

THE SLAVE DYNASTY (1206-1290)

Qutub-ud-din Aibak (1206-1210)

A Turkish slave by origin, Aibak was Muhammad Ghori who later made him his governor and Chori's death, Aibak became the master Hindustan and founded the Slave Dynasty in 1206. He courageously dealt with the threat posed by Yalduz and Qubachah. He also Ali Marian Khan of Bengal accept his suzerainty and received annual tribute from him. He is considered a generous ruler and was popularly called Lakh Bakhsh (one who gives lakh). He was also given the title of Amir-i Akhnr. The 72.5 m (238 ft) high Qutub Minor in Delhi was built by him to perpetuate the memory of saint Qutub-ud-din. The Qutab-ul-Islam mosque was also built during the reign of Aibak. He died after a fall from his horse while playing Chaugan. He was succeeded by his son Aram Baksh (1210-1211),

Early Muslim Dynasties ★

Arab penetration affected Afghanistan probably more decisively than any previous foreign influences. Centuries passed, however, before Islam became the dominant religion, Arab political control was superseded meanwhile by Iranian and Turkish rules. Complete Turkish ascendancy in the area was established late in the tenth century and early in the eleventh century by the Muslim sultan, Mahmud of Ghazni. Islamic culture subsequently achieved brilliant heights under the Afghan or Iranian Ghuri dynasty (1148-1215). The Ghurids gradually extended their rule into northern India, but were overwhelmed by the hordes of the Mongol conqueror Genghis Khan, who came down from the north about 1220. Most of the country remained, under Mongol control until the close of the fourteenth century, when another Mongol invader, Tamerlane seized northern Afghanistan. Among Tamerlane's most prominent successors was Babul, founder of the Mughal dynasty, who conquered Kabul about 1504.

Shams-ud-din Iltutmish (1211-1236)

He was a slave and son-in-law of Qutub-ud-din Aibak and occupied the throne of Delhi in 1211 after deposing Aram Baksh. He was a very capable ruler and is regarded as the founder of the Delhi Sultanate because during his long reign; he consolidated all Turkish conquests, reasserted his supremacy in the entire north and extinguished rebellions by reorganising his army. In 1227, Genghis Khan, carried out a Mongol invasion on Indian territories. Jallal-ud-din, the Ghazni king, asked Iltutmish to help. But Iltutmish remained neutral as he was afraid that the Mongols would attack his kingdom too. His denial to help the enemy of the Mongols was appreciated by Genghis Khan. Thus, he saved the slave dynasty from any threat of invasion. Later, Iltutmish captured Bengal and Ranthambor and many other Hindu states. He introduced the silver coin (tanka) and the copper coin (jital). Iltutmish described himself on the coins as the 'Lieutenant of the Caliph'. He also completed the construction of Qutub Minar, which was started by Qutub-ud-din Aibak.

Rukn-ud-din (1236)

He was the son of Iltutmish and was crowned by his mother, Shah Tukran, after the death of Iltutmish. He was deposed by Razia, daughter of Iltutmish, when he was out of capital to curb a rebellion in Avadh against him.

Razia Sultana (1236-1239)

She was the daughter of Iltutmish. She was the first and only Muslim woman who ever ruled India. She succeeded her father in 1236 after a strong opposition by Nizam-ul-Mulk Junaidi and was a very brave and strong ruler. Her rule marked the beginning of a struggle for power between the monarchy and Turkish chiefs called Turkani-Chahalgani (the forty). She fell in love with Jamal-ud-din Yakut whom she married. She was killed by her own brother Muiz-ud-din Bahram when she tried to recapture the throne of Delhi from him. ★

