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Rajiv Gandhi University

BAHIS202 HISTORY OF INDIA UPTO 1526 AD - II



BA (HISTORY)

4TH SEMESTER

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About the University

Rajiv Gandhi University (formerly Arunachal University) is a premier institution for higher education in the state of Arunachal Pradesh and has completed twenty-five years of its existence. Late Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, laid the foundation stone of the university on 4th February, 1984 at Rono Hills, where the present campus is located.

Ever since its inception, the university has been trying to achieve excellence and fulfill the objectives as envisaged in the University Act. The university received academic recognition under Section 2(f) from the University Grants Commission on 28th March, 1985 and started functioning from 1st April, 1985. It got financial recognition under section 12-B of the UGC on 25th March, 1994. Since then Rajiv Gandhi University, (then Arunachal University) has carved a niche for itself in the educational scenario of the country following its selection as a University with potential for excellence by a high-level expert committee of the University Grants Commission from among universities in India.

The University was converted into a Central University with effect from 9th April, 2007 as per notification of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

The University is located atop Rono Hills on a picturesque tableland of 302 acres overlooking the river Dikrong. It is 6.5 km from the National Highway 52-A and 25 km from Itanagar, the State capital. The campus is linked with the National Highway by the Dikrong Bridge.

The teaching and research programmes of the University are designed with a view to play a positive role in the socio-economic and cultural development of the State. The University offers Undergraduate, Post-graduate, M.Phil and Ph.D. programmes. The Department of Education also offers the B.Ed. programme.

There are fifteen colleges affiliated to the University. The University has been extending educational facilities to students from the neighbouring states, particularly Assam. The strength of students in different departments of the University and in affiliated colleges has been steadily increasing.

The faculty members have been actively engaged in research activities with financial support from UGC and other funding agencies. Since inception, a number of proposals on research projects have been sanctioned by various funding agencies to the University. Various departments have organized numerous seminars, workshops and conferences. Many faculty members have participated in national and international conferences and seminars held within the country and abroad. Eminent scholars and distinguished personalities have visited the University and delivered lectures on various disciplines.

The academic year 2000-2001 was a year of consolidation for the University. The switch over from the annual to the semester system took off smoothly and the performance of the students registered a marked improvement. Various syllabi designed by Boards of Post-graduate Studies (BPGS) have been implemented. VSAT facility installed by the ERNET India, New Delhi under the UGC-Infonet program, provides Internet access.

In spite of infrastructural constraints, the University has been maintaining its academic excellence. The University has strictly adhered to the academic calendar, conducted the examinations and declared the results on time. The students from the University have found placements not only in State

and Central Government Services, but also in various institutions, industries and organizations. Many students have emerged successful in the National Eligibility Test (NET).

Since inception, the University has made significant progress in teaching, research, innovations in curriculum development and developing infrastructure.

SYLLABI-BOOK MAPPING TABLE
History of India upto 1526 AD

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INTRODUCTION

India is recognized as having a unique and intriguing history and culture. Historical records trace the beginning of Indian civilization to the ancient Indus Valley Civilization. It is also called the Harappan Civilization as Harappa was the first site to be excavated. The sources of evidence about this civilization are the artefacts, pottery, tools, ornaments and ruins of towns. Man began to use metals which continued into the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic Ages. This was followed by the arrival of the Vedic Age which occupies an important place in Indian history. The religion, philosophy and social customs of the Hindus who constitute the majority of our country have their principal source in the Vedic culture. However, with the passage of time, Vedic religion had become quite ritualistic and the caste system had become predominant. This resulted in regional dissent among the masses, which led to the emergence of new classes and the rise of Jainism and Buddhism. Jainism and Buddhism represent a remarkable phase in the religious and cultural development of India. This was followed by the emergence of cities and territorial states, especially the Magadha Empire and the Nandas.

Further, the small cities and territorial states were brought under the control of Chandragupta Maurya who laid the foundation of the Mauryan Empire. The decline of the Mauryan Empire led to the arrival and emergence of Indo-Greeks, Shungas, Kharavelas, Kushanas and Satvahanas. India was once again politically united in the Gupta Period. The Gupta Age is marked as an era of unprecedented progress in all aspects of polity, religion, art and literature. The disintegration of the Gupta period led to the emergence of regional kingdoms. This was followed by the arrival of Arabs and Turks in India. Later, India was plundered and invaded repeatedly by foreign rulers such as Timur and Mahmud Ghazni. These invasions laid the foundation for the establishment of Muslim rule in India by Qutub-din-Aibak. He was the first ruler of the Delhi Sultanate and also the founder of the Slave dynasty. This dynasty was followed by the Sayyid and Lodhi dynasties. However, none of them could hold on to power for long and eventually Babur-the first Mughul emperor of India-defeated and conquered them.

This book, History of India upto 1526 AD, has been designed keeping in mind the self-instruction mode (SIM) format and follows a simple pattern, wherein each unit of the book begins with the Introduction followed by the Unit Objectives for the topic. The content is then presented in a simple and easy-to-understand manner, and is interspersed with 'Check Your Progress' questions to reinforce the student's understanding of the topic. A list of Questions and Exercises is also provided at the end of each unit. The Summary and Key Terms further act as useful tools for students and are meant for effective recapitulation of the text.

Unit-I

THE GUPTA AGE

Structure

- 1.0 Objectives
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- 1.11 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.12 Key Words
- 1.13 Check Your Learning
- 1.14 Suggested Readings
- 1.15 Hints/Answers to Questions in Check Your Progress

1.0 Objectives

After reading this unit you will be able to:

- Know about the exploits of the Imperial Guptas
- Familiarise yourself with the socio-economic-religious life of the Guptas

- to understand the cultural development of the period

1.1 Introduction

In the early Christian centuries, India witnessed the rise and fall of small powers like the Sungas, Kanvas, Satavahanas, Chedis and Kushanas. They played relatively significant role as regional powers supplementing the growth of Indian culture. Brahmanism and Buddhism had equal opportunities to prosper. Indian culture spread to far off countries like South East Asia and even in China, Japan, Korea and Tibet through Brahmanical and Buddhist religion. The atmosphere was again conducive for the emergence of an imperial power in Pataliputra to give a thrust to Indian culture inside the country and abroad. At that time, on the ruins of the Kushana Empire, the Guptas founded a new kingdom under their vigorous leadership to take India to the Golden Age. Under the Guptas, India became a great colonial power and reached its watermark in the field of art, architecture and culture.

1.2 Sources

There are a vast mass of literary, epigraphic, numismatic and remains of art and architecture to reconstruct the history of the Guptas. The Gupta period saw the unprecedented growth of literary activities under royal patronage. The Epics, the Puranas and Smritis were written in Sanskrit. There were poets, writers, dramatists like Kalidasa, Bhababuti, Visakhadatta, Bhasa and Bana who produced outstanding secular literature of great historic value. Due to her cultural hegemony, India attracted number of foreign scholars like Fahien, Itsing, Hiuen-Tsang and Al-beruni, who have left behind eyewitness account of India's socio-economic life, which are of immense value to the historians. Among the literary sources, mention may be made of the Vayu, Matsya, Vishnu, Brahmanda Puranas, the Narada Smriti, Brihasapati Smriti, Kamandaka's Nitisara, dramas like Kaumadi Mahotsava, Devichandraguptam and the Buddhist text like the Arya Manjusri Mulakalpa.

The stone and copper plate inscriptions of the period throw light on the political and cultural events. The notable examples are the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta, Eran inscription, Mehrauli pillar, Bhitari pillar inscriptions and Udyagiri cave inscriptions. The Allahabad pillar inscriptions throw light on the achievements of the greatest Gupta king Samudragupta while the Mehrauli inscription refers to the exploits of one Vikramaditya Chandragupta. The Bhitari pillar inscription describes about the achievements of Skandagupta. The Udyagiri cave inscription and the sanchi stone inscription provides an idea of the religious policy of the Gupta emperor. As a whole these epigraphic evidences provide authentic data for the history of the Gupta period.

The Guptas also issued a large number of gold, silver and copper coinage which depict their names, dates, religion and personal interest. It may be mentioned here that Gupta kings like Samudragupta and Chandragupta II issued varieties of gold coins, unique in ancient India. In the same manner, the Saka victory of Chadragupta II is reflected in his silver and copper coinage. These coins are invaluable sources for writing the socio-economic history of India. They also throw light on the progress of science and technology. The seals and sealing of the period reveals various aspects of Gupta period.

Guptas were master builders. They had innumerable monuments to their credit. The stone temples of Gupta period witnessed a new phase of Indian architecture and sculpture. The Brahmanical temples had a sound footing during their period. Monuments and rock cut caves at Sanchi, Eran, Nacchnakuthara, Aihole, Ajanta, Ellora, Bagh reflect the contemporary life and culture. It too bear testimony to the progress in metallurgy and engineering skills of the people of the period, besides giving a true picture of the artistic activity of the people.

1.3 Early Gupta Rulers

The origin of the imperial Gupta family is wrapped up in obscurity. According to Prof. S. Chattopadhyaya, the Guptas were Kshatriyas. However about their original home, we are in dark. K.P. Jayaswal believes that the original home of the Gupta was in or around Allahabad and at first Guptas were feudatories of the Bharashivas or the Nagas and later on rose to prominence. D.C. Ganguly have tried to prove that the original home of the Guptas was in Murshidabad district of Bengal and not in Magadha or Allahabad. He based his theory on a statement of I-tsing, the Chinese traveller who visited India 672 A.D. I-tsing refers to a tradition that one Maharaja Sri Gupta (Che-li-ki-te), built a temple near Mrgasikahavana for Chinese pilgrims and endowed it with 24 villages and this was done before 500 years of I-tsing .e. (in the last part of 2nd century A.D.). I-tsing also informs us that the aforesaid park was about 50 stages east of Nalanda down the Ganges. However fleet and others criticised the above theory on the ground that Sri Gupta ruled during the end of 3rd century A.D. and not in the last part of 2nd century A.D. as referred by I-tsing. However it may be pointed out that the original home of the Guptas was either consisted of some parts of Bengal or Magadha.

The Gupta records mention the names of the first three rulers of the family as Maharaja Sri Gupta, his son Maharaja Ghattokacha Gupta and the latter's son Maharajadhiraja Chandragupta. However the title of the first two Gupta rulers suggest that the early Gupta rulers were independent rulers of a small kingdom. The Poona plates of Prabhavati Gupta refers to Maharaja Sri Gupta as Adiraja. From the accounts of I-tsing, it can be inferred that Sri Gupta's kingdom comprised of some parts of Bengal and Bihar. His Buddhist affiliation can be marked in the construction of a temple for the Chinese pilgrimage near Mrigasikhavana and granting of twenty four villages for its maintenance. He ruled probably from 275-300 A.D.

Sri Gupta was succeeded by Ghatotkacha Gupta. He is regarded as a powerful ruler of central India and Deccan. The Vakataka record mentions him as the first Gupta king, which however is not correct. Infact, very little is known regarding his career and achievements. However his son, Chandragupta I, was destined to change the fortune of the Guptas.

1.4 Chandragupta-I

Chandragupta-I succeeded his father Ghatotkacha Gupta upon the throne. He brought his house under the full light of history removing the veil of obscurity. He may be described as the real founder of the Gupta Empire. He raised the fortune of his family from dusts to glory. He inaugurated an era of peace and prosperity, which endured for more than two centuries. He ascended the throne in 320 A.D. and started a new era called the Gupta era.

Chandragupta-I adopted the superior title 'Maharaja Dhiraja' meaning 'the Great King of Kings' in contradiction of the inferior title of Maharaja adopted by his predecessors. The gold coins of Chandragupta bearing on one side the figures of the king and the queen testify to the growing fortune of his house.

1.4.1 The Lichchavi Marriage

The most important incident of the career of Chandragupta-I was his marriage to a Lichchavi princess. Chandragupta-I married the Lichchavi princess Kumaradevi. His son Samudragupta in the Allahabad prasasti is described as 'Lichchavi douhitra' the son of a Lichchavi daughter. The same epithet is applied to him in all the subsequent Gupta epigraphic records. Even a series of gold coins portraying the figures of Maharaja Dhiraja Chandragupta and Mahadevi Kumaradevi are noticed on one side and the figure of Lakshmi, seated on a lion with the legend 'Lichchavayah' is noticed on the other. The title of Mahadevi of the queen was fitting to Chandragupta-I's title Maharaja Dhiraja.

The Lichchavis were a well known republican clan in ancient India during the time of Buddha. They were always a source of trouble to the Magadhan empire in the 6th century B.C. King Bimbisara won them over by matrimonial alliance and Ajatasatru crushed them through diplomacy. Nothing much is known about them after the 5th century B.C. But they are mentioned with pride and honour by Samudragupta. This led to the scholars to speculate that the Lichchavis were powerful during this period also and the matrimonial relation was considered to have augmented the Gupta power considerably. It is generally held that the Lichchavi marriage of Chandragupta immensely increased his power. But scholars are divided into opinions regarding the nature and extent of power acquired by Chandragupta-I by his marriage in the Lichchavi clan. According to Allan and Romila Thapar the Lichchavi matrimony enhanced the political status of the Guptas among the neighbouring princes. But R.C. Majumdar refused the theory of Allan and points out that the Lichchavis did not enjoy a high status in the society because they are branded as 'Vraytya Kshatriyas' (degraded Kshatriyas) in the Manusamhita. Whatever be the truth, at the present state of our knowledge we can only say that probably the Lichchavis and the Guptas ruled over adjoining kingdoms, which were united by this marriage and this led to enhancement of power and prestige of the Gupta family.

1.4.2 Extent of Empire

There is no inscription or literary record of Chandragupta I to give us any details of the expansion of his kingdom. It is suggested that after the Lichchavi alliance, Chandragupta I liberated Magadha from the yoke of subjection to the scythians. But this view cannot be a trustworthy. It is only in the record of his son and successors that he is called Maharaja Dhiraja. His territories most probably comprised of Magadha, Saket and Prayag, which are described in the Puranas as the land of the Guptas. The campaign of his son Samudragupta shows that Chandragupta I had no land to the west of the Ganges beyond Banaras in the Northern India and in the south, the empire was extended up to the southeastern part of Madhya Pradesh. In the east, Samudragupta did not launch campaigns, so it is obvious that Bengal was in the empire of Chandragupta I. In short, Chandragupta's empire included the whole of Bihar, Bengal (excluding Samatata) and eastern Uttar Pradesh upto Banaras.

Chandragupta I founded a new era called the Gupta Era, which commenced on 20th February, 320 A.D. to commemorate his coronation. Some scholars believe that it was started in 310 A.D. It is to be noted here that the basis of fixing the year of the Gupta era is based on the statement of Alberuni that the Gupta era was separated from the saka era by an interval of 241 years, i.e. (241-78)=319 A.D. Chandragupta ruled upto 335 A.D. and was succeeded by his son Samudragupta. His final contribution to the ascendancy of the Guptas was the selection of Samudragupta as his successor to the throne.

1.5 Samudragupta

Samudragupta the son of Chandragupta I and Kumaradevi succeeded his father to the Gupta throne in circa 335 A.D. With the accession of Samudragupta, the history of the imperial Guptas became eventful and important. He was destined to lead the Guptas to a dazzling and conspicuous ascendancy, which trans-formed a local power in the Gangtic valley into a pan-Indian imperial authority. We possess a long eulogy of this king composed by one of his officials named Harishena and engraved on the Asoka pillar at Allahabad. This prasasti or eulogy gives a detailed account of the career and personality of Samudragupta.

1.5.1 Accession

The Allahabad pillar inscription in its fourth stanza gives a vivid description of the selection of Samudragupta as successor by Chandragupta I. It is stated that in a full session of royal court, Chandragupta I embraced his son Samudra-gupta and declared “thou art worthy, rule this whole world”. It is also stated that this declaration caused joy among his cour-tiers, but the kinsmen of equal birth turned pale.

The above description has led scholars to surmise that Samudragupta’s accession was not peaceful. It is suggested that the princes of equal birth, who aspired for the throne, revolted under Kacha against Samudragupta. Kacha is supposed to be the eldest brother of Samudragupta. Some coins bearing the name of the Kacha and the Gupta Brahmi legend ‘Sarvaraj.o-Chheta’ have been found. Dr. Bhandarkar identifies him with Ramagupta. But this is not tenable because Ramagupta was a feeble personality who could not have claimed the title of ‘Sarvarajocneta’. Smith rightly suggests that Kacha of those coins was a rival brother of Samudra-Gupta and he headed a rebellion against the latter. However, Samudragupta succeeded in suppressing the revolt. It is generally accepted that his accession took place in circa 335. A.D.

1.5.2 Conquests

The reign of Samudragupta is chiefly remarkable for the series of military campaigns which he led in various parts of the country. At the time of Samudragupta’s accession, India was passing through a critical juncture. India was fragmented into different independent political divisions. It was in these circumstances, Samudragupta appeared in the political arena of India. His emergence dispelled the darkness of anarchy and confusion. From his very accession, it was his aim to bring about the political unification of India and make himself as Ekraat (Sole ruler). The vision of Rajachakravarti haunted his mind. The-refore, he embarked upon a policy of aggressive imperialism right from the beginning of his career and proved to be one of the greatest conquerors of ancient history.

The ambitious programme of conquest which Samudragupta followed is recorded in details in the Allahabad pillar inscription. This was composed by Harishena who was the 'Sanddhivi-grahika' (minister of peace and war) and 'Mahadandanayaka' (Chief of policy). Most probably he had accompanied the king in his military campaigns and thus was an eye witness to his victories. The seventh and eighth stanzas and the prose portion in the prasati, describe the military conquests of Samudragupta. Samudragupta's military campaigns and conquests included (a) his war in Aryavarta (Northern India), (b) a campaign in Dakshinapatha (Southern India), (c) a second war in Aryavarta, (d) the conquests of the forest countries, (e) the conquest of the frontier countries, (f) the conquest of the tribal people; (g) the submission of the foreign powers.

(a) First Aryavarta war: As per the line 13-14 of Allahabad pillar inscription Samudragupta first attempted to subjugate the neighbouring kings in the Ganga-Yamuna valley. It is suggested that while Samudragupta was busy in the war of succession, those kings joined hands with his rival brother Kacha and tried to fish in the troubled water of Magadha. The kings who were defeated by Samudragupta in course of his first North Indian campaigns were Achyuta Naga of Ahichhatra, Nagasena of Mathura and Ganapati Naga of Padmavati. These Naga rulers formed a league against Samudragupta and put up a stiff resistance. However in a fierce battle, they were defeated. Samudragupta then proceeded towards the Kataka territory and defeated a prince of that family and sported for sometime at the city called Pushpa. R.C.Majumdar identifies the city with Kanyakubja.

As a result of the conquests in the first Aryavarta war, the Gupta dominion was extended over the regions of the valleys of the Ganga-Yamuna up to Mathura and Padmavati. The chief battle was fought at Kausambi where the Allahabad pillar originally stood.

(b) Dakshinapatha Campaign: After having defeated the Northern Indian kings and consolidated his position in the Ganga-Yamuna valley, Samudragupta set out to conquer the south. The Allahabad pillar inscription is silent about the route by which Samudragupta led his South Indian campaign. R. K. Mukherjee is of the opinion that Samudragupta passed through modern Rewa and Jabalpur and reached the South. K.P. Jayaswal suggests that Samudragupta proceeded in his southern campaign along with coast and not through Jabalpur route. But it may be pointed out that the ancient military routes to the south was not through Bengal along the coast, but through the hilly tracts which were preferred as military routes during the southern Indian Campaign of Samudragupta. The lines 19-20 of Allahabad pillar inscriptions describe his southern campaigns.

In course of his campaigns in the Deccan, Samudragupta defeated no less than twelve rulers. They were king Mahendra of South Kosala (Modern Raipur, Bilaspur district of Chattisgarh and Sambalpur in Orissa), Vyaghraraja of Mahakantara (modern forest region of Kalahandi and Koraput district of Orissa), Mantaraja of Korala (modern Sonapur region in Bolangir district of Orissa), Mahendragiri of Pistapura (modern Pithapuram in Godavari district), king Swamidatta of Kottura (Modern region of Lothoor near Mahendra mountain in Ganjam district of Orissa), King Damana of Erandapalli (modern region of Erandapalli in Visakapatnam district in Andhra Pradesh), king Vishnugapa of Kanchi (modern Conjeevaram in Tamil Nadu), King Nilaraja of Avamukta (modern Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh), King Hastivaraman of Vengi (modern Krishna Godavari district), King Ugrasena of Pilakka (Nellore district),

Kuvera of Devarashtra (Vizagapatnam district), and King Dhananjaya of Kusthalapura (North Arcot district).

Samudragupta's South Indian campaign was confined to the eastern coast of India only. This campaign in Dakshinapatha is characterised by three principles: **Grahana** (capture of the enemy), **Moksha** (liberating him) and **Anugraha** (favouring him) by reinstatement in his kingdom. In the south, Samudragupta was satisfied with the submission of rulers and probably tributes and did not annex their countries to his territories under direct rule. Dr. H.C. Raychaudhary has described his policy in the south as that of a dharmavijaya. Samudragupta deserves praise for his farsighted policy in the south. He was judicious enough not to annex the territories. He was anxious that his position as the paramount ruler of India should be recognised in the south.

(c) **Second Aryavarta war:** When Samudragupta was engaged in his southern campaign, there was an outbreak of revolt against him in Northern India. Some of the territories conquered by him during the first Aryavarta war was probably lost. In order to deal with the new situation, he hurried back home and found himself confronted by a hostile confederacy of nine northern kings. Samudragupta met them at Kausambi, where high roads from different places met, making it possible for all the rulers of the confederacy to congregate easily. These kings were Rudrasena I of Vakataka dynasty (ruling in modern Bundelkhand, central and western Deccan), king Matila (a region in Western U.P.), king Nagadata, Chandravarman, king Ganapati Naga of Padmavati (the modern region of Nagpur in Gwalior), Nagasena of Mathura, king Achyuta of Ahichitra (modern Ramnagar and Bareilly in U.P.) Nandi (a Naga king of central India) and king Balavarman. The confederacy of the nine kings were defeated by Samudragupta and the territories of the nine rulers were annexed to the Gupta Kingdom, as known from line 21-23 of Allahabad pillar inscription.

(d) **Conquest of the forest countries:** Next, Samudragupta conquered the forest tribes called the Atavikas. The region in which these tribes lived extended from Gazipur district in Uttar Pradesh to Jabalpur district in Madhya Pradesh. The conquest of this region was considered a necessity by Samudragupta to maintain prompt and effective communication from the north to south.

(e) **Conquests of the Frontier countries:** The above conquests made Samudragupta so powerful that five monarchical states situated on the frontiers of his dominion were anxious to have friendly relations with him by payment of taxes, obeying royal orders, and attending the royal court to pay homage in person. These frontier kingdoms were (i) Samatata (south eastern Bengal), (ii) Davaka (Northern Assam), (iii) Kamarupa (Upper Assam), (iv) Nepal (Modern Nepal) and (v) Kartipur (Kartarpur in Jalandhar district).

(f) **Conquest of the Tribal Peoples:** Samudragupta also conquered nine tribal republics to the West, North-West and South of his empire. Samudragupta's campaign against these states was the final blow to the decline of the tribal system. Those tribal states were (i) the Malavas (ii) Arjunayanas (iii) Yaudheyas (iv) Madrakas (v) Abhiras (vi) Prarjunas (vii) Kakas (viii) Kharaparikas (ix) Sanakanikas. These tribes were ruling in different parts of central and Northern India.

(g) Submission by foreign Powers: The Allahabad inscription mentions that certain foreign powers brought peace by acts of self surrender and homage to Samudragupta. They also entered into a subordinate alliance with Samudragupta, thus recognising his supremacy. Some of those kings were: (i) the Kushana king of Western Punjab and Afghanistan, who sought Samudragupta's help against the Sassanian power. (ii) Saka-Murandas identified with the Saka chiefs of Western Malwa and Kathiawad. (iii) The king of Simhala (Sri Lanka) also paid him homage. According to Chinese sources, Sri Meghavarana, the king of Simhala sent a formal mission to Samudragupta with rich presents and asked for his permission to build up a monastery and a rest house at Bodhgaya for the Sinhalese pilgrims. Samudragupta readily granted permission and the Sinhalese king built a splendid monastery there. (iv) The Allahabad inscription records the extent of the imperial influence of Samudragupta to "all other islands" but it does not name colonies in Malaysia, Java, Sumatra and other islands of the Indian Archipelago.

1.5.3 Asvamedha Sacrifice

As a fitting crown to his glorious career of digvijaya, Samudragupta celebrated an Asvamedha (horse sacrifice) as attested by his Asvamedha type of gold coins and by the inscription of his successor. Asvamedha has been recognised in Hindu India as a symbol of imperialism. This must have taken place after the creation of the Allahabad pillar, as there is no mention of this ceremony in it. Samudragupta issued gold coins to commemorate this event. After a long career of conquests, Samudragupta died in Circa 375 A.D.

1.5.4 Estimate

Samudragupta was undoubtedly the greatest ruler of the Gupta dynasty. As a conqueror, he has a unique place in ancient Indian history. He was an empire builder, an efficient administrator, an astute diplomat, a scholar, a poet, a musician and a great patron of art and architecture. He was not only a great warrior but also a far-sighted king. His policy of conquest and liberal attitude towards the defeated kings highlights his diplomatic skill. Peace, stability, and happiness were ensured under his administration. He himself was a gifted poet, which earned him the title, 'kaviraja', "king of poets". He was also a good musician. Harishena has compared him with Narada and Tumburee for his musical accomplishments. His gold coins like archer type, standard type, Asva-medha type and others reflect his personal qualities and valour. In short he was a versatile genius.

