to work in various *karkhanas*. Each *karkhana* was supervised by a noble of rank, and was assisted by a number of accountants and supervisors.

Another department that gained importance since the reign of Alauddin Khilji was the department of public works (*Diwan-i-imarat*). However, its services were used to the maximum extent by Firuz Shah Tughlaq. He repaired many old building and built a number of new ones. He also dug canals and built many new towns.

2.2.4 Judicial Administration

The sultan was regarded as the fountainhead of justice. He was responsible for upholding and maintaining the *Shariat*, which was the basic law in an Islamic state. In the case of non-Muslims, especially Hindus, in their social relations such as marriage, inheritance etc., the customary law was followed. As far as possible the state refrained from interfering in the personal law of the Hindus. However, in criminal cases both Hindus and Muslims were treated equally.

As the lawgiver and the final court of appeal, the sultan was the highest judicial authority in the state. The department of justice was known as the *Diwani-i-Qaza*. The sultan made all appointments to the various judicial posts. While deciding cases related to religious affairs, in which interpretation of the *shariat* was required, the sultan took the advice of the *Sadr-us-Sadur* and the *mufti* (legal interpreter). The sultan settled cases of secular nature with the assistance of the *Qazi-ul-Quzat* (Chief Justice). The chief Qazi supervised and controlled the lower judges in the province and

heard appeals from the lower courts. On the recommendations of the *Qazi-ul-Quzat*, the sultan appointed *qazis* in the different provinces and localities. Usually the same person held the offices of Sadr-us-Sadur and the Qazi-ul-Quzat. Though the chief Qazi was designated as the head of the judicial department, he was only its nominal head. The sultan was the real head of the department as he was the supreme judge. Thus, the sultan had the power to reverse the decision of the chief *Qazis*. The *Qazi-ul-Quzat* was chosen for his piety and knowledge of the Islamic law. He held a position of prestige and authority in the state.

There was a *qazi* in every province and one in every district. In big cities, officials known as *Amir-i-dad* were appointed. Their chief functions included detection of criminals and their trial with the help of the *Qazi*. In the town the *kotwal* was responsible for maintaining law and order. Another important official who was responsible for maintenance of law and order was the *muhtasib*. He also supervised markets checked weights and measures, sale of wine and adulteration of food. He had to see that the Muslims followed their rules and regulations. In case of violation of the law he punished the guilty. He had to take the help of the *Qazi* in exercising his responsibilities. In the village however, the ancient system of local government was hardly touched by the sultans. The village or the caste *panchayat* carried on its traditional duties as long as they did not clash with the *qazi's* jurisdiction.

The criminal law was very severe. Confession was extracted from the criminals by way of torture. Those criminals who were convicted of a crime were punished according to the nature of the crime. Different forms of punishment have been mentioned. These included simple imprisonment, flogging, torture, fine and mutilation of limbs. Only the sultan awarded death penalty.

2.2.5 Check Your Progress

1. What were the responsibilities of the deputy or naib?
2. How was the judicial administration done during Sultanate?

2.3 IQTA SYSTEM

2.3.1. Origin of the Iqta System:

There is no sufficient information regarding the working of the provincial and local government during the sultanate period. Initially the sultanate was a loose structure made up of military commands. Uniform civil administration could not be introduced throughout the sultanate in the initial stages, as the military commanders were busy subduing the various Hindu chiefs. Under these circumstances the *iqta* system came into existence.

2.3.2. Meaning of Iqta:

Literally the word *iqta* means a portion. Actually it was the land or revenue assigned by a ruler to an individual instead of the service rendered to

the state. The *iqtdar* or *muqti* was expected to introduce administration in his *iqta*. The *iqta* system helped the sultan in bringing about territorial expansion, keeping rebellious military commanders in check, maintaining law and order in the conquered territories and collection of revenue.

During the thirteenth century the sultanate consisted of military commands, which were known as *iqtas*. Each *iqta* was under a *muqti*, who was a powerful military commander. During the Slave dynasty there were twelve *iqtas*.

2.3.3. Iqta System during Alauddin Khilji's Reign:

The situation underwent a gradual change during the Khilji dynasty. During the reign of Alauddin Khilji, a considerable portion of northern, western and central India was brought under the direct control of the sultanate. During the Khilji rule, there are references to *walis* or *muqtis* who were commanders of military and administrative tracts called *iqtas* or *wilayat*. They could be compared to provinces and their heads, the governors. After conquering the vast regions of the country, Alauddin Khilji organized them into provinces. However, he did not disturb the existing *iqta* system that he had inherited from his predecessors. While retaining the old *iqtas*, Alauddin appointed military governors to the newly organized provinces, which were larger in area and income. Besides, the principalities conquered from the Hindu chiefs were also reduced to provinces. Thus, since the days of Alauddin Khilji, there were three types of provinces in the sultanate. The officer in charge of an *iqta* continued to be known as the *muqti* as before. Those who were appointed to the new provinces were called *walis* and sometimes *amirs*. Thus, a *wali* enjoyed a higher status and greater authority than a *muqti*.

2.3.4. Responsibilities of the Muqti:

The responsibilities of a *muqti* were to collect revenue and remit it to the state treasury and maintain law and order in his *iqta*. From the amount of revenue he collected the *muqti* could appropriate the expenses that he incurred for rendering service to the state such as maintenance of the army, salaries of officials etc. He was allowed to keep a certain amount of revenue for his personal expense. He was required to send the remaining amount to the sultan. The accounts of income and expenditure of a *muqti* were properly audited. The *muqti* was severely punished in case of corruption or malpractice and the amount was recovered from him. The sultan saw to it that he recovered his due amount. Quite often the *iqta* holder tried to conceal his real income from the *iqta* or he showed that his surplus was only nominal. At such times an atmosphere of distrust prevailed in the state.

Due to the military nature of the state, the maintenance and command of the provincial troops was the basic duty of the *muqti*. When the sultan needed military help, the *muqti* was expected to render military service. Any refusal to do so by the *muqti* was considered to be an act of rebellion. They could not declare war or make peace on their own. They had to receive royal orders before they undertook any scheme of conquests. The strength of the provincial force varied probably according to the revenue of the province.

Barani writes that the booty that they collected was the income of the sultan. No *muqti* was allowed to have his own court or use a royal emblem. They could not mint coins in their name, nor could they have the *Qutba* read in their name. The *muqtis* became powerful when the sultan was weak and unable to control them. During the reign of the Lodi Sultans the *muqtis* wielded considerable power and enjoyed freedom.

2.3.5. Position of the Muqti:

The *muqti* could not claim the ownership of the land assigned to him. While the land belonged to the state, the *muqti* was granted the revenue out of it in lieu of the service that he was required to render to the sultan. He retained the land as long as the sultan allowed him to do so. In case the sultan was displeased with the *muqti* he could withdraw his assignment. The land grant or the *iqta* could vary in extent from a village to a province. The *muqti* could be transferred from one place to another. He could not treat his land as hereditary property.

As the control of the central government increased, the control over the *muqti's* administration also increased. In order to supervise the revenue administration of the *iqtas*, the central government appointed the *naib diwan*, also known as the *khwaja*. An intelligent officer (*barid*) was appointed to keep a check on the activities of the *muqtis* in their respective *iqtas*.

2.3.6 Check Your Progress

1. What was the meaning of Iqta?
2. Comment on the position of Muqti.

2.4 CONCLUSION

During the period of Sultanate the rulers used to call themselves as Sultans. Their administration basically was based on the Islamic laws of Quran and Shariat. But Sultan always enjoyed position as fountain heads of political, economic, military and judicial administration for the smooth functioning of the administration they created independent departments and kept under the control of individual officers with subordinate officers. To name, Alauddin and Firuz Shah Tughlaq gave very efficient administration to Delhi Sultanate.

2.5 QUESTIONS

1. Describe the structure of the Central government under the Delhi Sultanate.
2. Write a detailed note on the Iqta system under the Delhi Sultanate.
3. Write short notes on the following:
 - (a) Ministries of the Central Government

2.6 B) ADMINISTRATIVE AND MILITARY REFORMS OF ALAUDDIN KHILJI

2.6.1 Suppression of the Nobles:

Alauddin Khilji had to face a number of rebellions soon after assuming the throne of Delhi. These rebellions, occurring at short intervals convinced the sultan of the need for adopting preventive measures of a radical nature. He made a careful analysis of the cause of such rebellions and came to the conclusion that the rebellions occurred because of the inadequacy of the espionage staff, excessive use of liquor, free social intercourse and inter-marriages among the nobles and possession of excessive wealth by some of them.

In order to keep the nobles under effective check and prevent rebellions, Alauddin Khilji promulgated four ordinances. These ordinances authorized confiscation of all religious endowments, prohibited free gifts of land, reorganized the espionage system by placing news-writers and spies in the residences of nobles and officers, prohibited public manufacture or sale of liquor and forbade social gatherings and intermarriages among nobles except when permitted by the sultan. It was said that the nobles were so scared of the spies that they communicated in sign language.

2.6.2 Measures against the Hindus:

Among the Hindus, one class comprised of tributary chiefs. They were allowed to possess their lands so long as they paid annual tribute to the state. The other class comprised of landlords such as *chaudharis* (headmen of Paraganas), *khuts* (zamindars) and *muqaddams* (headmen of villages). They held land from the state and were allowed their dues so long as they paid stipulated revenue. Besides, they had the added advantage of cattle grazing facilities. This landed class acted as the intermediary between the state and the peasantry and wielded considerable local influence and amassed a lot of wealth. Alauddin Khilji came to the conclusion that the landlords had successfully maintained their independence due to the surplus income that they had gathered by evasion of various taxes.

Alauddin Khilji adopted a series of stern measures specially designed to curb the Hindus. He increased the land revenue to one-half of the total produce. Besides the land tax, he also imposed other levies such as grazing tax on cattle, sheep and goats. Other taxes, such as *jizya*, customs and excise taxes were continued as before. The privileges enjoyed by the *chaudharis*, *khuts* and *muqaddams* were withdrawn. As a result of these stringent measures the Hindus, who were mainly connected with land in one form or the other were hit hard. According to Sir Wolseley Haig, "Hindus throughout the kingdom were reduced to one dead level of poverty and misery, or if there were one class more to be pitied than another, it was that which had formerly enjoyed the most esteem, the hereditary assessors

and collectors of the revenue.” Summing up the effects of the measures of Alauddin, Barani observes. “The *chudharis*, *khuts* and *muqaddams* were not able to ride on horseback, to find weapons, get fine clothes or to indulge in betel.”

2.6.3 Market Regulations and Price Control:

2.6.3.1 Reasons for the Reforms:

The most important administrative reform introduced by Alauddin Khilji was aimed at the regulation of the market and control of prices of essential commodities. A number of factors prompted him to introduce these reforms. He had to maintain a huge standing army with limited economic resources. The cash salary paid to the soldiers was not adequate for their comfortable living. The sultan was unwilling to enhance the salary of the troops and officers due to paucity of resources. Thus, he tried the alternative method of increasing the purchasing power of the *tanka* by regulation of market and control of prices. Besides, his numerous expeditions combined with Mongol invasions had exerted a heavy burden on the state treasury. The dislocation of trade and traffic had resulted in the scarcity of food grains and a steep rise in prices of essential commodities. To overcome all these problems related to the economic principle of demand and supply and prices, Alauddin regulated the market and fixed prices of all commodities of daily use, from food grains to horses and from the cattle and slaves to foreign articles of luxury. He took special measures to enforce the schedule of prices on all traders and merchants. Thus, Alauddin became a ‘daring political economist.’

2.6.3.2 Diwan-i-Riyasat:

The entire scheme of market regulation was entrusted to the care of *diwan-i-riyasat*. For different trades separate markets were set up and each market was placed under a separate *shahna*. At Delhi, Alauddin set up three different markets. One market was meant exclusively for food-grains, a separate market for horses, cattle and slaves and a third one for costlier articles such as foreign clothes, silks, perfumes, jewellery etc. Under the *shahnas* there were a number of *barids*, who checked prices, weights and measure and supervised general arrangement of the market and sent daily reports to the sultan. The *shahna-i-mandi* kept a *daftar* or a register of licensed dealers.

2.6.3.3 Difficulties in Implementing the Reforms:

There were certain problems, which were likely to occur due to such stringent regulations and control of prices. As the sultan had reduced the prices of all commodities, it was possible that merchants might refuse to sell their goods at those prices or they might create artificial scarcity and blame it on the price control. Brokers lost their employment because prices had been permanently fixed. Having lost their trade, they might instigate the traders to create difficulties. Problems could also arise due to natural calamities such as droughts and famines. The merchants might outwardly agree to conform to these regulations but they might defraud

the people by under-weighting, under measuring or substitution of a lower grade article for a higher grade one.

2.6.3.4 Regulations:

To meet these difficulties, Alauddin issued detailed regulations. Merchants were classified broadly into two categories - the importers, who supplied the demands of local markets and whole-salers and retailers, who had their shops in the market and dealt with the customers. Descriptive lists of merchants of both categories for each trade were prepared. Each one of the merchants was asked to apply for the trading license. These merchants were required to give an undertaking that they would bring the required commodities in sufficient quantity at the proper time and to sell them at the prices fixed by the government. Once they gave satisfactory undertaking, licenses were issued to them. Costly and rare articles such as fine silks, woolens, brocades, cosmetics etc. could be purchased only by special permits. Alauddin inflicted severe punishment on those who violated the rules.

2.6.3.5 Measures to Implement the Regulations:

In order to have a regular supply of food grains, all peasants of the Doab region and the country to a distance of 200 miles were ordered to pay land revenue in kind. Further, they were ordered to sell their surplus grains to registered merchants at the rate fixed by the government. To guard against scarcity, in case of failure of crops due to famines and droughts, Alauddin ordered grain to be stored in state granaries. Hoarding was strictly forbidden. During emergency rationing was introduced. On such occasion no family was supplied more than 6 or 7 *seers* of cereals at a time. Merchants were severely punished if even the slightest irregularity was detected. According to Barani prices were not allowed to be increased even by a *jital* (one *tanka* of Alauddin's reign was equivalent to the Indian *rupee* and comprised 48-50 *jitals*). In weight, a *man* during Alauddin's reign was equal to 12 to 14 *seers* of modern times).

Although in the beginning traders and merchants resisted the market regulations and price control, later they reconciled themselves to low profits and obeyed the regulations as long as Alauddin lived. The sultan assured the traders and merchants certain privileges and facilities also. Though their margin of profit was reduced, there was no apprehension of loss in any contingency. The sultan advanced them loans for purchase of commodities and if the cost price was more than fixed price for sale, the trader was allowed a certain percentage on the total sale and the entire loss of the transaction was borne by the state. Copies of schedules of prices were supplied to *shahnas*, *barids*, traders and merchants and *diwan-i-riyasat*.

The market regulations were, in all probability, enforced in the capital city and its neighbourhood. These were not in force throughout the empire. Even if Alauddin desired to implement these regulations throughout the empire, lack of proper and adequate agencies might have prevented him to do so. These market regulations and price control have been regarded by some

historians as ‘marvels of medieval statesmanship’. The sultan was able to check cheating and profiteering, but in the long run trade and agriculture suffered. He did not allow any rise in prices. Due to his stern measures Alauddin could enforce order in the market. The scheme of market regulations and price control died with him. His successors did not have the will or the mechanism to implement them.

2.6.4 Land Revenue Policy:

Alauddin Khilji was not content with regulating markets and controlling prices. He aimed at increasing the financial resources of the state. Hence, he turned his attention to the revenue reforms. He not only desired to introduce efficiency in the revenue administration but also wanted to make a fundamental change in order to increase his revenue collection to the maximum. Keeping in view these objectives, Alauddin introduced a number of new measures, which transformed the revenue rules, and regulations of the Delhi Sultanate.

Alauddin’s first measure was to confiscate land held mostly by Muslim grantees and religious men. Thus, all land of the empire was converted into the *khalisa* land, i.e., under the direct control of the state. Land held as *inam* (gift), *milk* (proprietary rights given by the state), *idarat* (pensions) and *waqf* (endowments) was resumed. The only concession allowed to some was that they were allowed to enjoy the fruits of their original holding.

Alauddin’s second measure was to withdraw all the privileges, which the Hindu *muqaddams*, *khuts* and *chaudharis*, had enjoyed for generations. Like all others they were also required to pay the land revenue and house and grazing taxes.

In the central regions of the empire land revenue was assessed on the basis of measurement and the share of the government was fixed at half of the total produce. Earlier, land revenue could be paid both in cash and kind. But when market regulations were introduced, Alauddin preferred the payment of land revenue in kind. The peasants also had to pay the house and grazing taxes. In addition, the Hindus had to pay *jizya*. According to Barani, the grazing tax was levied on all cattle heads going to the village commons. But Firishta says that a person having two pairs of oxen, two buffaloes, two cows and ten goats was exempted from the grazing tax. Those who owned more than this minimum number were required to pay the grazing tax.

2.6.5 Military Reforms:

Alauddin Khilji was a true militarist. In order to support his theory of absolute kingship, to satisfy his ambition of conquests and annexations and to guard the sultanate from the recurring Mongol invasions, it was necessary to have a powerful army. With these objectives Alauddin introduced far reaching military reforms.

2.6.5.1 Permanent Standing Army:

Prior to Alauddin Khilji, the sultans of Delhi depended on the forces of provincial nobles and feudatory chiefs for strengthening their own forces. Alauddin decided to put an end to this dependence. He devised a programme of raising and maintaining a centrally recruited and trained army. Thus, Alauddin was first among the sultans of Delhi to lay the foundation of a permanent standing army. The minister in charge of the army (*ariz-i-mumalik*) was assigned the responsibility of directly recruiting the soldiers of the sultan's army. He took steps to recruit able and promising young men to the army. They were supplied with horses, arms and other equipments at the expense of the state. They were paid salary in cash from the state treasury. The soldier with one horse (*Yak aspa*) was paid 234 *tankas* for a year, while a soldier with two horses (*Do aspa*) was paid 78 *tankas* more.

2.6.5.2 Composition of the Army:

Alauddin maintained one of the largest armies during the early medieval India. According to Ferishta, Alauddin's army consisted of 4, 75,000 cavalry men. The strength of the infantry must have exceeded the cavalry. As in the case of other Indian armies, Alauddin's army also had a large number of war elephants. Swords, bows and arrows, mace, battle-axe, daggers, spears were the important weapons used by the soldiers. As India lacked good quality horses, Alauddin imported horses from Persia, Arabia and Central Asia.

2.6.5.3 Chehera and Dag:

The organization of Alauddin's army was based on the Turkish model. Division of units of army was based on the decimal system. Alauddin tried to eliminate two corrupt practices, which were prevalent during medieval times. One was that regular soldiers used to send irregular and untrained soldiers in their place in times of war. Another common corrupt practice was that the soldiers used to replace good quality horses supplied by the state with ordinary horses. Both these corrupt practices were detrimental to the efficiency and morale of the army. In order to root out these practices, Alauddin ordered the maintenance of a descriptive roll (*chehera* or *huliya*) giving detailed particulars of individual soldiers. He also introduced the practice of branding horses (*dag*) so that substitution of the horses would not be possible. *Diwan-i-Arz* maintained the records of all soldiers recruited by the government. These practices were common in many countries outside India. However, Alauddin Khilji became the first sultan of Delhi to adopt these measures in India. A periodic review of the soldiers, horses and equipments was also undertaken to keep a proper check on the quality and efficiency of the armed forces.

2.6.5.4 Forts:

Forts played an important role in the defence of the territories of the sultanate, especially in the northwestern frontiers. Alauddin repaired the forts constructed by Balban on the northwest frontiers and also constructed new

ones. He constructed new forts within the conquered territories as well. These forts were garrisoned and arrangements were made for regular supply of arms, food and fodder.

Check Your Progress

1. Write a short note on Alauddin's Market Regulations.

What are *Dag* and *Chehera* in the military of Alauddin?

2.7 C) REFORMS OF FIRUZ SHAH TUGHLAQ

The military failure of Firuz Shah was in striking contrast with his success as an administrator. His character was well suited to the achievement of victories of peace. Though it could be an exaggeration to compare him with Akbar, he did much good to his people and his reign was a welcome calm after the storm of the previous regime. Though he had great regard for his famous cousin, he abandoned the latter's policies. A large share of the credit for the sultan's mild and beneficent administration should be given to his prime minister, Malik-i-Maqbul.

2.7.1 Reform in the Revenue System:

Firuz Shah was a true friend of the peasants. Their debts, resulting from the exactions of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq were cancelled. Land revenue was fixed after a proper assessment. The land revenue was lowered. He abolished more than twenty frivolous, unlawful and unjust taxes, which were collected by his predecessors. He considered them to be not in accordance with the *shariat*. He made changes in the existing practices and customs in order to bring them into conformity with the sacred law. For this reason he strictly realized *jizya* from the non-Muslims. Being a devout Muslim, Firuz Shah charged six taxes. These were *kharaj* or land-tax from non-Muslims. Its rate varied from one-fifth to one-half of the produce; *ushr*, one-tenth of the produce charged from Muslim cultivators; *kham*s, one-fifth of the booty captured in war; *tarkat*, heirless property; *zakat*, a two per cent tax on property realized from the Muslims to be spent for specific religious purpose only and *jizya*, a poll tax payable by the non-Muslims. Later, with the approval of the *ulema* the sultan imposed the irrigation tax on those cultivators who made use of the water supplied by the state canals, the rate being one-tenth of the produce of the irrigated area.