Slaves Made Sultans

The concept of equality in Islam and Muslim traditions reached its climax in the history of South Asia when slaves were raised to the status of sultans. The Slave Dynasty ruled the sub-continent, for about 84 years. Qutub-ud-din Aibak, Shams-ud-din Iltutmish and Ghiyas-ud-din Balban, the three great sultans of the era were themselves sold and purchased during their early lives. The Slave Dynasty was the first Muslim Dynasty that ruled India. Muhammad Ghori had no son, so he raised thousands of slaves like his sons. Ghori had the habit of buying every talented one he came across. He would then train them in the way royal children were trained. During Ghori's regime, slaves occupied all key positions in the government machinery. Three favourite slaves of the Sultan were Qutub-ud-din Aibak, Iltutmish and Nasir-ud-din Qubachah. He appointed them governor of Delhi, Ghazni and Lahore, respectively. Ghori never nominated his successor but it was obvious that the successor was to be one of his slaves. When Ghori died in 1206, the amir selected Aibak as the new Sultan. Aibak first shifted his capital from Ghazni to Lahore and then from Lahore to Delhi. Thus, he was the first Muslim ruler who ruled South Asia and had his headquarters in the region as well.

Bahram Shah (1240-1242)

After Aizik, Iltutmish's third son Bahram Shah was put on throne by the powerful Turkish Council, Chalisa (or the family of forty). He was considered only as the de jure ruler, while the naib-e-mamlakat (head of Chalisa) was the de facto ruler. Bahram Shah lost his life after a failed attempt to assert his authority once on the throne.

Masud Shah (1242-1246)

Masud Shah was son of Rukn-ud-din but was deposed after Balban and Nasir-ud-din Muhammad's mother, Malika-e-Jahan, conspired against him and established Nasir-ud-din Muhammad as the new sultan.

Nasir-ud-din Muhammad (1246-1266)

Nasir-ud-din was the son of Iltutmish, and was known as the darvesh king as he was very pious and noble. He ruled for 20 years and died in 1266.

Ghiyas-ud-din Balban (1266-1287)

Ghiyas-ud-din Balban was brought to Delhi as a slave in 1232. He rose through the ranks and was made minister in 1246. During his ministership he impressed the throne by subduing a rebellion by the Oudh governor, Kutlug Khan, in 1255. After the death of King Nasir-ud-din, in 1266, Balban was made king. He dissolved the Chalisa (the famous forty) and established peace in and around Delhi, instead of expanding the Sultanate. He established the Diwan-i-arz (the Royal Military Department) to reorganise his army, introduced rigorous court discipline and new customs to prove his superiority to Turkish nobles. He started a well-organised espionage system in his kingdom to administer efficiently. However, in his last days he overlooked Sultanate affairs because of the death of his eldest and most loving son, Muhammad, and rebellion by his closest and most loved slave, Tughril. Muhammad died fighting the Mongolian ruler Ulgha Khan (grandson of Genghis Khan) in 1285 and Tughril was captured and beheaded.



Balban's Theory of Kingship

Balban has been hailed as perhaps the only Sultan of Delhi who is reported to have discussed at length his views about kingship according to Fatawa-jahandari of Ziauddin Barani. Balban constantly sought to increase prestige and power of the monarchy because he was convinced that it was the only way to face the internal and external dangers challenging him. He consciously sought to distance the sovereign behind a screen of increased pomp and ceremony, employed a network of spies, and informers to monitor the activities of the nobles. This stickler for etiquette would not even allow his private attendants to see him without his jacket.

Kaiqubad (1287-1290)

Balban's grandson was established on the throne by Fakr-ud-din, the kotwal of Delhi who assumed high political authority during the last days of Balban. But Kaiqubad was killed by the Khilji family, which saw the end of the slave or Ilbari dynasty and the beginning of the Khilji Dynasty at the Delhi throne. It is assumed that during the 84 years of the Slave Dynasty rule there was no stable government. Many of the kings of this dynasty, despite ruling a wealthy and powerful region, remained slaves by temperament.

The Khilji Dynasty (1290-1320)

The Khilji dynasty was named after a small village in Afghanistan. Some historians feel that they were Afghans, but Bharani and Wolse Haig have mentioned in their accounts that the rulers from this dynasty who came to India had temporarily settled in Afghanistan, but were originally Turks.

