
Chapter – 3 History

The Delhi Sultanate (1206 AD - 1526 AD)

- Delhi first became the capital of a kingdom under the Tomara Rajputs, who were defeated by the Chauhans (also called Chahamanas) of Ajmer.
 - The transformation of Delhi into a capital that controlled vast area of the subcontinent started with the foundation of the Delhi Sultanate in the beginning of the 13th century.
 - **Rulers of Delhi:**
 - (i) Tomars: Early 12th century 1165
 - (ii) Chauhans: 1165-1192 Prithviraj Chauhan: 1175-1192
 - (iii) Slave Dynasty: 1206-1290
 - (iv) Khalji Dynasty: 1290-1320
 - (v) Tughlaq Dynasty: 1320-1414
 - (vi) Sayyid Dynasty: 1414-1451
 - (vii) Lodi Dynasty: 1451-1526
 - **Finding out about the Delhi Sultans:**
 - (i) Inscriptions coins and architecture provide a lot of information.
 - (ii) Further valuable sources are 'histories', tarikh (singular)/tawarikh (plural), written in Persian, the language of administration under the Delhi Sultans.
 - (iii) The authors of tawarikh were learned men; secretaries administrators, poets and courtiers who both recounted events and advised rulers on governance, emphasizing the importance of just rule.
 - **From Garrison Town to Empire:**
 - (i) In the early 13th century the control of the Delhi Sultans rarely went beyond heavily fortified towns occupied by garrisons.
 - (ii) Delhi's authority was challenged by Mongols and by governors who rebelled at any sign of the Sultan's weakness.
 - (iii) The expansion of Delhi Sultanate took place under the reign of Balban, Alauddin Khalji and Muhammad Tughlaq.
 - **Administration and Consolidation:**
 - (i) To have reliable governors the early Delhi Sultans, especially Iltutmish' favoured their special slaves purchased for military service called 'bandagan' in Persian.
 - (ii) The Khaljis and Tughluqs continued to use bandagan and also raised people of humble birth, who were their clients, to high positions like governors and generals.
 - (iii) The Khaljis and Tughluqs appointed military commanders as governors of territories of varying sizes.
 - (iv) These lands were called iqta and their holder was called muqti or iqtadar. The duty of muqtis was to lead military campaigns and maintain law and order in their iqtas.
 - (v) In return, muqtis collected the revenues of their assignments as salary. They also paid their soldiers from this revenue.
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- (vi) Under Alaudding Khalji and Muhammad Tughluq accountants were appointed to check the amount collected by the muqtis.
 - (vii) As Delhi Sultans brought the hinterland of the cities under their control, they forced the samants and the rich landlords to accept their authority.
 - (viii) The attack of Mongols under Genghis Khan forced Khaljis and Tughluqs to mobilise a large standing army in Delhi.

- **The Sultanate in Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries:**

- (i) The Tughluq, the Sayyid and Lodi dynasties ruled from Delhi and Agra until 1526.
- (ii) By then Jaunpur, Bengal, Malwa, Gujarat, Rajasthan and the entire South India had Independent rulers who had established flourishing states and prosperous capitals.
- (iii) New ruling dynasties like the Afghans and Rajputs also arose during the period.
- (iv) In 1526, Mughals established their empire, though for a brief period Suri Dynasty ruled in Delhi (1540-1555). This administration became the role model for Akbar, the Mughal Emperor.