2.7.2. Promotion of Trade and Commerce:

Firuz Shah took special measures to promote trade and commerce. He withdrew the internal duties and artificial barriers on the movement of commodities from one province to another. The result of these steps was steady improvement of agriculture and commerce, general prosperity of the people and increase in the revenue of the state. The necessities of life became cheaper. In the words of Afif, "The homes of the people were replete with grain, property, horses and furniture; every one had plenty of gold and silver; no woman was without her ornaments and no house without good beds and *divans*. Wealth abounded and comforts were general."

2.7.3. Public Works:

Firuz Shah is known as an excellent builder. He is credited with 845 public works. He constructed five major irrigation canals. The longest and most important of these ran for 150 miles from the Yamuna watering the arid regions as far as the city of Hissar founded by the sultan. Another canal, 96 miles long, connected the Sutlej with the Ghaghra. Two others ran respectively from the Ghaghra and the Yamuna to the town of Firuzabad. The fifth served the tract from the neighbourhood of Sirmur hills to the town of Hansi. He also sank 150 wells for the purpose of irrigation. Firishta credits him with the construction of 50 dams across rivers to promote irrigation, 40 mosques, 30 colleges, 20 palaces, 100 caravanserais, 200 towns, 30 reservoirs or lakes, 100 hospitals, 5 mausoleums, 100 public baths, 10 monumental pillars, 10 public wells and 150 bridges besides numerous gardens and pleasure houses.

2.7.4. Builder of Cities:

Firuz Shah had great passion for founding cities and towns. His chief architects were Malik Ghazi Shahna and Abdul Haq. Among the important towns founded by him were, Fatehbad, Hissar, Firuzpur, Jaunpur and Firuzabad. The last named city, built on the bank of Yamuna, became his favourite residence. At present its ruins are found in *Firuz Kotla*, located to the south of the Red Fort in Delhi. Two monolith pillars of Ashoka were removed from their original places Topra and Meerut. The sultan relocated them, one in his new city named after him and the other near Delhi. This was extremely difficult task and the historian Shams-i-Siraj describes in detail how the great engineering feat was achieved.

2.7.5. Benevolent Measures:

Firuz Shah brought the administration of justice in harmony with the *Quranic* injunctions. He abolished torture and other barbarities. He introduced benevolent measures for the benefit of the people. He established *diwan-i-khairat*, a charity bureau to help the widows and orphans and give financial help to facilitate marriages of Muslim girls who remained unmarried for want of dowry. A charitable hospital, *dar-us-shafa* was founded, where patients were treated by skilful physicians and got medicine and food free of charge. An agency was set up to provide employment to the unemployed youth. Names of unemployed persons were registered and they were given suitable employment. It was conducted more on a charitable basis than a regular bureau of employment.

2.7.6. Jagir and Slave System:

The *jagir* system, abolished by Alauddin Khilji was reintroduced by Firuz Shah. Military and civil officers became fief holders of the feudal type. Though frauds were checked and the cavalry was properly maintained, the efficiency of the army suffered due to the sultan's excessive benevolence in allowing the relations of old soldiers to take their place. Another impolitic measure of the sultan was the employment of slaves on a large scale and the creation of a separate department for them. They were taken into civil

and military services. These slaves numbered around 1, 80,000, out of whom 40,000 were employed in the imperial palace. Like the *ulema*, the slaves also interfered in the administration and the slave system became an important factor in the disintegration of the sultanate.

2.7.7. Promotion of Learning:

Firuz Shah was greatly interested in learning. He established schools, colleges and monasteries and patronized scholars. The sultan was fond of history and the chief chroniclers of his reign were Barani and Shams-i-Siraj. Barani wrote *Fatwa-i-Jahandari* and *Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi*. The sultan wrote his own autobiography entitled *Futuh-i-Firuzshahi*. After the conquest of Nagarkot, a large library containing Sanskrit manuscripts fell into the hands of Firuz Shah. He got some of these works translated into Persian. One of these translations was called *Dalyal-i-Firuzshahi*.

2.7.8. Policy towards the Hindus:

In spite of his benevolent activities, in some respect Firuz Shah was a religious bigot. In two respects the sultan was more oppressive towards the Hindus than his predecessors. In the first place he reimposed *jizya* on the Brahmins, who were never required to pay it earlier. In the second place, the sultan himself boasted that he adopted every means to induce the Hindus to embrace Islam. The desecration and destruction of the temples of *Jagannath* in Puri and *Jwalamukhi* in Nagarkot demonstrate his inability to rise above sectarian intolerance.

2.7.9. An Estimate of Firuz Shah Tughlaq:

If goodness was greatness, Firuz Shah was certainly great. The contemporary historians, Barani and Afif are full of praise for the sultan and describe him as a just, merciful and benevolent ruler. His administration was largely beneficent and conducive to the happiness of his subjects. But his excessive mildness and generosity weakened royal authority. He was ruling during an age in which the most prudent approach for a monarch should have been to assert martial qualities to maintain the strength of his office and the stability of the state. The active interest and interference of the *ulema* in the affairs of the state, the connivance and the inefficiency of public servants, misplaced leniency in dealing with civil and military officials, and undue favour shown to the nobility weakened the entire administrative foundation of the sultanate. His aversion to war against the Muslims, even when it was imperative, his unwillingness or inability to carry the fight to the finish undermined the stability of the empire. The slave system, which developed into something like a praetorian guard proved to be a great distracting factor in the state. In spite of comparative peace, prosperity and contentment that prevailed during the long reign of Firuz Shah, the fact remains that his policy and administrative measures contributed to a great extent to the weakness and downfall of the Delhi Sultanate.

Check Your Progress

1. What were the public works of Firoz Shah Tughlaq?
2. How was the policy of Firoz Shah Tughlaq towards Hindus?

2.8 CONCLUSION

Alauddin introduced many reforms to the Delhi Sultanate such as market regulations, price control, a special department for it, land revenue policy and military reforms. He implemented these reforms very efficiently. So far Tughlaq Dynasty concerns the reforms of Firuz Shah are very important. Among them revenue, promotion of trade and commerce, public works, creation of cities and towns etc. marked the impressions on his benevolent sultanate.

2.9 QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the administrative measures introduced by Alauddin Khilji.
2. Why and how did Alauddin Khilji introduce market regulations and price control?
3. Give an account of the administrative reforms introduced by Firuz Shah Tughlaq.
4. Write short notes on the following:
 - (a) Revenue policy of Alauddin Khilji
 - (b) Market regulations and Price Control
 - (c) Military reforms of Alauddin Khilji

Administrative reforms of Firuz Shah Tughlaq

2.10 ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq was an ambitious and a diligent ruler. He adopted new and revolutionary policies in the matter of administration. He had a fancy for innovations, both in foreign and domestic affairs. In domestic policy he introduced certain experiments with best intentions. However, these innovations and experiments ended in failure and adversely affected the fortunes of the Delhi sultanate.

2.10.1 Revenue Reforms:

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq was keen to improve the revenue administration of the sultanate. Soon after his accession he promulgated a number of ordinances for the improvement of the revenue administration. As a first step, he ordered the compilation of a detailed register of income and expenditure of all provinces of the sultanate. The governors of the provinces were directed to send to the center all relevant records for the compilation of the

register. The chief motive of the sultan in undertaking this exercise was to introduce a uniform standard of land revenue and to see that no village remained unassessed. A department called *diwan-imustakhriz* was established to recover dues and arrears.

2.10.2 Taxation in the Doab:

In order to raise resources of the state the sultan increased the taxes by ten to twenty times more. Barani ascribed this measure to the sultan's tyranny and bloodthirstiness, and spoke in detail about the suffering caused to the people due to rigorous exaction of taxes. The increase in taxes in the Doab coincided with the outbreak of famine owing to the failure of rains. As a consequence the rich were reduced to poverty, the cultivators abandoned their lands and vast areas became depopulated. According to Dr. A.L. Srivastava, the sultan made an attempt to help the cultivators by giving them loans to buy seeds, bullocks etc. He also made arrangements for digging of wells for irrigation, but the policy failed.

2.10.3 Department of Agriculture:

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq realized that for an uninterrupted flow of revenue into the treasury, improvement of agriculture was essential. For this purpose he set up a separate department of agriculture under a minister, *amir-i-kohi*. Its main task was to increase the land under cultivation. According to Dr. A. L. Srivastava, a large tract of land sixty miles square in area was chosen for state farming. The land was cultivated and different crops were sown in rotation. In three years the government spent over seventy lakh *tankas* on this experiment. In spite of all efforts the experiment ended in a failure and the scheme was abandoned after three years. Poor quality of land chosen for the experiment, corruption among the officials and indifference of cultivators were some of the reasons for the failure of the well-intentioned experiment. Moreover, the scheme was given up in haste. Besides, three years was a short period for any tangible result.

2.10.4 Transfer of the Capital (1327):

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq's most daring and equally misunderstood measure was an attempt to transfer the capital from Delhi to Devagiri, renamed as Daulatabad. Several reasons have been ascribed for undertaking this disastrous decision. With the extension of territories of the sultanate, specially further south, the sultan desired to have a capital. Devagiri (Daulatabad) with its strategic location and impregnable fort was the natural choice of the sultan. Besides, Daulatabad being in the interior of the country was considerably safe from the Mongol invasions. As the southern India was rich in resources, Muhammad Bin Tughlaq thought it proper to exploit its wealth.

In 1327, the sultan along with the Queen Mother and the members of the royal household left for Daulatabad. They were followed by the government and state officials and nobles as well as by all the people of Delhi, who were ordered to migrate to Daulatabad. According to Ibn Battuta, the mass exodus was enforced with such severity that even a crippled and a blind

man could not escape. The sultan made excellent arrangements for the comfort of the travellers all along the seven hundred miles long route, providing them with free food and shelter.

The whole exercise of the transfer of the capital proved to be a costly and miserable failure. The people of Delhi, according to Barani, could not endure the exile and suffering. Daulatabad was not large enough to accommodate the large number of immigrants. The Muslims who were accustomed to living in Delhi with its predominantly Islamic character found it difficult to live amidst the predominantly Hindu area like Daulatabad. The sultan also realized that as it was difficult to control the south from the north as he could not control the north from the south. Thus, the sultan allowed those who wished to return to Delhi to do so eight years after the transfer of the capital. However, Daulatabad was abandoned as the imperial capital after seventeen years. Daulatabad remained, as Lane-Poole observes, 'a monument of misdirected energy.'

2.10.5 Currency Reforms:

Besides the attempt to transfer the capital, Muhammad Bin Tughlaq's reign was best known for his failed currency reforms. He introduced the currency reforms during the year 1329-1330 by adjusting the new coins to correspond the changed value of gold and silver. His new coins were noted for their design and execution. A new coin called *dokani* was introduced. *Quaranic* verses were inscribed on the coin. Small coins were minted in large quantities for the convenience of the people. Thus, he earned the epithet as, the 'Prince of Moneyers.'

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq also initiated a new experiment in coinage by issuing token currency. According to Barani, in order to meet demands of ever-increasing military expenses the sultan ordered the copper and brass tokens to be treated as legal tender in all monetary transactions, like gold and silver coins. The other reasons behind this novel experiment were that the treasury had been drained due to wars and rebellions and also by costly experiments.

The consequence of the experiment in token currency was disastrous. The sultan failed to take precautionary measures against counterfeit coins with which the market was flooded. According to the natural law of bad money driving out the good, the old silver coins disappeared from circulation, while the copper tokens circulated but became practically valueless. According to Barani, the house of every Hindu was turned into an unauthorized mint. The farmers paid their revenue in token currency; people paid their taxes in it and hoarded silver and gold coins. Foreign merchants used the token currency to purchase Indian commodities, but refused to accept them while selling their goods. This resulted in economic chaos. Trade was paralyzed and government incurred heavy losses. Accepting the failure of his experiment, the sultan withdrew the copper and brass coins and ordered the people to exchange them with gold and silver coins from the treasury. Thus, the treasury was depleted. The

sultan became bitter and his severity increased and the people became rebellious.

The failure of the experiment in token currency was due to the absence of government monopoly over the issue of tokens. It was difficult to distinguish between coins minted by the state and counterfeit coins manufactured by private agencies. Even if the technical difficulties could be got over, the success of the scheme depended on the credit of the royal exchequer, that is, the confidence of the people in the sultan's government. The scheme was not eccentric. It failed, as proper care for its implementation was not taken.

2.10.6 Administration of Justice:

The sultan was known for his sense of justice. Special officers held a *darbar* every Monday and Thursday in the *diwan-ikhas* to listen to public complaints. The *sadr-i-jahan* or the chief justice could be directly approached. The *mir-i-dad* saw to it that the officials did not take the law in their hand. Cases of capital punishment were recorded by the *munsif*. Torture was used to force confessions. Even the *sayyids* and the *ulema* were not spared from the law.

2.10.7 Relation with the Ulema:

Like Alauddin Khilji, Muhammad Bin Tughlaq was determined to keep the secular issue free from the control of the *ulema*. He did not go out of his way to defy the *shariat*. But at the same time he did not strain himself to win over the support on of the *ulema* on important matters. The sultan wanted to make himself not only the absolute head of the state but also claimed himself to be 'the shadow of God.' He dropped all references to the Caliphate. This naturally turned the *ulema* hostile towards the sultan. Initially the sultan did not think it necessary to seek the investiture from the Caliphate. But, in spite of his justice, generosity and personal ability, the sultan found that he was becoming more and more unpopular. Thus, he changed his attitude towards the Caliphate and sought confirmation from the Caliph of Egypt of his position as the sovereign. He removed his own name from the coins and inserted that of the Caliph. However, these measures did not restore the popularity of the sultan, neither was he spared from the recurring rebellions which ultimately proved detrimental to his authority and ruinous to the sultanate.

2.11 REBELLIONS AND BREAK UP OF THE SULTANATE

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq's reign was seriously distracted by sporadic rebellions. The areas affected by these rebellions ranged from Multan in the northwest to Bengal in the east and Mabar in the south. The sultan had to face as many as twenty-two rebellions during his rule. Among these, the rebellion of Mabar in 1335 was of a special significance. The governor of Mabar made a successful attempt for independence and the sultan's effort to suppress the rebellion ended in failure. Thus, independence of Mabar within a

decade of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq's accession indicated the beginning of the break up of the Delhi Sultanate.

As many as sixteen rebellions that followed the Mabbar revolt proved successful and led to the foundation of independent kingdoms. More serious rebellions broke out in the Deccan. The Hindu rebellion in the Deccan led to the foundation of the Vijayanagara kingdom in 1336 and the revolt of the foreign *amirs* led to the establishment of the Bahmani kingdom in 1347. In Malwa and Gujarat also the disaffected foreign nobles rose in open defiance of the sultan's authority as they suffered the loss or curtailment of their privileges. Mabbar and Bengal were lost to the sultanate and Muhammad Bin Tughlaq made no serious attempts to prevent the disintegration of the sultanate. The rebellions of Taghi in Gujarat took a serious turn. The rebel was hunted down by the sultan at Thatta in Sindh. He had to spend three years in order to bring peace and order to the rebellion infested province. From Gujarat, Muhammad Bin Tughlaq proceeded to Sindh in pursuit of the rebel. But on his way to Thatta the sultan fell ill and died on 20 March 1351. In the words of Badauni, "The king was freed from his people and they from their king."

2.12 AN ESTIMATE OF MUHAMMAD BIN TUGHLAQ

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq was the most remarkable personality among the sultans of Delhi. He was deeply interested in the pursuit of widely differing arts and sciences as logic, philosophy, astronomy and mathematics. He had knowledge of Persian classics. He composed verses of considerable literary merit both in Persian and Arabic. He was an excellent calligrapher, a lover of music and a patron of letters and arts. He even developed love for Sanskrit. He possessed great memory and had insatiable thirst for knowledge. Ibn Battuta regards him as a 'wonder of the age'. Muhammad Bin Tughlaq was deeply religious. He lived a remarkably simple life. He was regular in his prayers and charitable in his disposition. Sometimes his generosity exceeded his resources. He was a brave and experienced general, a well-intentioned ruler and a lover of justice.

The above observation is only one side of Muhammad's personality and character. His personality and character was so complex and enigmatic that it had defied correct analysis. That is why scholars have formed widely divergent estimates of his character. He was impatient, egotistic, tyrannical and eccentric. Due to these contradictions in his character, scholars like Elphinstone expressed the doubt "whether he was not affected by some degree of insanity."

To promote public welfare, Muhammad Bin Tughlaq introduced many reforms. But some of them were so novel and revolutionary in character that people failed to understand their significance. Some of his military adventures and administrative measures, such as the transfer of capital and the introduction of token currency had been condemned as instances of his insanity. However, such an opinion is not justified. By themselves these administrative experiments were excellent, but Muhammad did not realize the practical difficulties of implementing such novel experiments. He was

much advanced of his time and the people could not visualize their utility. He has been held partly responsible for the decline and disintegration of the Delhi sultanate. His policy and actions, no doubt undermined the stability of the Delhi Sultanate but it is important to note that the final end of the empire did not come till a century and three-quarters after the death of this controversial ruler, whom S.R. Sharma has described as the 'Wiseest fool in the Crescendom'. According to Lane Poole "With the best intentions, excellent ideas but no balance or patience, no sense of proportion, Muhammad Tughlaq was a transcendent failure."

Check Your Progress

1. Why did Muhammad bin Tughlaq impose taxation in Doab? a

Comment on the transfer of capital from Delhi to Daulatabad.



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EMERGENCE OF VIJAYNAGAR AND BAHAMANI KINGDOMS

Unit Structure:

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1. Introduction
- 3.2 A) Rise, Growth And Decline Of Vijayanagar Of Bahamani Kingdom
- 3.3 The Bahamani Kingdom:
- 3.4 Questions
- 3.5 B)Administration, Socio Economic And Culture Of The Vijayanagar Of Bahmani Kingdom
- 3.6 Economy Under The Vijayanagar Empire
- 3.7 Society Under The Vijayanagar Empire:
- 3.8 Culture Under The Vijayanagar Empire
- 3.9 Questions
- 3.10 C) Administration, Socio Economic And Cultural Conditions Of Bahmani Kingdom
- 3.11 Administration: Military And Civil
- 3.12 Economic Condition
- 3.13 Cultural Condition
- 3.14 Summary
- 3.15 Questions

3.0 OBJECTIVES

- To elaborate the development of Vijaynagar kingdom.
- To understand the rule of Bahamani kingdom.
- To understand the economy of Vijaynagar empire.
- To analyse the society during Vijaynagar empire.
- To explain the culture of Vijaynagar empire.

- To study the administrative system in Bahamani Kingdom.
- To understand the social and religious condition in Bahamani rule.
- To know the cultural condition in Bahamani Kingdom.

3.1. INTRODUCTION

For a long time South India enjoyed a 'splendid isolation', with her own culture and way of life. However, the political changes in North India were bound to affect the South Indian fortunes. Imperial expansion of the Delhi Sultanate gradually engulfed South India as well. It was Alauddin Khilji who began to extend the hegemony of the sultanate over the peninsula. Successively and successfully through his able general Malik Kafur, Alauddin succeeded in subjugating the South Indian kingdoms and extracting tributes from them. With the accession of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq, the imperial policy of the Delhi Sultanate towards the South Indian states underwent drastic change. In an attempt to extend the boundaries of the sultanate to natural frontiers of the sub-continent, Muhammad Bin Tughlaq effected the annexation of the South Indian states. The Hindus resented the extension of the Muslim rule over the peninsula. Resistance to the Muslim rule spread to different parts of South India. With the foundation of the Vijayanagar Kingdom the resistance to the Delhi Sultanate assumed new dimensions.

The Vijayanagar Empire was largely the outcome of South India's determination to save its culture, religious and political integrity against the threat of Muslim domination. During its active existence of over two centuries and a quarter it served as an effective centre and citadel of Indian culture and civilization. A large number of Vijayanagar rulers were promoters of orthodox religion, liberal patrons of culture and artistic activities and lovers of Sanskrit and vernacular literature.

In the Deccan, the transfer of the rule from Delhi Sultanates to the Bahamanis was marked by a particular change in the political and economic organization in Medieval India. It also affected the social and cultural patterns of the society. The Bahamanis had inherited the traditional system of the army organization of the Delhi Sultanates. It had continued over hundred years since the establishment of the Bahamani kingdom. The Bahamanis allowed the growth of the army to take its natural course.

3.2 A) RISE, GROWTH AND DECLINE OF VIJAYANAGAR OF BAHAMANI KINGDOM

Emergence of Vijayanagar
and Bahamani Kingdoms

3.2.1 Rise of the Vijayanagar Kingdom:

The forces of disintegration that set in motion during the reign of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq contributed to the foundation of the Vijayanagar Empire. There are various theories regarding the origin of the Vijayanagar Empire. Based on the description contained in the works *Raja Kalanirnaya* and *Vidyaranya Kalajnana*, some scholars are of the opinion that Harihara and Bukka founded the Vijayanagar Empire. Robert Sewell, the author of the *Forgotten Empire*, discusses the origin of the Vijayanagar with reference to the accounts of Nuniz and Ibn Battuta. Sewell gives as many as seven traditional accounts of the foundation of the city and kingdom of Vijayanagar.

Harihara and Bukka belonged to the family of five brothers, all sons of Sangama (Harihara, Kampana, Bukka, Marappa and Mudappa). Originally, they were in the service of the Kakatiya ruler, Prataprudradeva II. Following the conquest of the Kakatiya kingdom by the sultanate army in 1323, Harihara and Bukka went over to Kampili or Anegundi and became ministers of the ruler of Kampili. Pursuing the rebel, Bahauddin Gursasp, Muhammad Bin Tughlaq came in conflict with the ruler of Kampili for giving refuge to the fugitive, Gursasp. With the fall of Kampili, Harihara and Bukka became prisoners of the sultan. They were taken to Delhi, converted to Islam and were sent back to the province of Kampili to take over its administration from Malik Muhammad. They were also given instruction to deal with the revolt of the Hindu subjects.