Jalal-ud-din Firoz Khilji (1290-1296)

He was the founder of the Khilji Dynasty. He was brought to Delhi as a slave to Sultan Kaiqubad. He deposed the Sultan in 1200 and captured the throne. The Khilji's remained in power for 30 years. He brought all the Rajput kingdoms under his sway and also snubbed the Chajju Rebellion, inspired by Khishlu Khan (a maternal uncle of Balban who aspired for the throne). He is also credited to be the first ruler to expel the Mongol aggressors. His army inflicted heavy defeat to the Mongol ruler, Abdullah, in 1290. During his reign, his nephew, Ala-ud-din Khilji, won great victories against the Malwas and Bifida town. Later, his army defeated Ramchander Deva and captured the abundant treasures of Devnagri in die south in 1306-1307, He was the first ruler of Delhi Sultanate to clearly put forward the view that the state should be based on the willing support of the governed, and as a large majority of people arc Hindus, the state in India could not be truly an Islamic state.

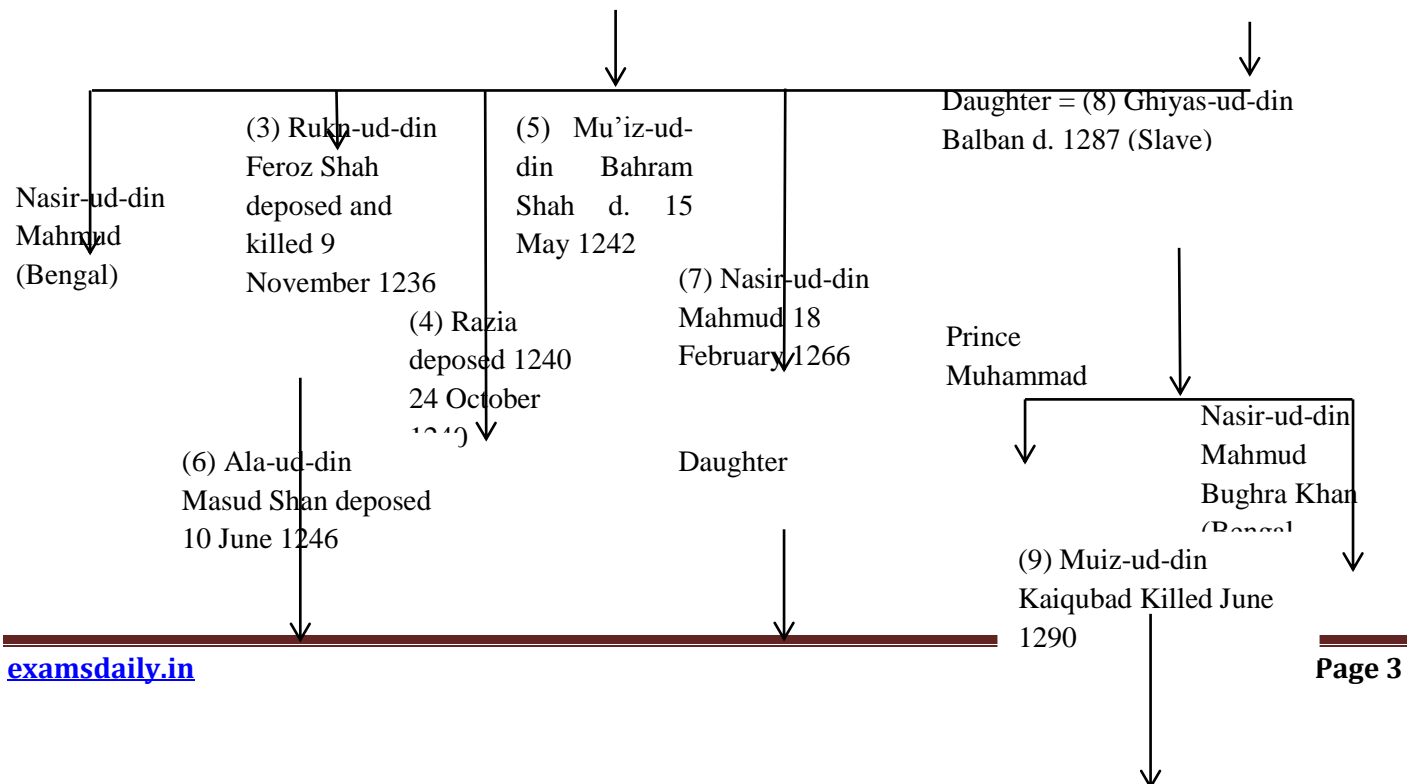
(1) Qutab-ud-din Aibak d 1210

(Slave of Muilz-ud-din Muhammad

Ghon)