1.6 Chandragupta-II Vikramaditya.

Chandragupta-II was one of the most popular rulers of ancient Indian history. He succeeded his father Samudragupta. It is stated in the Bihar stone inscription of his grandson, Skanda Gupta that Chandragupta II was chosen by Samudragupta as his successor. But this theory is refuted by some scholars. On the basis of literary evidences, particularly 'Devichandraguptam' by Visakadatta, epigraphs and coins, scholars have tried to establish that in the intervening period of Samudragupta's death and Chandragupta-II's accession, there was a brief rule of Rama Gupta, the elder brother of Chandragupta II. The sources relate the story that this Ramagupta was defeated by a Saka king. In order to show his authority, the Saka king forcibly took away Dhruvadevi, the Queen of Ramagupta to his camp. Prince Chandragupta

protested ag-ainst this act of dishonour and killed the saka king in the guise of Dhruvadevi. Chandragupta II had the support of the people and he murdered Ramagupta, seized the throne and married Dhruvadevi. If the story of Rama Gupta is correct, then there was brief in-terval between the death of Samudragupta and accession of Chandra-gupta II. The Mathura pillar inscription points to 375 A.D. as the date of Chandragupta II's accession. He ruled for a fair long period. His reign may be fixed as A.D. 375-415.

1.6.1 Sources

The original sources which throw light on the career and achievements of Chandragupta II are (i) The Devichan-draguptam by Vishakhadatta (ii) Writings of Chinese traveller, Fa-hien (iii) Mathura, pillar inscription (380 A.D.) (iv) Udy-giri cave inscription (401 A.D.) (v) Gadhwa stone copper ins-cription (408 A.D.) (vi) Gold and silver coin of Chandragupta II (vii) The clay seal from Vaisali.

1.6.2 Military conquests

War against the Sakas extended the frontier of the Gupta empire on all sides. But it did not touch the powerful Saka neighbours of western India. From the Western Saka satraps Samudragupta had conquered eastern Deccan but left the Saka power in the West untouched. The sakas of the west were in occupation of western Malwa (Ujjain) and Saurashtra. According to Devichandra-guptam, Rama Gupta was involved in a war with the Sakas. Chandra-gupta naturally found that a war with the Sakas was inevitable. Moreover, they were considered to be foreigners and had to be thrown out. Again, economic enactor was closely linked with the Guptas which necessitated a war against Sakas. The prosperous ports of West Indian coasts were controlled by the Sakas. Trade with the Roman Empire was also monopolised by the Sakas. The land of western Saka was fertile and full of silver mines. Thus the political object, economic factors coupled with a desire to suppress the impure foreign rulers, led the Saka war of Chandragupta II. There are indications that Chandragupta II with his feudatory chiefs had to make a prolonged stay in Malwa during the campaign. Chandragupta II at first conquered eastern Malwa and converted it as his base of operations against the saka Kshatrapa Rudrasimha III. From the Udyagiri inscription it is known that Chandragupta accomplished the conquest of eastern Malwa by 400 A.D. Then he violently uprooted Rudra-Simha III after a long war and annexed his dominion in Saurashtra. That's why Chandragupta II got the title of Sakari. His conquests of the Sakas, Malwa region are also reflected in the silver coins of Chandragupta II.

The brilliant conquest by the Gupta emperor put an end to the rule of the western saka satraps. The Gupta Empire now touched the Arabian sea. The empire was extended from the Bay of Bengal in the east to the Arabian sea on the West. The victory gave them fertile regions of western Malwa, Gujrat and Saurashtra which made the Gupta empire enormously rich. It also opened up to the Guptas, free access to the ports of the Western coast. Indian trade with western world flourished through these ports. Trade with foreign countries inevitably led to the exchange of cultural ideas with them. Inland trade between Northern and Western India vastly increased. The city of Ujjain became increasingly important for trade and traffic. It also became a great centre of culture and religion. Chandragupta made Ujjain his second capital.

Besides the conquest of the sakas, Chandragupta II had probably other successful military campaigns to his credit but we have no definite information about these conquests. The military exploits of a certain king named Chandra are described in an inscription engraved on an iron pillar of Meherauli near Qutab Minar in Delhi. Some scholars identify the king Chandra with Chandragupta II. If this identification is accepted then Chandragupta II said to have conquered vanga (Bengal) and Valhika (Bacteria) region. On the eastern frontier, the state of Samatata which had owed allegiance to Samudragupta revolted against Chandragupta II. He, therefore, put down the rebellion and annexed the region directly to his Empire.

1.6.3 Matrimonial Alliances

Chandragupta II followed the matrimonial policy of his grandfather Chandragupta I, for political reasons. (i) The first matrimonial alliances Chandragupta II had with the Nagas of central India. Chandragupta II was married to Kuberanaga, a princess of the Nagas, ruling in central India with Padmavati as their capital. This relation must have helped Chandragupta a lot during his campaigns against the sakas. (ii) The second matrimonial alliance was between Chandragupta II and the Vakataka rulers Rudrasena II. By this alliance, Chandragupta could get the help of a powerful neighbour in expanding the Gupta Empire. According to a tradition, Chandragupta II for his son also married a Kadamba princess of the Kuntala country which was also useful for his operation against the Sakas. Thus, by a policy of matrimonial alliances, Chandragupta II strengthened his position against the Sakas.

1.6.4 Administration

Chandragupta II was an able and efficient administrator. He divided his kingdom into several provinces for smooth functioning of administration. Each province was put under the charge of a Governor. The king was assisted by a council of Ministers and several other officials. The governor was also assisted by a number of officials. Land Revenue was the main source of income. It was paid either in cash or kind. Taxes were levied according to the paying capacity of the people. Peace and order was prevailing in the Gupta Empire. People were happy and prosperous. Crime remained under control. Fa-hien travelled widely in the Gupta Empire without any difficulty.

1.6.5 Coins

Chandragupta II issued gold, silver and copper coins as well. Chandragupta II issued as many as eight types of gold coins. These gold coins testify to his pomp and power and the prevailing economic condition. He also issued silver coins, in imitation of the coins of western satraps. His gold coins of western type, couch type, chattra type, lion slayer type and horseman type are unique in ancient Indian coinage.

1.6.6 Extent of Empire

Chandragupta II completed the task of expanding the Gupta Empire. His dominion included the whole of northern India. His empire was extended from the Himalayas in the North to the Narmada in south, and from Bengal in the east to Saurashtra in the West. His greatest

military achievement was to wipe out the foreign sakas from Indian land. He gave a finishing touch to the imperial fabric of his father.

1.6.7 Estimate

Chandragupta II Vikramaditya towers very high among the ancient rulers of India. He was a great warrior, a wise statesman and a diplomat, a successful administrator a learned scholar and a great patron of art and literature. He successfully liberated western India from three hundred years old servitude to the foreign Saka satraps. He completed the political unification of Northern India by bringing the land between the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian sea under his dominion. His policy of matrimonial alliance facilitated the task of conquering Western India from the Saka's hands and secured for him supreme position in India. He consolidated his empire through a sound and stable system of administration. The people enjoyed peace and prosperity. Chandragupta II was a Vaishnava by faith but he followed a very tolerant and liberal policy in religious matter. Fa-hien, the Chinese traveller found numerous Buddhist monasteries and monks in his empire.

The Brahmanical art and architecture also flourished in Udayagiri caves near vidisa. He was a man of letters. He patronised many educated persons in his court. He is often identified with the legendary Vikramaditya whose court was adorned by the famous 'Navaratna' or 'Nine gems'. Infact during his period, art and literature flourished remarkably. Several temples, images and col-umns were constructed. The Sanskrit literature reached an envious position. Kalidasa, the celebrated Sanskrit poet lived during his period. In addition, the reign of Chandragupta II saw the beginning of the great intellectual and cultural revival which is known as the Gupta Renaissance.

1.7 Fa-hien's Account

Fa-hien (399-411) was a Chinese traveller, who visited India during the reign period of the Gupta king, Chandragup-ta II. His main object in coming to India was to collect the Budd-hist books of discipline, which had become practically unknown in China. However, Fa-hien has not mentioned the name of Chandragupta II, the Gupta King in his accounts of India.

Fa-hien tells us that the region south of Mathura was called the middle kingdom. This region was famous for Brah-manical religion. The people were numerous and happy. The punish-ments were not so heavy. The people generally did not kill any living creature nor drink liquor except only the Chandalas. Cowry currency was prevalent. The Chandalas had separate apartments. The revenue of the Government was derived from various taxes on the cro-wn lands. Charitable institutions were numerous. People built homes of charity and sarias for the travellers. Buddhist pagodas were built in honour of Buddha and his disciples. Fahien also refers to various Buddhist monasteries and monks. He also tells us that the city Gaya was empty and desolate. The holy place of Budhagaya was surrounded by jungle. He also visited the city of Sravasti, Kapilavastu and Kusinagar.

Fahien was impressed by the capital city of Patali-putra. He refers to the existence of Asoka's palace and a stupa belonging to the time of Asoka. He also said to have seen Hinayana as well as Mahayana Buddhist monasteries at Pataliputra. These monasteries had hundreds of

monks, famous for their learning and wisdom. Fa-hien himself spent three years there studying Sanskrit. Fa-hien also collected various books on monastic discipline from Pataliputra. He also gives us an idea of the splendid procession of Buddhist images carried on about 20 huge cars richly decorated, on the 8th day of the second month every year.

However Fa-hien saw everything through Buddhist spectacles. Thus all his accounts can not be taken on face value. Still these accounts, gives us a lively picture of socio, economic and religious condition of the Gupta period.

1.8 Gupta art and Architecture

The Gupta era witnessed a classical age in the history of Indian art and architecture. The era set the pattern of sculptural art and temple architecture, which was followed by the succ-essor of the Guptas, sometimes with regional variations. The Gupta art and architecture can be systematically studied in Gupta temple Architecture, Buddhist painting, sculptural art, coins, pottery, terracotta, seals and sealing.

1.8.1 Gupta Temples

The Gupta Age witnessed the beginning of temple architecture in India in the real sense of the term. Though we have reference to religious edifice at Sanchi, Vidisa, Bairat, Sonkh (Mathura), Virabhadra and Moordhaja in pre-Gupta period, we do not have any Sikhara temple, which can probably be placed before- 6th Century A.D. It is to be borne in mind that the Gupta Age saw the growth of Brahminism in major parts of Northern India. The peaceful and congenial atmosphere, backed by prosperous trade and commerce and above all the religious urge of the people to have permanent house of the God, gave rise to the concept of a permanent temple of the God. It is needless to point out that the Gupta kings also patronized the temple architecture in true spirit. The earliest reference of stone temple can be noticed at Udyagiri, which is partly structural and partly rock cut.

The stone temples of Guptas evolved in 3 stages (i) The temples of 1st stage can be marked at Sanchi, Eran and Tigwa. Here the structure is simple and of less ornamentation. It has a square or rectangular plan, having a flat roof, with a shallow porch in front. The walls are plain, but the base capitals of the portico pillars are highly ornate. Representation of Celestial River like Ganga, Yamuna with their respective mounts crocodile and tortoise in anthropomorphic form are noticed on both sides of the portal. These temples are dated to 4th-5th century A.D., (ii) The evolution of second group of Gupta temples are marked in Parvati temple at Nacchana kuthara, Siva temple at Bhumra, Ladkhan and Megu-ti temple at Aihole, dated to the 6th-7th century A.D.

These temples are generally flat-roofed square temple, with a covered ambulatory around the sanctum and proceeded by a porch in front, sometime, with a second storey above. At Bhumra even subsidiary shrines are noticed on either side of its stair-cases, while the Aihole temples have a pillared hall in addition to other characteristics of this group. The second group of temples reflects a little elaboration of the first group. (iii) The next group of Gupta temples are noticed at Dasavatara temple at Deogarh Brick temple at Bhitargaon, Mahabodhi temple at Budhagaya and Maha-deva temple at Nachnakuthara. This group saw the innovation of sikhara.

The characteristic of this group of temples are the square temple with a low and squat tower or sikhara above. The Dasava-tara temple has a wide a lofty basement, having flight of steps in centre of each side. Sculptural scenes from Ramayana, Bhagatatha are represented in the outer walls. It is the most ornate and embellished of Gupta style. The Brick temples at Bhitargaon are so much ruin that they can only be studied by architectural drawing. Most probably it has a square sanctum, and a vestibule, connected by a passage. The interior passage and the outer one are roofed by semi-circular vaults. Here Sikhara is distinct, of about 70 feet high. Infact the skill of the Gupta architecture reached its high watermark in this temple. Here walls are decorated with terracotta panels altered with ornamental pillars. The projection of sides may have given a tri-ratha form of temple The brick temple at Mahabodhi has a straight contour of tower, the tall lancet opening in front having chaitya niches and, walls with receding plane, re-vealing the effect of light and shade.

Here it can be mentioned that the early Gupta temple, gave rise to two important styles of temple architecture. The Nagara style of temple, having cruciform plan and rekha deul had its origin in the first and third group, while the formative stage of Dravidian style had its genesis in the second group of temple.

1.8.2 Buddhist Architecture

Buddhist remains of Gupta period are found at Jaulian, Charsada, Mohra maradu, Mathura, Saranath, Pushkalavati and Rajgir. The excavation at Sarnath reveals a Buddhist temple and a number of monasteries. Stupas are noticed at Rajgir, Nalanda and Saranath. The famous Dhamek stupa at Sarnath speaks of the glorious archite-cture tradition of the Guptas. The Ajanta cave Nos XVI, XVII, and Chaitya cave No. XIX are the most important caves excavated by the Guptas. These cave architecture are unique in ancient India, notable for their sculptural art and paintings.

1.8.3 Sculptural Art

The technique of sculptural art was perfected during the Gupta period and a definite type evolved. The Gupta art is characterised by ideals of beauty with a highly developed aesthetic sense. Beautiful figures of Buddha were carved out, having full of Charm, dignity, gracefulness and a radiant spiri-tual expression. In general, sublime idealism combined with a highly developed sense of rhythm and beauty, vigour and refinement in design and execution, characterise the sculptural art of the Guptas. Here there is a balance between inner form and outer spirit. The finest examples of Gupta sculptural art are noticed in the Buddha images, of Saranath and Mathura, Ganga relief from Besnagar, Anantasayin relief of Dasavatara temple, Ramayana panels from Deagarh, door panel from Nagari, Siva-parvati relief from Kosam, Monumental Varahavatara relief in Udyagiri, sculpture in caves 5 at udyagiri, and in a beautiful Ekamukhi linga; now preserv-ed in Allahabad Museum. Mottledred sand stone and chunar sandstone were utilised for making fine Gupta images.

Besides there are several free standing pillars like Buddha Gupta monolithic pillar at Eran and famous Iron pillar at Delhi which reveals the various facets of the Gupta Art. The metal image of Pataliputra, Sultanganja and kurkihar also testifies to the classical art of the Guptas.

1.9 Other Remains

Other remains of Gupta art are noticed in the form of coins, pottery, terracotta, seals and sealings. The Gupta gold coins are unique for their execution, weight, variation and depiction of various divinities like Sarasvati, Lakshmi Durga, Visnu, Kartikeya, and others. The terracotta of the period are sophisticated in execution and are of three kinds - viz, gods and goddesses, male and female figures and animal figurines and miscellaneous objects. The pottery of the period, specifically the red polished ware, are unearthed from various excavated sites of Gupta age. This pottery is of dark red to pink in colour, having thick red slip, and polished, and mainly noticed in the form of sprinkler and surahi. This is considered as the deluxe pottery of the Gupta period.

The art of painting, reached its high watermark in the Gupta age. Most examples of the Gupta paintings are found on the wall of Ajanta cave, the Bagh caves in Madhya Pradesh and the rock-cut chambers at Sigiriya in Ceylon. The Ajanta paintings are true foescos. The cave painting of cave No.XVI and XVII are highly interesting and depicts various walks of life of Buddha, Jataka stories, and other incidents of worldly life. These pictures are composed in a light and shade scheme. The colours used are red ochre, vivid red, yellow ochre, indigo blue, Lapis lazuli, traverse and lamp black. Paintings of Ajanta and Bagh are affiliated to Buddhism. Ajanta painting, des-pite, being secular are slightly influenced by religious spirit, while paintings of Bagh are frankly secular, depicting contemporary life with its evident religious discipline. It seems that the painters followed the prescription of text like Vishnu-Dharmottaram for drawing the Gupta paintings.

1.10 Gupta Age as the Golden Age

The Gupta period in Indian history (320 A.D. to 500 A.D.) is called the Golden age for witnessing all round development in political, social, economic and cultural sphere. For producing new trends and high standard of Sanskrit literature, art and architecture, the Gupta period is also called the classical Age. The Age of ancient India is generally compared to the Periclean age of ancient Greece, the Augustan Age of ancient Rome and the Elizabethan Age of medieval England for its excellence and glory. Its cultural legacies became the proud heritage of India. This could be possible on account of a long period of political unity, stability and peace during the reign of Gupta rulers, combined with unprecedented economic prosperity and outstanding creativity of Indian mind. The literary heritage, epigraphs, monuments coins, and the excavated sites of Gupta period reveal the glory of ancient India under the Guptas.

(1) Political unity and stability: With the coming of the Guptas, major part of India came under their rule. A powerful centralised government was established. Both Samudragupta and Chandragupta II carefully built up an imperial fabric, by following a policy of aggressive imperialism. They established political unity in the whole of Aryavarta. They ruled the people following the concept of benevolent despotism. The machinery was full proof to ensure long period of smooth and peaceful administration. These rulers rooted out the foreign pockets in India and eliminated the fear from such foreigners as the sakas and kushanas. The empire was free from external dangers. The Guptas also maintained internal peace through sound administration. The Indians could move about inside the country freely. The exchange of ideas led to greater unity among the people. That encouraged a national spirit for creative activities.

(2) **Social life:** Fa-hien, the Chinese pilgrim visited India during the Gupta age. He has left behind a graphic account of what he witnessed during his visit. He informs that law and order prevailed in the country. Peace promoted progress in all spheres of human activity. Inter-caste marriage, widow marriages were practised. Sati system was rare. Joint family system was quite popular. Fahien noticed many prosperous monasteries. People had freedom of movement. Taxes were imposed in accordance with the production. There was security to life and properties of travellers. People were interested in cultural affairs. There was no social tension. The people were leading a good social life.

(3) **Economic life:** The Gupta age was notable for its economic prosperity. There was surplus agricultural and industrial production, which led to increase in the internal and external trade. Indian traders with ships loaded with cargo visited the ports of West Asia and Roman Empire. This has been proved by the discovery of plenty of Gupta gold coins. Similarly, Roman gold coins have been found in India to prove the brisk trade relation between the Gupta and Roman empires. Traders from India also visited Ceylon and the countries of South-East Asia.

As far as internal trade was concerned, navigation through the rivers and movement of caravans through the national highways proved quite helpful. The Gupta coins, and coins issued by merchant guilds created favourable condition for trade by providing stable currency. There were many urban centres to promote internal trade. Daily consumer goods like food, clothing were available in plenty. The accounts of Fa-hien suggest a high standard of living enjoyed by the people. The Gupta age was one of unusual prosperity and happiness.

(4) **Religious Life:** The Gupta age saw a remarkable revival of the Brahminical religion, which had suffered temporary set back due to the rapid expansion of Buddhism. With the patronage of Gupta emperors like Samudragupta, Chandragupta II and Kumara Gupta, Brahmanism revived with new vigour and captured the imagination of the people. There was a synthesis between vedic religion of sacrifice and the new development of Bhakti, puranic Hinduism grew in this age. The worship of Maheswara became more popular. The Guptas were staunch Vaisnavites which gave an impetus to vaisnavism. The incarnation theory or Avatarnad of Vishnu gained popularity. Side by side, worship of Durga, Saraswati, Lakshmi, Ganesh, Kartikeya, Yakaas and Nagas also attained high celebrity. The practice of visiting different religious centres, on pilgrim gained momentum.

There was perfect communal harmony in the society. Mutual respect for other religions was the order of the day. The religious inclination of the rulers had great impact on the kingdom of the people. The imperial Guptas were also avowed champions of horse sacrifice. With the revival of sacrificial worship, there was unprecedented development in Sanskrit religious literature. The Gupta age thus saw a wonderful upsurge all over India.

(5) **Literature and Education:** -The Gupta age saw the golden age of the Sanskrit literature. Both religious and secular education made great advancement. The Gupta monarchs were patrons of poets and men of letters. Harishena, Virasena and even the king Samudragupta were great poets. Learned Brahmanas were patronised liberally by the kings. There were famous centres of learning and higher education to which scholars from far and near were attracted. These were Benaras, Mathura, Nasik, Kanchi, Nalanda, Taxila and Valabhi etc. The universities of Nalanda and Valabhi had gained international reputation as advanced centres of learning in Vedas, Purana, Buddhist philosophy, Logic, Astronomy and Astrology.

Legend tells that there were nine literary gems in the court of king Vikramaditya, who is identified with Chandragupta II. The most celebrated of them was Kalidasa, who wrote dramas and poetry like Sakuntala, Meghadutam, Raghuvamsa Ritu-Samhar and Kumara Sambhawam. Another poet and dramatist, Visakhadatta was famous for his works like Mudrarakshasa and Devis Chandraguptam. Bharavi's Kiratarjuniyam, Sudraka's Mrichharakatika and Dandin's Dasokumara Charitam were the great works of the age. Among religious literature, the Puranas were recast, Ramayan and Mahabharat were rewritten. Manusmrti was revised and the codes of Yajnavalka and Narada were written. For literary pursuits, the age has been well compared with those of Periclean age of Greece and Elizabethan Age of England.

(6) Philosophy: The Gupta age was also remarkable for deeper philosophical thoughts. Buddhist philosophy developed a lot. In Buddhism renowned philosophers like Asang wrote 'Mahayana sutralankara' and Bodhisattive Bhumi. Vasuvandhu's works Gartha sangraha, Abhidharma Kosha received high acclaim from the circle of intellectuals. Buddhaghosa's Athokatha and Dignaga's Nyaya pravash were two other significant products of the age. The Hindu philosophy in the Gupta age found expression in many Shastras and Puranas. Commentaries were written on ancient religious thoughts. The great Buddhist philosopher Dinnagacharya adorned the age.

(7) Science: The Gupta age was also an age of scientific attainments. Scientists and astronomers such as Garga, Aryabhata, and Varahamihra were the finest product of that age. Aryabhata propounded the theory that the earth revolves round its axis. In the field of Mathematics, he contributed a great deal in Trigonometry, Algebraic identities, and progression. The most famous works of Aryabhata were Bija Ganita and Arya Siddhanta. In Surya Siddhanta, he explained the reason of eclipses, how to predict these timings and the rotation of earth on its axis. Another great scientists of the period were Varahamihira, who worked on astronomy, and Astrology. His great works included Brihat samhita and Brihajjataka.

Both in medicine and surgery Indians had made good progress. Astanga Sangraha of Vagbata, Hastyurveda of Palakapya are some of the outstanding works. Surgery was also a well-developed science. The use of mercury as a medicine was also known.

In technology, particularly metallurgy and metal casting, the Gupta period made amazing advance. The iron pillar of Delhi is a proof of that. The pillar is 22 feet high and during last one thousand and five hundred years, it has not rusted so far. It looks like a polished stone. The copper images of Buddha and other Buddhist deities from different parts of Bihar display the development of metal casting of that time. The coins of the Gupta period also bear evidence of the progress in technology. Their size, casting, metal composition and writing on the surface speak highly of the Gupta metallurgist.

(8) Gupta Architecture:- The Gupta age saw the construction of countless temples and monuments. The remains of Gupta architecture speak of the creative genius of the architects of the period.

The Gupta Age witnessed the beginning of temple architecture. The Vishnu temple of Tigawa, Siva temple at Bhumra, Parvathi temple at Nachnakuthara, the temple at Dah Parvatia

and the siva temple of Khoh are the example of Gupta temples. The brick temples at Bhitargaon, sirpur and paharpur also belong to this rare category. In their designs and workmanship, in the beauty of the decorative sculptures these monuments have no parallel. The Dasavatara temple at Daogarh is the gem of Gupta architecture.

Among Buddhist shrines of the period, most notable are Sanchi, Bodhgaya, Nalanda, Rajgir and sarnath (India) and Jaulian and Charsada (Pakistan). In Ajanta and Ellora, various caves were excavated in the Gupta period. The cave architecture of Ajanta and Ellora stands as brilliant examples of excellence reached in the Gupta period.

(9) Gupta Art: Indian sculpture entered into its classical phase with the Gupta age. In plastic art, the achievement of the Gupta age has remained unsurpassed till to day. In beauty, balance, harmony and dignity, the images of the Gupta period presented themselves in perfection. There is a harmony between physical and spiritual aspect in these sculptures. The seated Buddha image at sarnath, the standing Buddha at Mathura, the colossal copper statue of Buddha from sultanganj, are the best specimens of Gupta art. These arts are free from foreign influence and represent Indian art tradition as laid down in all the silpatexts. The gold coins of the Gupta (dinaras) also bear testimony to the artistic standard and knowledge in metal casting. Besides the Gupta terracotta and potteries particularly the red polished ware reflect the classical art tradition of India. The art of casting metals also reached a degree of development, reflected in a copper image of Buddha from Nalanda, bronze Buddha from sultanganj and the Iron pillar of Delhi.

1.11 Let Us Sum Up

The Gupta era, as discussed above, witnessed all round progress in social, economic, polity, culture, art, architecture, literature, scientific development etc in India. The age witnessed political unification of India under a single banner. It saw flourishing of Indian art and architecture. The growth of temple activity with characteristics Northern and Southern Indian style can be noticed in the period. Sculptural art, painting, coins, metallurgy reached to a new height. The excavated sites of the period and the material culture throw light on a developed economy. The age is aptly called the classical age in ancient India.

1.12 Key Words

<i>Gupta era</i>	:	The era started by Chandragupt I in 320 A.D. and used by the Gupta rulers in their inscriptions
<i>Dakshinapatha</i>	:	Southern kingdoms
<i>Terracotta</i>	:	Baked clay

1.13 Check Your Learning

1. Who were the Guptas? Discuss various sources for reconstructing the history of the Guptas.
2. Describe the achievements of Samudragupta on the basis of his Allahabad pillar inscription
3. Discuss the achievements of Chandragupta-II.