Harihara and Bukka soon gave up Islam and the cause of Delhi and proceeded to set up an independent Hindu state, which soon grew up into the powerful Vijayanagar Empire. They came under the influence of sage Vidyaranya, whom they accepted as their guide both in temporal and spiritual matters. They were convinced that it was their duty to renounce Islam and champion the cause of the ancient Hindu *dharma*. Harihara was crowned in 1336 as the king of the new kingdom of Hampi-Hastinavati. To commemorate the event he laid the foundation of the new capital, Vijayanagar on the southern bank of river Tungabhadra. This marked the origin of the Vijayanagara Empire.

3.2.2 Growth of the Vijayanagar Kingdom

3.2.2.1 Harihara I(1336-1356):

Harihara I was the first ruler of the Sangama dynasty. His reign is marked for the beginning of an era of conquest and territorial expansion. By 1342, most of the Hoysala territories were captured. The important fortress of Penugonda in the Anantapur district was captured from the Hoysalas. The treacherous murder of the Hoysala ruler by the Sultan of Madura and the conflict between the two kingdoms led to the weakening of the Hoysala power. This enabled Harihara to extend the territories of the

Vijayanagar kingdom over the remnant Hoysala kingdom. The Kadambas of Banavasi on the coast of Konkan were also incorporated within the Vijayanagar kingdom.

3.2.2.2 Bukka I (1356-1377):

Harihara I died without an issue. Hence, Bukka I succeeded him as the sole sovereign of the kingdom. After assuming the control of the state, the important task before Bukka I was to unify the kingdom and strengthen his position. Soon after his accession Bukka I was compelled by circumstances to interfere in the affairs of the Tamil country. Bukka's second son Kampana Odeya led the southern expeditions in about 1360. Two objectives of this expedition were to subjugate the refractory chief of the Sambuvaraya family ruling in the north and south Arcot districts and the subversion of the Sultanate of Madura. Both these objectives were achieved during the reign of Bukka I.

The conflict between Vijayanagar and the Bahamani kingdom, founded in 1347, began during the reign of Bukka I and continued till the Battle of Talikota in 1565. Following the death of the founder of the Bahamani kingdom, Alauddin Hasan Bahaman Shah, his son Muhammad Shah Bahamani succeeded him. However, the new sultan was not still secure on the throne. Taking advantage of the situation Bukka I, in alliance with the ruler of Telangana sent an ultimatum to the Bahamani Sultan to return the Telangana territories as far as the river Krishna and the forts of Raichur and Mudgal to the Telangana ruler. When the sultan refused, Bukka I dispatched an army of 20,000 to assist the Telangana ruler against the Bahamanis. These armies invaded the Krishna-Tungabhadra Doab. The conflict between the Bahamanis and the allies ended with the treaty by which Bukka I acquired territories in the Krishna-Tungabhadra Doab. River Krishna was fixed as the boundary between Vijayanagar and the Bahamani kingdom. Bukka I also waged war against the Reddis of Kondavidu.

3.2.2.3 Harihara II(1377-1404):

Following the death of Bukka I, his son Harihara II ascended the throne of Vijayanagar. He took the imperial title of *Maharajadhiraja*. He consolidated his power by suppressing insurrections in Konkan and other provinces. His son Virupaksha Odeya was successful in suppressing the rebellious chieftains in the Tamil country. He also invaded Ceylon and obtained tribute from its ruler.

Conflict with Bahamani kingdom continued during the reign of Harihara II. He invaded Konkan and northern Karnataka. Harihara's minister Madhava Mantri defeated the Bahamani armies and captured the port of Goa. Chaul and Dhabol on the coast of northern Konkan were also acquired.

Taking the advantage of political confusion in the east coast, Harihara II occupied the Reddi territories. This involved him in a war with the Velama ruler of Rachkonda, who was an ally of the Bahamani sultan. He dispatched a strong army under his son Immadi Bukka that penetrated as far as Warangal.

The Vijayanagar armies defeated the Velamas and their Bahamani ally. Firuz Shah, the sultan of Bahamani was forced to lose certain territories to the north of the Krishna-Tungabhadra Doab.

Emergence of Vijaynagar and Bahamani Kingdoms

3.2.2.4 Devaraya I (1406-1422):

After a brief period of war of succession following the death of Harihara II Devaraya I succeeded to the throne of the Vijayanagar kingdom. The reign of Devaraya I was a period of constant military activity. During the sixteen years of his reign he was constantly engaged in waging wars against the Bahamani Sultans, the Velamas of Rachkonda and the Reddis of Kondavidu. Devaraya I entered into marriage alliance with the newly founded Reddi kingdom of Rajmundry under Katya Vema. This enabled him to check the designs of his Velma enemy, the ally of the Bahamanis. According to Firishta, Firuz Shah, the Bahamani Sultan marched unopposed to Vijayanagar. Devaraya I sued for peace, and gave his daughter in marriage to the sultan. He also ceded the fort of Bankapur as the price of peace. A few years later Devaraya I retaliated by invading the Bahamani kingdom and drove out the Bahamani army.

The acquisition of the coastal Andhra brought Devaraya I into conflict with the *gajapati* of Orissa, Bhanudeva IV, who invaded the kingdom of Rajmundry. To assist his ally, Devaraya I dispatched a military expedition to the Godavari delta. Though the war was averted due to diplomacy, the rivalry between the Vijayanagar and the *gajapatis* continued in the east coast of the peninsula.

The last years of Devaraya I were peaceful. He was the first Vijayanagar ruler to realize the value of an efficient cavalry. He obtained the monopoly of the horse trade from the Portuguese for the Arabian and Persian horses. He also employed the Turkish bowmen in his army. Devaraya I was a follower of *Saivism*. He was especially devoted to the worship of the Goddess *Pampa* of the *Tampi-tirtha*. He built several temples at Vijayanagar. He patronized scholars, artists and philosophers.

Following the death of Devaraya I in 1422, his son Ramachandra occupied the throne for a few months. He was followed by his brother Vira Vijayaraya (1422-1426). According to Nuniz, he did nothing worth recording. The traditional enmity with the Bahamanis continued. The Bahamani Sultan, Ahmad Shah began a war against Vijayaraya and inflicted a defeat on his forces. It was followed by slaughter and destruction of the civil population of the kingdom.

3.2.2.5 Devaraya II(1426-1446):

By about 1428, Devaraya II effected the conquest and annexation of the Kondavidu country. He followed this up with the invasion of the kingdom of Orissa. Devaraya II also carried his arms into Kerala, subjugating the ruler of Quilon and other chieftains. The *Zamorin* of Calicut, however, seems to have continued to retain his independence. Abdur Razaq, the Persian ambassador who visited South India during this period states that although the *Zamorin* was not under the authority of Devaraya II, he lived in great fear of him.

According to Abdur Razaq, the supremacy of Devaraya was felt from Ceylon to Gulbarga and from Orissa to Malabar. Nuniz also supports the views of Abdur Razaq and asserts that Devaraya also exacted tribute from the rulers of Quilon, Ceylon, Pulicat, Pegu and Tenasserim.

Like all his predecessors, Devaraya's II relation with the Bahamani kingdom continued to be hostile. He had to confront the Bahamanis in several wars. The Bahamani Sultan, Ahmad Shah shifted the capital from Gulbarga to Bidar as a measure of safety as Gulbarga was very close to the Vijayanagar frontiers. An epigraph found in the South Kanara district dated 1429-30 refers to the defeat of a large and powerful Turushka cavalry by Devaraya II. In the same epigraph, two other victories against the rulers of Andhra and Orissa are attributed to Devaraya II. After these wars for about six or seven years Vijayanagar enjoyed peace. However, with the death of the Bahamani Sultan, Ahmad Shah and the accession of his son, Alauddin, Devaraya II was once again involved in wars with the Bahamanis in 1435-36 and 1443-44. Both wars were confined to the Krishna-Tungabhadra Doab and mainly centered round the fortresses of Mudgal and Raichur.

Devaraya II's long and generally prosperous reign came to an end with his death in 1446. He was succeeded by incompetent rulers which led to the weakening of the Vijayanagar Kingdom. The ruler of Orissa invaded the country and conquered almost all the coastal districts of Vijayanagar as far south as Trichinopoly. The Bahamanis under their great minister Mahmud Gawan invaded Vijayanagar. Under these circumstances one of the most powerful nobles of the Vijayanagar Kingdom, Saluva Narasimha put an end to the old dynasty, assumed the royal title and founded a new dynasty known as the Saluva dynasty.

3.2.2.6 Saluva Narasimha:

By the act of 'usurpation', Saluva Narasimha and his supporters saved the Vijayanagar Kingdom from disruption. At the same time Narasimha had to face a lot of opposition. He had to devote considerable amount of time and energy in fighting and subduing recalcitrant chieftains like the Sambetas of Peranipadu (Cuddapah district), the Palayagars of Umattur near Mysore and others. Though Narasimha overcame his internal troubles, he found it difficult to resist his foreign enemies. When Purushottama Gajapati, taking advantage of the weakness of the Bahamani kingdom after the death of Muhammad Shah III, conquered all the eastern coastal country south of Orissa up to Udayagiri, Narasimha's attempt to raise the siege was unsuccessful. He was defeated in the battle and taken prisoner. He could secure his release by agreeing to surrender the fort and the surrounding country.

Saluva Narasimha died in 1490 leaving behind his two minor sons. At the time of his death Narasimha appointed his minister Narsa Nayaka as the regent. As the regent (1490-1503) Narsa Nayaka subdued rebellions in the Pandya, Chola and Chera countries in the south and brought all the internal enemies under control. He also had to face the invasion of the

kingdom by the Orias. He also had to go to war against the Muslim rulers of Bidar and Bijapur.

Emergence of Vijayanagar and Bahamani Kingdoms

Narsa Nayaka was succeeded by his son Vira Narasimha as the regent of the kingdom. After about two years (1505), he had the nominal king, Immadi Narasimha murdered and proclaimed himself king. This is known as the 'second usurpation'. The new dynasty founded by Vira Narasimha is known as the Tuluva dynasty (Narsa was son of Tuluva Isvara). Vira Narasimha ruled as the king for five years (1505-1509). His rule was a period of turmoil. His usurpation of throne evoked much opposition. There were rebellions all around. However, he subdued most of them and forced the rebels to acknowledge his authority.

3.2.3 Krishnadevaraya (1509-1529)

3.2.3.1 Challenges before Krishnadevaraya:

On the death of Vira Narasimha, his half brother Krishnadevaraya succeeded him as the ruler of Vijayanagar Empire. He proved to be the greatest of the Vijayanagar kings and one of the most distinguished rulers in Indian history. During his reign Vijayanagar attained the apex of glory and progress in all spheres. Krishnadevaraya's task as a ruler was daunting one. He did not inherit a kingdom, which was peaceful and consolidated. A number of vassals were still in a rebellious state. The rebel chieftain of Umattur was contesting the lordship of the best part of the Mysore region. The *gajapati* of Orissa was openly hostile and aggressive. He had occupied the northeastern districts. Though the Bahamani kingdom had practically broken up into five separate sultanates, the Muslim pressure from the north had lost none of its old vigour. Yusuf Adil Khan, the founder of the Adil Shahi dynasty Bijapur was persistent in his efforts to extend his boundaries at the expense of Vijayanagar. There was also the newly founded Portuguese power on the west coast with which Krishnadevaraya had to contend. The Portuguese were rapidly establishing control over the routes and the maritime trade on the west coast. They were keen to establish profitable political contacts with the 'country powers'.

3.2.3.2 War against the Bahamanis:

One of the initial tasks of Krishnadevaraya was to repulse the Bahamani forces, which invaded the territories of Vijayanagar in pursuit of the policy of annual *jihad*. The prominent Bahamani nobles assembled at Bidar and marched with Sultan Mahmud Shah on their annual raid into Vijayanagar Kingdom (1509). When the Bahamani army arrived at Adoni on the Vijayanagar frontier, it was effectively checked by Krishnadevaraya's army and was decisively defeated by the latter. Krishnadevaraya pursued the retiring armies particularly that of Yusuf Adil Shah, who were killed in the battle that followed and Bijapur, was thrown into confusion and disorder. Taking advantage of the anarchic condition prevailing in Bijapur, Krishnadevaraya invaded Krishna-Tungabhadra Doab and captured Raichur (1512). Advancing further he also captured Gulbarga after a brief siege and inflicted a severe defeat on Barid-iMumalik and his allies. He next set out for Bidar in pursuit of Barid. Having defeated him, restored Sultan

Muhammad Shah to his throne, whom Barid had confined in an attempt to usurp power.

3.2.3.3 Suppression of Rebellious Vassals:

The *Palayagars* of Umattur had been defiant of the central authority even during the reign of the predecessors of Krishnadevaraya. The *Palayagras* were ruling over the upper Kaveri valley and were in possession of the forts of Seringapatam and Sivasamudram situated on the island between two branches of the Kaveri River. Following his success against the Bahamanis, Krishnadevaraya undertook campaign against Gangaraya of Umattur, who had been rebellious since the last years of Vira Narasimha's reign. Krishnadevaraya captured the fort of Seringapatam and later Sivasamudram, the headquarters of Gangaraya. The siege lasted for nearly a year. Finally, Gangaraya fled from the fort and was drowned in the Kaveri River while fleeing. The conquered territory became a new province with Seringapatam as the capital. Saluva Govindaraya was appointed its first governor. Local administration was entrusted to three local chieftains. The famous Kempe Gauda of Bangalore was one of them.

3.2.3.4 War against Orissa:

Following his success against the Bahamanis and the internal rebels such as the *Palayagars*, Krishnadevaraya felt strong enough to undertake expedition against the *gajapati* of Orissa who had conquered two provinces of Vijayanagar, Udayagiri and Kondavidu during the reign of his predecessors. After the termination of campaign against Gangaraya of Umattur, Krishnadevaraya sent an army to besiege Udayagiri in 1513 and soon the *raya* himself joined it and conducted the operation in person. The *gajapati*, Prataprudra sent a large army to relieve the fort, but it was defeated and driven as far as Kondavidu. Udayagiri fort was captured after a siege, which lasted for a year. On his way back to his capital, Krishnadevaraya and his queens, Tirumala Devi and Chinna Devi visited Tirupati and offered thanksgiving to Venkatesvara in July 1514.

After reducing the fort of Udayagiri, the Vijayanagar army marched into the Kondavidu province. On its way a number of forts such as Kandukur, Vinukonda, Nagarjunakonda, Tangeda fell into the hands of the Vijayanagar army. The Vijayanagar general, Saluva Timma, undertook the siege of Kondavidu. As he failed to storm the fort, Krishnadevaraya himself came down to conduct the siege personally and ultimately the fort was captured by escalade. Many Oriya noblemen including the son and heir of the *gajapati*, Virabhadra and one of his queens were captured and taken as prisoners of Vijayanagar. Krishnadevaraya entrusted the administration of Kondavidu to Saluva Timma.

From Kondavidu, the Vijayanagar army proceeded to Vijayavada on the Krishna River and laid siege to the fort. After its fall, Krishnadevaraya advanced to Kondapalli, to the northwest of Vijayavada. An army sent by Prataprudra to the relief of Kondapalli was thoroughly defeated. The fall of Vijayavada opened the gates of Telangana to Krishnadevaraya. The Vijayanagar forces captured the forts of Nalgonda and Warangal districts.

After effectively subjugating Telangana, Krishnadevaraya turned his attention to the Kalinga country. Rajmundry was captured with ease and Vengi was subjugated. As the *gajapati* Prataprudra was reluctant to sue for peace, Krishnadevaraya advanced up to his capital, Cuttack. This prompted the *gajapati* to sue for peace (1518). According to the terms of the peace, the *gajapati* gave his daughter in marriage to Krishnadevaraya. In return the *raya* returned to the *gajapati* all the territory north of the Krishna conquered by him during the war.

3.2.3.5 War against Qutb Shah of Golconda:

When Krishnadevaraya was busy with campaign against the *gajapati* of Orissa, Quli Qutb Shah, the sultan of Golconda became powerful in Telangana. He attacked Pungal and Guntur on the Vijayanagar frontier. A little later he occupied Warangal, Kondapalli, Ellore and Rajmundry. He also forced the *gajapati* to cede him the entire territory between the mouths of the Krishna and Godavari rivers. Following these conquests, he made inroads into the Vijayanagar territories. With a large army Quli Qutub Shah marched to Kondavidu and besieged the fort. Saluva Timma being away at Vijayanagar, his nephew Nandindla Gopa, who was in charge of the place, was unable to resist the besieging forces of Golconda. On receiving the news of the siege of Kondavidu, Krishnadevaraya immediately dispatched Saluva Timma from Vijayanagar with a large army to Kondavidu. The Qutub Shahi army was defeated and its commander Madar-ul-Mulk and several officers were captured and sent as prisoners to Vijayanagar.

3.2.3.6 War with Bijapur:

Taking advantage of Krishnadevaraya's preoccupation with the Oriyan and other wars on the east coast, Ismail Adil Shah of Bijapur invaded the Krishna-Tungabhadra Doab and captured Raichur. In 1520, as soon as Saluva Timma returned to the capital from Kondavidu, Krishnadevaraya marched against the sultan with a large army and began a regular siege of the fortress. Ismail Adil Shah came to its relief with strong contingents of cavalry and advanced within nine miles of Raichur where he entrenched himself. The decisive battle took place on the morning of 19 May 1520 in which the Bijapuris suffered a disastrous defeat. Though the sultan fled from the battlefield, the Bijapuri garrison did not give up the fort of Raichur. Krishnadevaraya persisted in his siege of the fort with the help of Portuguese musketeers in his service and finally succeeded in storming and capturing it. Soon after his return to Vijayanagar, Krishnadevaraya conducted a raid into Bijapur, occupied the capital for some time causing much destruction to it. The fortress of Gulbarga was captured and as stated by Nuniz, it was destroyed and razed to the ground. This was the second siege of the Bahamani capital. Krishnadevaraya even tried to revive in vain the Bahamani Sultanate by restoring the eldest son of Muhammad Shah II. But his attempt to resurrect the Bahamani sovereignty under Hindu patronage did not have any possibility of success. On the other hand it only served to irritate the sultans of the five succession states.

3.2.3.7 Relation with the Portuguese:

Krishnadevaraya had realized the importance of the Portuguese friendship. The Portuguese, having defeated the Arab and the Persian merchants and destroyed the Egyptian navy, established virtual monopoly over the horse trade from Arabia and Persia. Krishnadevaraya's friendship with the Portuguese enabled him to secure horses for his army without which he could not have waged successful wars against the Bahamanis. The Portuguese were also keen to secure Krishnadevaraya's favour. Soon after the accession of Krishnadevaraya, when he was involved in the war with the Bahamanis, the Portuguese governor, Albuquerque sent an envoy promising the Portuguese aid to Vijayanagar in return for its support against the *zamorin* of Calicut. He also promised to supply Arab and Persian horses exclusively to Vijayanagar and not to send any to Bijapur. Though Krishnadevaraya was eager to secure a monopoly in the horse trade, he did not accept the offer. He resisted the temptation of being dragged into an alliance with the Portuguese against the native powers. The Portuguese embassy sent by governor Almeida secured permission from Krishnadevaraya to erect a fort at Bhatkal. However, in 1523, when the Portuguese conquered the mainland near Goa, Krishnadevaraya sent a small force under his minister Saluva Timma against them. But the campaign ended in failure as the small Vijayanagar army had to beat a hasty retreat. In spite of this, normal relations were maintained between the Vijayanagara and the Portuguese. A large number of Portuguese travellers, merchants and adventurers visited the Vijayanagar Empire.

Krishnadevaraya was a great warrior and general. He was equally great as a statesman, an administrator and a patron of arts. As a warrior and general he won many victories against his enemies in spite of discouraging circumstances. As an administrator he toured the remote corners of his empire and heard and redressed the grievances of the people. He set up excellent administrative machinery. He patronized scholars and artists. His court was adorned by the *ashtadiggajas* who were eminent poets and writers. Krishnadevaraya himself was a great writer and poet. His famous Telugu poem *Amuktamalyada* is one of the greatest poems in that language. His reign witnessed a tremendous activity in architecture as well.

3.2.4 Decline of the Vijayanagar Empire:

The death of Krishnadevaraya signalled the decline and disintegration of the Vijayanagar Empire. The enemies of the empire took advantage of the death of their scourge to renew their attack on it. Ismail Adil Shah invaded Raichur Doab and seized Raichur and Mudgal. At the same time the *gajapati* of Orissa and the Sultan of Golconda also invaded Vijayanagar territories. Achyutaraya (1530-1542) managed to drive out the armies of Orissa and Golconda. The whole of Achyutaraya's reign was spent in a struggle against adverse conditions such as internal rebellions, foreign aggression and the intrigues and ambitions of Ramaraya, Krishnadevaraya's son-in-law. During the later half of his reign, Ramaraya

and his two brothers, Tirmuala and Venkatadri, dominated Achyutaraya. They advanced the claim of Sadasivaraya, son of Ranga, who was the brother of Achyutaraya. The death of Achyutaraya in 1542 was followed by a fierce struggle for the throne and the coronation of Sadasivaraya and Venkata I (son of Achyutaraya), both minors, by their respective supporters. But Venkata I was murdered by his partisan, Salakaraju. The tyranny of Salakaraju and the intervention of Bijapur made the affairs complicated. Ramaraya overthrew the tyrant and re-crowned Sadasivaraya and himself became the regent and *de facto* ruler.