Daughter = (2) Shams-ud-din Iltumish

d 1 May 1236 (Slave)



(10) Kayumars deposed
June 1290

FIG.2.1 The Slave Dynasty

Market Reform of Ala-ud-din Khilji

Alauddin Khilji was the first medieval ruler who looked at the problem of price control in a systematic manner. He instituted market reforms because after the Mongol siege of Delhi, he wanted to build a large army, but all his treasures would have soon been exhausted if he had to pay them their normal salaries. Ala-ud-din set up three markets at Delhi, the first for foodgrains, the second for cloths of all kinds, sugar, ghee, dry fruits etc., and the third for horses, slaves and cattle. Detailed regulations were framed for the control and administration of all these markets.



MAP 2. 1. The Khilji Kingdom

Ala-ud-din Khilji (1296-1316)

Ala-ud-din was a nephew of Sultan Jalal-ud-din, whom he killed and succeeded to the throne in 1296. He invaded Devangiri and conquered Warangal and Mysore, the Hindu kingdoms of the south. He was an able administrator and known for the rapid expansion of Khilji domination. Ala-ud-din was very severe with Hindus. He set up an efficient espionage system and also introduced various price control measures. Though he was illiterate, he was a patron of art and learning. Amir Khusrau, the poet-musician was his favourite court poet. Ala-ud-din Khilji built the **Siri** and **Arai Minars** near the Qutub Minor in Delhi.

Rani Padmini was the queen of Rana Bhim Singh of Mewar. Ala-ud-din Khilji, attracted by her beauty, invaded Chittoor in 1303 to capture the queen. Though he captured Chittoor, the queen committed Jauhar along with other Rajput women.

Coming to power of Khiljis

The founder of the Khilji Dynasty in South Asia, Malik Firuz, was originally the Arizi-Mumalik appointed by Kaiqubad during the days of decline of the Slave Dynasty. He took advantage of the political vacuum that was created because of the incompetence of Balban's successors. To occupy the throne, he only had to remove the infant Sultan Kaimurs. On 13 June 1290, Malik Firuz ascended the throne of Delhi as Jalal-ud-din Firuz Shah. Khiljis were basically Central Asians who had lived in Afghanistan for so long that they had become different from the Turks in terms of customs and manners. Thus the coming of Khiljis to power was more than a dynastic change. As the majority of the Muslim population of Delhi was Turk, the arrival of a Khilji ruler was not much welcomed. Yet Jalal-ud-din managed to win the hearts of the people through his mildness and generosity. He retained most of the officer's holding key positions in the Slave Dynasty. His own nephew and son-in-law, Ala-ud-din Khilji, killed Jalal-ud-din and took over as the new ruler. Ala-ud-din's reign was marked by innovative administrative and revenue reforms, market control regulations and a whirlwind period of conquests. It was considered as the golden period of the Khilji rule.

Malik Kafur (1315)

In 1315 after the death of Ala-ud-din. Kafur, a regent in Ala-ud-din court seized the throne. Before Kafur died, he nominated Shihab-ud-din (Ala-ud-din's 6-year-old prince) as king and imprisoned the eldest prince Mubarak Khan. Malik Kafur was killed by the loyalists of the royal family of Ala-ud-din Though Kafur himself was an illiterate, he encourage and rewarded the great poets of the Khilji era, Amir Khusrau and Amir Hassan.