4. Throw light on the art and architecture of the Gupta period
5. What were the contribution of the Gupta in the socio, economic, religious and cultural field
6. Write short note on:
 - a) Chandragupta-II
 - b) Saka war of Chandragupta-II
 - c) South India campaign of Samudragupta
 - d) Fa-Hein
 - e) Gupta art
 - f) Gupta Temple Architecture
 - g) Literature under the Guptas
 - h) Gupta Gold coins

1.14 Suggested Readings

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1.15 Hints/Answers to Questions in Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress-I

1. Maharaja Sri Gupta was the founder of the Gupta rule in India.
2. Gupta era was started in 320 A.D. by Chandragupts.
3. Chandragupta I married one Lichhavi princess known as Mahadevi Kumaradevi
4. The Allahabad pillar inscription, composed by Harishena refers to the career and achievements of Samudragupta
5. Samudragupta followed the principles of Grahana, Moksha and Anugraha in his Dakshinapatha campaign.

Check Your Progress-II

1. Visakadatta has written the book 'Devi Chandraguptam'.
2. Chandragupta II had the epithet 'Sakari', as he defeated the Sakas.
3. Chandragupta II introduced eight type of gold coins.
4. The Chinese traveller, Fa-hien (399-411) visited India during the time of Chandragupta II.

Check Your Progress-III

1. The earliest group of temple of the gupta period are, the temple at Sanchi, Eran and Tigwo, dated to 4th – 5th Century A.D.
2. The famous Dhamek stupa is located at Sarnath, near Benaras.
3. Two important sites of cave paintings of the time of gupta period are cave painting of cave No-XVI and XVII of Ajanta cave and Bagh caves in Madhya Pradesh.
4. Three important centres of education of the Gupta period were at Benaras, Nalanda and Taxila.
5. Three important works of Kalidas are Sakuntala, Meghadutam and Raghuvamsa.

Unit-II

POST-GUPTA PERIOD: PALLAVAS AND CHALUKYAS

Structure

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2.0 Objectives

After going through this unit you will come to know about:

- two important dynasties i.e. the Pallavas and the Chalukyas that ruled in South India in the post Gupta period;
- the continuous struggle between these two dynasties for establishing their respective political supremacy;
- the contributions of some important Chalukya rulers like Pulakasin II and the Pallava rulers like Mahendra varman- I in various aspects of their own dynastic rules;

- the most important aspects of the contribution of the rulers of these two dynasties towards the art, architecture, literature and culture of South India in particular and the country in general; and
- the expansion of Indian art and culture in South East Asian countries.

2.1 Introduction

Vincent Smith has rightly remarked that the early Indian history, as a whole, cannot be viewed in true perspective until the non-Aryan institutions of the South receive adequate treatment. The ruling dynasties of the south like the Pallavas and the Chalukyas, along with other important dynasties, made significant contribution not only in their respective political arenas but more importantly in the history of art and culture of the Indian sub-continent. Without adequate treatment on these aspects our knowledge about Indian history remains incomplete.

After the fall of the great Gupta dynasty as in the North numerous independent states and principalities emerged in the political scenario, so also in the South, the downfall of an imperial dynasty like the Satavahanas almost inevitably gave birth and fresh lease to the emerging independent provincial powers in different areas of South India. After the fall of the Satavahana family in the 1st half of the third century A.D., the Deccan plateau as well as the Southern peninsula witnessed the rise of a number of independent kingdoms. For about three centuries, the whole country lying in the South of Narmada was partitioned among these emerging powers.

One most important dynasty among these emerging powerful powers were the Pallavas who rose to political greatness in the Tondai-Mandalam, the region around Kanchi in the 3rd or 4th century A.D. It soon became a dominant power in South India, a position could continue till the 10th century A.D. The other dynasty was the Chalukyas, who in about 540 A.D. under the leadership of a chief called Pulakesi I(550-567 A.D) carved out a small principality around Vatapipura (Badami in Bijapur district), which henceforth became its capital. Under the leadership of its able rulers like Pulakesin II (606-42AD), the Chalukya dynasty established its political supremacy in the South and could even prevent attempt by Harshabardhan, the unquestioned master of Northern India, to establish his domination in the South.

The history of these two dynasties, after establishment of political dominance and supremacy in their own respective areas, was a history of continuous struggle for establishing mastery over each other. In this unit an effort will be made to mention about this struggle for political supremacy keeping in mind the limitation of space of the unit.

The other interesting aspect of the history of these two dynasties of the South is that inspite of their almost continuous struggle and warfare, they could afford to get time to contribute to the enrichment of the history of art, architecture, literature, religion and culture of South India in particular and the country in general. Infact it is held that the history of architecture and sculpture in South India begins with the Pallava temples which introduced a new technique called the Dravidian style. Further the style of Pallava architecture even influenced the architecture of the Indian colonies in the Far-East. This contribution in the South East Asian countries has become an enduring one.

2.2 The Pallavas

From the close of the 3rd century A.D. the history of South India is mostly remain obscure until about the sixth century. During the next three hundred years i.e. from 6th to 9th century A.D., we find the Pallavas and the Pandyas on two sides of the Kaveri river as the dominant powers in the South, the triangular fight between these two; the Chalukyas or the Rashtrakutas constituting the predominant feature in the political history of South India.

2.2.1 Origin

After the fall of the Satavahanas, the eastern region to the south of the Krishna river, passed into the hands of the Pallavas who ruled over Tondai-mandalam, the region around the city of Kanchipuram or Conjeeveram, which was their capital.

The classical literature of the *Sangam* Age does not refer about the Pallavas. It is generally believed that they were from outside the South and immigrated into Tamil land during the rule of the Satavahanas, most probably as their governors or military officials. But most others, however, have identified them to be an indigenous tribe, either identical with or allied to the Kurumbas. The names of some early Pallava rulers like Simhavarman and Sivaskandavarman are known from a few copper-plate charters, written in Prakrit and probably belonging to the 3rd century A.D. They performed Brahmanical sacrifices and ruled over a kingdom which was well organised that covered the Northern part of the Southern peninsula. Later than them there were kings about eight in number whose names are known from Sanskrit clusters. In general they may be placed between the fourth and sixth centuries A.D. Vishnugopa of Kanchi, who was defeated by the Gupta ruler Samudragupta of Kanchi, who was defeated by the Gupta ruler Samudragupta in about the middle of the 4th century A.D. was certainly a Pallava ruler of this period.

2.2.2 Some Important Pallava Rulers

The history of the Pallava dynasty becomes more definite from the reign of Simhavishnu, who ruled in the last quarter of the sixth century A.D. (C. 575-600 AD). Simhavishnu is said to have seized the Chola country and his dominions extended from the rivers Krishna to the Kaveri. It is said that he also vanquished the ruler of Ceylon. Simhavishnu was a Vaishnava, and magnificent reliefs representing the king and two of his consorts have been discovered in the Varaha cave at Mamallapuram.

Mahendravarma - I (C. 600-630 AD), the son and successor of Simhavishnu, was a versatile genius. He wrote some Sanskrit forces and was versed in music. He also introduced the practice of scooping entire temples out of solid rocks. But his reign saw the beginning of the great struggle between the Pallavas and their northern enemies the Chalukyas of Vatapi for the mastery of Southern India. The struggle was continued for several generations. Pulakesi II, the Chalukya King, defeated him and wrested the Northern provinces of his dominions

Narasimhavarman I (AD 630-68) who succeeded his father, not only resisted successfully the renewed invasion of Pulakesi, but shortly took the aggressive. He advanced as far as Badami and occupied it after a siege, in course of which Pulakesi II was defected and lost his life (c. A.D. 642). Narasimhavarman further defeated the Cholas, the Cheras and the Kalabhras. He gave

shelter to a prince from Ceylon named Manavarman and sent two naval expeditions to Ceylon to help him to secure the throne of that country. He thus became the most powerful king of the South and raised the power and prestige of the Pallavas to a new height.

But the struggle for supremacy was renewed by Vikramaditya I, the son of Pulakesin II who claims to have caused the destruction of the family of Narasimha and captured the city of Kanchi. The Pallava records, however, inform us that the Chalukya attack was finally repulsed.

But Vikramaditya, the Chalukya king, is said to have defeated not only Narasimhavarman, but also his two successors, his son Mahendravarman II and the latter's son Paramesvaravarman- I. The Chalukya king, helped by the *Gangas* of Mysore and the Pandyas of the South, invaded the Pallava Kingdom and Mahendravarman II(c 668-70 AD) was probably defeated and killed while in a war of resistance somewhere in Mysore. Vikramaditya in revenge devastated the Pallava dominion and advanced as far as Uraiyur, near Trichinopoly on the Kaveri. It was a decisive victory which forced the Chalukyas to retire and there was a halt in the conflict between the two powers for sometime Narasimhavarman II (c. 695-722AD), also known as Rajasimha, the son and successor of Paramesvaravarman, had thus a peaceful rule. He is specially known for his remarkable architectural activities that started a new Dravidian style. The most famous of the temples built by him was the Rajasimhesvara or the Kailasanath temple at Kanchi. Painting also flourished during his reign. Dandin, the most famous Sanskrit author, is said to have lived in his court. He is said to have sent ambassadors to China in 720 A.D. and was highly honoured by the Chinese emperor.

After the death of Paramesvaravarman, the son and successor of Narasimhavarman in 731 AD, without leaving a successor, Pallavamalla, a boy of 12 belonging to a collateral branch of the royal family, was elected king by the chief citizens of the state. The new king enjoyed long reign of 65 years or more. At the very beginning he had to engage himself in a prolonged fighting with the Pandya king Rajasimha I who in fact took up the cause of a rival pretender's cause to the Pallava throne. Both sides claim victory in a number of warfares but it appears the Pandyas did not achieve any notable success. In order to check the aggressive designs of the Pandyas in future, Nandivarman organised a confederacy against them with the rulers of Kongu and Kerela. But Nandivarman could not achieve his desired success.

The Chalukya king Vikramaditya II in about 730 AD defeated Nandivarman and occupied the capital city. But surprisingly instead of damaging it he returned the wealth of the temples that belonged to them. Later the Chalukyas made another raid to the Pallava kingdom in Nandiravman's reign and took a rich booty. Sometime about 750 AD Dantidurga of the Rashtrakutas also invaded Kanchi. But inspite of all these defeats, Nandivarman could maintain his kingdom intact.

During the rule of the next kind Dantivarman (c.796-840 AD) the Pallavas were threatened by enemies from the south and the Rashtrakutas from the north. The next King Nandivarman III however, could defeat the Pandyas and recover the lost territories. He was a powerful ruler and built a powerful navy. But towards the close of his reign he was defeated by the pandyas and died in about 865 AD.

But this defeat was avenged by his successor Nripatunga, who inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Pandya ruler Srimara and once more recovered the lost power and prestige of the Pallavas. Later in his reign in about 880 AD, the Pandyas were again defeated in a decisive battle at Purambiyam by the Pallava hero Aparajita, who was greatly helped by the Cholas and other feudatories. The history of Aparajita is not known but it is said that he was probably a relative of Nripatunga, who helped him in governing the country. Nripatunga ruled for about 41 years though Aparajita seems to have played the key role in the administration particularly in the last part of his rule.

2.3 Downfall of the Pallavas

But even the brilliant success of Aparajita could not save the future of the Pallavas. Seeing the weakness of the Pallavas, that was manifested in their fight with the Pandyas, the Chola chief Aditya, who was so long the Pallava feudatory ruler, started entertaining the ambition of reviving the old glory of the Cholas. In about 891 A.D. he defeated Aparajita in a battle and conquered Tondai-mandalam. Thus, the Pallava power was destroyed; but this was done not by their hereditary enemies like the Pandyas, the Chalukyas or the Rashtrakutas, but by their own feudatory, the Cholas who now established themselves as the dominant power in the South.

2.4 Pallava Contribution to Indian Art, Architecture, Culture, Etc

Through the glory of the Pallavas eclipsed politically, their contribution in various aspects of Indian culture has survived till date. Thus the epoch of the Pallavas of Kanchi has become a memorable one not only in the political sphere but also in the cultural history of India. Infact Pallava contribution to Indian culture is unique.

2.4.1 Pallava Contribution to Learning

The Pallavas exercised their political supremacy for nearly five hundred years from the fifth century to the ninth century A.D. The Aryanisation of South India, it is said, was completed during the reign of the Pallavas. Their grants show that the Aryan structure of the society had gained firm ground in the South by the sixth century A.D. Sanskrit had established its own place there and was used in almost all the royal epigraphs. Infact, the Pallava kings were great patrons of Sanskrit. Most of the Pallava inscriptions were written in Sanskrit and even in Tamil inscriptions Sanskrit was used in the *prasasti* portion. Temples were the important centres of Sanskrit studies.

Bharavi, the famous Sanskrit poet and the author of *Kiratajuniyam* is said to have lived in the court of the Pallava king Simhavishnu. Dandin, another famous Sanskrit scholar of poetics flourished in the reign of another Pallava king Narasimhavarman II, who was a ruler of the later part of the 7th century A.D. Mahendravarman I himself was celebrated author and wrote a social comedy called *Mattavilasa Prahasana*. Poems of Kalidasa, Bharavi and works of Varahamibira became famous and popular in the Pallava country. In a village known as Kurram near Kanchivaram, there lived 108 families that studied the four Vedas. Tamil classics having Aryan influence also grew with royal patronage.

The University of Kanchi, the seat of Sanskrit learning, which was then the greatest institution of education in the South, played a significant role in the cultural expansion in the south. Hiuen Tsang, the Chinese scholar, who visited Kanchi, saw hundreds of Buddhist scholars and monks of Mahayana sect. Vatsyayana, the logician and the author of *Nyaya Bhashya*, a fourth century scholar, was a *pandit* of Kanchi. Infact, it attracted scholars from far and wide places. The university of Kanchi thus dominated the intellectual life of the south which was done by Nalanda university in the North.

2.4.2 Pallava Contribution to Religion

In the field of religion the Pallavas had made significant contribution. According to Sardar Pannikar the great religious reform movement which was to sweep India in the 8th century A.D. infact originated in the Pallava court. It were the Pallavas who laid the foundation of the great reformation in the eighth century A.D. The Saiva and Vaisnava saints of the south flourished in the Pallava period. The greatest Saiva saints were contemporaries of the Pallava king Narasimhavarman, while the last of the Saiva saints lived in the closing years of the Pallava rule. Similarly the Vaisnava saints, the Alavars, were liberally patronised by the Pallavas which gives evidence of religious toleration of the Pallava rulers. Thus the Vaisnava and Saiva literature of the Tamils, a noble expression of religious thought and ideas, developed greatly because of the patronage of the Pallava rulers.

2.4.3 Pallava Contribution to Art, Architecture, Sculpture and Painting

The history of architecture and sculpture in South India begins with the Pallava temples with introduction of a new technique known as the Dravidian style. In addition to the temples in Kanchi and other places, “some of the rock-cut temples known as the seven pagodas or rathas of Mamallapuram are built in this style which may justly be called the Pallava style of Art.” From an early date they created an architecture of their own which was to be the basis of all the styles of the South. Thus the caves and the structural temples and other architectural remains of the Pallavas form an important chapter of the Hindu Art.

The Pallava architecture has two aspects:

- (i) rock-cut architecture from 610 to 900 A.D which generally includes the mandapas or rathas;
- (ii) the structural one from 610 to 690 A.D includes temples. A *mandapa* is an open pavilion, a hall with cells in the back wall which is excavated in a rock. A *ratha* is a monolithic shrine. The town of Mahavallipuram or Mamallapuram, 51 kilometres South of Madras, founded by Narasimhavarman (625-645AD), the great Pallava King, on the sea-beach has many cave-temples or *mandapas* decorated with fine reliefs. The *mandapas* are ten in numbers and are found on a hill. The pillars, the façade and the sculpture combined with the architecture are the real salient features of these *mandapas*.

The monolithic temples called *rathas*, known as the ‘Seven Pagodas’, are another type of remarkable rock-cut architecture at Mamallapuram. They are

named after the five Pandavas and Draupadi, each carved out from a single massive granite stone upon the sea-shore. They are complete with all the details of an ordinary temple and still exist as undying testimony of the superb quality of Pallava art. These *rathas* are not of so great size. They number eight in all with the exception of Draupadi's *ratha*, which is the smallest, simplest and the most finished, others are derived from the Buddhist structure of a *vihara* or monastery and *Chaitya* hall or temple. The Dharmaraja *ratha* is the largest. The Bhima *ratha* with its three upper stories is the finest and the most interesting of the group. The Ganesha *ratha* has architectural form known as *Gopuram* or the Gateway in the later Dravidian architecture. These monolithic shrines or *rathas* were of Saiva affiliation, as in their proximity are found images carved in rock of a lion, an elephant and a bull, which symbolise the Durga, Indra and Siva respectively. These *mandapas* and *rathas* are adorned with sculptural figures of marvellous nature.

The Pallava sculpture reveals a finer feeling for form, experienced craftsmanship, a notable sense of restraint and a refined simplicity. Among the sculptures the one that has obtained great celebrity was cut down from one standing solid rock 29.40 metres long and 12.90 metres wide, identified as Arjuna's penance or descent of the gangas to the earth. Towards the end of the seventh century the art of excavated *ratha* or *mandapa* was given up and the second phase of Pallava art, the art of structural edifices was taken up and it lasted for the whole eighth century. Splendid temples were built; their lofty towers were built upon tier upon tier, diminishing in sizes towards the summit, typifying all the wealth, magnificence and grandeur of the Pallavas.

The most wonderful example of the Pallava structural art is the famous Kailas temple at Kanchi. There the shrine with its Sikhara or Pyramidal tower and flat-roofed *mandapa* is surrounded by a series of cells resembling rathas. The temple of Vaikuntha Perumal at Conjevaram is another marvellous example of art. Here the Pallava style of architecture is seen in its most mature form. It is larger and more spacious than the Kailas temple.

To sum up, the Pallava art evolved splendid large temples of stone. Sometimes the upper part was made of brick. Above the main shrine pyramidal tower was constructed.

2.4.4 Pallava Influence in the South- East Asia

Kanchi of the Pallavas which played, as has been mentioned earlier, a great role in Sanskritisation and Aryanisation of the South, also played the same role in the Indian colonies of the Far East. The Aryanisation of the Hindu colonies of Kambuja and Champa through the Pallava influence continued till the eighth century. The Pallavas were a great maritime power and so their activities on the sea were mainly directed towards maintaining friendly relations and close contacts with the countries of South-East Asia.

The Pallava kings were Brahmanical Hindus and most of them were devoted Saivas. The southern doctrine of Saivism was made the official cult in Kambuja and Champa. Sanskrit was made their official language and more than a hundred inscriptions in Sanskrit have been discovered in Champa. The Kambuja architecture bears the undoubted marks of Pallava tradition. Like Kambuja, architecture in Champa was of predominantly Southern type. The Sailendra monarchs of Java and Sumatra and Malaya Archipelago derived their cultural inspirations from the South by means of their close communication with the rulers of the South. All these clearly demonstrate the Hindu cultural influence in the Far East Hindu colonies.

So far the Pallavas architecture is concerned it not only set the standard in the South but also largely influenced the architecture of the Indian colonies in the Far East. The Pallava Art was transmitted beyond the seas to the countries of South-East Asia like Indonesia and in the words of Percy Brown “where its influence, reflected in the vast monuments of those civilisations there with even greater splendours than in the country of its origin.” The school of sculpture which has been developed out of the Pallava art in Java and Cambodia displayed the high artistic character and the superb quality of the Pallava Plastic art. The Khmer sculptures at Angkor Thom and Angkor Vat and the base relief of the Stupa temple of Borobudur owe some of their characteristics to the rock-cut monoliths of Mamallapuram. The characteristic Pallava or Dravidian type Sikhara is met with in the temples of Java, Cambodia and Annam. But there are important differences between them and the south India temples. The pillars than form an important adjunct to the latter are altogether absent in the former.

Thus credit goes to the Pallavas for having kept burning brightly the torch, which was kindled by the Buddhists in the early centuries of the Christian era at Amaravati and was bequeathed to the lion kings i.e. Simhavishnus of the Pallavas. Later on, its flame glowed with renewed brilliance in the hands of the Cholas and subsequent rulers of Southern India.

2.5 The Chalukyas

The Chalukyas, the sworn enemies of the Pallavas of Kanchi, rose to power in Karnata or the kanarese speaking country in the sixth century A.D. and had their first capital at Vatapi, the modern Badami in the Bijapur district of the Bombay presidency.

2.5.1 Origin of the Chalukyas

The Chalukyas are regarded by some scholars as an indigenous Kanarese family. But it is also not unlikely that they had immigrated into South India from the North at some unknown period in history. They claimed to have originally ruled over Ayodhya for a pretty long time, but this view has not been accepted as a historical fact.

The real founder of the dynasty at Vatapi was Pulakesi I in about 540 A.D., who signalised his accession to power by performing a horse sacrifice. His sons, who succeeded him, were great conquerors. The elder Kistivarman (566-597 A.D) defeated the Kadambas of Vijayanti and annexed a part of their territory. Later on he also defeated the Mauryas who ruled over Konkan in the North and the Nalas who ruled Bellary and Kurnool districts in the South. He is also credited with conquests of distant countries like Bengal and Bihar in the North and the

Chola and Pandya Kingdoms in the South. But some scholars consider it as an exaggerated claim. The younger son Mangalesa defeated the Kalchuris and extended the boundaries of his kingdom to the river Mahi. The kingdom thus embraced nearly the whole of the old state of Bombay south of that river. Mangalasesa wanted to leave the throne to one of his sons but a civil war for succession ensued which ended in the defeat and death of Mangalesa.

2.5.2 Pulakesin II (c. 606-642 AD)

Pulakesin II, the son of Kirtivarman, who came out triumphant in the war of succession mentioned above, has been considered as the greatest king of the Chalukyas. Though Pulakesin secured the throne in 610-11 A.D, internal discord and confusion proved to be the signal of revolt of the newly conquered provinces. What was worse still was the attack on the Chalukyas by external powers. But Pulakesin II, who was a powerful and valorous king and a brave general, not only overcame all the difficulties but could reassert his political supremacy over the revolted territories. And he could accomplish extensive success in his military expeditions both in the North and the South.

The early history of the Chalukyas and the victories mentioned above have been engraved in a long inscription on the walls of a Jaina temple at Aihole in 634-35 A.D. The *prasasti* on the royal eulogy was composed by a Jaina poet named Ravikirti. We learn from this record that in the South Pulakesin II captured Vanavasi, the capital of the Kadambas, and he defeated the Gangas of Mysore. In the North he defeated the Mauryas of Konkan. He also reduced by a naval attack the island city of Puri (Elephanta Island near Bombay) which was probably the capital of the Mauryas. Further north, he subdued the Latas, the Malavas and the Gurjaras, i.e. parts of Malwa and Gujarat.

While Pulakesin thus was establishing his supremacy in the Deccan and was making aggressive raids in Western India, Harshavardhana was consolidating his empire in Northern India. As both of them were imperialists, a clash was inevitable between them. Both the Aihole Inscription and Hiuen Tsung's account inform us that Harshavardhana was defeated by Pulakesin II. It was a decisive battle which prevented Harshavardhana from ever extending his empire in the Deccan. Most likely the battle was fought between 630 and 634 A.D.

Immediately after describing the victory over Harsha, the Aihole Inscription refers to Pulakesin's presence in the region of the Vindhya and the Reva (Narmada river). From this it has been concluded that the battle took place on the bank of the Narmada while Harsha attempted to cross it. Whatever may be, Pulakesin had every reason to be proud of this great achievement which saved the Deccan from the domination of the North.

Pulakesin apparently turned towards the east from the Vindhya; for we come to know that he defeated the South Kosalas and the Kalingas. He then turned south and proceeding along the coast reduced the fort of Pishtapura (Pithapuram) and overthrew the royal family. He next conquered Vengi, inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Pallavas and advanced upon a few miles of their capital Kanchipuram. He then crossed the Kaveri and made friends with the Cholas, Keralas and the Pandyas. These Powers accepted the alliance of the Chalukya King who again dispersed the Pallava army.

These great victories made Pulakesin II the undisputed master not only of the whole of India south of the Vindhya, but also of a considerable portion of the territories to the north of the Vindhya. His reputation seems to have gone beyond the limit of India, and it is said that letters and presents were interchanged between him and king Khusru II of Persia. The Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang has paid a just tribute to the power and virtues of Pulakesi in his account which was written in about 641 A.D. when Pulakesin II was at the climax of his power

But hardly a year later the Pallavas, who were so disastrously defeated by Pulakesi, had not grown in power under their able ruler Narasimhavarman I. Pulakesi undertook a campaign against him. After defeating the Banas, who were feudatories of the Pallavas, he overran the Pallava dominion and once more threatened their capital Kanchi. But this time he was defeated by Narasimha in several battles and had to retire in disgrace. Now it was Narasimha's turn to attack the Chalukyas. The great Chalukya ruler Pulakesi-II was defeated and killed and his empire lay open now before the victorious army of the enemy. The Pallavas plundered and devastated Badami, the Chalukya capital and the Chalukya sovereignty practically remained in abeyance for about thirteen years. Thus ended the career of the great Chalukya emperor Pulakesin II.

2.5.3 The Eastern Chalukyas

While the Chalukyas were in a weak position a branch of the dynasty known as the Eastern Chalukyas established and consolidated its power over the territories between the Krishna and the Godavari rivers. These were conquered by Pulakesi II and left in charge of *Yuvaraja* Vishnu-Vardhana, the younger brother of the King. But sometime before 632 A.D., the *Yuvaraja* established himself as an independent king and founded what was known as the Eastern Chalukya Branch. He at first fixed his capital at Pishtapuri and then removed it to Vengi. His dominions extended as far north as Vizagapatnam district and he probably ruled upto 642 A.D. The family remained independent of the main or Western Branch and exercised uninterrupted power over the kingdom down to the 12th century A.D.

2.5.4 Revival of the Chalukyas

But the main Chalukya dynasty did not take much time to recover and revive its fortune, Vikramaditya I, a younger son of Pulakesi II, who succeeded him had to contend not only with the feudatories who had declared independence, but also with his own brothers who refused to acknowledge his authority. But he being a capable ruler, could come out of the trouble and retrieve the fortune of his family. His efforts were crowned with success after thirteen years, when at the end of a long and protracted struggle, the Pallavas were defeated and driven away. He could ultimately have the satisfaction of re-establishing his authority in whole of his paternal kingdom.