3.2.5 The Battle of Talikota (1565):

Ramaraya began to interfere in the affairs of the Deccan Sultanates. He often participated in their quarrels and conflicts either as a participant or as an arbitrator. This policy was motivated by an interest to safeguard the frontiers of the Vijayanagar Empire against the invasion of the Deccan Sultanates. Ramaraya first formed an alliance with Ahmadnagar and Golconda against Bijapur and Adil Shah was defeated. Later, he organized another confederacy of Bijapur, Golconda and Vijayanagar against Ahmadnagar. By playing mutually one against the other, Ramaraya failed to foresee the consequences of his policy that he was incurring the enmity of his former allies. The invasion of Ahmadnagar had caused much injury and heart burning to the people of Ahmadnagar. This was the first of the destructive invasions of that kingdom. The atrocities committed by the Vijayanagar army stirred up religious feelings of the Muslims against the Hindus of Vijayanagar. In 1562-1563, Ramaraya once again joined Bijapur against Ahmadnagar and the horrors of the previous invasions were more than repeated. Firishta gives a vivid account of the destruction of property, desecration of mosques and violation of the modesty of women.

The provocative actions of Ramaraya led to the organization of a confederacy for the overthrow of the Vijayanagar towards the close of 1564. It is believed that Ali Adil Shah of Bijapur was the chief promoter of this confederacy of Muslim powers of the Deccan against Ramaraya. Hussein Nizam Shah of Ahmadnagar, Ibrahim Qutb Shah of Golconda and Ali Barid Shah of Bidar joined the grand alliance. Burhan Imad Shah did not join the confederacy because he was not on good terms with Hussein Nizam Shah.

Converging at Bijapur, the allied troops began their march to the south on 25 December 1564. They entrenched themselves 25 miles north of the river Krishna at Talikota. Ramaraya faced the situation with utmost confidence. He first sent his brother Tirumala with considerable force to guard the Krishna and prevent the enemy from crossing it. Then he dispatched his another brother, Venkatadri, and finally he proceeded with the rest of the forces of the empire. The Hindu camp was on the south of the Krishna, while the Muslims occupied both banks. The rival armies were facing each other for over a month. During this period there were preliminary trial of strength. The decisive battle was fought on 25 January 1565. For the first time, two armies of enormous size faced one another. Initially the Vijayanagar armies seemed victorious. However, the situation changed with the opening

of the artillery wing of the allied forces and within a short time five thousand Hindu soldiers were slain. The cavalry followed up the charge. Though Ramaraya fought bravely, he was wounded. As he was unable to escape, he was seized by his enemies and beheaded.

It is believed that two Muslim generals of the Vijayanagar played a treacherous role and the tables were turned against Ramaraya. Venkatadri died or fled from the battlefield. Tirmuala, who had lost an eye in the contest hastily withdrew to Vijayanagar and soon left with Sadasivaraya and others, carrying away as much treasure as possible, probably for Tirupati.

After three days stay on the battlefield the confederates marched to Vijayanagar and sacked it. Sewell gives the following account, though a little exaggerated, "With fire and sword, with crowbars and axes, they carried on day after day their work of destruction. Never perhaps in the history of the world has such havoc been wrought, and wrought so suddenly on so a splendid city teeming with a wealthy and industrious population in the full plenitude of prosperity one day, and on the next day seized, pillaged and reduced to ruins, amid scenes of savage massacre and horrors." Six months later, the Muslim armies left Vijayanagar and returned home after the capture of Raichur and Mudgal. Thus, Vijayanagar finally lost the Raichur Doab.

Soon after the Battle of Talikota, Tirmuala made himself regent and left Vijayanagar with Sadasivaraya. He transferred the capital to Penugonda. He deposed Sadasivaraya in 1569 and founded the Aravidu dynasty with himself as the ruler. Tirumala succeeded in restoring a part of the power and prestige of the empire. Tirmuala was succeeded by his son Sriranga I (1572- 1585). He carried on the work of restoration of the empire, but there were many obstacles in his way. When Sriranga died without an issue, his younger brother Venkata succeeded him. Venkata II (1586-1614) shifted his capital to Chandragiri. Ranga III (1614- 1618) was the last important ruler of the Aravidu dynasty. He was unable to suppress the rebellious vassals who practically became independent of the central authority; neither was he able to resist the aggression of the Sultans of Bijapur and Golconda. He could not prevent the break up of the Vijayanagar Empire. Gradually the great empire split into a number of small independent units ruled over by the local princely families.

Check Your Progress

1. Who were the founders of Vijayanagar kingdom?
2. Write a short note on the battle of Talikot.

3.3 THE BAHAMANI KINGDOM

3.3.1. Foundation:

The Bahamani kingdom arose out of one of the several revolts that broke up the Tughlaq Empire towards the close of the reign of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq. The numerous foreign officials known as the *amir-i-sadah*

(Amirs of the hundred or centurions) rebelled against Muhammad Bin Tughlaq and set up their kingdom at Daulatabad. They proclaimed one among themselves, Ismail Mukh, the Afghan, king of the Deccan under the title Nasiruddin Shah (1346-1347). As he was well advanced in age and lacking in vigour resigned soon after in favour of Zafar Khan, who assumed the title of Abul Muzaffar Alauddin Bahaman Shah (1347-1358). Alauddin Bahaman Shah shifted his capital to Gulbarga. According to Firishta's version Zafar Khan chose the title of Bahaman in memory of his master, a Brahman named Gangoo for whom he had worked as a servant in his early days. However, the more accepted version is recorded in Nizamuddin's *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*. According to Nizamuddin, Zafar Khan derived the title by tracing his descent from a half mythical hero of Persia, Bahaman, son of Isfandiyar.

3.3.2. Alauddin Bahaman Shah:

Sultan Alauddin (I) Bahaman Shah spent most of his time waging war or conducting negotiations calculated to extend the territory under his sway. He crushed the refractory chiefs, and during his reign extended the kingdom from the Wainganga to the Krishna and from Goa and Dabhol to Bhongir. He adopted the feudalistic pattern of administration. He divided the kingdom into four *tarafs* or provinces. Gulbarga, Daulatabad, Bidar and Berar. These were assigned to his loyal Amirs, who were appointed as governors. In turn they were required to render military service to the king. Alauddin Bahaman Shah secured recognition of his position as sultan from the Egyptian Caliph in 1356.

3.3.3. Muhammad Shah I:

Alauddin Bahaman Shah was succeeded by his son Muhammad Shah I (1375-1378). He took steps to consolidate his authority through a series of administrative measures. He established a council of eight ministers including the *peshwa*. His foreign policy was marked by hostility towards the Hindu kingdoms of Vijayanagar and Warangal. The conflict between the Bahamani kingdom and the Vijayanagar was aimed at the possession of the Raichur Doab. Muhammad succeeded in defeating the rulers of both Warangal and Vijayanagar and compelled them to pay a huge war indemnity. The ruler of Warangal was forced to surrender the fort of Golconda. The Vijayanagar kingdom, however, continued to take the offensive.

3.3.4. Mujahid Shah:

Muhammad Shah I was succeeded by his son Mujahid Shah (1378-1397). He continued his father's policy of waging war against Vijayanagar. He besieged Vijayanagar but failed to capture it. Following court intrigue he was murdered by his cousin, Daud Khan, who in turn was killed by his slave. A grand son of Alauddin Bahaman Shah, Muhammad Shah II (1397-1418) was raised to the throne. He was a man of learning, of peace loving disposition and a patron of scholars. His reign was marked by peace with Vijayanagar.

3.3.5. Firuz Shah:

The next ruler, Firuz Shah (1379-1422) continued aggressive policy towards Vijayanagar and Warangal. In his first campaign against Vijayanagar, Firuz Shah forced Harihara II to pay a large amount of war indemnity. In his second campaign Devaraya II was forced to conclude peace with Firuz Shah and to cede Bankapur as dowry for one of his own daughters married to the sultan and a war indemnity. However, in the third campaign Firuz Shah had to face defeat in the hands of the Vijayanagar army.

3.3.6. Ahmad Shah:

The successor of Firuz Shah was his brother Ahmad Shah (1422-1435). In 1425, he transferred his capital from Gulbarga to Bidar. Ahmad Shah carried on a war of revenge against Vijayanagar to wipe out the disgrace of his predecessor's failure. He saw the armies Vijayanagar and Warangal on the bank of Tungabhadra, crossed the river and ravaged the country, massacring people, demolishing temples and slaughtering cows. Vijayanagar was reduced to inactivity and the army of Warangal withdrew. His blockade of Vijayanagar reduced its inhabitants to misery and the *raya* accepted the terms imposed by the victor, who returned home with immense treasure and innumerable prisoners. One of them was a Brahmin, who was converted to Islam under the name of Fathullah, who ultimately became the founder of the Imad Shahi dynasty of Berar. Another Brahmin, who was converted to Islam under the name of Hasan rose to the highest office in the Bahamani kingdom. His son, Ahmad founded later the Nizam Shahi line of Ahmadnagar. In 1424 Ahmad Shah annexed Telangana. Four years later the sultan triumphed over Hoshang Shah of Malwa.

3.3.7. Alauddin Ahmad Shah II (1436 - 1458) :

Alauddin Ahmad Shah II (1436-1458), the next ruler led a series of campaigns against Vijayanagar. He led an expedition against Konkan and reduced its chief to submission. He compelled the Raja of Sangameshwar to give his daughter in marriage to him. But this new matrimonial alliance angered the queen and consequently her father, Nasir Khan of Khandesh. He invaded Berar in 1437, but was defeated and pursued right up to his capital Burhanpur. Though a stern ruler, Alauddin Ahmad Shah was a patron of learning and architecture. He founded a free hospital at Bidar.

3.3.8. Humayun:

The successor Alauddin Ahmad Shah II, Humayun (1458- 1461) was a fierce tyrant and was known as *zalim* or oppressor. His minor son, Nizam Shah (1461-1463) was eight years old when he ascended the throne. This led to the formation of a Council of Regency consisting of the Queen Mother, Nargis Begum, Khwaja Jahan and Mahmud Gawan. During the reign of Nizam Shah the Bahamani kingdom was exposed to attacks led by the Hindu rulers of Orissa, Warangal as well as by Sultan Mahmud Khilji of Malwa. But the intervention of Mahmud Beghara of Gujarat and the ability of Gawan saved the situation.

3.3.9. Muhammad Shah III:

Nizam Shah was succeeded by his brother Muhammad Shah III (1463-1482). As he was only nine years of age, the Council of Regency continued, but the attempt of Khwaja Jahan to domineer over the other members of the council led to his execution at the instance of the Queen Mother. However, she retired into private life on the sultan attaining the age of fifteen. Mahmud became the sole adviser to the sultan.

3.3.10. Mahmud Gawan:

Mahmud Gawan was born in 1411 at Gawan in Persia and belonged to the ancient nobility of that country. Suspecting the disposition of the ruling sovereign towards him, he left his home as a merchant and came to Bidar in 1453. He entered the service of Alauddin Ahmad Shah II. Under Humayun, Mahmud Gawan became chief minister and also governor of Bijapur. During the minority of Nizam Shah, he was one of the two ministers. During the reign of Muhammad Shah III he was the *de facto* ruler of the kingdom for about twenty-five years. Under the able guidance of Mahmud Gawan, the Bahamani kingdom attained great power and prosperity. He fought most hazardous of wars and extended the dominions of the kingdom to an extent never achieved by former Sultans. The annexation of Konkan and Goa extended its frontier to the western sea and the annexation of the Godavari-Krishna Delta brought it to the coast of the eastern sea. The Raja of Belgaum, who had revolted at the instigation of Vijayanagar, was subdued. In 1478 Mahmud Gawan raided Orissa, suppressed a rebellion in Kondavidu. In the south the Bahamani power was extended till Kanchi, which was seized from Vijayanagar.

Besides undertaking territorial expansion, Mahmud Gawan provided for the consolidation of the kingdom through administrative reforms. He tried to maintain equilibrium between the Deccani and the Irani Amirs. According to Haig, “the natives of Deccan were less energetic and enterprising. ..and being unable to compete with the hardy Arab, the intellectual Persian and the virile Turk, were obliged to give place to them at courts as well as in camp.” Besides the natives were all Sunnis and the foreigners were Shias. Hence, they had mutual jealousy and distrust. Mahmud Gawan, knowing well the dangers of factionalism, though himself a foreigner refused to identify himself with either of the factions and divided the honours evenly between the two groups.

As Mahmud Gawan found that the four provinces of Gulbarga, Daulatabad, Telangana and Berar were too unwieldy to administer efficiently divided each of them into two divisions and placed separate governors over them. To strengthen the central administration, Mahmud Gawan curtailed the powers of the *Tarafdars* or governors.

Many of the *paraganas* were converted into crown lands. Special officials were appointed to collect revenue from central places. Only one fort in each province was left in the charge of the governors. The remaining forts were entrusted to officers and troops appointed by the sultan. This was

aimed at making rebellions difficult if not impossible. To improve the revenue administration, a systematic survey and assessment of the land revenue was ordered. The army was thoroughly reorganized. The pay of the soldiers was increased. No department of the state failed to engage the attention of Gawan and his reforms extended to finance, justice and education.

Mahmud Gawan added dignity and scholarship to his martial and administrative qualities. He founded a *madrasa*, an academy of learning at Bidar. It was provided with a valuable library, which comprised of 3,000 volumes. He was a great scholar with profound knowledge of mathematics. He was also a poet and a prose writer, and two books are ascribed to him. A man of simple habits, he always helped the poor and the needy.

Mahmud Gawan's various reforms and his pre-eminent status in the kingdom fostered jealousies among other *amirs*, especially the Deccanis. They conspired to get rid of him and hatched a conspiracy. They forged a letter of treason against Sultan Muhammad Shah and persuaded the sultan to kill the 'traitor'. Mahmud Gawan was executed in 1481 by the sultan's orders on the charge of treason. The sultan soon discovered his own colossal stupidity and was plunged in grief.

The death of Mahmud Gawan ushered in a period of steady decline in the fortunes and prestige of the Bahamani Sultanate. Muhammad Shah III was succeeded by Mahmud Shah (1482- 1518). He was utterly incompetent. The provincial governors took advantage of the growing weakness of the government for their self-aggrandizement. The quarrel between the Deccani and foreign amirs continued. Within a short interval the provincial governors asserted their independence. The kingdom was reduced in size and the sultan's authority remained confined to a small area around the capital. On Mahmud Shah's death, three rulers succeeded one after another in quick succession. But they were puppets in the hands of Qasim Barid-ul-Mumalik, and after his death in those of his son, Amir Ali Barid. The last sultan of the Bahamani kingdom was Kalimullah Shah. With his death in 1527 the Bahamani Sultanate came to an end. On the ruins of the Bahamani Sultanate, five independent splinter sultanates came into existence-the Adil Shahi kingdom of Bijapur; the Nizam Shahi kingdom of Ahmadnagar; the Imad Shahi kingdom of Berar; the Qutub Shahi kingdom of Golconda and the Barid Shahi kingdom of Bidar.

Check Your Progress

1. Who was the founder of Bahamani kingdom?
2. Comment on Mahmud Gawan.

3.4 QUESTIONS

Emergence of Vijayanagar
and Bahamani Kingdoms

1. Give an account of the rise and growth of the Vijayanagar Kingdom.
2. Make an estimate of Krishnadevaraya as the conqueror and ruler.
3. Examine the circumstances that led to the downfall of the Vijayanagar Empire.
4. Discuss the origin and growth of the Bahamani Kingdom.
5. Trace the conflict between the Vijayanagar and the Bahamani Kingdoms.
6. Write short notes on the following:
 - (a) Devaraya II
 - (b) Krishnadevaraya
 - (c) Battle of Talikota (1565)
 - (d) Mahmud Gawan

3.5 B) ADMINISTRATION, SOCIO ECONOMIC AND CULTURE OF THE VIJAYANAGAR OF BAHMANI KINGDOM

3.5.1 Administration Of The Vijayanagar Empire

3.5.1.1 The King:

The Vijayanagar administration was a vast feudal organization presided over by the king. The king of Vijayanagar, like all contemporary rulers, was an autocrat with unlimited authority in civil, judicial and military matters. However, the desire of the king to promote the welfare of the people according to the principles of *dharma* limited the urge for despotism. A detailed study of Krishnadevaraya's book *Amuktamalyada* helps us to understand the nature of political philosophy of the Vijayanagar kings. Krishnadevaraya advises the king in these words, "With great care and according to your power you should attend to the work of protecting the good and punishing the wicked, without neglecting anything that you see or hear." He further says, "A crowned king should always rule with an eye towards *dharma*." Enumerating the king's duties Krishnadevaraya says that he should rule collecting round him people skilled in statecraft, counteract the activities of his enemies by crushing them with force and protect one and all of his subjects.

3.5.1.2 Council of Ministers:

The king was advised by the council of ministers. However, it was left to the discretion of the king whether to heed to their advice or not. He also consulted his own favourites on very important matter. Even the most

powerful minister held his office at the pleasure of the king, and was liable to be degraded and summarily punished. Krishnadevaraya punished Saluva Timma when he was suspected of poisoning the heir apparent. The office of the minister was some times hereditary and some times based on selection. Ministers and officers of the state held *jagirs* which the king could resume at will. Abdur Razaq mentions some public offices such as *diwankhana* (council chamber), *daftarkhana* (secretariat) and *zorrabkhana* (mint).

3.5.1.3 Division of the Empire into Provinces:

For administrative convenience the Vijayanagar Empire was divided into provinces, which were known as *rajya*, *mandala*, or *chavdi*. These were further sub-divided into smaller units known as *venthe*, *nadu*, *sima*, *sthala*, *kottam*, *parru* etc. The division of the empire into provinces was on military lines. The governors were primarily officers who generally remained at the imperial headquarters and governed the provinces as deputies except on the frontier. Governors were described as *mandalesvaras*, *nadaprabhus*, *nayakas* and *mahamandalesvaras*. Governors kept their own courts, army etc. They performed civil, judicial and military functions in their jurisdiction. They were required to submit regular accounts of income and expenditure of their province to the central government. In time of need they had to render military service to the king. The governors of Vijayanagar enjoyed the position of vassal in relation to the king. But they acted as autocrats in relation to the people of their provinces. To keep the governors under check the king appointed royal officers to be present in their courts.

3.5.1.4 Village Administration:

The village was the lowest administrative unit. As in ancient times, the villages had their assemblies. They were self-sufficient units. Hereditary officers called *ayagars* looked after the village affairs. They decide petty disputes, collected revenue and enforced law and order. The central government exercised general supervision over the village administration through an officer known as *mahanayakacharya*.

3.5.1.5 Land Revenue:

Land revenue comprised the main source of income of the state. The other sources of income included, tributes and gifts from the vassals and provincial governors during the great festival of *Mahanavami*, custom duties, taxes on various professions, houses, markets and licenses etc. The flourishing seaports brought huge wealth. Inland trade and commerce also formed an important source of income. Payment of taxes could be made both in cash and kind.

The land revenue was collected on the basis of the assessment fixed after a careful survey of land. On the basis of productivity, the land was classified in three categories, wetland, dry land, orchards and woods. According to Nuniz, the peasants had to pay nine-tenths of their produce to their lords, who paid one-half to the king. There was a special department known as *athavane* to supervise the administration of land revenue. Among the innumerable taxes, the extremely unpopular was the marriage tax levied

throughout the empire. It was later abolished at the instance of Saluva Timma. The fiscal system of the Vijayanagar Empire was not at all favourable to the peasants. There is some clear evidence of their sufferings and migrations to other places due to the oppression of the fief-holders and others. Rulers like Krishnadevaraya remedied the injustice brought to their notice. However, during the reign of weak rulers, the exploitation and oppression by the nobles and others continued without check.

3.5.1.6 Treasuries:

Two treasuries, a smaller one for day-to-day remittances and withdrawals and a larger one to deposit huge amounts and valuable gifts from the vassal kings and mandalesvaras controlled the revenue of the state. According to Paes, the larger treasury was “kept locked and sealed in such a way that it could not be seen by anyone and is not opened except when the kings have great need.”

3.5.1.7 Expenditure:

The chief items of expenditure were the upkeep of the palace, maintenance of the military forces and charitable endowments. Krishnadevaraya suggested in the *Amuktamalyada* that the income of the state be divided in four parts: one quarter to maintain the palace establishment and charity; two quarters for the military expenses and the remaining should be deposited in the reserve treasury.

3.5.1.8 Administration of Justice:

The Vijayanagar kings administered even-handed justice. The king presided over the *sabha*, which was the highest court of appeal. In most cases special judicial officers administered justice. There were regular courts for administering justice in different parts of the empire. The *Dharma Shastras* were the basis for deciding the civil cases. The criminal law was severe. Death or mutilation was awarded as punishment for theft, adultery, murder and treason. There were village courts, caste *panchayats* and guild organizations to decide petty offences such as violation of caste rules, trade regulations etc.

3.5.1.9 Police System:

The police system in the Vijayanagar Empire was fairly efficient. According to a general rule when a theft occurred, the property was recovered or made good by the police officers. There was an excellent espionage system. The spies always kept the king informed of all the development in the state. This prevented conspiracies, intrigues and revolts of the defiant nobles and provincial governors. In towns, the streets were patrolled regularly at night. The police arrangement at the capital was so efficient that the foreign travellers like Abdur Razaq were full of praise for them.