Mubarak Khan (1316-1320)

After the death of Kafur (1316), Mubarak Khan was freed from prison and was appointed as regent for Shihab-ud-din. He captured the throne at the first opportunity he got, but could rule only for 4 years as he sank into debauchery and could not give up his dissipated lifestyle. He awarded his lover Hassan authority over the array and palace guards, and the latter soon obtained full control over the Sultan's palace. Hassan was given the title Khusrau Khan by the Sultan, and within months Khusrau killed Mubarak Khan and assumed the title of Nasir-ud-din in the mid-1320

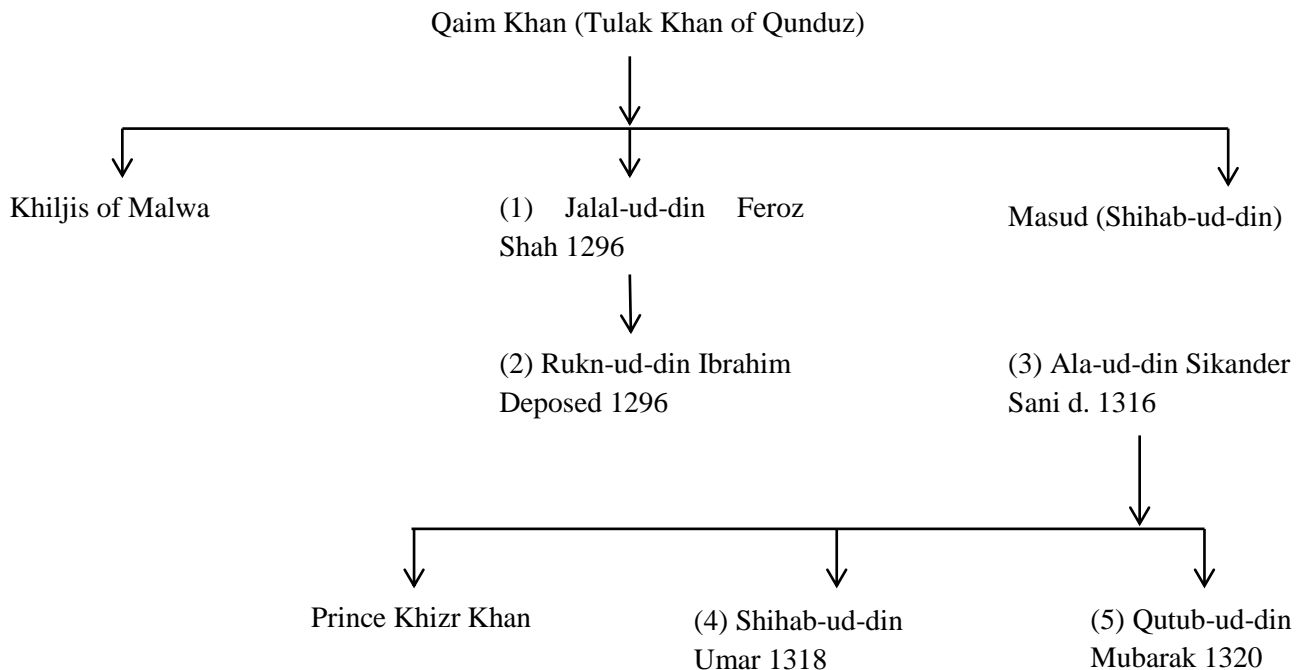


Fig 2.2 The Khilji Dynasty

KHUSRAU KHAN (1320)

Khusrau Khan was killed by Ghazi Khan, governor of Dipalpur, when he tried to oppose a rebellion by Ghazi Malik and his son Fakhr-ud-din Jaima. This marked the end of the Khilji dynasty and the rise of Tughlaq dynasty at the throne of Delhi.

Chalghan

The most important institution that developed under the Slave Dynasty was the institution of Chalghan (Chalisa) or the Forty Chalghan were a corps of highly placed and powerful officers, whom Iltutmish had organised as his personal supporters. They were like the cabinet for the Sultan. However, during the days of civil war between the successors of Iltutmish, the Chalghan started looking for personal gains and played one prince against the other. During this era they became very strong. Each one of them started considering himself as the deputy of the Sultan. When Balban assumed charge as Sultan, he murdered some of them while others were banished from the kingdom. There is no doubt that by crushing their power, Balban strengthened his rule, but actually he destroyed the real power of the slave dynasty.

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