Not satisfied with this alone Narasimha Varman in order to take full revenge on the Pallavas now carried the fight into the Pallava territory itself. He claims to have defeated no less than three successive Pallava kings, namely, Narasimhavarman, Mahendravarman II and Paramesvaravarman I. He then captured the capital Kanchi. He also defeated the kings of the Cholas, Pandyas and the Keralas and thus became the lord of the whole area bounded by the three oceans (i.e. Bay of Bengal, Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean) But the Pallavas soon recovered

and retaliated with the result king Paramesvara Varman I is said to have not only defeated Vikramaditya I but also destroyed his capital city Badami. Thus Vikramaditya being defeated in spite of the help of the Pandyas by the Pallava king had to give up his conquest in the South.

Vikramaditya I died in 681 A.D, a worthy son of a worthy father. When he ascended the throne he found the kingdom in ruins; but soon he recovered and established the old glory and prestige of the Chalukya dynasty.

2.5.5 Vinayaditya (681-96 AD)

Vinayaditya, the son of Vikramaditya I, who succeeded to the throne already distinguished himself during the reign of his father by his victory over a large number of people like the Pallavas, the Kalabhras, Keralas, the Cholas and the Pandyas in the South and Malavas and Haihayas in the North. It is also claimed that Vinayaditya defeated the master of the entire Uttarapath i.e. of the North and acquired from him the banner called *Palidhvaja*. Even though the name of this ruler from the North has not been mentioned, he was most probably Emperor Yasovarman of Kanauj, who is said to have led an army campaign to the Deccan.

During the campaign of Vinayaditya to the North, his son Yuvaraja Vijayaditya defeated the hostile forces faced by his father and thus acquired not only the *Palidhvaja* mentioned earlier, but also the Ganga and Yamuna symbols with a rich war booty. Inscriptions of later period mention about Vinayaditya's levying tribute on the Parasika(Persia) and Simhala(Ceylon) which seems to be highly improbable.

2.5.6 Vijayaditya (696-733 AD)

The reign of Vijayaditya, who succeeded his father Vinayaditya, was a peaceful one. But towards the close of his reign he sent an expedition under the command of the *Yuvaraja*(crown prince) against the Pallavas. Vikramaditya was successful in conquering the Pallava capital Kanchi and levied tribute from the Pallava king Paramesvara Varman II.

2.5.7 Vikramaditya II (733-746-7 AD)

Vikramaditya II who succeeded to the throne after his father ruled from 733 AD to 746-7 AD. The old hostility with the Pallavas was renewed and the Chalukya king made a sudden attack on the Pallavas. It is testified by sources from both the sides that he achieved significant success. He defeated the Pallava king Nandivarman II who fled away from the capital and it was occupied by the Chalukyas. But he did not damage the city and in fact made rich donations to the temples of the capital city. Vikramaditya then defeated the Chola, Pandya, Kerala and Kalabhra kings and planted his victory pillars on the shores of the Southern ocean.

But the most memorable event in the reign of Vikramaditya was the invasion of Sind by the Arabs. After firmly establishing themselves in Sind as early as 712 AD, the Arabs, after defeating Northern Gujarat, marched towards the Deccan with an intention of establishing its supremacy over the kings of the region. The Arabs occupied and entered Lata, the northernmost province of the Chalukya Kingdom. After this initial Arab success, the gates of the Deccan were successfully defended by the forces of the Chalukya king led by his viceroy named

Avanijanasraya Pulakesiraja and the Arabs were badly defeated. The Viceroy received from his grateful master the proud titles of “Solid Pillar of Dakshinapatha” and “Repeller of the unrepellable.” The Arabs were thus forced to retreat and the Southern India was saved from foreign occupation.

2.5.8 Downfall of the Chalukyas

But this defeat of the Arabs was the last great act of the dynasty whose earlier records were also full of brilliant achievements. For, under the next king Kirtivarman I the Chalukyas were defeated by Dantidniga of the Rashtrakutas, another group of indigenous people of the South. Thus the Chalukya supremacy came to an end, the mastery of the Deccan passed into the hands of the Rashtrakutas. This event may be placed at about 753 AD. After this defeat, it appears Kirtivarman nominally ruled over few years more which has not been given importance by historical records.

2.6 Chalukya Contribution to Indian Culture

The glory of the Chalukyas of Badami, which continued to wield power for two centuries, had faded away when their last ruler Kirtivarman I was defeated and killed in a battle by the Rastrakuta king Dantidurga in 753 A.D. In their long political rule the Chalukyas had made significant contribution to Indian History and culture. Though the Chalukyas were Hindus, they were tolerant of other faiths. Besides, they were ardent lovers of art and architecture. Many splendid temples were built during their rule.

The caves in and around their capital Badami, give us an idea of excellent sculpture of the times. In the vicinity of the Chalukya capital Badami, there are a number of cave-temples. They are dedicated to Brahmanical gods and contain many fine figures and pieces of good sculptures. Among them the figures of Vishnu seated on the body of the great snake *Seshnag* or *Anantanaga*, the *Varaha*(the Boar incarnation), the *Narasimha*(Man-Lion incarnation) and the *Vamana*(Dwarf incarnation) are the most famous as they indicate the development of sculpture in the Deccan. Then there are many stone temples at Badami and at many other places constructed in the ordinary style. Most of them display the Pallava or Dravidian style of the South.

2.6.1 Hiuen’s Tsang’s Account and the Chalukyas

The Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang pays a rich tribute to the power and virtues of Pulakesin II who defeated Harshavardhana. He has also mentioned about the valour and heroism of his people. Hiuen Tsang has mentioned, “The disposition of the people is honest and simple; they are tall of stature and of a stern, Vindictive character. To their benefactors they are grateful; to their enemies relentless. If they are insulted they will risk their life to avenge themselves. If they are asked to help one in distress, they will forget themselves in their haste to render assistance.”

“The country provides for a band of champions to the number of several hundred. Each time they are about to engage in conflict, they intoxicate themselves with wine and then one man with lance in hand will meet ten thousand and challenge them in fight.” Though

exaggerated this statement of the traveller indicates the courage and valour of the Chalukya people.

From another piece of his account we come to know that Chalukya land was full of elephants. He has continued, "Moreover, they inebriate many hundred heads of elephants and taking them out to fight, they themselves first drink their wine, so that no enemy can stand before them. (But inspite of these military habits), the men are found of learning."

"The king, in consequence of his possessing these men and elephants, treats his neighbours with contempt. His plans and undertakings are wide-spread, and his beneficent actions are felt over a great distance. His subjects obey him with perfect submission.

Hiuen Tsang then records how Harsavardhana, although master of the whole of Northern India, failed to conquer these stubborn Chalukya People. The account was written about 641 A.D. when Pulakesia II was at the climax of his power.

2.7 Let Us Sum Up

After the fall of the Satavahanas in the South the Political unity of the area came to an end and several independent kingdoms and principalities emerged in different parts of South India. Among these newly emerging kingdoms the Pallavas and the Chalukyas are the two most important powers in the South. They established political supremacy in their respective areas by subjugating the other powers. But the most interesting aspect of the history of this period is the continuous struggle between these two political powers-the Pallavas and the Chalukyas for establishing dominance on each other. In the series of struggles that took place sometimes the Pallavas came out successful, but most of the times the Chalukyas established their dominance.

Among the important Pallava rulers the names of Mahendravarman I (c 600-630 AD), Narasimhavarman I(630-68 AD), Narasimhavarman II etc. are noteworthy. The Pallava power was destroyed not by their hereditary enemies like the Pandyas, the Chalukyas or the Rashtrakutas but by their own feudatory the Cholas in about 819 AD.

Some of the famous Chalukya rulers were Pulekesin I, Pulakesin II, Vikramaditya I and Vakramaditya II. Of all these again Pulakesis II has earned an extra fame by defeating Harshavardhana, the Emperor of the North, thus preventing effort from the north to establish its dominance in the South. Of the other rulers Vikramadity II's name is to be noted specially for his notable success in preventing the Arab expansion towards the South by defeating them.

Besides, political supremacy and rulers of both these dynasties have made tremendous contribution towards art, architecture, religion, and literature. Of these two dynasties again the Pallavas earned greater name and fame in these aspects by introducing a new technique of art known as the Dravidian style. Many famous Sanskrit poets lived in the Pallava court and the University of Kanchi, compared to the Nalanda University in the North, thrived in the Pallava kingdom that attracted scholars from far and wide. Further the policy of religious tolerance was accepted by the rulers of these dynasties. The Pallavas further took a leading role in expending Indian art, architecture, sculpture and culture in the Indian colonies of the Far East. Some of these impacts are still visible in the South East Asian countries. Hiuen Tsang paid rich tribute to

the richness and valour and courage of the Chalukya people. The cave temples of the Chalukyas near their capital Badami attracted attention of all.

Thus these two important dynasties of the south in the Post-Gupta period established not only their respective political dominance but also cultural dominance both inside and outside the country.

2.8 Key Words

<i>Vatapiपुरa</i>	:	Badami, the capital of the Chalukyas.
<i>Satavahanas</i>	:	A ruling dynasty of the South.
<i>Consort</i>	:	Queen.
<i>Rajasimhesvara temple</i>	:	Kailasanath temple at Kanchi
<i>Confederacy</i>	:	An alliance of powers or states.
<i>Feudatory rulers</i>	:	Subordinate rulers
<i>Prasasti</i>	:	Eulogy
<i>Dandin</i>	:	A famous Sanskrit scholar of the court of Pallava king Narasimhavarman II.
<i>Mandapa</i>	:	An open Pavillion
<i>Ratha</i>	:	A monolithic shrine
<i>Vihara</i>	:	Monastery
<i>Gopuram</i>	:	The gateway
<i>Sikhara</i>	:	A pyramidal tower
<i>Sanskritisation</i>	:	Coming under Sanskrit influence
<i>Simhavishnus</i>	:	Lion kings.
<i>Ravikirti</i>	:	A Jaina poet
<i>Sovereignty</i>	:	Supreme or independent power on authority.
<i>Uttarapath</i>	:	Northern India
<i>Palidhvaja</i>	:	A kind of symbol or flag

2.9 Check Your Learning

1. Who were the Pallavas? Give an account of their struggle with the Chalukyas.
2. Write a short account of the Pallava contribution to Indian literature, religion and culture.
3. Discuss briefly the impact of Pallava culture in the South East Asian countries.
4. Discuss the origin of the Chalukyas. Write the main account of their struggle for supremacy with the Pallavas.
5. Do you think that Pulakesin II was the greatest king of the Chalukyas? Support your answer with reasons.
6. Discuss briefly the Chalukya contribution to India culture. Also briefly discuss the narration of the Chalukyas in the account of Hiuen Tsang.

2.10 Suggested Readings

- Majumdar, R.C. : *Ancient India.*
Roychaudhury, Majumdar and Datta : *An Advance History of India.*
Luniya, B. N. : *Evolution of Indian culture.*
Sastri , K. A.N. : *A History of South India.*

2.11 Hints/Answers to Questions in Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress-I

1. Satavahanas.
2. Kanchipuram or Conjeeverom.
3. Vishnugopa
4. Narasimhavarman- I
5. Pallavamalla
6. Aparajita
7. Bharavi and King Simhavishnu
8. Nalanda
9. Indonesia, Java and Cambodia.

Check Your Progress-II

1. Vatapi (the modern Badami in Bijapur district).
2. Pulakesin I in about 540 A.D.
3. Pulakesin II may be considered as the greatest Chalukya ruler. He conquered not only a major part of South India but also could defeat Harshavardhana, the master of North India. Thus he could prevent the attempt of a ruler from the North to establish his dominance in the South.
4. The Aihole Inscription and Hiuen Tsang's Account.
5. The Pallava King Narasimhavarman I.
6. Vinayaditya (681-96 A.D) and the Master of Uttarapatha is said to be Yosovarman of Kanauj.
7. Avanijanasrya Pulakesiraja, the viceroy of Chalukya king Vikramaditya for his defeat of the Arabs.
8. Dantidurga
9. Badami.

Unit-III

FOUNDATIONS OF THE DELHI SULTANATE

Structure

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Background
- 3.3 The Ghori kingdom
- 3.4 The Slave Dynasty
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 - 3.4.3 Raziya Sultan (1236-1240)
 - 3.4.4 Ghiyas-uddin Balban
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 - 3.5.1 Allauddin Khalji
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 - 3.6.1 Muhammed-bin-Tughlaq
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- 3.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.8 Key Words
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- 3.11 Hints/Answers to Questions in Check Your Progress

3.0 Objectives

After reading this unit you will get acquainted with:-

- the advent of the Turko-Afghans as rulers of North India centering on Delhi;
- would be able to comprehend the political history of the period between the twelfth and the 14th centuries; and
- would be in a position to understand the dynamics of changes in medieval India.

3.1 Introduction

The general association of the Delhi Sultanate in North India is Associated with the advent of the Turkish Slave Dynasty. Irfan Habib in his article *Formation of the Sultanate Ruling Class of the Thirteenth Century*, in Medieval India I, has attributed the creation of the Sultanate to the Ghorian conquests. The last years of the twelfth century and the large part of the thirteenth century according to him constitutes the genesis and early history of the Sultanate. As Delhi continued to be the hub of the administration, except for a brief 'deccan interlude' of Muhammed-bin-Tughluq.

3.2 Background

The core principality of Ghor included modern Afghanistan including modern Oruzgan and the town of Tamarun. As the kingdom expanded in the 12th century under Alauddin Soz some other elements were included amongst the ruling elite. They were drawn from the Khalj region. Subsequently representatives of this group played a significant political role in the history of India. The Ghorians occupied Ghazni by 1173-74, the capital of the great Mahmud of Ghazni. Shihabuddin better known in Indian History as Muhammed Ghori began to recover the Muslim principalities earlier held under Ghazni. He marched to Multan, an old Arab colony in 1175 and annexed it. He attempted to seize Anhilwara from the king Bhima of Gujrat, but suffered a crushing defeat. Next he turned his attention towards the Ghaznavid principality of Peshawar. By 1185 Lahore and Sialkot came under his control. He then turned his attention towards the Hindu Rajput Kingdoms of North India.

3.3 Ghori Kingdom

Mohammad Ghori (1191-1206)

Mohammad Ghori invaded Multan in about 1175-76AD. In 1178 he attempted the conquest of Gujarat. He was strongly resisted by Bhimdev II who inflicted a crushing defeat on him in 1178 AD. In 1179 he conquered Peshwar and annexed Lahore. In 1186 AD Mohammad Ghori deposed Khusru Malik, the last prince in the generation of Sabuktgin and Mahmud and after occupying Punjab kept himself in a strong position in the Indus region.

In 1191AD Mohammad Ghori met Prithvi Raj Chauhan in the first battle of Tarain. Here unlike the separate independent forces which Mohammad met in his previous campaigns, he had to face combined armies of Prithviraj, the Chauhan ruler of Ajmer and Delhi. Mohammad Ghori was severely wounded and outnumbered. He was defeated and left the battlefield. In the very next year in 1192 AD both the armies met again at Tarain. This time Mohammad cleverly out did Prithvi Raj Chauhan. The gateway to Delhi was opened.

In 1194 AD Mohammad Ghori invaded and defeated the ruler of Kannauj. He occupied Benares. Mohammad Ghori had left Qutab-ud-din Aibek who was a slave from Turkistan in charge of the Indian affairs. In 1193 Qutab-ud-din Aibek occupied Delhi and he joined Mohammad Ghori's invasion on Kannauj whose ruler Jaichand was defeated and killed. Gwallior and Anhilwara the capital of Gujarat besides Ajmer was also occupied by 1197 AD. Qutab-ud-din's general Muhammad Khilji successfully plundered and conquered the fort of Bihar in 1193 AD. In about 1199-1202AD Muhammad Khilji brought Lakshmana Sena the ruler of Bengal under his authority. In 1203 Qutab-ud-din Aibek conquered Bundelkhand. Mohammad Ghori died in 1206AD. Muhammed Ghori died in March 1206, while returning from the Salt range to Ghazni leaving no heir. A fight broke out between Ghorian *amirs* and Turkish *amirs* and *maliks* who were slaves of the Sultan for accession to the throne. Yilduz a Turk, seized Ghazni and the entire Indian dominions passed into the hands of Qutubuddin Aibak.

3.4 The Slave Dynasty

3.4.1 Qutub-ud-din Aibak (1206-1210)

The choice of Qutubuddin Aibak as the master of the Indian dominions represented an unalloyed triumph of the Turkish amirs, who were predominantly slaves. When he took over he discovered that though his forces had successfully overrun entire north India, but the Turks practically held parts of Punjab, Sindh and the Gangetic Valley. In 1206 he was formally vested with vice-regal powers and promoted to the ranks of a 'Malik'.

When he took over the throne of Delhi, Qutubuddin Aibak had to face manifold problems. The Rajputs who had been stunned to submission by the earlier Ghorian offensive had recouped most of their territory. By 1206 Kalinjar was recovered by the Chandela King. The Ghadvala clan under the able leadership of the Harishchandra annexed the districts and Badon. The Pratiharas recovered the fort of Gwalior, described as 'a jewel among forts'. In the East. The possession at Lakhnauti was rendered insecure by its distance from Delhi and Khalji factitiousness. Maintaining his domination over the Indian possessions was a challenging as well as an arduous task.

Noted for his intrepidity, valour and strength of character, Qutub-uddin Aibek sought to strengthen his position by pursuing a policy of matrimonial alliances with influential rival chiefs. He married the eldest daughter of Yilduz-the Ruler of Ghazni. He married his sister to Nasiruddin Quabaicha, the Governor of Sindh. Iltutmish the foremost of his slaves' married Qutubuddin Aibek's daughter.

Qutubuddin ruled for a short span of four years. Though a genius, he neither won any new wars, nor evolved any new policy of administration. However he kept his possessions in India intact by virtue of severity, diplomacy and beneficence. He established justice and equity with such strict foundations. This helped in maintaining peace and tranquility in the kingdom. He did lay down the foundations of a state without being able to outline its imperial policy. After his death in 1210 there arose a problem of succession. Conflict arose between Qutubuddin's slaves known as the Qutubi and the Muizzi (slaves of Muhammad Ghori). Iltutmish from the Illbari tribe of the Turks, a slave of Aibek and a *muqti* of Badaun seized Delhi and set himself as a Sultan.

3.4.2 Iltutmish (1211-1236)

Campaigns

Iltutmish not only brought Delhi under his control but also sought to take over the other possessions from the hands of the Muizzi slaves, prominent amongst them being Yilduz and Qubacha who had established sultanates of Ghazni and Sindh. Yilduz was eliminated in 1215-16, and the struggle with Qubacha ended with his fall in 1227. In Bengal the Khalji regime too was destroyed the same year.

Iltutmish can be considered the real founder of the Delhi Sultanate. Initially he kept the status of the Qutbi slaves on an equal plane. Very soon he succeeded in placing himself well above his peers. His immediate task was to unite the Turkish nobles into a homogenous whole. He created his own corps of Turkish slaves a large number of them being Tazik or Persian-speaking officers, including scions of the Ghor-Khalj nobility. Iltutmish also collected his slaves by purchase from all sources, from professional slave merchants who dealt in war captives as well as from private owners. The slave marts at Egypt and Baghdad were filled with captives sold by the Mongols.

The Mongols of Central Asia rose under the leadership of Chengiz Khan extended to include the Khwarazmi Empire. The crown prince of that Empire, Jalaluddin crossed over to Punjab and sought Iltutmish's help. Astutely Iltutmish brushed off the request for help, as he did not wish to incur the wrath of the great Mongols.

Having secured the northern frontiers, Iltutmish turned his attention towards Lakhnauti. Ali Mardan Khan had struck coins and read the khutba in his name. Ghiyas-uddin Khilji continued this practice and also annexed Bihar. In 1225 Iltutmish proceeded to Lakhnauti, but Ghiyas-uddin averted war and acquiesced by agreeing to pay a huge tribute. As soon as Iltutmish left Lakhnauti, Ghiyas-uddin reasserted his independence. Bengal was finally annexed to the Sultanate in 1230 and a separate province of Bihar and Bengal was created.

He next turned his attention towards the Rajputs, who had been steadily recovering territories under Rajput control. In 1226 he re-captured Ranthambor. Next he defeated and annexed Mandor, which was followed by similar victory over Jalor. The principalities of Bayana, Thangir, Ajmer, and Sambhar were re-occupied. In 1231 Iltutmish besieged Gwalior, which fell after year long resistance. Kalinjar was annexed to the Delhi Sultanate. However Iltutmish suffered a setback in Nagdah and Gujrat. His apparent success in Malwa in 1234-35 was short lived, as the Paramars remained the undisputed leaders for the rest of the country.

In the Gangetic valley Iltutmish successfully suppressed the turbulent Chiefs and recaptured the principalities of Badaon, Kanauj, Banaras, Oudh and Doab. In 1235 Iltutmish made his last attempt to recapture the country inhabited by the Khokars. Unfortunately he fell ill and died on the way.

Iltutmish was successful in uniting dismembered and disorganized territories of Qutub-uddin Aibek and established Muslim supremacy in Northern India.

Administration

The substance of power and wealth during the reign of Iltutmish was represented by titles conferred upon his slaves. They were assigned *iqta's* or revenue and military charges over vast tracts of land. The *iqta's* were not permanent and heritable. They changed hands along with changes in the officers in charge. However, Iltutmish's Turkish slaves are not known to have occupied a single of the highest central or court offices at his death in spite of holding large *iqta's*. Even free-born nobility were in possession of large *iqta's* as in the case of that of Lakhnauti or Bengal. The *Iqtadar's* were responsible for maintaining law and order and collection of taxes in the areas under their control. The *Iqtadar's* or *Muqta's* held their dominions rent-free in lieu of service to the state. A specified annual amount in cash or kind called *kharaj* was paid to the Sultan.

Iltutmish appointed Nizammu'l Mulk Muhammad Junaidi a person of Tazik origin, to the post of a *Wazir*. The office of the *Dabir o Musharif-i Mamalik* (Chief of the Secretariat and Finance Departments) was held by a Tazik, Taju'l Mulk. Two other central offices, *Wakil-i dar* and *Barbak*, both concerned with the court were held by Izzuddin Salari and Qutubuddin Hasan Ghor belonged to Ghor.

Iltutmish therefore presided over a nobility in which his own corps of Turkish slaves, who held a large number of *iqta's*, and the free-born immigrants, who occupied high offices at the court and also held some *iqta's*, were almost evenly matched. The ruling class thus comprised of a coalition of two different groups, the Turks and the Taziks.

Realizing that the stability of his Sultanate depended on reconciling with the Hindus, Iltutmish handled the issue with rare finesse. Personally he had outgrown the orthodoxy and rigidity of Islam due to close association with Sufi saints. He accepted the saints Muin-uddin Chisti and Qutub-uddin Bahaqi as his personal preceptors. He attempted to conciliate the Hindu population by not resorting to idol breaking or indiscriminate destruction of temples. His reign also witnessed a peaceful conversion of Hindus to Islam. As a result by Balban's rule there was a substantial section of Indian Muslim population.

The crowning glory of his career was the procurement of a legal and spiritual sanction from the Caliph of Baghdad. This helped in legitimizing his claim to sovereignty and silenced his detractors. The investiture also officially recognized the Muslim state of India as a separate entity, independent of Ghazni. In this way Iltutmish struck a rare balance amongst all classes and laid the foundation of an absolutist monarchy.

He was a patron of learning and culture. At Badaon various intellectuals and poets flocked to his court. His court at Delhi provided a wider dimension to his intellectual pursuits. Minhaj-us-Siraj the author of *Tabqat-i-Nasiri*, mentions of the presence of many scholars from Central Asia who sought refuge after being driven out by the Mongols. Amir Khasrau's father was the chief amongst them. Iltutmish completed the Qutb Minar, a monument of strength and grace. To his credit is the magnificent mosque at Ajmer, while his own tomb at Delhi is one of the examples of a fusion of Hindu and Muslim art forms. He struck coins in the purely Arabic form. The standard coins were the silver Tanka, weighing 175 grams.

During his lifetime Iltutmish sought to groom his successors by providing equal opportunities to his children, Ruknuddin Feroz and daughter Razia. In 1231 he left the capital in charge of Razia and proceeded to Gwalior. On his return he issued a proclamation appointing her as a successor. The wisdom of such a proclamation was questioned by a number of his Amirs. He introduced the principle of heredity in the Delhi Sultanate.

On his death contrary to his wishes, the Qazis of Delhi and the Wazir, Nizam-ul-mulk Muhammad Junaidi in alliance with his mother Shah Zaman put Ruknuddin on the throne. His short reign was marked by ascendancy of Tazik's to power, which was greatly resented by the Turks. A number of Iltutmish's *muqti's* refused to accept Ruknuddin Feroz and the conflict soon assumed racial overtones. The Turkish *amirs* and the Sultan's slaves' rose at the Sultan's camp and carried out a massacre of the Tazik officials. The Turkish *amirs* then marched to Delhi and placed Iltutmish's daughter on the throne of the Sultan. Feroz and his mother died in captivity. Once again the incidents following his death lay bare the contentious issue of succession. A major issue which cropped up was whether the free-born or Tazik nobles could retain their previous influence as it was a setback to their power.

3.4.3 Raziya Sultan. (1236-1240)

Raziya on her ascendancy realized the weakness of her army and thus sought to conciliate the nobles. Izzauddin Salari and Kabir Khan amongst the rebels formed a secret alliance with Raziya. She consolidated her position by distributing chief offices amongst her supporters. Khwaja Muhazzaduddin Saifuddin Aibek was made the *Wazir*. Kabir Khan was made the Governor of Lahore. Tughril-I-Tughan Khan, the Governor of Lakhnauti who abstained from participating in the revolt was retained in his position. Raziya tried to break the ascendancy of the Turkish *amirs* by appointing non-Turkish nobles to high posts. This is evident from the appointment of Indian Muslims as *Qazis*. An Abyssinian officer, Jamaluddin Yaqut was appointed as the *Amir-u-Khur* (master of horses). It helped Raziya in extracting untrammelled obedience from all *maliks* and *amirs*. Raziya was equally determined to carve an independent and absolute monarchy on the pattern laid down by Iltutmish. Bold and courageous, she discarded the female attire, rode at the head of the armies and held open courts.