3.5.1.10 Military Organization:

The vastness of the empire, the need to suppress the recurring internal rebellions and the necessity to counteract the perennial threat from the Deccan sultanates prompted the Vijayanagar kings to maintain a large and efficient army. Besides the feudal levies, the kings recruited soldiers including the Muslims. There was a military department called *kandachara* under the control of *dandanayaka*. The emperors maintained a large standing army consisting of an elephant corps, cavalry and infantry. More attention was paid to cavalry than to infantry. As compared with the Deccan Sultanates, the artillery of Vijayanagar was defective and weak. The Portuguese traveller Paes maintains that Krishnadevaraya's army consisted of 700,000 infantry, 32,600 cavalry and 600 elephants.

According to Abdur Razaq, the soldiers received their pay every four months. Besides, military fiefs spread over the length and breadth of the empire, each under a military leader or *nayaka*. He was authorized to collect revenue and to administer a specified area provided he maintained an agreed number of elephants, horses and troops ever ready to join the imperial forces in war. Nuniz counted more than two hundred such *nayakas*. There were regular military schools in which men were trained in martial arts such as archery, swordsmanship etc. and were later enlisted in the army. Foreigners generally manned the artillery. Fortresses played an important part in the defence organization. The command over several ports and parts of Ceylon leads one to infer that Vijayanagar might have had a naval force. However, we do not have definite information regarding its strength or organization.

3.5.1.11 Check Your Progress

1. What was the position of the king during Vijayanagar Empire?
2. How was the administration of justice during Vijayanagar Empire?

3.6 ECONOMY UNDER THE VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE

3.6.1. Accounts of Foreign Visitors:

A number of foreign travellers who visited Vijayanagar have left interesting and valuable accounts of their impression about the social and economic life of the people. The Vijayanagar Empire was one of the richest states then known in the world. The economic prosperity was reflected in the thickly populated cities and towns, flourishing trade and commerce, and the lavish life at the royal court. The Italian traveller, Nicolo Conti, who visited Vijayanagar in 1420, writes that its circumference was sixty miles and protected by massive walls. Further he says that in the city there are ninety thousand men fit to bear arms.

Abdur Razaq, the Persian envoy who visited the empire in 1442-43, speaks of chambers in the king's treasury filled with masses of molten gold. The

inhabitants of the country, whether high or low wore jewels and gilt ornaments in their ears and around their necks, arms, wrists and fingers. About the splendour of the city, Abdur Razaq records his impression thus, "The city of Vijayanagar is such that the eye has not seen or heard any place resembling it upon the whole earth. It was so built that it has seven fortified walls, one within the other."

The Portuguese traveller Domingo Paes writing about the city of Vijayanagar says, "This is the best provided city in the world and is stocked with provisions such as rice, wheat, grains, Indian corn, a certain amount of barley and beans, moong, pluses, horse-grain and many other seeds.... the streets and markets are full of laden oxen without count.... In this city you will find men belonging to every nation and people."

Eduardo Barboza who visited Vijayanagar in 1516 confirms the information of earlier travellers. Praising the city of Vijayanagar he says, "The city was of a great extent, highly populous and the seat of an active commerce in country - diamonds, rubies from Pegu, silk of China and Alexandria and cinnabar, camphor, musk, pepper and sandal from Malabar."

3.6.2. Agriculture, Industry and Trade:

These testimonies of different foreign travellers leave no doubt that the Vijayanagar Empire was rich and prosperous. Agriculture was in a flourishing condition. The emperors took keen interest in promoting agriculture through various irrigation projects. Various industries supplemented the agricultural wealth. The most important of these industries were textile, mining and metallurgy. Perfumery was another important industry. Trade and industry was organized and regulated by guilds. There was flourishing inland, costal and over-seas trade. According to Abdur Razaq, the empire possessed 300 seaports. The chief seaports were Honnavar, Bhatkal, Mangalore, Calicut, Cochin, Quilon, Kaval, Negapatam, St. Thome and Pulicat. Foreign trade was in the hands of the Portuguese, Arabs and Indians. Vijayanagar Empire had commercial relation with the islands in the Indian Ocean, the Malaya Archipelago, Burma, China, Persia, Abyssinia, South Africa and Portugal. The principal articles of export were cloth, rice, iron, saltpetre, sugar and spices. The commodities imported into the empire were copper, coral, mercury, China silk and velvet. Besides horses and elephants were also imported.

3.6.3. Coinage:

The Vijayanagar emperors issued brilliant coinage in gold and silver. The gold series were called the *varaha*. The full *varaha* weighed 52 grains and there were also half and quarter *varahas*. On the obverse the Vijayanagar coins contained the bull, elephant, various Hindu deities and the *gandaberunda*, a double eagle, either alone or holding an elephant in each beak and claw. On the reverse these coins had the name of the reigning king.

Check Your Progress

1. Which Italian traveler visited the Vijayanagar Empire?
2. What was the gold coin called during Vijayanagar Empire?

3.7 SOCIETY UNDER THE VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE:

The social life under the Vijayanagar Empire was well developed. The upper and the middle classes of the people were wealthy and had a considerably higher standard of life. The common people had to bear the burden of the taxation.

3.7.1. Royal Court:

The king and his courtiers led an extravagant and luxurious life. It was in striking contrast to the modest living standard of the rest of the population. The palace always had a large number of establishments attached to it. In the establishment there were large number of women, especially chosen for their youth and beauty. Some were brought from abroad while others were captured in war and enslaved. Many were courtesans, skilled in the art of music and dance while others were the concubines of princes, nobles and courtiers.

3.7.2. Caste System:

The institution of caste with all its social and economic implications was a universally accepted social organization. The great poet Allasani Peddana, in his famous work, *Manucharitramu* mentions the four castes that existed in the Vijayanagar society. They were *viprulu* (Brahmins), *rajulu* (Kshatriyas), *motikiratalu* (Vaisyas) and *nalavajativaru* (Sudras).

3.7.3. Position of Different Castes in the Society:

In civil life the Brahmins occupied highly respected position. With the exception of a few who entered the state service in the army and elsewhere, they generally devoted themselves to religious and literary pursuits. Nuniz describes the Brahmins as "honest men, given to merchandise, very acute and of much talent, very good at accounts, lean men and well formed but little fitted for hard work". According to the Domingo Paes the Brahmins were vegetarians and their womenfolk were known for their beauty and seclusion. The Kshatriyas were generally associated with the ruling dynasties, assisting them in matters of state and warfare. Most of the nobles and men of rank belonged to this caste. The Vaisyas were the same as the merchants who carried on trade and commercial activities. These upper castes appeared to have enjoyed the privileges attached to their status in the society. Economically they were well placed, commanded royal favours and were fortunate to be educated. Sudras were considered inferior in their status. They rendered manual services to earn their livelihood. Both in towns and villages the castes tended to live in separate quarters of their own and followed their own peculiar customs and habits. The outcastes

who tilled the land and did menial work lived in hamlets at a distance from the village.

3.7.4. Position of Women in the Society:

Women played an important role in social life of the Vijayanagar Empire. Some of them were highly learned. They received opportunities of training not only in literary and fine arts such as music but also in wrestling. They were also employed as astrologers, keepers of accounts and even as judges. Princesses of the royal family generally received a good education in literature and fine arts. Gangadevi, the wife of Kampana, was the author of the famous work *Maduravijayam*. Triumalamma was a distinguished poetess in Sanskrit during the time of Achyutaraya. According to Nuniz large number of women was employed in palaces as dancers, domestic servants and *palki* bearers. The custom of *devadasis* was in vogue. They were dancing girls attached to the temples. They were also summoned for festivities held in the royal palace. Polygamy was recognized and was practiced by the wealthy people. Child marriage was also common. According to Nuniz the practice of *sati* was in vogue. He says, "The women have the customs to burning themselves when their husbands die and hold it a honour to do so."

3.7.5. Amusements:

The people of Vijayanagar used to relax from serious work through hunting, gambling, playing a game like polo and by witnessing theatrical performances and cock fighting. Paes states that every morning before daylight Krishnadevaraya drank gingellyoil and exercised with earthenware weights and a sword till he had sweated out all the oil. He then wrestled with one of his wrestler and later went riding before his morning bath. There were areas inside royal palace in Vijayanagar for the amusement of the monarch and his court. Fights between animals and wrestling matches were arranged. There were also women wrestlers. Festival and fairs offered means of amusement and enjoyment for the people.

3.7.6. Food Habits:

The kings and the general public were meat-eaters. They ate meat of all kinds of animals except the flesh of oxen or cow. Animal sacrifices were common. Some sections of the population such as Brahmins, Jains and *Saivas* were strict vegetarians.

3.7.7. Religion:

The early rulers of Vijayanagar were worshippers of *Siva*. *Virupaksha* was their family God. Later they came under the influence of *Vaishnava* saints. The *Vaishnava* work *Prapannamritam* gives the legendary account of the conversion of the Vijayanagar king, Virupaksha to *Vaishnavism*. Krishnadevaraya was devoted to *Vishnu* and *Siva*. Achyutaraya was a great patron of *Vaishnavism*. Sadasivaraya followed a very liberal policy. He worshipped *Siva*, *Vishnu* and *Ganesa*. Besides Vedic religion there were also other religious sects like the Jains who

enjoyed protection and patronage of the Vijayanagar kings. They were tolerant to other religions. Barbosa, who visited Krishnadevaraya's court observes, "The king allows such freedom that every man may come and go and live according to his own creed without suffering any annoyance and without enquiries whether he is a Christian, Jew, Moor or Hindu".

3.7.8 Check Your Progress

1. How did Nuniz describe the castes during Vijaynagar Empire?
2. What were the food habits of the people of Vijaynagar Empire?

3.8 CULTURE UNDER THE VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE

3.8.1. Art and Architecture:

Under the Vijayanagar Empire, South Indian art and architecture attained fullness and freedom of rich expression. This was in keeping with the general consciousness of the great task of the empire, namely the preservation and development of all that remained of Hinduism against the onslaught of Islam. During this period, temples became very elaborate both in structure and organization.

The capital city of Vijayanagar was described by Domingo Paes as large as Rome and very beautiful to look at. The extensive ruins of Hampi now represent it. In its glorious days the city of Vijayanagar was one of the foremost cities in Asia. Paes refers to the strong and massive fortifications of the city, its imposing gateways, its wide streets lined by beautiful houses, its elaborate and effective works of irrigation, its orchards, groves, its many temples, market places and other amenities suitable to a royal city. Following the Battle of Talikota (1565) this splendid city was destroyed and plundered by the Muslim armies of the Deccan Sultanates. The remains of this magnificent city are still seen and they illustrate one of the most significant phases of South Indian architecture.

3.8.2. Building Material:

There was an extensive use of granite for the construction of buildings, both religious and secular. In most of the Vijayanagar buildings, at least in the earlier buildings of the Sangama and Tuluva dynasty, mortar was not used for construction of buildings though its use was fairly well known. The granite blocks were so huge and heavy, and so beautifully dressed and accurately fitted together that cementing and plastering material were not necessary to hold the blocks. The idols in the temples and other free-standing sculptures were made of chlorite stone, which was soft, dark in colour and was amenable for extreme sculptural designs and decorations. Some such icons resemble the soap stone sculptures of the Hoysalas at Belur and Halebid.

3.8.3. Structure of the Temple:

During the Vijayanagar period, the temple became a more complex and a very elaborate institution with several new halls and pavilions constructed for

various purposes. The *gopuram*, of the Cholas, which was small, plain and unsculptured, evolved into a huge structure, rising to a height of five, seven, nine or even thirteen storey, tapering towards the top in pyramidal fashion. Stone or bronze *kalasams* or other sculptures crowned the summit of the towers. Images of *Saiva* and *Vaishnava* gods and goddesses adorned the niches on the outer walls of the *gopuram*.

The *antarala* (small passage between the main sanctum and the *mahamandapa* of the shrine) of the Chola period evolved into a big passage with sculptural decorations on its walls. This passage came to be known as the *aradhamandapa* during the Vijayanagar period. It was also used to store articles used in the daily worship of the main deity. Another important feature of the temple architecture was the so-called 'thousand pillared *mandapa*'. In fact the varied and complicated treatment of the pillar was perhaps the most striking feature of the Vijayanagar style. The shaft becomes just a core round which is grouped a vast amount of statuary of great size and sculptured in the round. The pillar and sculptures were carved out of a single block of stone. Less complicated, but equally effective, is the pattern of the monolithic pillar consisting of a central column with slender columnettes attached all round. All pillars had ornamental brackets as part of their capitals and below the bracket a pendant that was elaborated in this period into an inverted lotus-bud. Continuous panels of sculptures, illustrating various myths and legends appear on the exterior surface of the walls.

During the Vijayanagar period, temples became very elaborate, both in structure and organization. Even old temples were modified by the addition of pillared halls, pavilions and other subordinate structures. The most important characteristic of such addition was the *kalyana-mandapa*, generally put on the left in the courtyard of the temple. This was a very ornate pillared pavilion with a raised platform in the center for the reception of the deity and his consort at the annual celebration of their marriage ceremony. Gradually, marriages of all castes of the Hindus, except the shudras were performed in the *kalyana-mandapa*. The other *mandapas* included the *unjal mandapa* meant for placing images of deities on the swing while performing religious ceremonies; *vasanta mandapa* was located amidst gardens; *neerudam mandapa*, located in the midst of the temple tank was used to give ceremonial bath to the deity. From the foreign accounts Vijayanagar appears to have been as much a capital city as a city of temples. A number of interesting temples may still be found extant in this ruined site. The temple of *Pampapati* was the most sacred. The other principal temples in the city of Vijayanagar were *Vitthalaswami* and *Hazara Rama*.

3.8.4. Vitthalaswami and Hazara Rama Temples:

The *Vitthalaswami* temple is the most ornate. The construction of this temple had begun during the reign of Devaraya II and continued even in the reign of Achyutaraya, but was never entirely finished. There are three entrances with *gopurams*. The main temple occupies the centre and there are five other structures mostly of the nature of pillared halls within the enclosure. The main temple is dedicated to *Vishnu* as *Vitthala*. It comprises three distinct sections, the *mahamandapa*, an open pillared hall in front, an

aradhamandapa, and a similar closed hall in the middle and the *garbagriha* in the rear. Of the remaining structures, the *kalyanamandapa* is excellent in its statuary. The *Hazara Rama* temple, constructed during the reign of Virupaksha II is a modest but perfectly finished example of the Vijayanagar style of temple architecture. Besides the main temple there is a shrine for the goddess, a *kalyanamandapa* and other subsidiary temples all enclosed in a courtyard.

3.8.5. Provincial Architecture:

In the rest of the empire, Vellore, Kumbakonam, Kanchipuram, Tadpatri and Srirangam are also famous for temples designed and built in the Vijayanagar style of architecture. The *kalyanamandapa* of the temple at Vellore is considered to be the most beautiful structure of its kind, and its *gopuram* is typical of the style of the century. The *Ekamranatha* and the *Varadaraja* temples at Kanchipuram contain pavilions of remarkable size. Two *gopurams* of the temple of *Ramesvara* at Tadpatri are remarkable for their rich and exquisite carvings. "These carvings," says Ferguson, "are in better taste than everything else in this style".

3.8.6. The Madura Style:

The last stages of Vijayanagar architecture are rightly known as the Madura style. This is because of the great encouragement given by the *nayakas* of Madura. Among the more important temples of this period were built at Madura, Srirangam, Triuvalur, Ramesvaram, Chidambaram, Tinnavelly, Tiruvannamalai and Srivilliputtur. The temple of Madura is, perhaps, the most typical of them. It is a double temple, one dedicated to *Sundaresvara* and the other to his consort *Minakshi*. These two shrines take the largest space inside the main enclosure with four large *gopurams* towards the center of each of its four sides.

In the capital, Vijayanagar, there was a Jain temple called the *Ganigitti* temple. The monolith pillar in front of the temple contains an inscription dated 1385, which states that it was built by Irugappa Dandanatha, the Jain minister of Harihara II.

3.8.7. The Audience Hall:

Due to the extremely fragmentary nature of the majority of the remains, it is difficult to understand clearly their designs and other arrangements. Two masonry platforms deserve special mention. Of these, the one known as the *King's Audience Hall* seems to have been part of building of considerable dimension. The *Audience Hall* was a hall of a hundred pillars, ten rows of ten pillars each. The pillars evidently had square bases, cylindrical shafts and bracket capitals, Abdur Razaq describes the *Audience Hall* as being 'elevated above all the rest of the lofty building in the citadel'. The considerable dimensions of the basement lend support to such description.

3.8.8. The Throne Platform:

The other important structure is the *Throne Platform*. Paes calls it the *House of Victory* erected by Krishnadevaraya in 1513 to commemorate his conquest of Orissa. The *Throne Platform* is smaller in dimensions but more ornate. Like the *Audience Hall* it also ascends in three diminishing terraced stages and is approached by balustrade stairways.

3.8.9. The Lotus Mahal:

Other secular buildings at the Vijayanagar include the *Lotus Mahal*, the *Elephant Stables* and watchtowers of the *Zanana* enclosure. The building called *Elephant Stable* is Islamic in appearance and character. It is an extremely elegant and dignified structure having the best of proportions. Its fine ranges of arches in the facade represent Islamic conventions so also the graceful domes over the roofs. The projected balconies on brackets in the facade and the square turret-like super-structures in the center of the roof represent indigenous style. Thus, the *Elephant Stable* is a fine blending of the Islamic and indigenous conventions in a pleasing manner.

3.8.10. Sculpture:

The art of sculpture also made considerable progress during the Vijayanagar period. Stone and metals were used to make the images of gods and goddesses. They were used to adorn the niches in the exterior faces of the temple walls. The most noteworthy of the Vijayanagar sculpture is a huge monolith statue of *Narasimha*, an incarnation of *Vishnu* enshrined within the walled enclosure. The art of casting bronze, which began to be practiced on an extensive scale under the Cholas, continued to flourish under the rulers of Vijayanagar and their feudatories. The subjects of sculpture and the mode of treatment continued to be the same as before. But during the Vijayanagar period a remarkable progress was made in sculpting life-size portraits, which have survived even today. In the Tirupati temple there are life size portraits of Krishnadevaraya, his two wives and of Venkata I.

3.8.11. Painting:

The Vijayanagar rulers continued the tradition of painting of the imperial Cholas. Hampi, Lepakshi, Anegundi and Kanchipuram were the chief centers of the art of painting. Religious themes, especially scenes from *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and *Vishnu Purana* were depicted in the murals in *Vishnu* temples. Scenes from the *Siva Purana* dominated the paintings in the *Siva* temples. Incidents from the lives of *Jain Tirthankaras* are found in Jain temples and monuments. In the *Hazara Rama* temple at Hampi, scenes from the life of *Sri Rama* adorn the walls of the temple. The paintings at the temple of Lepakshi, besides representing divine figurines, portray animals and birds including the colourful peacock and the parrot. Painting reached a new height during the reign of Venkata II, who gave encouragement to Jesuit painters of his age.

3.8.12. Literature:

Though militant Vijayanagar was primarily the expression of the political need of the time, was given to cultural progress. The culture of Vijayanagar in the fourteenth century and later is best represented by literature. Vedantadesika (1268-1369) was a great author in Sanskrit and Tamil. His *Yadavabhyudaya* is a long epic poem on the life of Krishna; the *Hamsasandesa* is on the model of Kalidas's famous poem; the *Sankalpasuryodaya* is an allegorical drama in ten acts from the *visishtadvaitic* point of view; the *Tattvamuktakalpa* discusses the philosophical and religious questions. Like Vedantadesika, Madhava Vidyanaya was a literary luminary. He wrote a full exposition of the *Mimamsa*. His *Panchadasi* is a treatise on *advaita* in fifteen chapters; the *Parasara Madhaviya*, a commentary on the *Parasarasamriti*, exhibits a liberal outlook and the *Sarvadarsanasangraha* is a critical account of sixteen philosophical systems from materialism to monism.

Madhava and his brothers, Sayana and Bhoganatha enjoyed the patronage of Vijayanagar Kings. Madhava wrote the *Veda Bhashya* a commentary on the Vedas. Sayana wrote on grammar, poetics and medicine. Bhoganatha wrote poems and compiled a list of examples of grammatical rules. Ganga Devi, wife of Kumara Kampana wrote *Madura Vijayam*, an account of the conquest of Madura by Vijayanagar.

The important Jain authors of the fourteenth century are Madhura, who wrote a *Purana* on *Dharamanatha*, a *Tirthankara* in 1385 and Ayatavarma whose *Ratnakarandaka* deals with the three jewels of Jainism. Bhimakavi composed the *Basava Purana* in 1369, in which the founder of *Virasaivism* or *Lingayatism* is regarded as an incarnation of *Nandi*, *Siva's* bull.

Krishnadevaraya was not only a great patron of literature, but also an author of many works in Sanskrit and Telugu. His play, *Jambavatikalyanam* and *Ushaparinayam* are the only extant works of the emperor in Sanskrit. Appaya Dikshita (1520-1592) was a great writer in Sanskrit. He was the author of over a hundred works in many branches of Sanskrit learning. He was patronized by the *nayakas* of Vellore. His great works include *Chitramimamsa* and *Lakshanavali* on literary criticism and the appreciation of poetry, *Varadarajastava* and many other devotional poems. The family of Appaya Dikshita produced a considerable number of talented authors. These included Nilakantha Dikshita, Appaya's great-nephew, who was a greater poet than his uncle. At the court of the *nayaka* of Tanjore, at about the same period flourished Govinda Dikshita. Two of Govinda's sons also gained distinction as writers. Another family of the Dikshitas rose to literary fame under the *nayakas* of Jinji.