The Turkish amirs were however not cowed down by the moves of Raziya. Her actions were interpreted as scandalous and a challenge to Turkish dominance. Soon a secret conspiracy was hatched in the court under the leadership of Ikhtiyar-uddin Aetigin who was the Queen's chamberlain. The other members involved were Malik Altunia, Governor of Bhatinda and Kabir Khan the Governor of Lahore. Raziya's vigilance and popularity amongst her subjects earned her

the loyalty of her troops rendered the palace revolution impossible. The rebels planned to entice Raziya out of Delhi to make the plot successful. Kabir Khan once again led a rebellion in 1240. Raziya gathered troops and marched to Lahore, successfully crushing the rebellion. Within a fortnight Malik Altunia, Governor of Bhatinda rebelled. Raziya was unable to counter the blow and was taken in as a prisoner. In her absence from Delhi, Yaqut was beheaded and Bahram the third son of Iltutmish was placed on the throne. Determined to regain power Raziya married Altunia and proceeded together to Delhi. Both were taken captive and slain.

Raziya's reign was for a brief spell of over three and a half years. It was too brief a period to consolidate the empire. She worked incessantly towards achieving the twin objectives of strengthening the image of the monarchy and providing solidarity to the state. She never allowed her sex to impair the efficiency of the state. The absence of a military force was supplemented by her skills in diplomacy. Her father had perceived of her kingly qualities and thus nominated her as his successor. According to Minhaj-us-Siraj she was "a great monarch; wise, just and generous, a benefactor to her realm, a dispenser of equity, the protector of her people and the leader of her armies; she had all the qualities except the sex, and this exception made all her virtues of no effect in the eyes of men;"

Subsequently, Raziya's successor Bahram was over (1242) by the Amirs and the Turks. Soon afterwards the Tazik amirs Muhazzibuddin, who engineered the coup was killed in the tumult by the 'King's Turks' as he had tried to seize all offices from the Turks. The period between 1240 - 44 was divided between Bahram and Masud the son of Ruknuddin. This period witnessed the rise of famous forty to the zenith of power. While the size of the Empire shrunk, corruption and lawlessness was rampant.

Qutubuddin Hasan was a Ghorian noble who enjoyed high office since the time of Iltutmish. In 1242 he became the *Niab-ul-Mulk*, thereby holding the highest office available to the nobility. During this period the younger Turks led by Balban became powerful. Nasiruddin Mahmud another son of Iltutmish and his mother connived with Balban to depose his nephew Masud in 1246. To strengthen his position Nasiruddin replaced Qutubuddin Hasan as *Naib-i-Mulk* with Balban. His elder brother was made the *Amir Haji* and Minhaj-us-Siraj was appointed as the chief *Quazi*. He also sought to placate other Turkish elders. Balban was too ambitious and assertive, leaving Nasiruddin with little option but to relegate him with a lot of power.

3.4.4 Ghiyas-uddin Balban. (1266-1286)

Balban was born of a Khan of 10,000 families of Turkish Ilbari tribe. Captured by the Mongols he was sold as slave to Iltutmish. His ability and prowess endeared him to Iltutmish that he rose to the position of one of the Forty Shamsi *maliks*. Raziya appointed him as her Chief Huntsmen. Bahram in addition granted him the fiefdom of Rewari. For joining the revolt against Bahram he was made the Governor of Hansi. In 1243 he successfully suppressed a rebellion and thwarted attempts of the Mongols under Mangu Khan. In 1245 he made the Mongols raise the siege of Uch and pursued them with untiring zeal.

Role as a Minister

In order to strengthen his position as a minister, Balban married his daughter to king Nasiruddin. The most important appointments in the state were given to his close relatives. Kishlu Khan, his younger brother was appointed as the *Amir-i-Hajib* (Lord Chamberlain). His cousin Sher Khan was appointed as the Governor of Lahore and Bhatinda. In 1249 Qutuddin Hasan was removed to appoint Balban as the *Naib-i-Mulk*. This paved the way for Balban to wield absolute power, reducing the office of the *Wazir* to a non-entity.

The monopolizing influence of Balban provoked serious opposition against him. An Indian slave Imaduddin Raihan was alleged to have played a major role in instigating the conspiracy in 1253. Nasiruddin was a ready patron to transferring Balban to Dipalpur and Bhatinda. Raihan persuaded the king to remove all Turks from all key positions and replace it with Indian Muslims. A racial conflict ensued between the Turks and the Indian Muslims, which threatened the stability of the Empire. Minhaj-us-Siraj was replaced by Shamsuddin as the *Qazi*. Nasiruddin was aware of the comparative weakness of the Indian Muslims and decided to reinstate Balban in 1264, transferring Raihan to the outlying province of Bahraich.

The reinstatement of Balban signified the investiture of absolute authority in him. He became the de-facto ruler with the king fading into oblivion. He used this opportunity to strengthen his position and consolidating the state. He set forth to suppress internal rebellions; crush Hindu revolts and keep the Mongols at bay. Balban adopted a policy of severity, coercion and repression and used it against all sections including the Turks. Anyone who dared to question his authority or jeopardize the stability of the state was dealt with severely. Alongside he sought to make key appointments with men close to him. Minhaj-us-Siraj was restored as the Chief *Qazi*, while Sher Khan was elevated to the position of the Governor of Lahore and Bhatinda. Turkish ascendancy was restored, but he did not allow it to jeopardize the stability of the State. A rebellion in 1255 by the Turkish Governors of Sindh and Oudh was dealt with a heavy hand.

Next he turned his attention towards the refractory chiefs amongst the Hindu principalities. His first attempt was at occupying Doab where he met with persistent resistance for months at a stretch. He led similar expeditions against Ranthambor, Kalinjar, Narwar, Ijari and Gwalior. The ferocity of his efforts resulted in massacre of over 12,000 people.

The campaign of 1243 against the Mongols had kept them at bay. To deal with the Mongol menace, Balban continued a policy of watchful surveillance. The frontier tribes in the frontier provinces were reorganized and placed under the able command of his cousin Sher Khan. The next Mongol invasion in 1257, led by Hulagu was severely crushed. This increased the prestige of the Delhi Sultanate, that the Mongols sent an envoy to the Imperial Court. Balban, for over twenty years under the rule of Nasiruddin was practically the power behind the throne. He worked persistently towards the preservation and consolidation of the Delhi Sultanate.

Role as a King

Nasiruddin was reduced to a nominal Sultan. Impressed by Balban's commitment to the cause of the State, Nasiruddin was convinced of his indispensability. Consequently, before his death, Balban was nominated as his heir. The Turkish *amirs* were not willing to accept Balban as a monarch, as they considered themselves as equal claimants to the throne. Balban was aware of

such possibilities. He therefore set himself upon making the institution of monarchy extremely awe inspiring. This would provide him the legitimacy in the eyes of the commoners and raise his status above the nobility. This would thus act as a deterrent for the nobility to aspire for the throne.

He furthered this process by establishing a pattern of Court etiquette, tradition and customs. This created a halo of splendour, sobriety and forbiddance around himself and his court. The *amirs* were thus kept in awe of his personality and thus at abeyance. Balban made a great display of pomp and grandeur. He abstained from interaction with people of low birth as well as with friends and strangers alike. His court was an austere assembly, where jest and laughter were unknown, and wine as well as gambling was forbidden in the pretext of it being forbidden by Islam. His policy was termed as one of 'blood and iron'.

The entire administrative pattern was overhauled. Centralisation became the hallmark of his administration. He considered noble birth as a prerequisite for state service. The Sultan was the fountain of all authority and thus no one else except his sons were allowed to take administrative decisions. All important decisions had to be referred to the Sultan, and the orders were enforced with utmost rigour. Acts of injustice were meted out with inflexibility irrespective of the relationship with the Sultan, while the grievances of the people were attended with utmost care.

To keep himself posted of the activities of the *amirs* and other Hindu chiefs, Balban paid attention to developing an efficient espionage system. He groomed news-writers, spies or informers. They were directly accountable to the Sultan independent of provincial authorities.

Balban realized that the basis of his empire was in the maintenance of a strong army. The command of the cavalry and the infantry was vested in *amirs* of experience who were loyal to him. With the help of the reorganized army, he turned his attention towards the brigands, which had become active. Balban himself took charge of clearing all the highways of robbers by personally camping at Patiyali, Kampil, Bhojpur and Jalali. Forts were built on the highways, which were garrisoned by Afghans.

During his early days of rule of Balban, he pursued the suppression of the Meos. He brought order in Rohilkhand. He maintained a strict attitude towards the Hindus and kept them under strong suppression with the help of his military power. In 1260 he suppressed the rebellion in Katehar, while in 1268-69 Balban raided the salt range and suppressed another rebellion. He suppressed the revolt of Tughril Khan, the governor of Bengal. After the death of Sher Khan, he divided the frontier provinces into two parts. Sunam and Samana were given to Bugra Khan, while Multan, Sindh and Lahore were entrusted to Prince Muhammad (Balban's son and heir apparent). This helped in containing Mongol expansion. In early 1286 Mongols reappeared and Muhammad was killed in the contest, leaving only Lahore under the Delhi Sultanate.

Estimate

Balban was undoubtedly the greatest of the military rulers of the Slave dynasty. He ruled over the Delhi Sultanate, first as a minister and then as a Sultan for over forty years. Balban died in 1287 AD unable to recover from the shock of Prince Muhammad's death. He was to be

succeeded by Kai Khasrau, but a diplomatic gamble brought Qaigabad the son of Bulhara Khan the governor of Bengal to the throne. He was a grandson of Balban. Aged eighteen, Qaigabad turned a blind eye to the affairs of the state. The nobles bringing his three-year-old son to the throne disposed him off.

His reign has often been condemned for parochialism as no basic innovations were made in the administration. The 'blood and iron' policy was characterized by repression without being able to eradicate the menace of insubordination. He is also charged with deliberately destroying the Turks, leaving no rivals to compete for the throne. This policy was characterized as shortsighted and it was successful as long as he was personally there to supervise. But it is to his credit that the unity of the monarchy and the state in the later period can be attributed to.

In spite of the tribulations of the Sultanate the system of Iltutmish basically survived in the continuance of the *iqta's*. In spite of the great cleavage between the Turks and Taziks, and the slave and the freeborn, the concept of a 'composite' ruling class still existed. Balban's brother Kishlu Khan was known for his 'kindness and favours' to Turkish *maliks*, Tazik notables and Khalj *amirs*. The Taziks and Khalj were thus still recognized as elements of the nobility. Their basic unity was manifest in common hostility to outsiders. The Ghorians and Khalj continued to hold the exclusive preserve of the nobility. To that extent, when the Khalj seized power in 1290, were no upstarts but representatives of a long-established segment of the ruling class. In immediate terms the seizure of power by Jalaluddin Firoz Khalji not simply a triumph of Khalj over Turks, but was in fact a Ghorian restoration.

3.5 The Khilji Dynasty

3.5.1 Alauddin Khilji (1296-1316)

After coming to the throne of the Khilji dynasty Jalaluddin expanded the boundaries of his empire. Besides this, his achievements include suppression of the revolt of Malik Chhaju with the governor of Qudh. He suppressed the 'Thuggees' a band of robbers and send them off peacefully to Bengal. It was during the conquest of Bhilsa that Alauddin the nephew of Jalal-ud-din started realising the dream of being Sultan. In 1292 AD Alauddin led an expedition to Devagiri hearing of its wealth. Devagiri was forced to pay a huge war indemnity. This helped Alauddin in buying the nobles and pleasing the soldiers who were dissatisfied by the rule of Jalaluddin. Alauddin then hatched a conspiracy and got Sultan Jala-lud din killed and proclaimed himself as the Sultan. There was initial resistance from followers of Jalaluddin Malika Jan, his widow laid claim to the throne for her younger son Qadr Khan. Alauddin remained unruffled by these problems as he conciliated most of the *amirs* with gifts and *jagirs* and commoners with lavish distribution of gold. Therefore when Qadr Khan came out to fight, his army deserted him. In the year 1296 AD Alauddin became the Sultan, after Malika Jan the widow of Jalal-ud-din and her younger son Qadr Khan left Delhi.

In 1297 AD Alauddin Khilji set off for conquering Gujarat. The Raja of Gujarat took shelter in Devagiri where Nusrat Khan an Ulugh Khan pursued and looted them. Here Nusrat Khan purchased a Hindu slave called Malik Kafur who in due course helped Alauddin Khilji in his future conquests. In 1299 he turned his attention towards Rajputana. In 1301 Ranthambhor was captured and the Rajput Hamir Deva was murdered. In 1303 he conquered Chittor killing Rana Rattan Singh. His queen Rani Padmini with the other women committed Jauhar. In 1305 Alauddin Khilji captured Malwa and annexed Ujjain, Mandu, Dhar and Chanderi. Alauddin Khilji's expedition to Bengal was not successful and it remained

independent. In 1308, Allauddin led an expedition to capture a fort in Sivana, Rajasthan. In 1311AD Allauddin set off on the Jalor expedition. Thus he almost completed his conquests of North.

Allauddin now set out to conquer the region separated from northern India, by the Vindhyas and the Satpuras, and was especially lured by the wealth of Devagiri. He was the first to have thought of venturing to the south. This region was perceived to be a source of revenue for him. His unwieldy standing army of 47, 00 soldiers necessitated steady financial resources. In this adventure of his, Malik Kafur, his slave who in course of time turned to be an able commander contributed greatly. Allauddin had already invaded Devagiri in the year 1294 AD and had reconciled for the condition that a tribute would be paid. Malik Kafur led the operation. A huge war indemnity was paid and a tribute offered. In 1310 AD Malik Kafur was sent to invade the Hoyasala kingdom of Dwarasamudra. The ruler conceded to his demands and further assisted Malik Kafur in his quest against the Pandya kingdom. In 1311AD Malik Kafur went on an expedition to the Pandya kingdom, which had its capital at Madurai. Malik Kafur came out successful. In 1313 AD Allauddin set out on Devagiri and annexed it to Delhi. During the rule of Allauddin Khilji, the Mongols invaded the country several times. The first invasion came during the period of 1297 AD. The forces of Sultan successfully repulsed this invasion.

In 1298 AD Saldi's invasion was neutralized by Zafar Khan thus increasing his prestige. In 1299 AD Qutlugh Khwaja invaded India for the third time. A fierce battle was the result involving Zafar Khan, Nusrat Khan and Alagh Khan. The Mongols were routed but it cost the life of Zafar Khan. In the year 1303 AD under the leadership of Targhi another Mongol invasion was carried out. From this invasion Allauddin Khilji learnt the lessons of keeping himself prepared, not only with a strong army but by fortifying and organizing his armed forces. In 1305 AD the Mongols led by Ali Beg and Tartaq invaded India but were brutally defeated. The last of the Mongol invasion was the under the leadership of Kubak and Iqbamand. Allauddin Khilji successfully met even this invasion.

In his later days Allauddin had to face many troubles. Malik Kafur influenced all his actions. He met with his death in the year 1316 AD. An infant son of the Sultan was placed on the throne and he acted as the regent. Malik Kafur imprisoned, blinded and killed other members of the royal family. But Malik Kafur was murdered, and Mubarak Khan the third son of Allauddin Khilji became the regent. He then imprisoned Sahib uddin and ascended the throne as Qutb-ud-din Mubarak in the year 1316 AD. The rule of Qutb-ud-din Mubarak was an utter failure owing to his liberal administration and luxurious life style. Above all he was under the influence of a youth called Hassan who later was called Khusru Khan. The misdoings of Qutb-ud-din Mubarak led to his death at the hands of Khusru Khan. The death of Mubarak sealed the fate of the Khilji dynasty. The Turkish nobles did not favour Khusru who came to the throne after Qutbuddin Mubarak. He was killed by a Qaraunak Turk noble, Ghazi Malik Tughluq. This paved the way for the foundation of a new dynasty called the Tughluq dynasty.

General Administration

Allauddin's imperialistic policy necessitated a viable administrative framework. He therefore devoted himself to systemizing the administration. All powers were vested in the King at the apex of the administration. He also formed the highest court of appeal within the empire. Ministerial posts of religious and quasi-religious nature were vested in the Chief *Qazi*, called *Quzzat-i-Mamalik*, and the *Sadr-us-Sudur* (minister for theological affairs), called the *Sadr-i-Jahan*. These posts, which were earlier, the exclusive privilege of the Shaikh and Saiyad families was open to educated people without having claim to noble descent.

As a part of the Khalji policy, for recruitment there was no insistence of noble lineage. Under Jalaluddin Khilji (1296) a Hindu chief of Mandahar tribe was honoured with the post of *Vakil-i-Dar*. This policy was carried forward by Alauddin Khilji. The important posts were that of the *Diwan-i-Vizarat* (Chief Minister in charge of collecting revenue); *Diwan-i-Arz* (minister in charge of war); *Diwan-i-Insha* (incharge of drafting royal proclamations); *Diwan-i-Risalat* (foreign affairs); *Diwan-i-Riyasat* (ministry of economic affairs and trade).

The empire was parcelled out into a number of provinces. According to Barani the court historian, besides the centrally administered *Khalsa*, there were eleven provinces. Each province was under the administration of a Governor. He was the chief executive, head of judicial administration, incharge of revenue administration and head of the provincial army. He was directly accountable to the Sultan who could appoint as well as transfer him. Stringent measures were adopted to restrain the Governors from growing powerful, e.g., audits of revenue accounts as well as review of the army.

Army Administration

For the maintenance, extension and consolidation of the vast Khalji possessions, upkeep of a large army was a necessity. According to Ferishta's account the army of Allauddin Khilji consisted of 4, 75,000 cavalry and over 50,000 slaves. He introduced a number of reforms to increase its efficiency. A permanent standing army was maintained at the Imperial capital and paid in cash from the Imperial Exchequer. Apart from the infantry and cavalry, elephants and special recruitment amongst both Hindus and Muslims was done. A large number of personal bodyguards were appointed for the Sultans security.

Alauddin Khilji modelled his army on the Turkish decimal system. Accordingly a cavalry unit comprised a *Sarkhail* who commanded ten horsemen; a *Sipahsalar* commanded ten *Sarkhail*; a *Malik* commanded ten *Amirs* and a *Khan* commanded ten *Maliks*. The *Diwan-i-Arz* was ordered to prepare a descriptive role of each soldier. Branding of horses was strictly enforced. Frequent review of the army, their weapons and their horses were carried out.

The challenge of maintaining such a huge standing army forced the Sultan to look for alternate sources of raising revenue. He faced with the prospects of either to pay high salaries, or pay low salaries with corresponding regulation of market prices. He decided to adopt the measure of price-control to ensure maintenance of army with low salaries. His market reforms revolved on a three-fold strategy viz., fixed wages, fixed prices and rationed supplies of food grains. Allauddin Khilji not only imposed price-control but also ensured its effective enforcement. This policy was largely an outcome of his political and military compulsions. Its enforcement was in the Imperial city and the regions close to it. Besides the army, the government servants, the nobility and the people residing the vicinity of Delhi benefited.

Economic Policy

The Sultan introduced a series of land reforms. The time honoured revenue units of the *Khuts* and the *Muqaddams* (village revenue collectors) were abolished. All land was assessed at uniform rates applicable to landlords and tenants. A standard revenue of half of the produce was fixed on basis of assessment was uniformly imposed on all communities. A system of measurement was adopted to strengthen state control over the Hindu landlords, revenue officials and peasants alike. A house tax and grazing tax was also introduced on pastoral groups. While liquor and gambling tax was done away with, *Jaziya* a tax on non-Muslims continued to be levied. This was collected in proportion of 10:20:40 *tankas* from the poor, the middle class and the rich Hindus respectively. Spoils of war-booty or *Khun* was another source of revenue. Traditionally this was collected as one-fifth for the state and the rest was for

the soldiers. Instead he appropriated four-fifths of the spoils to the state treasury. Slaves were also sold in the market and standard prices were fixed for their sale.

To ensure effective enforcement of revenue measures there was a corresponding increase in the number of revenue officers. An office of the *Diwan-i-Mustakharij* was created to root out corruption amongst revenues officials. The salaries of *Patwaris* and other lower officials were increased to discourage bribery and corruption. Many officials who indulged in corruption were severely punished and reduced to beggars, with their offices falling to disrepute. Allauddin preferred to accept revenue in kind, especially from the fertile regions of Debate stringent revenue measures hit hard the classes of landholders and peasants alike, amongst both Hindus and Muslims.

The fixation of low market prices and the policy of coercion adopted towards the merchants' and traders left no incentive for trade and industry to flourish. Not only were the permanent merchants of both food grain as well as textiles regulated, but the itinerant travelling merchants also came under surveillance. However at times inspite of the restrictions imposed the merchants were able to secure raw materials at low prices. The financial burden of the market control was borne by bulk of the manufacturing and artisan class. The segment most affected by this system was the peasant, who forms the backbone of the agricultural economy. A peasant was forced to part with all its produce and allowed to retain very little for himself. However the peasants were relieved of the burden of middlemen.

Though Allauddin was uneducated, yet his court became a centre of learning. He patronized literary stalwarts like Amir Khasrau and Amir Hasan of Delhi. Fond of architecture, he sponsored the erection of the Alia Darwaza, the Fort at Siri and the Palace of Thousand Pillars. These were excellent examples of Saracenic art. The brilliant forms of art were a reflection of the policy to liberate the state from the rigidity of the *Ulemas*. In the religious sphere he was neither secular nor acquiesced to the *Ulemas* or paid heed to the *Khalifa*. Neither were Shariat laws implemented. Allauddin openly claimed that the monarchy was the ultimate law-making body. The state could thus exist without religious legitimation, which reflected his visionary zeal.

Estimate

The extent of Alauddin's empire extended on the northwest from the Indus, bulk of the Northern, Central and Western regions of India. In the Deccan, the Yadavs, Hoysalas and Kaktiyas kingdoms became major tributaries, with the exception of the Pandyas. In the Deccan he did not follow a policy of permanent subservience, yet maintained an effective policy of remote control through the tributary system. The extension of Delhi's control to the South ended the cultural and religious seclusion from Islam.

The social base of the administration expanded with both Hindus forming a part of the administration as well as Indian Muslims. With heredity being assigned primacy for official position under the Slave Dynasty, the rule of the Khaljis saw a reversal in trend. As the needs of the administration expanded, noble birth ceased to become the sole privilege for attaining an office. During the later phase of the rule of Allauddin Khilji, high offices of the *Quzzat* and *Sadr-i-Jahan* were given out to men of learning and not noble birth. The spread of education helped to undermine social barriers created by Muslim immigrant families in the early days of the Sultanate. The elevation of members of unprivileged families and slaves to high positions in the army and administration created conditions for inclusion of Hindus and low caste people in the administrative fold. The best example is found in the Sultan's dependence on Malik Kafur a slave during the last few years of his reign. The regime was thus

weeded of earlier pan-Islamic extraterritorial loyalties with both Indian Muslims and a section of the Hindus finding place in administrative set up.

The revenue reforms proved futile, as he was obsessed with securing benefits for the army, which would help him, strengthen the Empire. The only party to benefit from the stringent revenues measures was the State. The policy of coercion helped in reducing internal revolts. The Sultan inadvertently impoverished the various classes of people and alienated the landlords, peasants and officials alike. Market regulations were introduced for the sole benefit of the imperial troops, and not of the general people. In a sense the market regulation was a daring and bold measure. The flaw in the system was that the idea was too narrow and that the benefits did not spill over all classes of the population. The primary under current in his policies was coercion. This policy lacked farsightedness. Allauddin was a brave soldier and administrator who never looked beyond his time. Coercion sustained the Empire and therefore after his death the system collapsed.

3.6 The Tughluq Dynasty

3.6.1 Muhammad-bin Tughluq (1325-1351)

Allauddin Khilji appointed Ghiyasuddin Tughluq also known as Tughluq Shah as the governor of Dipalpor in Punjab. The rule of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq includes the suppression of the revolt at Warangal. Pratap Rudradeva of Warangal had accepted overlordship of Allauddin Khilji and agreed to pay tribute annually. After the death of Allauddin Khilji he neglected this. Ghiyasuddin sent his son Juna Khan to conquer Warangal. In 1323 AD Rudra Pratap Deva was defeated. Warangal was renamed as Sultanpur and annexed to Delhi. Muhammad-bin-Tughluq came to the throne in 1325 AD. The rule of Muhammad-bin-Tughluq includes various reforms. The first of these reforms included his attempt to consolidate his empire by curbing the rebellions of 1327 AD by his cousin Bahauddin Garshap in the Deccan and the other of Kishlu Khan, the governor of Multan and Sind in 1328AD.

The internal condition in Khorasan, a Persian territory was in turmoil under Abu Said. Many Khorasani nobles sought refuge in his court. A neighbouring chief Taramshirin Khan and the King of Egypt were ready to intervene on the side of Muhammed-bin-Tughluq. The Sultan was keen on having an ally in the border areas and hence an alliance was attempted. As the news of Taramshirin's execution reached Muhammad Tughluq he retracted from the expedition, leaving his soldiers on the bank of the river Ravi as his territory extended to Peshawar. The conquest of Khorasan required a strong army, which was later disbanded. This has been considered as an act of instability. He undertook another expedition to Qarachal mountains in the region of the Himalayas. This was to quell turbulence of a refractory hill tribe, who defied Imperial suzerainty. Inclement weather conditions paralysed supply of goods in the mountainous terrain. The demoralized Imperial army on their retreat was plundered by raiders of their entire luggage. Subduing the hill men was achieved at a high cost.

The latter half of his reign witnessed the disruption of the large Empire, which he had inherited from the Khilji's. A series of rebellions and subsequent declaration of independence, curtailed the limits of the empire to Central India, with a nominal hold over Gujarat. The first of these rebellions took place in the Malabar region. This region being distant from Delhi its Governor Jalaluddin Ahsan took advantage of the Sultan's preoccupation with the North. The Sultan himself led the rebellion, but with cholera decimating his troops, the expedition ended disastrously. In 1338 Fakhruddin Mubarak of Bengal declared himself independent. In 1340-41 Oudh witnessed a rebellion, when Muhammad-bin-Tughluq

insisted on transferring him to South. The rebellion was quelled and he was pardoned and subsequently appointed as the keeper of the royal gardens.

Muhammad bin Tughluq's engagements with his domestic affairs made him turn a blind eye to the Mongols. They made use of his opportunity and invaded India in 1328 AD. The shifting of the capital from Delhi to Devagiri also proved advantageous to the Mongols, as they prepared for more conquests. The Sultan's ambitious plan of invading Himachal and the devastation of his army owing to inhospitable climate was another blunder by Mohammed-bin-Tughluq. In 1340 the Governor of Gujarat declared himself independent. The Sultan faced problems from the Afghans led by Hasan Gangu. In 1350 AD the province of Gujarat revolted under Taghi. He pursued the enemy to inflict punishment, but unfortunately Mohammed bin-Tughluq died out of illness. His cousin Feroz Tughluq whose mother was a Rajput succeeded him.

One of the most significant revolts took place in the Deccan in 1336. Harihara a Hindu chief with his brother laid down the foundations of the Vijaynagar Empire. It became a rallying point of the erstwhile Hindu rulers of the Deccan. Krishnan Nayar the ruler of the erstwhile Kakatiya kingdom organised a confederacy of Hindu rulers. Supported by Ballal IV, Harihara and the other Hindu rulers threw off the Imperial yoke in Warangal, Dwarasamudra and the country of the Coromondal Coast.

Administration

His reign on the basis of the success of his policy has been divided into two phases. The first one was between 1325-1335; with the other phase being between 1335-1351. The first phase was marked by a series of farsighted innovations. Muhammad-bin-Tughluq inherited an empire with a substantially replenished treasury. Initially in a bid to win allegiance of the old nobility, he showered lavish gifts, which added to further depletion of the treasury. To replenish the treasury, he had to tap other sources of revenue. There was a massive enhancement in taxation in the fertile Doab region. He continued with Allauddin Khilji's policy of taxing a maximum of 50% of the total produce. A special department called the *Diwan-i-Talah Akhnam-i-Taqui* was created for overseeing the execution of the project. He ruthlessly implemented the taxplan, irrespective of the ground reality in cultivation. Any violation in the payment of revenue witnessed severe punishment. The Sultan appointed *Kaikhuns* to extract cesses. Often the peasants faced natural calamities like drought and famine. While the landholders flourished the ordinary peasant suffered. In fact famine like conditions persisted in Delhi and its adjoining areas for several years reducing the peasants to abject poverty. Many perished under such conditions. In 1332 when Muhammad-bin-Tughluq returned to Delhi following the Devagiri fiasco Doab was seething with rebellion. He enforced coercion, which also reduced production. In 1337 foodgrain production fell short of civil and military needs. This forced him to revise his stand on taxation. He decided to provide special incentives to agriculturists. A special ministry was set up to provide agricultural loans and the officials were instructed to ensure an increase in production. Though Muhammad-bin-Tughluq showed genuine concern for agrarian reform, its hasty implementation coupled with corruption and indiscipline amongst the bureaucracy, ruined agriculture.

He was the first of the Delhi Sultans who paid meticulous interest to the quality, design and finish of the token currency. He introduced a gold *dinar* weighing 201.6 grams and revised the silver *adali* of 144 grams. For smaller transactions he introduced the *dokani* or *sultani*. His most daring venture was the introduction of the token currency in copper. This was introduced for a number of reasons. The treasury had been depleted due to drain of resources during coronation, the famines, the Doab exactions, transfer of capital and stalling of Mongol incursions. This introduction was motivated as silver was becoming scarce and could be used on a mass scale. However while copper coins were made a legal

tender, the Sultan failed to safeguard the currency as it was not backed by sufficient gold bullion in the royal mint. As a result each house practically became a mint, devaluing the coins. Trade and commerce suffered as the foreign traders refused to accept such currency, which undermined the prestige of the Empire. To redeem the situation Muhammad-bin-Tughluq permitted people to exchange their hoard of coins with silver and gold currency. Thousands continued to produce currencies and exchange it in the treasury, which proved an immense drain to the Sultanate treasury in the long run.

Following the footsteps of Alauddin Khilji, he set to free the state from the clutches of the *Ulemas* (religious preceptors). Muhammad-bin-Tughluq, with his enlightened mind and love for justice was determined to keep secular issues out of the shackles of the *Ulemas*. While not defying the 'Shariat', he refused to strain himself to seek their support in important affairs. Four Muftis were officially to advise the Sultan in administration of justice. Equity before law was the axiom of his administration and thus on many occasions overruled advice of the *Ulemas* and *Qazi's*. This earned him their hostility that they even fostered rebellions. Unable to suppress the rebellions he offered them important posts and subsequently on refusal inflicted severe punishment. In 1340 he secured legitimation from the Caliphate and expected that the *Ulemas* would recognize his stature. The *Ulemas* however refused to reconcile with his secular ideology and was branded as a heretic as he was tolerant towards the Hindus and offered them high posts.

Muhammad-bin-Tughluq's experiments with his ideas of administration are noteworthy. One of the significant events of his reign was the shifting of the capital to Devagiri, rechristened as Daulatabad. It seemed to be taken up under the consideration that Daulatabad would hold a central position in his Empire as it seemed equidistant from Delhi, Gujarat, Lakhnauti. To balance the population he sought to transfer a section of the north Indian Muslim population including saints, *ulemas* and *Amirs*. This transfer of capital involved the shifting of the army, officials, servants, tradesman, court and shift of population. This was a torture of the people who suffered greatly. The region appeared to be too remote for the Mongols to arouse their interest. To ensure the success of this magnificent mass migration he made liberal gifts to all sections of the people. Forts and spacious roads were constructed which were lined with shady trees. Daulatabad itself was endowed with a number of buildings. His Deccan adventures left the Sultan physically exhausted, politically dissipated and financially ruined.

Estimate

The reign of Muhammad-bin-Tughluq, who inherited a large empire, including the south could not be sustained. His policies were short sighted. Excessive taxation in the Doab region left people seething in anger. In the south he tried to create a realm of nominal suzerainty did not work as the distance from Delhi made the rulers defiant. The extra-territorial ventures into the northern mountainous belt ended in a fiasco. His anxiety to execute his plans with speed and in a ruthless manner accounted for failure in his schemes.

The society during his reign became more composite with upward mobility in the nobility. Many people who were earlier considered low born were given important posts. Educated men found place in the administrative set up. Ratan, a Hindu barber was a scholar in Mathematics and was appointed as the Governor of Sindh. Najib, a musician of obscure origin was assigned the Charge of Gujarat, Multan and Badaun. Examples of this kind are in plenty. This happened because educational institutions were maintained or aided by the state were staffed with reputed scholars. These institutions admitted students belonging to various strata of the society. These schools or *madrasas* (Islamic schools) increased as the city of Delhi expanded. By the time of Muhammad –bin-Tughluq, the number of such schools had increased to 1000 alone in Delhi. In fact historians Ibn-Battuta and Isami corroborate that,

the Sultan's plan to shift his capital to Daulatabad and make it a leading centre of Islamic learning, was to get rid of Delhi's elite who were critical of his policies. This he thought would help him in freely pursuing radical policies and religious goals. Unlike Allauddin Khilji the Sultan did not have the good fortune of having a capable adviser.

3.6.2 Feroze Shah Tughlaq (1351-1388)

The sudden death of Muhammad –bin-Tughluq in Thatta in 1351 amidst a military campaign, created an anomalous situation. It perilously left an army leaderless, amidst rebels and Mongol mercenaries, who were adept in changing loyalties. With the Imperial throne vacant it was essential to select a successor soon, lest it unleashed a war of succession. The logical choice of the nobles was to enthrone Feroz Shah Tughluq, who was trained in the art of administration by Ghiyasuddin Tughluq and his cousin Muhammad-bin-Tughluq. A man of religious temperament, he initially refused to accept the reigns of the Empire, but finally acquiesced. As a close witness to the 'magnificent failures' of his cousin he chose to tread the middle path. He gave primacy to promote material upliftment of the people rather than indulge in fresh wars.

Feroze Tughlaq became the Sultan in the year 1351 AD. He did not contribute much to expansion of territories of the empire, which he inherited. His military weakness resulted in the loss of his territories. He failed in his attempt to regain Bengal. In 1360 he invaded Jajnagar on his journey back after the Bengal fiasco. Many historians are of the opinion that he sought to destroy the Jagannath Puri temple. The terms of the truce, which insisted on payment of annual tribute, corroborates that it was out of the desire to replenish his army that the attack was carried out. In course of the Quarachal expedition, Muhammad-bin-Tughluq had conquered Nagarkot. In the wake of a general rebellion, the ruler of Nagarkot declared independence. In 1360 Feroz Shah Tughluq led an expedition to Nagarkot. After a prolonged siege and desecration of the Jwalamukhi temple, a truce was accomplished. By it he received a large booty, which included 1300 Sanskrit manuscripts. In 1326 AD he met with success in his expedition to Sindh.

Initially he tried to regain lost territories in the Deccan by sending emissaries to Malabar, where he was ignored. It is recorded that the Sultan after the second Lakhnauti expedition, had set out for Daulatabad, but retreated from Biyana. Dismal failures in his other campaigns convinced Feroz Shah Tughluq of the futility of undertaking fresh campaigns to the Deccan. Convinced of his inability in war the Sultan made an official declaration in 1367 of henceforth abstaining from war. As a military general he proved vacillating and feeble and was unable to add territory to his kingdom. He lost important provinces like Bengal, Sindh and the Deccan.

He was immediately succeeded by Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq-II who ruled from 1388-1389 AD. He was murdered in 1389 AD and was succeeded by Abu Baker. In a struggle that followed between him and one of the sons of Feroze Tughlaq Abu Baker was defeated. The younger son of Feroze Tughluq, Nasiruddin Muhammad ruled from 1390-1394 AD. He died in 1394 AD and was succeeded by Humayun. After his death in 1395 the Tughluq dynasty saw the last Tughluq ruler Mahmud Nasiruddin. He ruled from 1395-1413 AD. The invasion of Timur sealed the fate of the Tughluq dynasty.

After the Tughluk dynasty Indian history witnessed the rule of the Saiyyids and the Lodis. The foundation of these two kingdoms was on the remains of the Tughluq Empire, which was razed to the ground as a result of Timur's invasion. Timur was a Barlas Turk. Born in 1336 AD he grew up with a military skill that made him a military genius. He attained the throne of Samarqand in 1369 AD. With the zeal of conquering distant lands he set out and conquered several Central Asian territories before

turning towards India. With an ambition to possess a large territory, besides acquiring enough wealth Timur moulded his conquest, as he was aware of the disintegrating Delhi Sultanate he invaded beyond the Indus with a powerful army. Timur's grandson Pir Muhammad had conquered Multan, Ulch, Pakpattan and Dipalpur. Both proceeded towards Delhi and defeated Sultan Muhammad Shah. He then conquered Meerut and Haridwar. Besides conquering these territories he looted the wealth of the temples. He nominated Khizr Khan as his governor in India. Thus the political stability of the country was disrupted and the condition that prevailed then ultimately resulted in the downfall of the Tughlaqs.

Administration

A witness of the rebellions led by the *ulemas*, Firoz Shah Tughluq a devout man tried to conduct the affairs of the state according to the theocratic principles of his faith. This was aimed at strengthening his political position. He re-granted all the *Inams* and *Waqfs* to the various *ulemas*, which had been cancelled by Muhammad-bin-Tughluq. He obtained legitimation on receiving the robe of honour from the Abbasid Caliph. To appease the *ulemas*, Firoz discriminated against the Shias and the Hindus. For the first time *Jaziya* was strictly enforced upon the Brahmins. Hindus were encouraged to convert in lieu of high posts and freedom from *Jaziya*. He was therefore one of the first Delhi Sultan to indulge in deliberate conversions of Hindus.

Firoz Tughluq sought to express his gratefulness to the nobility and secure their sustained support in his reign. The income of the Empire was divided amongst the *Khans' Amirs' and Maliks'*. He replaced the officers appointed by his predecessor and replaced them by his own supporters. The offices were made hereditary. The officers and soldiers were no longer paid in cash, instead were offered *jagirs* (rent free land). He reintroduced the *Jagirdari* system, which was abolished by Alauddin Khilji. All these measures result in the improved financial status of the empire.

It is to the credit of Firoz Shah Tughluq that construction boom is associated. He is said to have built 80-90 villages and towns. Chief amongst them were Firozabad or New Delhi, Fatehabad in Hissar, Firozpur in Badaun and Jaunpur, which remains a tribute to his memory. Besides he built four mosques, thirty palaces, two hundred *sarais* (rest houses) five reservoirs amongst many other constructions. The growth of towns in turn provided impetus to trade and commerce. Organisation of free hospitals under the ablest of *hakims* (medicine man). An ardent lover of culture and learning, the most important historical treatises of Ziauddin Barani and Shams-i-Siraj Afif were written under his patronage. He wrote his biography 'Fatuh-i-Feroz Shahi and ordered the translation of some rare Sanskrit manuscripts. He insisted that provincial Governors to encourage art and learning in their provincial capitals.

Revenue Policy

In an attempt to disassociate himself from the policy of Muhammad-bin-Tughluq, he pardoned all loans by burning all records in a public *darbar*. The infamous 'twenty-six cesses' were done away with. Fresh assessment of land was taken up. With the assessment completed in six years time, the land revenue was fixed in perpetuity at six crore and eighty-five lakh *tankas* (currency under the Sultanate). The Sultans share was not fixed as the entire amount was to be shared by the *Maliks* and *Amirs*. This led to extension of cultivation and helped in the growth of a prosperous economy. The earlier system of receiving benevolences from Governors was discontinued. They were only to pay a fixed share of revenue.

To improve the lot of the peasants and the slaves special measures were taken up. Reclamation of wasteland was encouraged. For improving production in agriculture proper irrigation facilities were

initiated by the state. Canals as well as 150 wells were provided. Some of the new canals provided water to new urban areas. This led to a spurt of agricultural colonies along the Doab where about 52 of them sprung up. Additional production ensured income for the Imperial treasury. The Sultan sponsored the growth of 1200 fruit orchards around Delhi, which provide the treasury with an additional source of income. Old *Karkhanas* (factories) were reconstituted and new ones were established, which was primarily manned by slaves. It goes to the credit of Firoz Shah Tughluq as a pioneer to utilize the slaves for constructive purposes. A separate department of slavery was set up under the Finance Ministry. Bulk of the slaves were recruited as bodyguards, while the rest were trained in various branches of skills. As a result of these policies there was all-round prosperity in his state.

The Sultan also introduced new variety of coins in his Empire. Of special significance are the half and quarter *jitals*, mixed coins of copper and silver. This strengthened the metallic stability of the coinage.

Estimate

The reign of Feroz Shah Tughluq of over 37 years was one of tranquility, where peace and prosperity prevailed. He proved to be the best example of a benevolent ruler. Nevertheless he failed to consolidate his Empire. The reforms strengthened his position, but in the long run hastened the disintegration of the Tughluq Dynasty. His attempt to make the state theocratic antagonized many sections of the population. Strong military tactics did not back the attempt at theocracy. His policy of granting *Jagir's* to the soldiers, robbed the army of its efficiency. With distribution of all resources amongst the officials and nobility enriched them, which undermined the central authority. General administration was neglected and corruption and bribery reigned supreme. The unusual growth of a slave system caused a great deal of lawlessness under his weak successors.

3.7 Let Us Sum Up

The Turkish expansion into the Kingdom of Ghor in the north of India brought them closer to the territories beyond it. The Mongol hordes were in control of territories north of present Afghanistan leaving the other groups to naturally expand towards India. Though Muhammad Ghori is considered the founder of the Delhi Sultanate but its real credit can be given to Iltutmish of the Slave dynasty. The socio-economic and political landscape witnessed a massive transformation with the unification of large areas in northern, central, western and some portions of eastern India. The zenith of Imperial Delhi was achieved under the rule of Alauddin Khalji in the 13th and 14th centuries. The whimsical reign of Muhammad-bin-Tughluq who ordered the transfer of capital and population to Daulatabad in Deccan brought untold miseries to the people. Failures of his military campaigns and that of his successor greatly undermined the power and extent of the Delhi Sultanate. Successful internal policies of Feroz Shah Tughluq stalled the decline for a limited period. End of his reign marked the decline of the Delhi Sultanate.

Changes at the level of the polity initiated changes in the socio-economic structure. The multi-state system evolved after Harsha gave way to centralized political administration. The old cities were restructured as cosmopolitan urban centres. The artisans and craftsmen who earlier lived in peripheral areas could live in their own houses in the vicinity of the ruling elite. This process of urbanization initiated by the Sultans led to greater social mobility in the urban areas.

As Turkish rule consolidated itself in Delhi the needs of administration induced migrations from Central Asia and Afghanistan. Under the Slave Dynasty while stress was laid on noble birth for securing

important positions in the state service. The Khilji Sultans met the needs of administration by inducting Hindu chiefs as well as converted Indian Muslims. New elements in the population and the economic policies created certain level of social tensions

3.8 Key Words

<i>Amirs and Maliks</i>	:	Nobles.
<i>Iqta's</i>	:	transferable territorial fiscal assignments.
<i>Wali</i>	:	Governor.
<i>Qutubi</i>	:	slaves of Qutubuddin Aibek
<i>Muizzi</i>	:	slaves of Muhammad Ghori also known as Shamsuddin
<i>Shamsi</i>	:	slaves of Iltutmish
<i>Inams and Wafqks</i>	:	land holdings assigned to religious leaders.

3.9 Check Your Learning

1. In what way was the Delhi Sultanate a departure from the earlier invaders?
2. Discuss the major achievements of the Slave Dynasty?
3. How far is it correct to state that the Delhi Sultanate reached its zenith under the Khilji dynasty?
4. Assess the reign of Muhammad-bin-Tughluq?
5. Was the reform regime of Feroz Shah Tughluq able to stem the tide of decline of the Sultanate?
6. Did the invasion of Amir Timur lead to the shrinking of the Delhi Sultanate?

3.10 Suggested Readings

Habib, Irfan (ed) : *Formation of the Sultanate Ruling Class of the Thirteenth Century* by Irfan Habib in Medieval

India 1: Researches in India 1200-1750, Oxford University Press, New Delhi 1992.

Frykenberg, R.E. (ed) : *The study of Delhi: An Historical Outline* by R.E. Frykenberg *Delhi through the Ages: Selected essays in Urban History, Culture and Society*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi 1986.

Singh, Meera : *Medieval History of India*, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1978.

Nizami, K.A. : *Studies in Medieval History and Culture*, Kitab Mahal, Allahabad, 1966.

Hints/Answers to Questions in Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress-I

1. Mohammad Ghori defeated Prithviraj Chauhan in the first battle of Tarain.
2. Qutub-ud-din Aibak founded the slave dynasty in India.
3. Iltutmish completed the Qutb minar at Delhi, which was started by Qutub – ud – din Aibak.
4. Iltutmish introduced the Iqta system.
5. Qheyas-uddin Balban followed a blood and iron policy.

Check Your Progress-II

1. They were a band of robbers in Northern India. Alauddin suppressed them and send them to Bengal.
2. Rani Padmini was the wife of the Rajput king of Chittor Rana Rattan Singh. She committed jauhar after the downfall of Chittor kingdom in the hand of Alauddin Khilji.
3. Alauddin followed the model of Turkish decimal system for his army administration.
4. The celebrated sufi poet Amir Khushru lived in the court of Allauddin.
5. Allaudin is remembered for his market reforms.

Check Your Progress-III

1. Muhammad Tughluq shifted his capital from Delhi to Daulatabad.
2. Muhammad bin Tughluq introduced the token currency in India.
3. Feroz Shah Tughluq brought two Asokan pillar, one from Topra and another from Meetut to Delhi.
4. Ziauddin Barani and Shams-i-Siraj Afif were court poets during his period.

Unit-IV
DISINTEGRATION OF THE DELHI SULTANATE

Structure

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Background
- 4.3 Decline of the Delhi Sultanate
 - 4.3.1 The Sayyids
 - 4.3.2 The Lodhi Dynasty
- 4.4 Economy
- 4.5 Society
- 4.6 Culture
- 4.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.8 Key Words
- 4.9 Check your Learning
- 4.10 Suggested Readings
- 4.11 Hints/Answers to Questions in Check Your Progress

4.0 Objectives

After reading this Unit you will be:

- acquaint with the objective conditions responsible for the decline of the Delhi Sultanate
- comprehend the various aspects of change brought about in the socio-economic life of medieval India;
- understand the contributions of the Turkish regime in the realm of art and architecture; and
- perceive the contributions of the Delhi Sultanate in the realm of growth of a composite culture.

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has outlined the genesis, expansion and consolidation of the Delhi Sultanate. The regime had its roots in the Turkish expansion in the region south of the Himalayan range. Having set themselves up in the region of Afghanistan (Ghor) their entry into India was but a part of a natural extension towards the south as the Mongols thwarted any extension towards Central Asia. The zenith of the Sultanate was achieved under the rule of Alauddin Khilji in the 14th century. The political and cultural extension into the region beyond the Deccan plateau was the high-watermark of the regime. The Tughluqs through their whimsical of Muhammad-bin-Tughluq failed to either extend or consolidate on the political gains. Feroz Shah Tughluq no doubt initiated several reformist measures, which brought peace and prosperity within the empire. But his military weakness led to a loss of territories and the final weakening and shrinking of Empire.

4.2 Background

Feroz Shah Tughluq, the last of the able Tughluqs died in 1387. During his lifetime he was witnessed to a battle of succession between Prince Muhammad and Khan-I-Jahan. Tughluq II a pleasure loving prince succeeded him and could rule for only five months till he was killed. A string of weak successors followed within a short span between 1388-1390. By 1394 the physical division of the Empire culminated in the setting up of two independent courts. One was based in Old Delhi under Mahmud, and the other was at Ferozabad under his cousin Nusrat Shah. The disintegration of the empire progressed at amazing pace. Real power now got transferred into the hands of the nobles, who vied with each other to consolidate their personal gains. The weak successors fell prey to the ambitions of the ambitious and intriguing nobility. Thus in real terms the death of Feroz Shah Tughluq marked the end of the Tughluq Dynasty. The disorder and turbulence set the stage for another external invasion.

Born in Trans-Oxiana to the Chagtai Chief of Baral, Amir Timur ascended the throne of Samarqand in 1369. He soon conquered Persia, Afghanistan and Mesopotamia and India was logically his next target. In 1397 his grandson Prince Muhammad had successfully besieged Uch and Multan, as an advanced guard of Timur. The political anarchy of northern India and the legendary lore's associating India with being a treasure trove attracted the personal attention of Timur. In 1398 he personally headed the army, descended on Bhatnair and captured it. All important towns of southern Punjab were captured enroute to Delhi. As news of savagery and plunder spread, the ruler of Delhi Mahmud Shah fled Delhi. Timur occupied Jahanumma constructed by Feroz Shah Tughluq and proclaimed himself as the king. Delhi was witness to acts of severe brutality unleashed and resorted to plunder of its wealth. Besides staggering wealth, he is said to have carried several thousands of skilled craftsmen back to Samarqand. The marauding nomad had no intentions of settling in India.

On his way back he sacked the towns of Meerut, Hardwar, Kangra and Jammu. He crossed the Indus in 1399 leaving his most trusted lieutenant Khizr Khan in charge of Lahore, Multan and Dipalpur. Meanwhile a remnant of the Tughluq dynasty Mahmud Shah was invited by Mallu his minister, back to Delhi, after driving out Nusrat Shah. After his death in 1412, the nobility selected Daulat Khan Lodhi, an Afghan, to head a military oligarchy. With very meagre financial resources at his disposal, he was unable to run the administration. Rampant pillage had drained the resources of the Sultanate reducing the Empire to Delhi and territories in its vicinity.

4.3 Decline of the Delhi Sultanate

4.3.1 The Sayyids (1414-1451)

Daulat Khan Lodhi, the nominee of the Delhi nobility could not achieve real power amidst intrigue of the nobility. He remained practically a puppet ruler. Khizr Khan the representative of Timur at Multan annexed Delhi. In March 1414, Daulat Khan was imprisoned at Hissar Feroza with Delhi and the throne passing into the hand of Khizr Khan. He never assumed the royal insignia as he ruled on behalf of Shah Rukh the successor of Timur. Annual tributes were sent to Samarqand.

He founded the Sayyid Dynasty, which ruled over the Delhi Sultanate. Attempts have been made to link the dynastic origin to descendants of Prophet Muhammad, which does not remotely appear possible. Khizr ruled for seven years which was mainly devoted to suppressing rebellions and bringing order to the Empire. In 1412 AD he conquered Gujarat, Gwalior and Jaunpur. He added territories to the Delhi Sultanate by forcing the Hindu chiefs of Etawah, Katchar, Kanauj, Patiali and Kampil. The Mewatis and Khokars, tribes on the North-West Frontier came under the control of the Delhi Sultan. He also concentrated his energies along with his loyal minister Taj-ul-Mulk subdued the turbulent Hindu chiefs of the Doab. He was left with very little time to concentrate on initiating administrative reforms in the Sultanate under his control. He died in 1421 and was succeeded by his son Mubarak Shah.

(a) Mubarak Shah (1421-1434)

His reign was otherwise uneventful, but became momentous. It was in his regime that the *Tarik-I-Mubarak Shahi* was written by Yahya-bin-Ahmed Sirhindi. It stands as a valuable source of history for the reign of the Sayyid dynasty. As an administrator he was kind and merciful. He continued to persevere for establishment of peace in the Doab and Bhatinda. The Khokars under the leadership of their chief Jasrat tried unsuccessfully to seize Delhi. A full-blown rebellion of the Khokars in 1428, ended in their defeat. He was benevolent towards the Hindu population and the rulers. He built the town of Mubarakabad. Unfortunately he lost his life in a joint conspiracy of Hindus and Muslims led by Sarwar-ul-Mulk.