The Reddis patronized the principal Telugu writers of the fourteenth century, Errapragada and Srinatha. Nachana Soma (1355-1377) was one of the court poets of Bukka I. He wrote the *Uttara Harivamsa*. Potana (1400-1475), the translator of the *Bhagavata*, shunned royal contact. Pina Virabhadra (1450-1480), the author of the *Jaimini Bharatamu* and the

Sringara Sakuntala, was patronized by Saluva Narashima. The authors of the Varahapuramu, Nandi Mallaya and Ghantam Singaya were patronized by Narasa Nayaka. The other notable names include Duggupalli Duggaya author of Nachiketapakhyana, Dubagunta Narayana, author of Panchatantra, Vennalakanti Suranna, author of Vishnupurana and Gaurana, author of Harishandrapakhyana.

The reign of Krishnadevaraya was a glorious epoch in the Telugu literature. The impetus he gave to the Telugu literature lasted far beyond his time. Krishnadevaraya was also a prolific writer in Telugu. His great work in Telugu, *Amuktamalyada* is one of the five great *kavyas* in Telugu. It also marks the beginning of the influence of *Vaishnavism* on Telugu literature. It deals with the life of the *alvar* Vishnucitta (Periyalvar). His exposition of *Vaishnava* philosophy and the love between his foster-daughter Goda and God Ranganantha. Like the navaratnas of Vikramaditya's court, the *Ashtadiggajas* were Allasani Peddana, Nandi Timmana, Ayyala Raju, Rambhadraiah Durjati, Madayagiri Mallana, Suranna, Ramraja Bhushana and Tennali Ramakrishna. On Allasani Peddana, Krishnadevaraya conferred the title of *Andhrakavitapitamaha* (Grandfather of Telugu poetry). Durjati was a *Saiva* poet from Kalashti. He evoked the admiration of Krishnadevaraya by his work, *Kalahasti Mahatmaya*. His grandson Kumara Dhurjati chronicled the conquest of the emperor in his *Krishnadevaraya-Vijaya*. Madayagi ri Mal lana's *Rajashekharacharita* is dedicated to Nadendla Appa, a nephew of Saluva Timma and governor of Kondavidu. Ayyalar Rambhadraiah wrote the *Sakalakathasara-sangraha*, an abridgement of many *Puranic* stories. Suranna, though counted among the *Ashtadiggajas*, came under later than the reign of Krishnadevaraya. His *RaghavaPandaviya*, tells the story of the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* simultaneously.

In the age of Vijayanagar, the Jains were steadily pushed out by the rising influence of *Saivas* of different schools and *Vaishnavas*. But they continued to write in Kannada on the lives of *Tirthankars* and other holy persons. Jainism flourished in Tuluva country more than anywhere else in this period. Hence, quite a number of Kannada writers were from this country. Vadi Vidyananda of Gersoppa, an able champion of Jainism in public debates at Vijayanagar and many provincial capitals, compiled the *Kavyasara* in 1533. It is an anthology with forty-five different heads. Salva court poet of a petty prince of Konkan produced a Jain version of the *Bharata*, in *Shatpadi* in sixteen *parvas*. Ratnakaravarni, a Kshatriya of Mudabidre wrote a number of works. His *Triokasara* is an account of Jaina cosmogony. The *Aparijata-sataka* treats the philosophy, morals and renunciation; the *Bharatavarsa-charita* gives the story of the legendary emperor Bharata, the son of the first *Tirthankara* who turned Jaina ascetic.

After the Jains, the *Vira-saivas* did most for the development of Kannada language and literature. The *Basava-purana* of Bhimkavi is an important and popular work on hagiology. It treats *Basava* as an incarnation of *nandi*, *Siva's* bull, specially sent to reestablish *Vira-saiva* faith on earth and dwells at great length on the miracles performed by *Basava* in his lifetime. Another account of *Basava's* life was written by Singiraja in about 1500. It

was named *Mala-Basava-raja-charita*. It recounts the eighty-eight miracles of Basava.

Tamil language and literature prospered under the *nayakas* of Tanjore and Madura, who came to power after the downfall of the Vijayanagar Empire. Tirumalainatha of Chidambaram was the author of *Chidambara Puranam*, a translation of Sanskrit work of the same name. His son Paranjotiyar wrote *Chidambarapattiyal*. The Tamil poet, Haridasa makes a comparative study of *Saivism* and *Vaishnavism* in his *Irusamyavilakkam*. Other Tamil writers such as Kumara Sarasvati and others appear to have enjoyed the patronage of Krishnadevaraya.

Check Your Progress

1. Comment on the Vitthalswami temple during Vijayanagar Empire.
2. What did Madhava write?

3.9 QUESTIONS

1. Describe the administration of the Vijayanagar Empire.
2. Discuss the economic and social conditions under the Vijayanagar Empire.
3. Give an account of the cultural development in the Vijayanagar Empire.
4. Write short notes on the following:
 - (a) Economy under the Vijayanagar Empire
 - (b) Society in the Vijayanagar Empire.
 - (c) Art and architecture of Vijayanagar
 - (d) Literary development in the Vijayanagar Empire

3.10 C) ADMINISTRATION, SOCIO ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL CONDITIONS OF BAHMANI KINGDOM

In the Deccan, the transfer of the rule from Delhi Sultanates to the Bahamanis was marked by a particular change in the political and economic organization in Medieval India. It also affected the social and cultural patterns of the society. The Bahamanis had inherited the traditional system of the army organization of the Delhi Sultanates. It had continued over hundred years since the establishment of the Bahamani kingdom. The Bahamanis allowed the growth of the army to take its natural course.

The army grew and adapted itself to the changing modes of the fighting technique suitable in Deccan. A new element had, however, entered the field of battle and that was the use of cannon as an effective weapon of offensive warfare. A specific mention is made of the use of fire arms as early as in 1366 in the siege of Adoni. The account says that these cannons were operated by Rumiyanwa-Firangiyan. The use of cannon as an offensive weapon revolutionized the whole system of warfare. Fortresses were built on hill tops, cities and towns were surrounded by thick walls. Pigeon holes for musketry and various other devices were constructed to put up a strong defense.

To the Bahamanis recruitment to the army never posed a problem because people had grown so much accustomed to war that a special call up was not regarded as necessary nor was it heard of. As a matter of fact possession of vast armed forces was not only a sign of strength in those days but a sure guarantee of victory. On the basis of the account of the numerous wars fought by the Bahamanis it would be a fair estimate to put the strength of the standing army of the Bahamanis at about hundred to hundred and fifty thousand men. It will be interesting to state here what Nicolo Conti, an Italian traveller, who visited India during the middle of the 15th century, has to say in connection with the arts of war and peace. The territorial possessions of the Bahamanis comprised, the west coast of the Deccan. The Bahamanis possessed a strong navy. Nicolo Conti says that the ships lying at anchor in the ports of the Deccan were much larger than those built in the shipyards of Italy. Each of them bore five sails and as many masts. The lower part of these vessels was built with triple planks in order to withstand the force of the storm to which they were exposed in monsoon climes.

On the advice of his vazir or prime minister Malik SaifuddinGhori, the Kingdom was divided into four provinces viz., Daulatabad, Berar, Bidar and Gulburga. Of these Daulatabad, Berar and Gulburga covered the major territory of Maharashtra. The governors of these respective provinces were designated as Masnad-i-Ali, Majlis-i-Alt, Azam-i-Humayun and Malik Naib. Sultan Muhammad I. On the advice of his vazir or Prime Minister Malik SaifuddinGhori, the Kingdom was divided into four atracts or provinces viz., Daulatabad, Berar, Bidar and Gulburga. Of these Daulatabad, Berar and Gulburga covered the major territory of Maharastra. The governors of these respective provinces were designated as Masnad-i-Ali, Majlis-i-Alt, Azam-i-Humayun and Malik Naib.

The Bahamani Sultans rarely assigned lands in Jagir and when it was thus assigned it was situated far away from the territory which a Jagirdar administered as a governor or an officer. The tenure of a Jagir depended upon the will of the Sultan. He could transfer or reassign the Jagir. It was not hereditary but purely military in character and was bestowed for some exceptional service rendered to the state. The position of the Jagir holder was thus a dual one. He was a member of the Sultan's court as also the chief administrator of the local affairs. In his former capacity he was

responsible to the state ministers, whereas in his latter capacity he had his own authority and had ample discretion. The Bahamanis also introduced the system of mokasa which was more in vogue than the bestowal of a Jagir. Mokasa denoted a country or paragana bestowed upon a person for its revenue management on behalf of the state and signified a territory assigned to an officer of the state or grantees of the court either rent-free or at low quit-rent on condition of service. Like the Jagir holder the Mokasi also functioned in a dual capacity. It is significant to note that the influx of foreigners into the Kingdom continued throughout the period of the dynasty. Immigrants from Persia, Turkey and the Arab countries entered the Deccan, through the ports of Dabhol, Caul and Goa. They brought military and political strength and vigour to the Bahamani Kingdom. The names of Khalaf Hasan Basri, Khwaja Mahmud Gawan, Yusuf Adil, Sultan Quli and Amir Barid are a few among the hundreds of foreigners who came to the Deccan in search of career. Some divines who migrated from Persia and the Arab countries soon obtained a great influence in the Bahamani court. The family of Shah Nimatullah, who wielded a decisive influence in the councils of the Bahamani King can be cited as an example.

With regard to the civil administration, the Bahamanis made use of the hereditary Vatandars such as the Desmukh, Despande, Desai, Patil and Kulkarni for the collection of land revenue which was the principle source of income of the state. The Vatandar who collected revenue for the state received commission to see that villages were populated and lands were brought under cultivation. The attachment of the general population of Maharashtra to Vats, large and small, is a striking feature of the mediaeval society in Maharashtra. The village watchman, the artisan, the trader, the accountant and the collector of revenue, even the priest were all hereditary vatandars. They went to any length of co-operation with the rulers for the sake of their vatan. The rulers thus found that they could continue their rule by limiting their interference in the life of the village to the minimum and by making full use of the body of vatandars for the administration of the country at the lower level. The army, high civil posts, forts and strongholds continued to be held by the Muslims but there was little interference in the daily life of the people. This system ensured that the Hindu society was not subjected to any violent changes. This feudal society continued throughout the mediaeval period without any basic change in its pattern.

3.12 ECONOMIC CONDITION

The Bahmani rulers followed the administrative structure of the Delhi Sultanate. The Sultan was the head of the state and supreme authority followed by Wakil, Wazir, Bakshi and Qazi and a host of officials like Dabir or Secretary, Mufti or interpreter of law, Kotwal, Mehtasib or censor of public morals and Munhikans or spies. The Bahmani kingdom was divided into 4 Tarafs or provinces. They maintained a strong army of soldiers, cavalry and elephants and they knew the use of gun powder in the battles.

Systematic measurement of land fixing boundaries of the villages and towns was undertaken by Muhammad Gawan. By this process, Gawan streamlined the revenue system and improved the revenue collection of the state. Further, by this process the income of the state was known in advance and corruption of the nobles was also minimized. From the statements of Nikitin, a Russian traveller who visited Deccan during AD 1469-1474, we come to know that trade and commerce too flourished in the Bahmani kingdom.

Nikitin mentions that horses, cloth, salt, and pepper were the main items of merchandise and Mustafabad-Dabul as a centre of the commercial activity. Horses were imported from Arabia, Khurasan and Turkistan. Musk and fur were imported from China. Interestingly, trade and commerce was mostly in the hands of Hindu merchants, whereas in Vijayanagara kingdom, coastal trade and long distance trade was in the hands of foreign and indigenous Muslims.

Bahmani rulers were mostly Sunnis, but the Bahmani society was cosmopolitan in character. The Muslims, local and foreign, Hindus and the Portuguese were the components of the society. Consequent to multi-Jati composition of the society, we notice multiple languages Persian, Marathi, Dakhini or proto-Urdu, Kannada and Telugu being spoken by different social groups. Economically, the population of the Bahmani state appears to be divided as poor and the affluent nobles, according to Nikitin. He says that the nobles were carried on their silver beds, preceded by 20 gold caparisoned horses and followed by 300 men on horseback and 500 on foot along with 10 torch bearers. Nikitin also describes the luxurious lifestyle of Muhammad Gawan. He observes that every day, 500 men dined with Gawan and 100 armed personnel kept watch over his palace. Besides these two social classes, we also come across the community of merchants who were not as affluent as nobles and as poor as common people.

In the Bahmani kingdom, we notice the predominant influence of the Sufis of the Chisti, Qadiri and Shattari orders. Bidar has emerged as one of the most important centers of the Qadiri order. Sheikh Sirajuddin Junaidi was the first Sufi to receive the royal honour. The famous Chisti saint of Delhi, Syed Muhammad GesuDaraz migrated to Gulbarga in AD 1402-03 and Sultan Firuz granted a number of villages for the maintenance of Khanquah of GesuDaraz. With the influx of Afaqis, the Shia population of the Bahmani kingdom also increased. An interesting feature of the communal life is the mingling of Muslim and Hindu traditions and in particular, during the Ursu celebrations, the Jangam, a Lingayat in a Muslim cap blew the conch and offered flowers to the Muslim saint. Thus, the Bahmani culture was composite and tolerant.

3.13 CULTURAL CONDITION

The Bahmani Rule predominantly institutionalized Islamic culture in Deccan which was reflected in literature, art, architecture and other spheres of life. The rulers attached great significance to the advancement

of culture in Deccan and contributed notably for the cultural promotion of the region. They invited scholars, saints, artists and other cultural personalities from the Middle East and enabled them to institutionalize the salient features of Persian culture which enhanced the status of Deccan in several ways. The rulers raised a new nobility based on aliens coming from Iraq, Iran and Central Asia. Scholars have studied the development of language and literature of Bahmani Kingdom under three heads namely – Arabic, Persian and Urdu

The rulers had highest respect for Islam and championed the growth and development of Arabic literature. It was due to the fact that the West Coast had direct trade relations with Persian Gulf. The commercial transactions between Deccan and Middle East prompted the rulers to promote Arabic language and literature as a prominent means of communication. Literature The Bahmanis emerged as the patrons of literature and encouraged many Arabic scholars during the regime of Alaud-din Bahman Shah, Sultan Muhammad Shah II, Muhammad Shah III and Mahmud Gawan who were great patrons of learning and culture.

Some of the prominent literary works of this period include – Gesu Daraz Bande Navaz's Diwan (collection of poems), Sahabuddin Ahmad Daultabadi's Bahre Mawwaj, Mullah Daud Bidari's Tohafutul Salatin, Azari's Bahaman Nama and so on. Mahmud Gawan played a crucial role in the promotion of literature and academic excellence in Deccan. The Sufi movement popularized the Deccani language which emerged as a language of the Muslim ruling class of Deccan. It was developed in a similar way like north Indian Urdu. The Sufi saints and scholars also developed Dakhani grammar and produced a literature in Dakhani for the ruling class.

Their works, which are mostly in Persian, enriched the contemporary Indo-Persian literature. A sizeable chunk of Arabic, Urdu and Persian literature dealing with religion, mystic, and lexicographical subjects were written by various scholars under the patronage of Bahmani rulers. Urdu language which was born in the north became a prominent means of communication in Deccan. Khwaja Band Nawaz Gesu Daraz was the foremost scholar in Deccan who produced a treatise in Urdu and Persian script entitled Miratul Ashiqin

Art and Architecture

The Deccan witnessed the general process of fusion of the Hindu-Muslim cultures with respect to the art and architecture. Historians have pointed out that two entirely different styles of architecture came in contact with each other in medieval India. The temple and the mosque clearly exemplified the Hindu and Muslim beliefs and practices. In particular, the Muslim architecture underwent a significant change because of the influence of Persian Gulf. There is much evidence that the Bahmani sultans employed architects and craftsmen from Persia to build the Jami

The fortresses built during the period were a mixture of the work of Hindu, Tughlaq and Bahmani sovereigns. Mahur, Bidar, Narnulla and Golkonda are some of the architectural examples of the Sultans. The Golgumbaz in Bijapur shows the skill of the architecture of Bahmani kingdoms. It is one of the largest domes in the world. The Golgumbaz with its enormous dome covers an area of 18,000 square feet. The MihtarMahal, which is an ornamental gateway to the courtyard of a mosque, is a notable building.

The monuments of Gulbarga namely – Great Jami Masjid, Takht Mahal, mausoleum of Hazrat Gesu Daraz, the mosque built by Qalandar Khan, Firoz's tomb, the Bidar Fort, tombs of Hazrat Samsu'd Din, Ala-ud-din Hasan, Bahman Shah, Muhammad Shah I, Muhammad Shah II and so on remain as perpetual monuments of the magnificence of Bahmani dynasty. The tombs of the Bahmani Sultans are situated in the East of Gulbarga which demonstrates massive square domed structures and handsome stone tracery on the outer walls. The decorated tombs vividly depict the free intermingling of Hindu and Muslim art. These monuments typify practically all the peculiarities of architecture in vogue in those days.

The Bahmani rulers replaced Tughluq tradition by Dhakani tradition in the fields of art, architecture and culture. The architectural wealth of Bahmani Kingdom reveals extravagant artistic designs or huge buildings built in marble slabs with impressive creative additions. The Bahmani rulers revolutionized the Deccan architecture which bears a testimony to the new influences which were at work. The arts and crafts in Deccan during medieval India based on metals, alloys, gems and minerals had attained global fame. Sultan Shah Wali of the Bahmani Kingdom brought from Iran the master craftsman Abdullah-bin Kaiser to decorate his palaces

Bidar had special properties in making the moulds for their creations. Hence koftgari became known as bidriware. The Iranian craftsman created many artistic treasures after settling down in Bidar. The rulers of Bahmani Kingdom made great contribution towards the development of art, architecture, education, society and cultural aspects of the Deccan in the medieval period. The Bahmani rulers left to posterity their names in the shape of gardens, dams and magnificent edifices. Their architectural monuments speak of their simplicity and interest in various fields. The Bahmani rulers inherited Iranian legacy but they were greatly influenced by the Indian culture and brought about cultural rejuvenation in Deccan.

3.14 SUMMARY

The Bahamanis had inherited the traditional system of the army organization of the Delhi Sultanates. It had continued for well over hundred years since the establishment of the Bahamani kingdom. With regard to the civil administration, the Bahamanis made use of the

hereditary Vatandars such as the Desmukh, Despande, Desai, Patil and Kulkarni for the collection of land revenue which was the principle source of income of the state. The Bahmani Rule predominantly institutionalized Islamic culture in Deccan which was reflected in literature, art, architecture and other spheres of life. The rulers attached great significance to the advancement of culture in Deccan and contributed notably for the cultural promotion of the region.

3.15 QUESTIONS

- 1) Explain the administration of Bahamani Kingdom.
- 2) Trace the cultural progress during Bahamani Rule.

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SOCIETY, ECONOMY, RELIGION AND CULTURE OF DELHI SULTANATE

Unit Structure :

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 A) Socio-Economic And Religious Life
- 4.3 Relation Between The Hindus And The Muslims
- 4.4 Seclusion Of Women
- 4.5 Slavery
- 4.6 Economic Condition
- 4.7 Religious Life
- 4.8 Sufism
- 4.9 Summary
- 4.10 Questions
- 4.11 References
- 4.12 B) Education And literature
- 4.13 Education Under The Delhi Sultanate
- 4.14 Literature Under The Sultanate
- 4.15 Regional Languages
- 4.16 Summary
- 4.17 Questions
- 4.18 References
- 4.19 C) Arts And Architecture
- 4.20 Painting
- 4.21 Calligraphy
- 4.22 Architecture
- 4.23 Provincial Architecture
- 4.24 Summary
- 4.25 Questions
- 4.26 References

4.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit the student will be able to

- 1) To know the caste system during Sultanate period.
- 2) To understand the position of women during Sultanate period.
- 3) To know the slavery system during Sultanate period
- 4) To understand education system during Sultanate period.
- 5) To trace the literature during Sultanate period.
- 6) To study the literature of regional literature during Sultanate period.
- 7) To know the art of calligraphy and painting under the sultanate period.
- 8) To understand the art of sculpture under the sultanate period.
- 9) To study the art of painting under the sultanate period.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The changes in the political and economic life had their impact on caste groupings. Many old castes vanished and new ones arose or came into prominence, both in the north and the south. The practice of sati prevailed in different parts of India during the medieval period. The agricultural producers formed the vast majority of the population. The villages were more or less self-sufficient with regard to production and consumption. Cultivation was based on individual peasant farming. This era was marked by the emergence of the bhakti saints. They observed certain common approach in their beliefs and teachings.

4.2 A) SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS LIFE

4.2 Caste System

The broad framework of the Hindu society as prescribed by the smritis continued unaffected during the Sultanate and Mughal period. The Hindu society has been divided into varnas on the basis of division of labour since the ancient times. The sentiment of high and low characterized the social organization. But in matters of marriage and inter-dining the entire Aryan community was looked upon as a great brotherhood descended from a common ancestor. However, by the beginning of the medieval age the ancient social system underwent a drastic change and the sentiment of fraternity in social relations began to be restricted to a narrower group.