(b) Muhammad Shah (1434-1445)

Muhammed Shah the heir designate and his son ascended the throne in 1434. He soon fell prey to the machinations of the nobility especially the *Amirs*. Initially Kamal-ul-Mulk killed Sarwar with the tacit support of the Sultan. In no time he assumed the charge of the *Wazir* and challenged the authority of the Sultan. He failed in his attempt to usurp the throne, as he did not receive the necessary support of the Imperial army. Rebellions continued unabated. Ibrahim Sharqui of Jaunpur seized a number of imperial *parganas*, while the raja of Gwalior and other petty chiefs refused to pay any tribute. The Raja of Malwa planned an invasion of Delhi but was compelled to recede by Bahlol Lodhi the Governor of Lahore and Sirhind. Bahlol Lodhi was bequeathed the title of Khan-I-Khanan. He became powerful and waited for an opportune moment to seize power. After the death of Muhammad Shah in 1451, his weak successor Allauddin Khan could not maintain the Sultanate and hastened the end of the Sayyids. He handed over the throne to Bahlol Lodhi in 1451.

4.3.2 The Lodhi Dynasty

Before going into the history of the Lodhi dynasty it becomes imperative to mention about the emergence of Afghans as prominent communities during the Sultanate period. The Afghans apparently settled in the frontier regions of North west of Punjab much before their conversion to Islam. They began to enter the fold of Islam during the reign of Sultan Mahmud of Ghaznin (998-1030) and by the 12th century the entire population practically became Muslims. The *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* fleetingly mentions of Afghans being ferocious and rustic. They served as soldiers of nobles till the second half of the 13th century. Apparently lack of sophistication retarded their entry into the fold of state service. During the reign of Ghiyasuddin Balban the new generation of Afghans were entrusted with the charge of the newly established *thanas* (police posts) around Delhi and its neighbouring territories. The number of Afghans in the provincial armies increased substantially. Improvement in their social status encouraged them to educate their children. Under the Khiljis the Afghans came to command great respect. During the Tughluq period the number of Afghans holding important administrative posts in each province increased considerably. As a new social group they became so powerful in Multan, Gujrat and the Deccan that they began to aspire for kingship. In spite of suppression of their revolts by Muhammad-bin-Tughluq, they continued to hold important *iqta's* in the Delhi Sultanate as well as in regional kingdoms which rose after Timur's sack of Delhi in 1398.

(a) Bahlol Lodhi (1451-1489)

Bahlol Lodhi who was in service during Khizr Khan founded the Lodhi dynasty. He was an Afghan belonging to the Lodi tribe. He became the governor of Punjab and was proclaimed the Sultan in 1451AD. The nature of the Afghan polity was so complex that securing the loyalty of other Afghans and

non-Afghan rulers was not easy. He attempted to use shrewdness and diplomacy in consolidating his rule. The Afghan chiefs were invited to have a share in his victories. A large platform called the *Masnad* was erected where he sat with leading Afghan chiefs to take important decisions of the Sultanate. This created a semblance equality thus keeping them in control. After coming to the throne he quelled the rebelling nobles of Jaunpur who were related to the Sayyids by marriage and therefore considered themselves as the rightful claimants to the Delhi throne. The provincial chiefs of Sambhal, Koil, Mainpuri, Rewari, Etawah and other districts in the Doab were suppressed. Their *jagirs* were seized and given to the Afghan nobles to win their cooperation. He brought Mewar, Sambal and Gwalior under his rule. While proceeding on a second expedition against Gwalior, he died near Jalali in 1489.

(b) Sikandar Lodhi (1489-1517)

Behlol Lodhi nominated his son Nizam Khan as his successor. But the nobles placed Barbak Shah on the throne. In the struggle that ensued, Nizam Khan was successful and ascended the throne as Sikandar Lodi. He proved to be a capable ruler who brought back the lost prestige of the Sultan. He maintained friendly relations with the neighbouring states. Sikandar Lodhi settled his differences with his uncle Alam Khan who conspired against him. He also defeated Barbak Shah who in co-operation with Hussain Shah of Jaunpur fought against him. Barbak Shah was appointed as a nominal governor of Jaunpur. He brought Gwalior and Bihar under his rule.

He was determined to create regulations that differentiated in the status of the Sultan and the Afghan *amirs*. He replaced the *masnad* with the throne, which elevated the status of the monarchy. The *amirs* had to walk for four to five miles to receive the royal *firman*s. To increase efficiency in administration he emphasized on auditing of accounts. Discrepancies in accounts made officials liable to punishment. The espionage system was revived and news-writers were posted even in the houses of the nobility. He encouraged education and trade. His military skill helped him in bringing the Afghan nobles under his control. He worked for the welfare of the poor, by abolishing duties on corn and encouraged agriculture. Though he was a religious fanatic yet he brought changes in some of the practices of the Muslims. He has to his credit a number of verses in Persian and patronized music. However he failed to unite the Afghan polity by removing the shackles of deep-rooted tribal schisms. He died in 1517 leaving a substantial territory to his successor.

(c) Ibrahim Lodhi (1517-1526)

Ibrahim Lodhi the eldest son of Sikandar Lodhi ascended the throne in 1517 with the unanimous consent of the Afghan nobility. Ibrahim Lodhi lacked the tact and military prowess of his predecessors. Without keeping in mind the nature of Afghan polity, he introduced radical court customs. It was compulsory for the nobility to attend the court sessions. They had to stand with folded hands throughout the court proceedings. His brash behaviour along with these reforms antagonized the nobles to a great extent. His relations with the Afghan nobles became worse and this led to several conflicts with him. He tried to suppress various rebel chiefs. The provincial Governors became extreme defiant and the Sultan lacked tact and persuasion.

The Sultan sent a force under Azam Humayan who successfully captured the fortress of Gwalior. Encouraged by his victory he sent an expedition against Rana Sanga the ruler of Mewar. He defeated him twice as the ruler valiantly defended himself and the Afghan nobility did not cooperate. The rest of his reign was marked by a series of revolts. The nobles made his younger brother Jalal Khan as the ruler of Jaunpur. They wanted to divide the empire into two between the Sultan and his brother Jalal Khan. The Sultan foolishly agreed to the division, but decided to retract and ask for Delhi back from

Jalal Khan. Jalal Khan refused to surrender and thus created problems for Ibrahim Lodhi. He defeated Jalal Khan in a battle.

Suspicious of the Afghan nobles Ibrahim Lodhi treated them with utmost cruelty. Azam Humayun and his son Fateh Khan were imprisoned. Islam Khan the governor of Kara was stripped off his powers. Mian Bhua the *Wazir* was imprisoned and he died in captivity. The followers of these officials rebelled against the Sultan and demanded the release of the officials. Ibrahim Lodhi refused to accede and secured victory at an immense cost. The rebels were then executed. The ill treatment meted out to Ghazi Khan the son of Daulat Khan Lodhi the governor of Punjab was the final nail in the coffin. The discontented Afghan chiefs sent Daulat Khan Lodhi to invite Babur the ruler of Kabul to India. After many incursions in the year 1525 and 1526 Babur defeated Ibrahim Lodi in the battle of Panipat. With this defeat the Delhi Sultanate was laid to rest.

Ibrahim Lodhi failed to consolidate the empire he had inherited. His tactlessness and short temper alienated all sections of the Afghan nobility. This was because egalitarian treatment of the nobles formed the base of their tribal polity. As traditionally there were no monarchical institutions amongst the Afghans he failed to consolidate and build an empire on consensus.

4.4 Economy

In the Delhi sultanate as also in the regional states which succeeded it during the thirteenth century, the appropriation of agricultural surplus and its orderly distribution amongst section of the ruling class was conducted through an elaborate system of revenue assignments introduced by the Ghorians. The central feature of this system consisted of an arrangement by which the management and appropriation of revenues of various territorial units was directly controlled by members of the ruling elite at the behest of the central authority. Such assignments were called the *iqta's* in the Delhi Sultanate. As revenue and military charges they were the real source of substance and wealth. The individual holder of these assignments was not allowed to acquire hereditary rights over the area under their jurisdiction. Minhaj, the historian records how personnel were transferred from one *iqta* to another.

As the system evolved through changes which was responsible in defining the degree of political centralization. Firoz Shah Tughluq, policy of allowing son to succeed the father in official posts was tantamount to a complete capitulation of the earlier order in favour of granting permanent and heritable rights over the *iqta's*. The Lodhi's went a step ahead. The nobility, which comprised of Afghan tribal leaders, were allowed to retain hereditary rights over the assignments for being in the king's favour.

The new socio-political system ushered in a process of urbanization, wherein there was a social mobility amongst craftsmen and artisans. The artisans and other working groups found work and prospered. The skilled craftsmen found employment in the royal *karkhanas*. The *karkhanas* were established just after the founding of the Sultanate. The Governor's too were encouraged to maintain *karkhanas* in their provincial capital. Under Muhammad-bin-Tughluq, the workshops employed 4000 skilled men who embroidered and wove silk cloth for the royalty. Feroz Shah Tughluq maintained 36 *karkhanas* in Delhi, which employed goldsmiths, gem cutters and perfumers. The revival of trade and commerce in the Sultanate during the Afghan period attracted people across the class divide. This contributed to greater social mobility.

Many slaves received their training at these workhouses and later were assigned important posts. As the metropolis of Delhi developed there was migration into the city from both Central Asia and

Persia. Many of the artisans are said to have migrated from Khurasan and painters came from China. The conglomerate of artisans in Delhi excelled in manufacturing weapons, garments rosaries etc. Measures adopted by the rulers to free the highways of robbers encouraged merchant caravans from outside the country. They exchanged their merchandise for precious Indian products. The boost in trade encouraged diversity in tastes, which modified the demand in favour of newer indigenous products.

Major centres of industry grew at Cambay, Nagaur, Gujarat and Bengal. Silk cotton and woolen fabrics were their speciality alongside calico printing, sugar industry, metalwork, stone and brickwork to mention a few. Leatherwork, perfumes, spirit and liquor were the minor industries. India imported gold, silver and copper metals, textiles from China and horses from Persia and Arabia.

To appropriate surplus the peasant had to pay tax in kind under the Sultanate. The Khiljis and Tughluqs concretized the land revenue system. Allauddin Khilji abolished the iqta system on crown lands. The hereditary Hindu landlords known as *khuts*, *muqaddams* and *chaudhuries* traditionally heavily taxed the peasants and remitted very little to the central exchequer. To remedy the situation he introduced a regulation of measuring cultivable land and fixed the state demand at half the produce. Both the landlords and peasants were to strictly abide by it. This deprived the landlords of extra revenue as they were forced to pay to the Sultan the actual land revenue and other cesses raised from the peasants.

For maintaining a large army to expand and protect the Empire Allauddin Khilji adopted certain measures. To maintain these soldiers on low salaries without adversely affecting their standard of living, he devised market control measures. Supply of goods in the markets at a fixed price was envisaged. The prices were fixed on the progressive principle of production cost. In fact the land revenue from the *khalsa* villages were realized in grain, which were stored in state granaries for use in times of scarcity. All foreign grain merchants were united under a single corporation. They were registered and issued licenses and their movements were regulated strictly. Weights and measures were rigorously regulated under a special ministry of commerce. These measures were carried out with extreme severity and ruthlessness. Inadvertantly though the ordinary peasant, both internal and foreign traders suffered because of the regulation, though it eliminated the role of the middlemen. As the system sustained on personal strength, the system collapsed on his death.

Muhammad-bin-Tughluq reintroduced the *iqta* system. He provided incentives for reclamation of wastelands and insisted on the technique of crop rotation for improvement of agriculture. His disastrous experiment to shift the capital to Daulatabad from Delhi with forced migrations was extremely strenuous on the finances of the Sultanate. Desperate to replenish the treasury he introduced measures to double the existing land tax rates in the fertile region of the Doab. Cesses like house tax and grazing tax were levied too. These taxes were extracted with utmost severity. The region was at the same time reeling under severe drought and the resultant famine forced him to reconsider the land tax regime. Land tax was suspended and peasants were advanced agricultural loans to buy bullocks and seeds while the state provided for digging wells. In the long run the simmering peasant discontent manifested itself in form of rebellions.

Feroz Shah Tughluq set himself to correct the mistakes of his cousin. He immediately wrote off all debts of the peasants. The fiscal policy was revised with the twin objective of ensuring adequate returns to the state coffers and reducing the burden on the taxpayers. The twenty cesses were abolished. War booty, a traditional source of revenue was fixed by Allauddin Khilji at four fifths of the spoils. The soldiers now had to pay only one fifth of the spoils to Feroz Shah Tughluq. The revenue from the *khalsa* after an elaborate exercise of assessment was permanently fixed at six crore and eighty lakh *tankas*. Jaziya was

strictly collected. The state undertook to construct irrigation canals and wells for the benefit of the peasantry.

Token currency was introduced by Muhammad-bin-Tughluq for exchange and circulation in trade. Gold coins were increased in weight, while silver coins were had reduced weights. Bronze coins became the legal tender. With no system to back the currency by sufficient gold bullion in the royal mint, the measure failed, as it there was an explosion in the circulation of spurious coins. He introduced new variety of coins in his Empire. Of special significance are the half and quarter *jitals*, mixed coins of copper and silver. This was sufficiently backed by adequate gold bullion.

Urbanization was a hallmark of the Delhi Sultanate. The old cities took the form of cosmopolitan urban centres. All groups of people including the skilled artisans who were earlier treated as low caste could live close to each other. Delhi though had been a centre of administration in the Pre-Sultanate period, but was a mere military headquarter when the Slave Dynasty inherited it. It developed into a magnificent city after Iltutmish made it his capital in 1210, around Qila Rai Pithora, inherited by them. As it was on the outspurs of the rocky Aravalli the Slave Sultans had to large tanks for the cities water supply. The Khiljis, under Jalaluddin, extended the city. Alauddin Khilji created sources of water supply for Delhi with its expanding population.

Cambay underwent a complete transformation after its annexation to the Sultanate in 1300. It became a centre of international trade. It was major centre to receive foreign products and war-horses for the Delhi Sultanate. Nagaur emerged as an important trading centre between Gujarat and Delhi. It was also famous for its trade in war-horses of good breed, weapons and fine cloth. It became another important urban centre. After the Deccan exodus of Muhammad-bin-Tughluq, Daulatabad developed as the second metropolitan centre of the Empire. The establishment of *karkhanas* and other institutions led to its growth as an alternate city. The building spree under Feroz Shah Tughluq led to the growth of Ferozabad or New Delhi, Fatehabad in Hissar, Ferozpur in Baduan and Jaunpur as urban centres in northern and central India. The new townships had a complex of public utility building complexes, military cantonments, tanks, mosques and palaces. As no distinction was made in dwellings of the general people in these urban centres a composite urban habitat developed.

4.5 Society

When Prophet Mohamed became the leader of united Arab tribes, he was more concerned with providing them with religious succour by the tenets enshrined in the Holy Quran. He was concerned with spreading the message of common brotherhood and not get involved in politics. But his forced sojourn to Medina by pressure from the warring groups forced him to sanction recourse to use of force to defend his faith. He did not sanction a structured governing institution. On his death the Caliphate drew its structure from the traditional Arab polity and the strictures of the Sharia. Initially a Caliph was elected for his intellect and prowess. This soon gave way to heredity as a principle. The State systems that evolved in Central Asia, Iran and Turkey largely influenced the formation of the polities. It is in this context that the Sultanate superseded the Caliph who merely played a legitimizing role. The theocrats largely drew on the Holy Quran. The administration in India, which was a non-Muslim country, was evolved by adjusting to local conditions. Heridity in succession was accepted as a norm. Alauddin Khilji

however invoked the divine right principle by doing away with the role of religious preceptors in the administration.

The Delhi Sultanate was based on a political system, which was different in many features from the 'feudalism' of the states it succeeded. The Sultanate was created as a result of Ghorian conquests. The core principality of Ghor largely corresponds to the modern Afghan province of that name, including a large part of mountainous Oruzgan. A geographically isolated area, largely a part of the Iranian cultural zone, it was inhabited from early times by sedentary groups. They claim their origin to 'Arab tribes' having little Turkish influences. The ruling dynasty was called the Shansabani as the Ghor kingdom. The Shisani and Kharmil clans supplied military notables and later administrative officials became a part of the ruling elite.

It expanded in the 12th century with the most significant entrants drawn from the race of the Khalj. They have been referred to as originally being of Turkish origin. Besides the population of Ghor and Ghazni, there were also Turkish soldiers who comprised of the ruling class. As their base shifted to India, Muhammad Ghor found it convenient to expensively train slaves to run his writ. This was largely aimed at safeguarding his territories and resources from clannish cosharers. He collected, through purchase over a thousand Turkish slaves whom he regarded as his own children. His Indian dominions were left exclusively in the charge of the Turkish slaves. However bulk of the army commanders and elite guards continued to monopolized by people from Ghor and Khalj.

The Turkish slaves formed an important group amongst the ruling elite who domination the political landscape of the Sultanate for the first half of the 13th century. Many of them rose to position of Khan, a title given by Iltutmish following the Mongol order. There were a section of free-born Turks amongst the ruling elite under the Slave Dynasty. Persian speaking or Tazik people constituted the bulk of the free born section of the ruling elite. Through the conflicts for power between these two sections during the reign of Iltutmish, yet they retained some kind of unity. The cleavage between the Turks as slaves and Taziks as free-born was maintained, but it gave rise to the concept of a composite ruling class. Curiously both the groups united in their opposition to the entry of Indian Muslims into the exclusive ruling elite.

Several factors attracted a large number of people to migrate from Central Asia and Afghanistan. The Khaljis made no pretensions to noble lineage nor laid claim to past glory. The doors of official opportunity were opened to all. Race, caste and ceased as the criteria was replaced with education. Hindus as well newly converted Indian Muslims. Education thus helped to undermine the exclusive privileges retained by the migrant Muslims during the early days of the Sultanate. The reign of the Tughluqs witnessed entry of many low born persons into important positions in the Empire. All this was because the extent of the Empire had increased requiring more people for administration.

The Afghans till the second half of the 13th century served as personal soldiers attached to the nobility. Their apparent rustic ways came in the way of their upward mobility. As education spread, by the second half of the 13th century the Afghans began to be incorporated into certain ranks of the administration. Under Allauddin Khilji's regime the rose to status of nobles Muhammad-bin-Tughluq raised them to positions of provincial Governors.

Another social group, which prospered, were the Kalal or liquor-brewers under the new industrial regime. The wealth and prosperity acquired by the caste led some of them to acquire Islam. As education spread within the community, some of them abandoned their hereditary professions in favour of acquiring more prominent positions in the administration. By the seventeenth century a converted member of the Kalal caste founded the Sultanate of Nagaur. Its ruler Shams Khan Dandani

married the sister of Feroz Shah Tughluq before converting to Islam. His family members were honoured with high ranks and titles.

The Jains, a community of traders acquired upward mobility. They attained high positions in the state service during the reign of Allauddin Khilji. For instance a gemologist was appointed a superintendent of the royal mint under the Sultan Allauddin Khilji. Jains rose into prominence in the provinces of Gujarat and Nagaur as well.

The Kambos were originally a Hindu caste of Punjab and belonged to the peasant community. They embraced Islam in Multan under the influence of Suhrawardi saints and took to learning. During the reign of Feroz Shah Tughluq this community yielded so much influence that they could intervene in the court of the governor and even the Sultan. By the 15th century Kambos of Multan made their mark as *ulemas* and *Sufi* saints. Sheikh Samauddin Kambo was the patron saint of the Lodhi dynasty. His son-in-law was elevated to a poet laureate under Sikandar Lodhi. They came to occupy important positions in the Lodhi Empire.

The Khatris, residents of Delhi and Punjab also emerged as a new social group in the 14th century. By acquiring proficiency in accountancy and arithmetic they were largely employed in the revenues department. In the province of Gujarat and Malwa they rose to the position of Dewan, while many of them were employed as Finance officers. In fact Babur was amazed to find Hindu domination of the revenue department.

The Chishti Sufi saints were also responsible for increasing social mobility. They admitted disciples cutting across social barriers. Their *khanqahs* served as seats of learning which led to literary and spiritual upliftment. Interaction between disciples of different social strata of poor and rich, led to the growth of a relatively egalitarian ethos. As there was a system of nominating principal disciples, people belonging to weavers and dyers community gained prestige and social recognition.

The internal dynamics of the Hindu caste system was left untouched. The early rulers of the Sultanate engaged in peaceful conversion of Hindus to Islam. This policy continued under the Khiljis, especially with Allauddin Khilji adopting a policy of separate the political sphere from influence of religion. Muhammad-bin-Tughluq continued the trend. The incursion of the Delhi Sultans into the Deccan helped in spreading Islamic culture into a region hitherto untouched by the early Delhi Sultans. Feroz Shah Tughluq however sought to placate the *ulemas* and is said to have resorted to forced conversions of Hindus to Islam.

4.6 Culture

Evident by the emerging social groups into prominence, it reflected the evolution of a composite culture under the Delhi Sultanate. With influx of population from Persia Khurasan and Central Asia, due to Mongol inroads, Delhi became a repository of Islamic culture. The Turkish conquerors brought along with them a new religion and a new educational system. These educational institutions were maintained or aided by the state.

In Delhi there was a strong local school system of the *maktabs*, which were attached to mosques or holy shrines. Persian was used as a medium for imparting knowledge in the three R's and Arabic was used to help students to memorize the religious texts. The school system led to higher seats of learning such as *Madrassa-i-Muizzi*. The *Madrassa-i-Nasiri* and later the *Madrassa-i-Firuz Shahi*, were staffed with reputed scholars and they admitted students from all strata of the society. The number of *madrasas* increased in Delhi with the expansion of old cities and foundations of new ones. By the reign of Muhammad-bin-Tughluq, Delhi alone had 1000 of

them. The provincial capitals under Muslim Governors too saw the growth of a similar school system. The *madrasas* were housed in large buildings where students were provided free of cost boarding and instruction. *Ulemas* from within the country and outside imparted education.

Initially such kind of education spread social tensions when the Sultans were trying to maintain distinction on the basis of lineage. Education to a great extent helped in social mobility as under the Khiljis and Tughluqs. It helped to fulfill the requirements of administration in an expanded Delhi Sultanate. All social groups whether migrants or indigenous sought to use education as a ladder to improve their social status. Many of its scientist and men of arts found fame in foreign countries. Kayasthas (scribes) an occupational caste amongst the Hindus were allowed to study in the madrasa during the reign of Sikandar Lodhi. They were exempted from studying religious ceremonies but were permitted to learn Persian. This was to secure their services as clerks and accountants in the revenue department.

Though the education system brought the learning of Persian and Arabic into prominence, its interaction with the indigenous Indian languages and dialects led to the evolution of Urdu as a language. *Urdu* in literal connotation was synonymous with the Mongol word *lashkar* meaning 'horde' or 'camp'. Though soldiers were not academically trained, yet in their campaigns they had to interact and communicate with the populace cutting across Sanskrit and Pali based local languages. Some scholars are of the opinion that bridging the language divide by the Turkish-speaking soldiers led to the growth of the composite Urdu language. The earliest specimen of this language as a spoken dialect of the Dehlavis or inhabitants of Delhi was known during the Khilji rule. The first scholar who used this language in his literary compositions was Amir Khasrau a poet and a literary stalwart. At a later stage under Sikandar Lodhi when the capital shifted from Delhi to Agra the Dehlavi language was further enriched by Brajbhasi and Rajasthani and dialects of Agra and Ajmer. The language thus grew out of a synthesis of Panjabi, Harijani, Khari Boli, Brajabhasi and Rajasthani. Urdu became an official language in the Deccan in the 14th century.

In the 14th and 15th century the interaction between Hinduism and Islam laid the genesis of a stable and progressive Indo-Muslim society. The synthesis of their respective systems of education and learning gave impetus to the Bhakti movement. They sought to rid their faiths of its rigidities and hence embarked on a plan to reform it. The Sufi saints and Hindu saints provided an integrated platform for religious synthesis. All these preceptors preached on basic unity of God and insisted on egalitarianism amongst its followers. Their followers cut across caste and creed helping in the formation of an integrated society.

The court of the Delhi Sultans extended lavish patronage to the growth of Persian literature. Minhaj Siraj and immigrant of Ghor was the court chronicler of Iltutmish wrote the *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*. Ziauddin Barani wrote the *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, and later it was *Shams-Siraj Afif* who also continued with the text. Yahya-bin-Abdullah chronicled the *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi* under the Saiyyid regime. Al Beruni a profound Arabic and Sanskrit scholar translated several Sanskrit treatises into Arabic in the 10th century. His *Tarikh-i-Hind* is a monumental work on the flora and fauna of India. Feroz Shah Tughluq ordered the translation of rare Sanskrit manuscripts on philosophy and metaphysics into Persian. They were compiled in a volume named *Dayalal-i-Feruz Shahi*. Court poets were also encouraged with Amir Khasrau marking the climax of literary skills in the court.

The art and architecture under the Delhi Sultans marked a synthesis of Turkish and Hindu styles. The Turkish art forms were not rigidly Islamic in character. The use of Indians and Central Asian builders and sculptors led to an amalgamated style. Some common features of the architecture were use of open courtyards encompassed by corridors. The reliefs were done with flowers and geometric designs. The arch and the dome, lofty minarets, half domed portal, flowing arabesque interwoven with graceful lettering and use of coloured stones and enamelling were the hallmarks of mosque building.