Primary Castes:

The social structure in the smritis consists of four primary castes—the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas and the Shudras with diminishing rank and status, an indefinite number of subcastes and mixed castes of varying status and of a group of despised castes coming at the bottom of the scale. Al-beruni lists eight antyaja castes below the status of the Shudras. They were the shoemaker, the juggler, the basket maker, the sailor, the fisherman, the hunter of wild animals and the blacksmith. All those who did not fit into any of the traditional castes were 'simply classed as the 'outcastes' or the chandalas. The high caste people exploited the

low castes and treated them in an inhuman manner heaping on them insults and indignities. Even the state discriminated between the citizens on the basis of caste.

Emergence of New Castes:

The changes in the politico-economic life had their impact on caste groupings. Many old castes vanished and new ones arose or came into prominence, both in the north and the south. While the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas were theoretically bound to their traditional occupation, there was no rigidity about it in practice. Among the innumerable sub-castes in northern India, the Kayasthas came into great prominence as government servants. The Khattris who came from the Punjab were astute financiers and successful administrators and their influence spread over the whole of northern India. The Nagars of Gujarat migrated to different parts of northern India and exercised much political and social influence in Agra and Malwa. In South India the Brahmins retained their social leadership, since they continued to be the custodians of Hindu religion. The Konkan or Chitpavan Brahmins of Maharashtra produced great administrators.

4.3 RELATION BETWEEN THE HINDUS AND THE MUSLIMS

With the advent of the Muslims the caste system became more rigid. In order to save their religion and social system the Hindu population tried to isolate themselves from the Muslims. The Hindus treated the early Muslims as mlechchas and assigned to them a social status much lower than the Sudras. With the passage of time the attitude of exclusiveness on the part of the Hindus underwent a change. A promise of better treatment and economic advantages led to the conversion of a large number of low caste Hindus to Islam. Even the high caste Hindus reconciled with the changed situation and began to mix up with the Muslims. The descendants of the Muslim immigrants came to be regarded as Indians. Even the Muslims began to identify themselves with their adopted land and developed a greater affinity with the new land.

4.4 SECLUSION OF WOMEN

Purdha or veiling of women was a common practice among the Muslims. With the advent of the Muslim rule this system was adopted by the Hindu women as well specially belonging to the upper classes. It was also in vogue in ancient Iran and Greece. This custom was later adopted by the Arabs and Turks and brought it to India. Under their influence the use of purdha became widespread especially in northern India. According to R.C. Majumdar, the Hindus used purdha as a protective measure to save the honour of their women and to maintain the purity of their social order.

Child Marriage and Widow Remarriage, Divorce etc:

The practice of sati prevailed in different parts of India during the medieval period. The contemporary historical records give the most authentic evidence of the prevalence of sati in different parts of India. Friar Odoric (1321- 22) noticed it as a peculiar custom among the Indians of Quilon on the Malabar Coast. Friar Jordanus (1323-1330) witnessed the practice of sati near Dhar in Malwa. Nicolo Conti and Durate Barboza give an account of the prevalence of sati in the Vijayanagar Empire in the beginning of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries respectively.

FEMALE INFANTICIDE

There were families where the birth of a daughter was regarded as a misfortune while the birth of a son was celebrated on a grand scale. A wife who gave birth to a number of girls in succession was also despised. The evil practice of infanticide, which is, killing of the female infants soon after their birth, was practiced among certain sections of the Rajputs. The girl was brought up under parental supervision and was married without her consent. She was under the control of her mother-in-law once she was married. She had to obey all the commands of her husband and mother-in-law. If she failed, she might be divorced in a Muslim family and her life would become miserable in a Hindu home.

4.5 SLAVERY

The Mamluk sultans and their Turkish nobility themselves happened to be the products of a highly commercialized institution of slavery. In fact from 1206 to 1290 the rulers of the Delhi Sultanate belonged to the Slave Dynasty. Importance of Slaves: Both the Muslim and Hindu communities maintained slaves. The slaves rendered almost all the manual and menial services. Slave markets for men and women existed in West Asia as well as India. The Turkish, Caucasian, Greek and Indian slaves were much sought after. Skilled slaves, handsome boys and beautiful girls commanded higher price in the slave market. Skilled slaves rose to high positions in the administration and military. Firuz Tughlaq maintained a separate department of slaves and collected about 180,000 of them. Many of them were employed in the royal karkhanas, imperial household and as the sultan's personal bodyguards.

Treatment of the Slaves

The communities, Hindus, as well as Muslims prescribed that good treatment should be given to the slaves. In the Hindu society the slaves lived like the members of the family. They were treated generously during occasions such as festivals and other ceremonies. In the Muslim community, theoretically, since a slave was usually a convert to Islam, he possessed the same rights as any other member of the Muslim society with a feeling of brother-hood and equality. Thus, his moral claims, though they might not be fully recognized, could never be denied. But in practice, the position of a slave was very different. As a prisoner of war, his life was at the mercy of his captor, who had full power over his life.

4.6 ECONOMIC CONDITION

Agriculture was carried on by the peasants living in villages. The agricultural producers formed the vast majority of the population. The villages were more or less self-sufficient with regard to production and consumption. Cultivation was based on individual peasant farming. The size of land cultivated by them varied from the large holdings of the khuts (headmen), to the petty plots of the balahara (village menials). Besides the peasants there must have existed a large landless population. During the sultanate period state functioned in relation to the villages through intermediaries such as khuts, muqaddams and chaudharis. Alauddin Khilji discontinued this practice and collected the land revenue directly from the peasant.

Methods of Agriculture and Irrigation:

The methods and implements of agriculture and irrigation remained generally unchanged during the medieval period. Besides sowing by the ordinary plough, drill sowing seems to have been an equally common practice. Ibn Battuta mentions the use of Persian wheels in East Bengal. Means of irrigation were both natural and artificial. Wells, tanks, reservoirs and canals were constructed wherever necessary. Wells were probably the major source of artificial irrigation in most areas. Muhammad Bin Tughlaq advanced loans to peasants for digging wells for the purpose of extending cultivation. In some areas small dams were constructed across streams to block water, which was used for irrigation. Some of these were built through local initiative and the government constructed some. Canals were constructed during the fourteenth century. The first sultan to construct canals was Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq. However, during Firoz Shah Tughlaq's reign the biggest network of canals known in India until the nineteenth century was constructed. From wells and canals peasants drew water by various means. Leather buckets and the Persian wheel, lifting water by means of a dhenkh (a system worked on the lever principle) and baling were some of the means employed by the people to irrigate their fields.

Revenue and other Taxes:

With the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, the older systems of revenue collection continued. But with the passage of time and the growing authority of the sultanate attempts were made to increase revenue. The different taxes levied in the Islamic world became a model for the Delhi Sultans to increase their revenue in India. It was Alauddin Khilji who imposed a uniform taxation system over a large part of northern India. The tax could be paid both in cash and kind. Alauddin decreed that three taxes were to be levied on the peasantry, the kharaj (tax on cultivation); charai, (tax on cattle); and gharai (tax on houses. Alauddin's taxation system was probably the one institution from his reign that lasted the longest. The land revenue became the chief form by which the surplus of the peasant was appropriated by the ruling class.

Methods of Collection of Taxes:

There was a need to devise a mechanism to collect the taxes from the rural masses and distribute it among members of the ruling classes. This led to the development of the iqta system, which combined two functions of collection and distribution of the revenue. The iqta was territorial assignment and its holder was known as muqti. The muqtis were required to collect and appropriate taxes, specially land revenue due to the king and maintain troops and furnish them at call to the sultan. Every year the muqti was required to send a particular amount of the revenue to the sultan's treasury. Thus, the iqtas were the main instrument for transferring agrarian surplus to the ruling class and its soldiery.

4.7 RELIGIOUS LIFE

BHAKTI MOVEMENT:

Origin of the Bhakti Movement:

Though the bhakti movement became the dominant feature of Hinduism in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, its origin can be traced to ancient Indian religious traditions. We find mention of bhakti in the Vedas, Upanishads, the epics and the Puranas. The Vedanta philosophy enumerates the concept of the Creator and the creation. God (Brahman or Paramatman) and soul (atma). The other two basic principles are the doctrine of rebirth or transmigration of the soul and the theory of karma (deeds).

Teachings of the Bhakti Saints:

Most the bhakti saints on a broader plane observed certain common approach in their beliefs and teachings. The bhakti saints did not observe any ritual or ceremonies, nor followed any dogma, and most of them severely denounced idolatry. They condemned polytheism, believed in one God and realized the unity of God invoked by various religious sects under different names such as Krishna, Rama, Siva, and Allah etc. The bhakti cult cut across distinctions of high and low birth, the learned and unlettered, and opened the gateway of spiritual realization to one and all. Being revolutionary reformers, most of the bhakti saints campaigned vigorously against the deep-rooted socio-religious evils. They refused to accept the supremacy of the Brahmin priests who considered themselves as the custodians of all religious knowledge and institutions. Some of the saints challenged the sanctity of ancient Indian scriptures and Sanskrit language

The Bhakti Saints

1) Ramanuja: The earliest exponent of the bhakti movement was Ramanuja (1017-1137) who hailed from modern Andhra Pradesh. He was great Vaishnava teacher. He popularized the cult of devotion to a personal God and emphasized that salvation can be achieved through the bhakti marga alone. He redefined the Vedanta philosophy by laying greater stress

on devotional worship to a personal God who constituted the supreme reality. Ramanuja travelled widely to popularize his teachings and wrote a number of books and treatises on the bhakti cult. His famous works are Vedanta Sanghama, and the commentaries on Brahmasutras and the Bhagavad-Gita.

2) Nimbaraka: Nimbaraka, a young contemporary of Ramanuja from the south established his ashram near Mathura and preached to the common people in the Gangetic valley about the dedication to God, personified by Krishna and Radha.

3) Madhvacharya: Madhvacharya, a Vaishnava saint from the south wrote as many as thirty-seven works on vaishnavism. His works mostly deal with the bhakti cult based on the concept of dualism (dvaita) as distinct from the monistic philosophy of Shankaracharya.

4) Vallabhacharya: Vallabhacharya was another prominent Vaishnava saint from the south. He advocated a system of pure nondualism. He glorified the intense love of Radha and Krishna. Vallabhacharya advocated a universal religion that did not believe in distinctions of caste, creed, sex or nationality. He insisted on complete identity of both soul and world with the supreme spirit. Vallabhacharya's philosophy was known as shuddhadvaita or pure non-dualism.

5) Ramananda: Ramananda, a disciple of Raghavananda, who belonged to Ramanuja's sect, spread the bhakti movement in the north. Ramananda was born at Prayag about the end of the fourteenth century. He was educated at Prayag and Benaras and visited the various religious places in northern India. He also came in contact with learned scholars of all faiths including Muslims. He advocated the worship of Rama and Sita in place of Vishnu. He believed in the Vishistadvaita philosophy of Ramanuja. He preached through Hindi, the language of the common people in the Gangetic valley. He ignored the traditional barriers of caste and creed. His disciples included members of the higher castes as well as lower castes.

6) Kabir: Of all the disciples of Ramananda, Kabir was the most outstanding and popular. It is said that he was the son of a Brahmin widow and was brought up by a Muslim weaver at Varanasi. He spent much of his time in the company of ascetics, saints and Muslim Sufis. He stood for Hindu-Muslim unity and declared "Allah and Rama were the names of the same God." He lived the life of a householder, earning his living by weaving. Ramananda initiated him into the bhakti cult. Kabir denounced the Brahmins and the mullahs alike to be the sole custodians of their religious order and criticized them for their orthodox and exploitative attitude.

7) Raidas: Raidas, a contemporary of Kabir and fellow-disciple of Ramananda, was a cobbler of Varanasi. He was also a householder like Kabir. Raidas as Kabir belonged to the Nirguna School of mysticism.

8) Guru Nanak:

Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, was a mystic of the Nirguna School. He was opposed to idol worship, pilgrimages, fasts etc. He, however, believed in the doctrine of karma and the transmigration of the soul. He had both Hindu and Muslim disciples. His teachings are included in the Adi Granth compiled by the fifth Guru, Arjun Das.

9) Bhakti Movement in Maharashtra: The bhakti movement in Maharashtra ran parallel to that north. The center of the bhakti movement in Maharashtra was Pandharpur with its famous temple of Vithoba. The leaders of the movement were Jnaneshvar, Namadeva, and Eknath in the early medieval period.

4.8 SUFISM

The term Sufi, according to Edward Sell, is most probably derived from the Arabic word *suf* meaning wool. The eastern ascetics used to wear the coarse garments prepared out of wool. This practice was also followed by the Sufis as a mark of poverty. The Sufis did not form an organized sect. They neither had a Prophet, nor a sacred book, nor a uniform code of religious doctrines. They accepted Muhammad as their Prophet and the Quran as their sacred book. But in course of time they were influenced by a number of ideas and practices from different sources such as Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism and Indian philosophical system of Vedanta and yoga.

The *Sufis* were the peaceful messengers of Islam. They dedicated themselves to the service of mankind and the spread of Islam. The *Sufis* regarded the service of humanity as part of mystic discipline. The *Sufis* migrated to the far-off countries and lived in the midst of the non-Muslims and carried out their work of proselytization through peaceful means. The advent of the *Sufis* in India dates back to the Arab conquest of Sindh. After the establishment of the Muslim rule in northern India, *Sufis* from different Muslim countries began to migrate and settle down in different parts of India.

The Chisti Silsilah:

Khwaja Abdul Chisti founded The Chisti order. Khwaja Muinuddin Chisti, a native of Sijistan in Persia, introduced it in India. He reached India before the battle of Tarain and settled down at Ajmer, which was a center of considerable political and religious importance. His simple, pious and dedicated life had great impact on those who came in contact with him. Khwaja Muinuddin worked amongst the low caste people and spent his life in the service of the helpless and the downtrodden. He attracted a large number of followers. He died in 1236. Two eminent disciples of Khwaja Muinuddin Chisti were Shaikh Qutub-din Bhaktiyar Kaki and Shaikh Hamiduddin. The former popularized the Chisti order in Delhi and the latter in Rajasthan. Shaikh Hamiduddin lived in a mud-house in a village near Nagaur in Rajasthan. He lived like a simple peasant and cultivated a *bigha* of land. He was a strict vegetarian. He mixed freely with the Hindus and won their admiration for his simple and virtuous

living. Shaikh Qutbuddin Bhaktiyar Kaki was an immigrant from Farghana. He settled down at Delhi during the reign of Iltutmish. He refused to accept the royal patronage and preferred to live in poverty. The famous *Qutub Minar* was named after this venerable *Sufi* saint. Shaikh Fariduddin Ganj-i-Shakar was a disciple of Bhaktiyar Kaki. He was also known as Baba Farid. He popularized the Chisti order in Hansi and Ajodhan in modern Haryana and the Punjab. He led a householder's life. To convey his message he spoke in local dialects. Some of his sayings are included in the *Adi Granth* of the Sikhs. Baba Farid had a number of disciples who spread the message of Islam through mysticism in India and abroad.

The most prominent of Baba Farid's disciples was Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya (1236-1325). Though Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya witnessed the reign of seven sultans of Delhi, he never visited the courts of any one of them. Nizamuddin Auliya gave an Islamic touch to the sociocultural atmosphere of the capital. He lived a virtuous life and rendered social service to the poor and needy. He represents a great spiritual force in the history of Muslim India. For nearly sixty years he was a source of inspiration to thousands of people who came seeking his blessings. He laid stress on the element of love as means of realization of God. In his opinion love of God implied love of humanity. Nizamuddin Auliya practiced celibacy unlike a number of other Chisti saints. He adopted *yogic* breathing exercises so much so that the *yogis* called him a *sidh* or perfect. His successor was Shaikh Nasiruddin Chiragh-i-Delhi. Another great Chisti saint was Shaikh Salim Chisti, a contemporary of Akbar the Great. He lived the life of an ordinary householder in his cave dwelling at Sikri. He was Akbar's spiritual guide. Most of the Chisti saints belonged to the liberal school of thought. Their popularity in India was due to their understanding of the Indian conditions and the religious attitudes and aspirations of the Indian people. They adopted many Hindu customs and ceremonies in the initial stages of the development of their *silsilahs* in India. They laid much emphasis on the service to mankind. The Chisti mystics were believers in pantheistic monism, which had its earliest exposition in the *Upanishad* of the Hindus. As a result many Hindus felt closer to the Chisti *silsilah* and became its followers. Many of the Chisti saints lived in utter poverty and refused to accept any grants from the state. They were of the opinion that possession of any kind of private property was an obstacle to spiritual advancement.

The Suhrawardi Silsilah:

The other mystic order, which had reached India almost at the same time as the Chisti silsilah, was the Suhrawardi order. It was founded by Shihabuddin Suhrawardi, a teacher in Baghdad. It was introduced in India by his disciples Jalaluddin Tabrizi and Bahauddin Zakariya. Tabrizi settled down in Bengal where he converted a large number of Hindus. Zakariya was chiefly responsible for organizing the Suhrawardi *silsilah* in India. He carried on his missionary work at Multan till his death in 1262. Unlike the Chistis, the Suhrawardis did not believe in leading a life of poverty and excessive austerity and self-mortification. They lived comfortable family

lives. They made ample provisions for their families. They felt no scruples in accepting costly presents and patronage from the Muslim aristocracy. Suharwardis believed that there was no harm in possessing and dispensing of wealth, if the heart was detached. They did not shun the ruling elite. They actively associated with the government and accepted the posts of *Shaikh-ul-Islam* and *Sadr-i-Wilayat*. The Suhrawardi silsilah was confined mostly to the upper strata of the Muslim society. Some of the saints of the Suhrawardi silsilah adopted a rigid and uncompromising attitude on many matters of religious and social significance.

4.9 SUMMARY

With the advent of the Muslims the caste system became more rigid. In order to save their religion and social system the Hindu population tried to isolate themselves from the Muslims. Sufism is a Muslim movement whose followers seek to find divine truth and love through direct encounters with God. The Sufi Saints like Khwaja Muinuddin Chisti, Bakhyiya Kaki, Nizamudin Aulia and Nasiruddin Chirag-i-Delhi etc. attempted to restrain the fanaticism of the Muslims and tried to bring them nearer to the Hindus. Several Hindus became followers of the Sufi saints but without relinquishing their own religion. Agriculture during the Sultanate Period: Agriculture was carried on by the peasants living in villages.

4.10 QUESTIONS

- 1) How was the seclusion of women during Sultanate period?
- 2) Review briefly the economic condition under the Delhi Sultanate.
- 3) Discuss the socio-religious conditions during the Delhi Sultanate.

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4.12 B) Education and Literature

Under the Sultanate period, Hindus conducted their own pathshalas started by the local inhabitants with their own funds in the big cities. The state made no attempt to organize or regulate public system of education. The Brahmin scholars and priests, with the resources at their command continued the tradition of education. Sometimes the schools were run in their homes. However, education was denied to the lower castes. Buddhist

monks imparted education to all those who wanted to learn, as they did not believe in social hierarchy and the caste system. The Muslim system of education was also basically religious in nature.

4.13 EDUCATION UNDER THE DELHI SULTANATE

A) Hindu System of Education

At the primary level, the pathshala or the elementary school was attached to the temple whether Hindu or Jain. The priests imparted education or sometime appointed pandits or Jain scholars to teach free of charge. Children learnt the basic three R's - reading, writing and arithmetic. They also learnt to memorize and recite the holy texts. Each village had its own Sanskrit pathshala. A Hindu child was sent to the pathshala when he was five years old. An initiation ceremony known as the upanayana was performed before he was sent to the school. During this period of study, the child lived with the family of his guru. In return for the education he received from his teacher or guru, the pupil had to render all kinds of service to the guru and his family. Learning tradition was oral as the manuscripts were rare and expensive and the art of printing was not known. Great emphasis was laid on memorization. A student was expected to spend the first twenty years of his life with his guru in the pathshala and observe brahmacharya, a life of chastity and self-discipline. As he grew older, he was introduced to new subjects like mathematics, astronomy and astrology.

The learned men and the public at a specially held meeting once the student's education was complete, which took about ten to twelve years. He was then ready to enter the stage of Grihasthas or life of a householder. The fees of the teacher or the Gurudakshina could be a cow, fruits and eatables, grain, horse, garments or anything, which the student could obtain easily. According to R.K. Mookerji, the Gurudakshina was "enjoined more as a religious act formally bringing to a close the period of studentship and marking the fulfillment of a sacred vow than as any kind of material remuneration, for the education imparted to him by the teacher".

The Hindu centers of higher learning were usually attached to temples or were situated at centers of pilgrimage as the devotees made generous grants at these places. Renowned scholars lived here and could pursue their profession from the endowments and charity these centers received. Some of the institutions became famous due to the influx of scholars from the Muslim occupied areas and the generous patronage of Rajput rulers.

B) Muslim System of Education:

The Muslim system of education was basically religious in nature. The duty of Islamic state and its sultan was to spread Islam. The sultans established educational institutions in the areas they conquered. Along with the Muslim invaders several Persian and Arabic scholars had migrated to India. Delhi became an important center of studies. New languages, Persian and Arabic were introduced in India. There was an

outburst of literary activity and great literary works in Persian and Arabic were composed during the medieval period.

1. Elementary Education:

Elementary education was given in a *maqtab*, which was attached to a mosque. It could be compared with a Hindu *pathshala* where the Hindu students learnt the basic three R's. The *maulavi* in charge of the mosque would impart religious instruction to his pupil, just as a Brahmin would do in a *pathshala*. Sometimes the *maulavi* would conduct classes in his house. A child was sent to school, according to Islamic traditions when he was four years, four months and four days old. A ceremony called *bismillah* was performed before the child began his formal education.

Practice of private tuitions for the children of the affluent was also common. The *ataliqs* (tutors) visited the patron's house to impart the education. Astrologers were consulted to decide on a suitable date to start schooling for the pupil. The *takht* (a wooden board) and black ink were used for writing. The lesson began with the opening sentence of the *qalima*. The *maulavi* recited it and the students followed him. Emphasis was on oral education and learning by rote. Learning passages from the Quran was essential for every student. Education was given in both Persian and Arabic languages. Once the child was familiar with recognizing alphabets, he was taught grammar. He learnt short stories, poems and lessons in *hadis* in simple language. Early in life the child learnt the art of calligraphy. It was considered to be an accomplishment and later earned him a livelihood. The *maqtab*s received grants from the state or endowments from nobles.

2. Higher Education:

The *madrasas* were the center of higher learning. It was also known as *jamia*. It was mostly established in provincial capitals and large towns, which had a considerable wealthy population. The *madrasas* were residential institutions, comparable to the Hindu *gurukula*. The *madrasas* were patronized by the state and were not starved of funds. The scholars who taught here received a generous salary. The Hindu centers of higher learning were the result of individual enterprise and funded by charitable institution. Once the student completed education a ceremony called *dastarbandi* (tying the turban) was held. At this solemn service the teacher tied a turban around the head of his pupil and this meant that the student had completed his studies. Degrees were conferred on the students. The theologians awarded sometimes certificates to the pupils as a result of which the pupils could impart instructions.

Amir Khusrau's *Ijaz-i-Khusravi* (1319) and *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* of the reign of Firuz Tughlaq gives an idea of the content of education. Persian and Arabic literature, Islamic studies, mathematics, astronomy, ethics, philosophy, mysticism, logic, history, rational sciences were some of the subjects studied at the *madrasas*. The library was an essential part of each of the *madrasas* containing popular texts and rare manuscripts. The *madrasas* fulfilled the objective of imparting religious instructions, the

purpose for which they were founded. Multan, Sindh, Lahore and Delhi were known for their renowned madrasas.

Society, Economy, Religion
And Culture Of Delhi
Sultanate

4.14 LITERATURE UNDER THE SULTANATE

Sanskrit in medieval India was the medium of thought and expression. It was the language of the learned and had not reached the masses. Literary works in Sanskrit were produced despite the establishment of Muslim rule. Works in the fields of Advait philosophy by Ramanuja, Madhava, continued to be written in this period. However, in this period there were no great original writings. According to R.C. Majumdar, “The creative period, however, had long been a matter of the past, there being little of intrinsic merit, though the production is immense and almost every branch of literature is represented. There is no originality”.

Hindu rulers of Vijayanagar, Warangal and Gujarat patronized scholars. Poets and dramatists drew their inspiration from the great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Themes from the Puranas were also popular among the writers. Most of the literary outburst was in the south, Bengal, Mithila and Western India also contributed to the enrichment of Sanskrit literature. There are very few translations of the rich Arabic and Persian literary works into Sanskrit. This may be due to, as Al-beruni mentions, the insular outlook of the Indians. Much of the writing of this period, according to Dr. Satish Candra, “is repetitive and lacks fresh insight or originality.”

Persian and Arabic Literature

The establishment of Muslim rule not only introduced a new religion but also introduced different languages in India. Arabic and Persian languages gradually became the languages of learning, education and administration in India. Persian in particular became more widespread. It was the court language and hence more popular. Use of Arabic language remained confined to theologians and Islamic scholars. With the help of Indian scholars, digests of Islamic law were prepared in Persian, particularly in the reign of Firoz Tughlaq. Two great poets who composed poems in Persian were Firdausi and Sadi. Lahore gradually became the center of literary activity. Amir Khusrau was an outstanding literary giant of this period. He wrote several poetical works and historical romances. He created a new style of Persian, which came to be called the Sabaq-i-Hindi (the style of India). Amir Khusrau was full of praise for the Hindi language, which he called Hindavi or Dehalavi, which he recognized as the language of the common man. He used Hindavi freely in his poetic compositions.

The use of Persian and Devanagari script led to the development of Urdu and Hindi languages respectively. In course of time Urdu became the court language of the Deccan Sultanates. In the north, Persian remained the court language. Apart from being a literary figure Khusrau was an accomplished musician and participated, along with the Sufi saint, Nizamuddin Auliya in musical gatherings. Amir Khusrau died the day

after the saint's death in 1325. With the passage of time Persian became not only the language of the court and administration, but also the language of the upper class people. With the territorial expansion of the sultanate, Persian language spread to different parts of the country. Sanskrit and Persian languages spread more widely. There is a vast collection of literature on varied subjects in these languages. An important translation of Sanskrit stories into Persian was done by Zia Naqshabi (1350). His book called Tuti Nama (Book of the Parrot) was a translation into Persian of Sanskrit stories. This work was done during the reign of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq. Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq encouraged translation work. Books on medicine were translated into Persian. Translations helped in the dissemination of knowledge. Sultan of Kashmir, Zai-ul-Abidin had the Mahabharata and Kalhan's Rajtarangini translated into Persian. There are several chronicles, historical works in Persian, written during this period, which constitute important source material. Knowledge of Persian enabled Indians to develop cultural ties with Central Asia.

4.15 REGIONAL LANGUAGES

The bhakti saints contributed to the development of regional languages. Their verses were composed in the languages easily understood by the common man. According to Dr. Romilla Thapar, "Literature in the regional languages was strikingly different from Sanskrit literature in one main respect, it was as spontaneous and imbued with genuine sentiment as the latter had become artificial and forced." Amir Khusrau had also praised the richness of the regional languages.

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The literature of the sultanate period dealt with varied themes and subjects, ranging from poetry, devotional songs to philosophy. Local cults and creeds also contributed to the development of literature. The vast plains of North India witnessed spread of literary ideas and themes from the Punjab to Bengal and the other way round. There were of course variations in languages as one travelled from one region to another. Persian language greatly influenced Indian writing at the time. Persians introduced the art of writing history in India and later on one finds historical works in different regions and languages of India.

4.16 SUMMARY

The Hindu centers of higher learning were usually attached to temples or were situated at centers of pilgrimage as the devotees made generous grants at these place. The Muslim system of education was basically religious in nature. The duty of Islamic state and its sultan was to spread Islam. The sultans established educational institutions in the areas they conquered. Along with the Muslim invaders several Persian and Arabic scholars had migrated to India. Delhi became an important center of studies. The establishment of Muslim rule not only introduced a new religion but also introduced different languages in India. Arabic and Persian languages gradually became the languages of learning, education and administration in India

4.17 QUESTIONS

- 1) Give an account of the development of education during the Delhi Sultanate.
- 2) Review the progress of education under the sultanate.
- 3) Trace the literary activities during the early medieval period.

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4.19 C) ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE

The art of painting that had flourished in ancient India gradually began to decline after the collapse of the Gupta Empire. After the decline of the Guptas the royal patronage to painters might have come to an end. This did not prevent the painters from seeking patronage from regional rulers in

central and western India, where the art of painting continued to flourish. After the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate in 1206, though the Muslim rulers did not encourage the art of painting as it was prohibited by their religion, the indigenous artist continued with their painting work and different schools of painting flourished.

4.20 PAINTING

Rajasthan School of Painting:

Rajasthan was another center of painting. In Mewar a paper manuscript called Supasanahachariyam, (1422-23) has been found containing thirty-seven illustrations. The Gujarat school of painting influenced the Rajasthani style of painting till about 1583.

Jain School of Painting:

In spite of the Muslim invasions, in western India, especially Gujarat, Malwa and Rajasthan, the classical Indian art of miniature painting survived. This school of art is generally known as the Jain, Gujarat or Western School of Art. The Chaulukya rulers patronized the painters who were commissioned to illustrate a large number of Jain scriptures for almost three centuries from 961 onwards. In spite of the conquest of Gujarat by the armies of Alauddin Khilji in 1299, the art of miniature painting continued due to the support of the Jain merchants and local chiefs. Most of these twelfth century illustrated palm leaves manuscripts contain Jain religion and philosophy. With the introduction of paper in the fourteenth century, the painters had greater scope to manifest their artistic skills. Paper replaced palm leaves and bold colours were used in painting the miniatures. Floral decorations and use of gold and silver for writing became very common.

Mandu and Jaunpur:

The art of miniature painting also flourished at Mandu and Jaunpur. In the later fifteenth century manuscripts of the Kalpasutra were written on paper and illustrated. The figures in the miniature paintings were characterized by local variations in facial expressions and costumes. There was an illustrated volume of a cookery book known as Nimat-Khana. This work was completed sometime during the reign of Sultan Nadir Shah of Malwa in the fifteenth century. Paintings in the Nimat-Khana show Persian influence.

The Sultanate Paintings:

The early Muslim rulers have left many architectural monuments of their rule, but there is hardly any example of court painting during the Sultanate. However, the contemporary writings help us in concluding that some kind of art of painting was in vogue during the Sultanate period. In Tabaqat-i-Nasiri, Minhaj-us-Siraj writes that when the envoy of the Caliph of Baghdad came to the court of Iltutmish, the city of Delhi was decorated with large portraits of the sultan. Ziauddin Barani, in his work Tarikh-i-

Firuz Shahi mentions that the palace of Sultan Firuz Shah Tughlaq had a number of frescoes painted on its walls.

The provincial sultanates also encouraged the art of painting. Hermann Goetz, in his famous book *India: 5000 Years of Indian Art*, refers to a number of illustrated manuscripts, which were produced in the courts of the provincial sultanates. Sultan Hussein Sharqi of Jaunpur (1458-79) was a great patron of art. During his reign a Hindu romance in Avadhi Hindi, called *Laur-Chanda* was completed. The illustrations in the manuscript show Persian and Rajput influence. The portrait of Sultan Firuz Shah (1533) and the *Ragmala* miniatures of Bikaner show a mixture of the Vijayanagar and Rajasthani influence. *Tarif-i-Husain Shahi*, a manuscript from Ahmadanagar, the Persian-Hindi murals of Kumtagi, and the Timurid-Persian *Hatifi* manuscript at Patna, are some of the important examples of the art of painting during the Sultanate period.

4.21 CALLIGRAPHY

Calligraphy is the art of fine handwriting, in which the form of the letters is decorative or elaborate. The term 'calligraphy' is derived from the Greek word *kalligraphia*, which means beautiful writing. This term is usually applied to writing done in ink, but can also refer to inscriptions in a cursive script on stone or engraved in metal

While Islam forbade the depiction of living things, the written word of God was considered worthy of the finest craftsmanship. Fine copies of the Koran were produced in which the elegant Arabic script was further embellished with illuminations. Kufic, a square and angular form of Arabic script, was used prominently as decoration on buildings. Verses of the Koran carved in stone or laid out in mosaics were used as ornament on the walls of mosques. Kufic script also appears on metalwork, textiles, and ceramics, and delineated in enamels on mosque lamps and other glass vessels. Nashki is a more cursive form, from which modern Arabic handwriting has evolved

4.22 ARCHITECTURE

The Muslim rulers, during the Sultanate period proved to be great builders and they made greatest contribution in the field of architecture. The salient features of Islamic architecture were massive and extensive buildings, domes, tall minarets, lofty portals, open courtyards, huge walls without any sculpture. The Hindu architecture, on the other hand was characterized by vastness, stability, majesty, magnificence, sublimity, and infinite richness.

ARCHITECTURE DURING THE DELHI SULTANATE

The Slave Dynasty

In the beginning the Islamic architecture was light and graceful. However, with the passage of time it became heavy and solid. Qutbuddin Aibak constructed the *Quwwat-ul-Islam* mosque at Delhi and another mosque at

Ajmer called the Dhai Din Ka Jhonpra. The Quwwat-ul-Islam was constructed in 1197 out of material taken from twenty-seven Hindu and Jain temples. The major part of the mosque was retained in original with some modification aimed at making it a 'Muslim House of prayer'. The images and carvings were either defaced or concealed. Later sultans made many additions and modifications to this mosque. The Dhai Din Ka Jhonpra mosque was raised in 1200 at the site of a destroyed college of Sanskrit and a Jain temple. Therefore, both these mosques have the imprint of both the Hindu and the Muslim art.

Qutbuddin Aibak also started the construction of the famous Qutb Minar in 1197, but Iltutmish completed it. The planning of Qutb Minar was purely Islamic as it was originally intended to serve as a place for the muazzin to call Muslims to prayer. However, later it became famous as a tower of victory. Consequently, Firuz Shah Tughlaq made certain modifications. Sikandar Lodi is also said to have carried out some repairs in the upper storeys. The Hindu artisans who were employed in the construction of the Qutb Minar were unconsciously working towards the fusion of Islamic and Hindu forms of architecture and ornamentation. The Qutb Minar is an impressive building and Ferguson regarded it 'as the most perfect 'example of a tower known to exist anywhere in the world.'

Besides completing the Qutb Minar, Iltutmish constructed a tomb on the grave of his eldest son, Nasiruddin Mahmud, known as Sultan-Ghari, nearly three miles away from the Qutb Minar. The decorations of Sultan-Ghari are done purely in Hindu style. Iltutmish also built a single compact chamber near the Qutb Minar, which was probably, the tomb on his own grave. The other important buildings constructed by Iltutmish are Hauz-i-Shamsi, Shamsi Idgah, and the Jami Masjid at Badaun and the Atarkin-ka-Darwaza at Nagaur (Jodhpur). Balban constructed his own tomb at the southeastern end of the Quwwat-ul-Islam. Though in a dilapidated condition now, Balban's tomb marked a notable landmark in the development of Indo-Islamic architecture. Balban also constructed the Red Palace at Delhi.

The Khilji Dynasty:

The reign of Alauddin Khilji marked a new phase in the history of medieval architecture. He had better economic resources at his command and, therefore, constructed beautiful buildings. His buildings were constructed with perfectly Islamic viewpoint and have been regarded as some best examples of Islamic art in India. His architectural designs were an improvement upon that followed by the previous sultans. He had a plan to build a minor and a big mosque near the Qutb Minar, which he could not pursue because of his death. But there still stands his splendid gateway to the southern entrance hall called the Alai Darwaza. It is perhaps the first building where wholly Islamic principles were employed. Alauddin Khilji also founded the city of Siri, built a palace of thousands of pillars within it, Jamait Khan Mosque at the shrine of Nizamuddin Auliya. His city and the palace had been destroyed but the Jamait Khan mosque and the Alai Darwaza still exist which have been regarded as beautiful

specimens of Islamic art. According to Marshall, “the Alai Darwaza is one of the most treasured gems of Islamic architecture.” Alauddin also constructed a magnificent tank covering an area of nearly seventy acres, known as Hauz-i-Alai or Ifauz-i-Khas near his newly constructed city of Siri in the neighbourhood of the old city of Delhi. It had stone and masonry wall around it and provided water to the city during the year.

The Tughlaq Dynasty:

The style of architecture underwent a marked change under the Tughlaq dynasty. In contrast to the lavish ornamentation of the preceding centuries their buildings were characterized by massiveness and extreme simplicity. The Tughlaq sultans did not construct beautiful buildings. Economic difficulties might have been one of the reasons for austerity and simplicity in their buildings. Besides, they were puritanical in their taste, and therefore avoided ornamentation in their buildings. Ghiyasud-din Tughlaq constructed the new city of Tughluqabad east of the Qutb area, his own tomb and a palace. Though the city and the palaces built by Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq are now in ruins an idea of their magnificence can be still found in those ruins.

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq undertook the construction of a number of buildings. He constructed the new city of Jahanpanah near the city of old Delhi, the fort of Adilabad and some other buildings at Daultabad. He constructed many buildings but all of them were just ordinary and weak. Among his notable- buildings were the new city of Firuzabad near the old city of Delhi, the palace-fort known as Kotla Firuz Shah within it, a college and his own tomb near Hauz-i-Khas. Firuz Tughlaq also built a number of mosques. The important among them are Kali Masjid, Bagampuri mosque, Khirki Masjid at Jahanpanah and Kaba Masjid

The Sayyids and Lodi

The invasion of Timur in 1398 destroyed not only the political power of the Delhi Sultanate, but also the continuity of the architectural magnificence. The Sayyids and the Lodis tried to revive the architectural style of the Khilji period. The Sayyids, with their severely shrunken resources, founded two poorly built cities called Khizrabad and Mubarakbad. The only monuments of this period, which have survived, are the tombs. A large number of tombs were built, mostly on the pattern of Khan-i-Jahan Tilangani's octagonal mausoleum. The important mausoleums built on this model were the tombs of Mubarak Shah Sayyid, Muhammad Shah Sayyid and Sikandar Lodi. A new element was introduced in the time of Sikandar Lodi. Instead of one, two domes were built, one within another, leaving some space between the two. The other type of tombs was square in plan, without any verandah. The tombs of the square design were the Bara Khan Ka Gumbad, Chota Khan Ka Gumbad, and Poli Ka Gumbad.

4.23 PROVINCIAL ARCHITECTURE

Apart from Delhi, notable buildings were also constructed in various provinces during this period. The Muslim rulers in provinces built palaces, tombs, forts, mosques etc. in their respective kingdoms. Primarily, the provincial styles drew inspiration from the Delhi style of architecture. But as the economic resources of provincial rulers were limited, they could not provide that grandeur to their buildings as was provided by the Sultans of Delhi. Besides, the local circumstances also influenced the provincial styles and, therefore, the architecture of provinces differed not only from the Imperial style but also from each other.

Multan: There are four notable buildings in Multan, which were constructed during this period, namely, the shrine of Shah Yusuf--Gardizi, the mausoleum of Bahlul Haqq, the tomb of Shamsuddin and the tomb of Rukn-i-Alam built up by Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq. Among them, the tomb of Rukn-i-Alam has been regarded as the best.

Bengal: Bengal developed its own style of architecture, which was greatly influenced by local climatic conditions and the environment. Mostly bricks were used in the buildings constructed in Bengal. The principal features of the Bengal Style of architecture were the use of pointed arches on pillars, Hindu decorative designs and adaptation of Hindu architecture to Islamic art. Yet, the Bengal style of architecture remained inferior to other styles, which were adopted in several other provinces.

Jaunpur: Firuz Shah Tughlaq built the city of Jaunpur in 1359-60. The rulers of the Sharqi dynasty at Jaunpur greatly patronized architecture and some fine buildings were constructed during their rule, which adopted certain good features of both the Hindu and the Islamic architecture. The salient features of the buildings raised at Jaunpur were square pillars, small galleries and absence of minarets. The most important of the surviving structures at Jaunpur is the Atala Masjid. Although its builders borrowed several features from the Tughlaq architecture, it has its own individuality.

Malwa: The buildings constructed in Malwa closely resembled those, which were constructed by the Sultans of Delhi. However, they possess distinctive style of their own. These buildings are mainly found at Mandu, Dhar and Chanderi. The fort of Mandu has been regarded as a beautiful protected city. The most notable build-ings of Mandu are the Jami Masjid, the Hindola Mahal, the Ashrfi Mahal, the tower of victory and palaces of Baz Bahadur and his queen Rupmati. The buildings in Malwa have their own distinct style and occupy a respect-able place among the architectural styles of provinces during this period.

Gujarat: The architectural style of Gujarat was the product of an extraordinary blending of Hindu and Muslim building traditions. Sultan Ahmad Shah founded the capital city of Ahmadabad in the first half of the fifteenth century. He adorned the city with many buildings. The most important building at Ahmadabad erected by Ahmad Shah himself was

Jam-i-Masjid. It occupies a large quadrangle and has four cloisters on four sides of the open courtyard. The tomb of Ahmad Shah situated in the enclosure of the Jam-i-Masjid is another important monument.

Kashmir: There was a harmonious blending of the Hindu and the Muslim architecture in Kashmir. The most notable buildings constructed here during his period are the tomb of Mandani, the Jami Masjid at Srinagar and the mosque of Shah Hamadan.

Hindu Architecture:

Hindu architecture in northern India declined as a result of the fall of the Hindu kingdoms. The Hindus could maintain their political existence in north India only in Rajasthan. Thus, the specimens of medieval Hindu architecture could be found in Rajasthan only. Rana Kumbha of Mewar erected many forts, palaces and other buildings, the best known among them being the fort of Kumbhalgarh and the Kirti Stambha (tower of victory). Part of this pillar is built of red sandstone and part of it is that of marble. It has been regarded as the most remarkable tower in the country. There is another beautiful tower at Chittor known as Jain Stambha, which is decorated with beautiful carving and latticework. Many other forts and palaces were built by the Rajput rulers at different places. The forts have existed but most of the palaces have perished. The Hindus, no doubt, learnt something about the art of construction from the Muslims but kept their architectural style free from their influence. Therefore, their buildings maintained their separate identity and differed from the buildings of the Muslim rulers

4.24 SUMMARY

Most of these twelfth century illustrated palm leaves manuscripts contain Jain religion and philosophy. With the introduction of paper in the fourteenth century, the painters had greater scope to manifest their artistic skills. The salient features of Islamic architecture were massive and extensive buildings, domes, tall minarets, lofty portals, open courtyards, huge walls without any sculpture. The Hindu architecture, on the other hand was characterized by vastness, stability, majesty, magnificence, sublimity, and infinite richness. The art of miniature painting also flourished at Mandu and Jaunpur. Apart from Delhi, notable buildings were also constructed in various provinces during this period.

4.25 QUESTIONS

1. Trace the development of architecture during the Delhi Sultanate period.
2. Explain the painting, calligraphy and sculpture during the Delhi Sultanate
3. Give a detailed account of Provincial Architecture during Delhi Sultanate

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