Architecture under the Slave Sultans was not strictly Islamic in form. The Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque was built with material stripped from Hindu shrines and hence the base material represented Hindu art with the exception of the Islamic art screen. Iltutmish added to the mosque by using the technique of weaving sacred texts with geometrical designs. The Qutb Minar used nuances of Islamic style in its architecture with an emphasis on calligraphy and geometric design. Under the Khilji rulers the principal monuments were the Jama Masjid at the Dargah of Nizamuddin Auliya and the Aliya Darwaza at Qutb Minar. Built in marble and red stone they were ornamented with arabesque designs inscriptions, arches, towers and elaborate grills. A plain dome indicated growing Muslim influence. The monuments under the Tughluq reflected growing political insecurity. The monuments were massive and solid, poorly built, simple austere and sober in appearance. Though Feroz Shah Tughluq is credited with building activity, yet they were poorly built and lacked elegance. Tughlaqabad which includes the tomb of Ghiyasuddin Tughluq, Bijay Mandal and Firoz Shah Kotla are best examples of the architecture of their reign. The shrunken empire severely hampered the Sayyids and Lodhis from building elaborate structures. The tomb of Sikandar Lodhi, and tombs of nobles like the Bara Gumbaz and Moti-ki-Masjid stand out as best examples of architecture under the Lodhis. In the provinces too distinctive architectural styles which were an amalgam of Hindu and Islamic styles emerged.

4.7 Let Us Sum Up

The condition of the Delhi Sultanate under the Sayyids and the Lodhis shrunk to a large extent till the coming of the Mughals in 1526. An assessment of their contributions in the form of a composite Indian culture was immense unlike the Greeks and Huns the Turkish conquerors made India their home. The socio-political structure gave rise to changes within the Hindu society, which retained its form but became more rigid. Migrations also changed the social composition, while education helped in upward mobility. Opportunities in trade and commerce helped people of all sections to prosper. A centralized administration was the hallmark of the Delhi Sultanate. In spite of social and religious tensions within the country yet large areas from the north to the Deccan came under single rule.

4.8 Key Words

<i>Maktab</i>	:	religious schools
<i>Madrasas</i>	:	schools of higher learning
<i>Karkhanas</i>	:	workshops and storehouses
<i>Jaziya</i>	:	a tax imposed on non-Muslims
<i>Khalsa</i>	:	land of special category in and around Delhi.

<i>Tankas</i>	:	currency
<i>Khanqahs</i>	:	congregation
<i>Dargah</i>	:	shrines of Sufi Saints
<i>Dervish</i>	:	Sufis

4.9 Check Your Learning

1. Describe the political condition of the Delhi Sultanate under the Sayyids Dynasty?
2. What led to the decline of the Sultanate under the Lodhis?
3. Give an outline of the economy under the Delhi Sultanate?
4. Describe the social structure during the Sultanate period?
5. What were the contributions of the Delhi Sultans in the realm of Culture?

4.10 Suggested Readings

Habib, Irfan (ed) : *Formation of the Sultanate Ruling Class of the Thirteenth Century* by Irfan Habib
in *Medieval India 1: Researches in India 1200-1750*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi 1992.

Frykenberg, R.E. (ed) : *The study of Delhi: An Historical Outline* by R.E. Frykenberg in *Delhi through the Ages: Selected essays in Urban History, Culture and Society*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi 1986.

Singh, Meera : *Medieval History of India*, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1978.

Nizami, K.A. : *Studies in Medieval History and Culture*, Kitab Mahal, Allahabad, 1966.

4.11 Hints/Answers to Questions in Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress-I

1. The main intention of Timur was to plunder the wealth of India. He had no motif to settle in India and annexed it.
2. Daulat Khan Lodi founded the Sayyid dynasty.
3. Bahloe Lodi was founder of the Lodhi dynasty.

4. Babur, the founder of the Maghul empire in India, defeated Ibrahim Lodhi in the first battle of panipath in 1526 AD.

Check Your Progress-II

1. The Karkhanas were workshops, which used to employ skilled craftsmen and artisans.

2. A local school system under the sultanate, attached to mosque or holy shrines.

3. Al-bervni has written the book Tarikh-i-Hind.

5. Minhaj Siraj was the court chronicler of Ilutmish.

Unit–X

THE VIJAYANAGAR AND BAHAMANI EMPIRE

Structure

- 5.0 Objectives.
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 The Vijayanagar Empire-Rise and fall
- 5.3 Krishnadev Raya
- 5.4 Administration
- 5.5 Art and Architecture
- 5.6 Socio-Economic Life
- 5.7 Bahamani Empire
- 5.8 Rise and Extension of Bahamani Empire
- 5.9 Downfall of Bahamani Empire
- 5.10 Let Us Sum Up
- 5.11 Key Words
- 5.12 Check Your Learning
- 5.13 Suggested Reading
- 5.14 Hints/Answers to Questions in Check Your Progress

5.0 Objectives

After reading this Unit the students should be able to know:

- the rise and fall of the Vijayanagar Empire;
- achievements of Krishnadev Raya;
- the system of administration under the empire and how it was a welfare state;
- what was the development of art and architecture under the Vijayanagar Empire and what new innovations were carried out during this period; and
- the nature of the social and economic life of the people during this period in the Empire.
- the rise and fall of Bahamani Empire

5.1 Introduction

The Vijayanagar Empire was founded by Harihara I in the 14th century. This was the last great Hindu empire in medieval India. It not only resisted the onslaughts of Islam successfully but also championed the cause of Hindu civilisation and culture in the south for almost three centuries. By doing so Vijayanagar could preserve the ancient tradition polity and art. Infact, “it was Vijayanagar which held the key to the political situation of the time”. The Vijayanagar empire gradually developed a centralised administration with all its branches carefully organised. The concept of kingship among the Vijayanagar rulers were very high. In his book on polity, Krishnadev Raya advise, the king that “with great care and according to your power you should attend to the work of protecting (good) and punishing (the wicked) without neglecting any thing that you see or hear’.

5.2 The Vijayanagar Empire-Rise and fall

The beginning of disintegration of Delhi Sultanate in the second decade of Muhammad-bin-Tughluq's reign gave birth to two mighty states in South India - the Bahmani kingdom of Gulbarg and the empire of Vijayanagar. Both the kingdom came into existence almost simultaneously. The Bahmani kingdom was the most powerful of all the Muslim kingdoms that arose on the ruins of the Sultanate of Delhi while the Monarchs of Vijayanagar were Hindus of the indigenous stock. The period of the Bahmani and Vijayanagar kingdoms, therefore, constitutes a distinct epoch in the socio-cultural history of south India.

The early history of Vijayanagar is obscure. There are several theories about the origin of Vijayanagar Empire. It is however, definite that the foundation of the Vijayanagar empire on the south-west coast of India was laid down by two brothers, Harihar and Bukka. They were the ministers in the state of Kampili. When Sultan Muhammad Tughluq conquered Kampili, he imprisoned these two brothers and forced them to embrace Islam. With the help of chief priest of Sringeri, Vidyatirtha, again they were converted to Hinduism. Then they decided to liberate their people from Muslim domination. In 1336, Harihar founded the independent kingdom of Hampi-Hastinavati and was crowned as the first king. On his coronation day, he founded the capital city of Vijayanagar. This very small state grew up as the mighty kingdom of Vijayanagar. Harihar I ruled upto 1356 A.D. He was a capable ruler. He succeeded in extending the territory of his kingdom. He also established a sound system of administration and encouraged the farmers to cut down forests and bring this land under cultivation. He strengthened the old forts of Badami, Udayagiri and Gooty as a protection against invasion from the enemies. Harihar was succeeded by his brother Bukka I, who ruled the empire from 1356-1377 A.D. Bukka was a farsighted ruler. He centralized the administration, brought provincial governors under his control and conquered Tamilnadu. He compelled the Bahmani ruler Muhammad Shah I, to handover Krishna-Tungabhadra Doab to him. From that time started the prolonged struggle between the Bahmani and Vijayanagar empire. The most important conquest of Bukka was that Madura because of which his empire extended upto Rameshvaram in the extreme South. Bukka was a great ruler. He carried on the traditions of the empire and infused a new life into it. He retained and renovated the temples and patronized Hindu learning. Literary works mostly dealing with Hindu religion and philosophy were produced during his reign. He was a tolerant and kind who made no distinction between his subjects on the basis of cast or creed.

Bukka nominated his son Harihar II to throne ignoring the claims of others. Harihar's accession in 1377 A.D. immediately after Bukka's death led to rebellions particularly in the Pandya, Chola and Tundira countries. But Harihar was able to crush them. He conquered Kanara, Mysore, Trichinapali, Dharwar, Kanchi, etc. and forced the king of Srilanka to pay him tribute. During his reign Bahmani Sultans, Munammad Shah II and Firuz Shah respectively, attempted to capture Krishna-Tungabhadra Doab from him but failed. Thus, Harihar II extended the territory of his empire further. His administration was however, based on the old pattern. His death in August 1404 A.D. led to internecine wars between his three sons, Bukka II, Virupaksha I and Devaraya I. Finally, Deva Raya had the better of them and crowned himself on November 7, 1406 A.D. He holds an important position among the kings of Vijayanagar. He was a great diplomat. He successfully resisted the combined armies of the Reddis, the Velamas and the Bahmanis. He was perhaps the first king in his dynasty who realized the importance of cavalry in a war. He purchased the best quality of horses from Arabia and Persia. His greatest

achievements, however, lay in the construction of dams to provide irrigational facilities to peasants. Devaraya was a great Saivite and built a number of temples dedicated to the goddess Pampa of the Hampitirth. He died in 1422 A.D. and was succeeded by his sons Ramachandra and Vijaya I, both of whom ruled for a short period. Vijaya was a weak ruler and passed on the administration to his son and co-regent Devaraya-II. Finally, Devaraya-II ascended the throne after the death of his father in 1425 A.D.

Devaraya-II was involved in a series of battles with his neighbours. He fought against the Bahmani kingdom twice but that yielded no concrete result. However he succeeded in defeating the rulers of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh. He was a great monarch. He gave an efficient administration to the state. He modernized his army. He was liberal towards Muslims. He enrolled them in the army and also permitted them to construct Mosques. This great ruler passed away on May 24, 1446 A.D. after a rule of 25 years. He was succeeded by his eldest son Malikarjuna who ruled between 1446 - 1465 AD. Immediately after his accession, Malikarjuna was confronted with an attack by the forces of the king Gajapati of Orissa and the Bahmani Sultan. But both were defeated by Malikarjuna. He was a kind-hearted and religious man but his reign marks the beginning of the decline of the Sangam dynasty. Malikarjuna was probably, murdered by his cousin Virupakshi II, Who captured the throne in 1465 A.D. But the provincial governors refused to accept him which weakened the Vijayanagar empire. However, the empire was saved because of the efforts of Saluva Narasimha, the chief of Chandragiri who, finally captured the throne in 1485 A.D. and laid the foundation of a new dynasty known as Saluva dynasty.

Saluva Narasimha remained the first and last ruler of his dynasty. He had to face a number of rebellions from his erstwhile supporters and friends who became jealous of his power. He was successful in suppressing them. It was his credit that he rescued the Vijayanagar empire from complete disintegration. He made earnest efforts to recover all the territories which his predecessor had lost. He infused new spirit among the people of Vijayanagar and exhorted them to lay down their lives for the sake of their religion. He became the Saviour of the Vijayanagar empire. He died in 1490 A.D. His son Timabhupal was murdered by Vira Narasimha who became the next ruler and founded a new dynasty, the Tuluva dynasty.

5.3 Krishnadev Raya

Vira Narasimha ruled from 1503-1509 A.D. He was the first king who broke the monopoly of Arabs and Persian merchants in the import of horses. He tried to help the poor ryots and abolished several taxes. He was perhaps the first king who did away with the marriage tax which was a great burden on the poor people. Vira Narasimha was succeeded by his brother, Krishnadev Raya who ruled Vijayanagar empire till 1529 A.D. He proved himself as the greatest ruler of Vijayanagar. The empire reached at the zenith of its power and prosperity during his reign. By that time, the Bahmani kingdom was divided into five independent kingdoms. All they were the enemies of Vijayanagar empire. Krishnadev Raya, however, defeated all his enemies and recaptured all territory and forts of the Vijayanagar empire lost by its previous rulers. His incessant wars hardly left him time to carry out any large scale reforms. He had very intimate and friendly relations with the Portuguese. A large number of Portuguese travellers and merchants visited Vijayanagar during his reign. Krishnadev Raya was a scholar of Telegu and Sanskrit. He was undoubtedly the greatest of the Vijayanagar rulers.

Krishnadev Raya was the greatest ruler of Vijayanagar and one of the most famous kings in the history of India. He ascended on the throne of Vijayanagar kingdom in 1509 A.D. after the death of his step brother Vira Narasimha. He had to face multifarious problems. Many nobles were not in favour of him. His two step brothers and the prince (son of Vira Narsimha) were ready to lead any revolt against him. Yusuf Adil Khan, the founder of Adil Shahi dynasty of Bijapur was making earnest efforts to extend his kingdom. On the west coast, the Portuguese were extending their hold. Krishnadev Raya was not a person to be unnerved by these difficulties. He tackled all of them with great foresight. His first step was to send away his rival nephews and step brothers to the fortress of Chandragiri where they were confined.

War with the Bahmanis

The Bahmani Sultan in collaboration with Yusuf Adil Shah of Bijapur was the first to invade Vijayanagar and advanced upto the frontier town of Doni. Krishnadev Raya inflicted a crushing defeat on the combined forces. In an another battle which took place at Kovelakonda, Krishnadev Raya defeated and killed Yusuf Adil of Bijapur. In 1512 A.D. Krishnadev Raya captured Raichur. He also defeated Barid-i-Mamalik and captured Gulbarga. Krishnadev Raya then turned his attention towards Mysore. The ruler Gangaraya had strengthened his fortresses of Seringapattam and Sivansamudram in anticipation of the invasion. He defeated GAngaraya and captured the whole area by September, 1512. He formed a separate province and placed it under the charge of Saluva Govinda.

Conquest of Orissa

In 1513 A.D. Krishnadev Raya turned against the Gajapati king Pratprudra Dev of Orissa. Krishnadeva was determined to recover the two provinces of Vijayanagar, Udayagiri and Kondavidu which had been captured by Orissa ruler. It was a very difficult task to recover these territories. Krishnadeva's first attempt to capture the fort of Udayagiri in January 1513 A.D. failed. But it took a year and half to capture the fort. His forces under the command of Saluva Timma marched against Kondavidu. After a fierce hand to hand fight the fort was captured. The next target of Krishnadeva was Bezwada (Vijayawada). After the conquest of Bezwada, Krishnadeva took possession of Kondapalli. Prataprudra Deva tried to resist the advance of Krishnadeva but he was defeated and fled away to save his life. Then Krishnadeva captured Rajahmundry and the whole of Vengi upto Simhachalam. In spite of series of defeats, Prataprudra was not prepared to surrender. Krishnadeva, therefore decided to attack Cuttack, the capital of Gajapati king Pratprudar Deva. Finally, Prataprudra concluded a peace treaty in 1518 A.D. according to which he gave his daughter in marriage to Krishnadev Raya. In return Prataprudra got back the conquered territories.

War with Golkonda and Bijapur

When Krishnadev Raya was busy in Orissa, Quli Qutb Shahi, ruler of Golkonda took full advantage and conquered some strategic forts of Vijayanagar like Pangal and Guntur. He also annexed Warangal, Kondapalli, Ellore and Rajahmundry. Then Quali Qutb Shahi sent his army to capture Kondavidu. As soon as Krishnadev Raya came to know the advances of Quali-Qutb

Shahis army towards his kingdom, he ordered his general Saluva Timma to resist the invader. The Qutb Shahi army was defeated.

In 1512 A.D. Raichur was captured by Krishnadev Raya. As soon as Ismail Adil Khan took over the control of the state, he wanted to recover Raichur. Krishnadeva's occupation with Orissa provided him an opportunity and he recaptured Raichur in 1520 A.D. Krishnadev Raya deputed his commander Saluva Timma to capture the territory again. Bijapur forces were defeated and Ismail Adil Khan saved his life with great difficulty. Bijapur forces surrendered. Ismail Adil Khan requested Krishnadeva for the restoration of all the territories he had taken away during the war. Krishnadeva agreed to it on the condition that the Sultan should kiss his feet. But the Sultan refused to do so. Krishnadev Raya immediately, marched to Bijapur and occupied it without much resistance.

The conquests of Krishnadev Raya enabled him to extend the limits of his empire upto the south Konkon in the west, Vizagpattam in the east and the extreme border of the peninsula in the south. During the last few years of his life he devoted his attention to the organisation and consolidation of the empire. His long and triumphant career came to an end after the close of the Golkonda campaign. However, he was not destined to rule in the eastern provinces. Krishnadeva was anxious to solve the problem of succession during his life time. He had an eighteen months old son so he selected his brother Achyuta as his successor. In 1529 A.D. Krishnadev Raya died and was succeeded by Achyuta.

Relations with the Portuguese

Krishnadev Raya had very intimate and friendly relations with the Portuguese. This was beneficial to both the parties. During that time the Portuguese had established their monopoly trade in the Indian seas by driving out the Arab and Persian businessmen. Krishnadeva was able to establish friendship with the Portuguese and persuaded them to sell to him the Arab and Persian horses. On the other hand, as a mark of friendship, Portuguese got a site for the construction of their factory between Bhatkal and Mangalore from the Krishnadev Raya. A large number of Portuguese travellers and merchants visited Vijayanagar during the reign of Krishnadev Raya. The Portuguese traveller Domngos Paes, praises Krishnadeva in eloquent terms. The Portuguese travellers have left a very vivid account about the reign of Krishnadev Raya. Krishnadev Raya was, however, against the acquisition of Indian territories by the Portuguese. In the conquest of Goa, Krishnadev Raya also helped the Portuguese and had no intention to take sides. But he refused to enter into any alliance with the Portuguese against Zamorin, the rulers of Calicut.

Krishnadev Raya was also famous for his religious zeal and catholicity. Although a Vaishnava himself, he was tolerant towards other religious and granted the freedom of worship to everybody living in his kingdom. He also extended his kindness without any distinction of creed and colour to foreigners. Krishnadev Raya was a scholar of Telgu and Sanskrit. He wrote many works in Telgu and Sanskrit. He extended his patronage to scholars in various languages particularly Telgu, Kannada and Tamil. His court was adorned with eight celebrated Telgu poets who were known as 'ashta-diggajas'. He made an everlasting contribution in the realm of Telgu language and literature.

Krishnadev Raya's incessant wars hardly left him time to carry out any large-scale reforms. He however, kept up the old tradition of undertaking tours to his provinces at least once in a year to meet his subjects and to listen their grievances. He was very vigilant towards the work of his ministers and officials. He abolished some of the taxes which were a great burden on the peasants such as marriage tax. To increase the revenue of the state, he brought new lands under cultivation. In spite of his pre-occupations with the defence and reorganisation of the territories conquered by him, Krishnadev Raya founded a new town Nagalapur near Vijayanagar. He built a number of temples and mansions in the new city. He is also credited with the building of thousand pillared 'Mandapas' and the 'raya-gopurams'. Foreign travellers such as Paes, Nuniz, and Barbosa who visited Vijayanagar during his reign speak highly of the efficiency of administration and prosperity of the people. Krishnadev Raya was always anxious to promote the welfare of his subjects. He was very polite, amiable and wise person. He was a great ruler and man of much justice. He was able, brave and statesman like and was a vital man of much gentleness and generosity of character. He was loved and respected by all. During the reign of Krishnadev Raya, Vijayanagar empire reached to the zenith of its glory and prosperity.

With the death of Krishnadev Raya in 1529 A.D. ended the glorious period of Vijayanagar Empire. It had reached the zenith of its power and prestige now began the inheritable decline. Krishnadev Raya had only a 18 month old son, and therefore, he selected his brother Achyuta Raya to succeed him. He proved himself an incapable ruler. He was succeeded by his nephew Sadasiva Raya in 1542 A.D. Sadasiva Raya was now the undisputed ruler of the Vijayanagar empire. However, he was only a titular head, the real power rested with his minister Rama Raya. Rama Raya was an able administrator but failed as a diplomat. He tried to create dissensions among the five Muslim state which once formed the Bahmani kingdom. But he failed in his policy. All these states united themselves against Vijayanagar in the name of Islam. The combined army of Bijapur, Golkunda, Ahmednagar and Bidar attacked Vijayanagar. The historic battle of Talikota was fought on 23rd January, 1565 A.D. The army of Vijayanagar was totally defeated and the invaders completely destroyed the capital city of Vijayanagar. The battle of Talikota has been rightly regarded as one of the decisive battles of Indian history. The great Vijayanagar Empire disintegrated completely. The dream of an Hindu empire in the south vanished forever.

Vijayanagar Empire was one of the most glorious and prosperous of India which flourished for a considerably long period. The kingdom of Vijayanagar stood as a champion of Hindu culture and civilization. Like all medieval Indian states, it was a feudal organisation which retained some of the ancient Hindu institutions which were suitably modified to meet the new challenges. The rulers of the Vijayanagar Empire were able to setup a very efficient system of administration. They continued to organise the administration as demanded by the circumstances.

5.4 Administration

The King

The king was the fountain head of all power in the state. He was the supreme authority in civil, military and judicial matters. As supreme head of the state, he enjoyed in theory unfettered power. In actual, practice, however, he was expected to act in accordance with the 'Dharma

Sastra'. He was required to keep in view the goodwill and welfare of the people. He was required to bring peace and plenty to the kingdom. According to Krishnadev Raya 'a crowned king should always rule with an eye towards Dharma'.

The Ministers

The king had a council of ministers to assist and advise him on matters of state policy and administration. But the king was not bound to accept their advice. He could appoint and dismiss any one of the ministers at his pleasure. Besides there was a larger council which the king was obliged to consult in the administration of the kingdom. It consisted of feudal chiefs of nayaks, scholar and other dignitaries. It was not a regular body. The council of ministers comprised of 8 to 10 members. The ministers were taken not only from the Brahmanas but also from the Kshatriya and Vaisyas. The office of the ministers was sometimes hereditary but it all depended on the will of the king. The important ministers of the state were the prime minister, chief treasurer, custodian of the jewels and the prefect of the police. The prime minister advised the king in all important matters, The Prefect was like the Kotwal and his duty to maintain law and order. There was a secretariat called 'raysam' attached to the king. The office-in-charge was 'rayasasvami'. The king had a large number of officers in his personal establishment.

Revenue

The main source of income of Vijayanagar empire was land revenue. There was a separate department called 'Athavane'. Land was divided into three parts for purpose of assessment: wet land, dry land, orchards and woods. The share of the state was one-sixth of the produce. Sometimes it was increased in order to meet the heavy burdens of the state. Besides land revenue, the peasants were required to pay other taxes such as grazing tax, marriage tax, etc. The state got its income from the tributes paid by the chieftains, tolls on roads and port and custom duties. Taxes were also levied on properties and house and industries. There were professional taxes and income from judicial fines. The professional taxes were collected from craftsmen, potters, washer men, mendicants, barbers, shoemakers, prostitutes etc. The people were required to pay a number of duties on articles of ordinary consumption such as grains, fruits, vegetables, fats etc. Taxes were paid either in cash or in kind. The government appointed its own employees to collect the revenue. However, relief was given to the cultivators in case of failure of monsoon, drought and other natural calamities.

The state spent a major portion of income on the maintenance of a large standing army. Large amounts were given for maintenances of temples. The Vijayanagar rulers undertook the construction of large irrigation and public works to increase the production. Much money was also spent on the upkeep of the king's household.

Judicial System

The king was the supreme court of justice and decided most important cases. There was an officer called 'Dandanayak' who heard important cases also. But Prime minister was overall in-charge of administration of justice and may be called the Chief justice. There were courts in the provinces which could decide cases in their jurisdiction. Civil and criminal cases were usually decided by these courts. The cases were decided according to the principles of Hindu

Law. The sources of Hindu law are the Vedas, the Smritis or Dharmasastras, commentaries and digests, and customs. A large number of commentaries were written by scholars and statesmen under the patronage of the rulers. These law books were standard works of reference in the various courts.

Punishments were very severe. People were fined for breaches of civil law. The administration for criminal law was harsh. Torture was allowed to find out the truth. For a minor offence of theft, the hands or the feet of the culprit were chopped off and sometimes, the head of the guilty persons were cut off in the market place. Some criminals were thrown before the elephant that tore them into pieces. The punishments were thus very harsh as it was considered necessary to eradicate crimes.

The Army

The Vijayanagar kingdom had a standing army. It was well organised and disciplined. The military organisation was under the control of department called 'Kandachara' and its head was 'Dandanayaka' or commander-in-chief. The military organisation was of a feudal nature. The king had an army of his own but in addition that, in times of emergency, the provincial governors were required to send their contingents. The army of the empire consisted of infantry, cavalry artillery and camels. But it was inferior in strength, patience and endurance to the Muslim armies. It is not possible to give the exact strength of the army of the rulers of Vijayanagar. According to Paes, (a foreign traveller) Krishnadevaraya put into the battlefield in 1520 A.D. an army consisting of 7, 03,000 foot, 32,600 horsemen and 551 elephants, with these military strength Krishnadevaraya could be able to stretch his empire.

Provincial Administration

The empire was divided into provinces which were known as 'rayyas' and sometimes as 'Mandalas'. The provinces were further divided into districts, Talukas villages. In the Tamil region, the districts were known as 'Kottams' or 'Kurrams'. The 'Kottams' were divided into 'nadus' or modern Talukas. The nadus were divided into villages. Each province was put under the charge of a governor who was usually a member of the royal family. The governor generally known as Nayaka or Naik, every governor exercised civil, military and judicial powers within his jurisdiction. However, he was required to submit his account of income and expenditure regularly to the central Government. He was also to help the central Government with the military whenever required. The provincial governors could, however be transferred from one province to another depending, on the will of the emperor. These provincial governors were even permitted to issue their own coins. They were held responsible for the maintenance of law and order. They had to pay a fixed sum of money annually to the king out of revenues. If the governor oppressed the people or became a traitor, he was likely to be punished by the king. Although controlled by the king in many ways, the governors enjoyed a lot of autonomy within their jurisdiction

Village Administration

Village was the lowest unit of administration. Each village was self-sufficient. The village assembly was responsible for the village administration. The ancient institutions of

village assemble or Sabhas continued during Vijayanagar times. The village Sabhas had right to acquire or dispose of land in the name and on behalf of the state. But these assemblies could also protest if new taxes were imposed by the state. The Sabhas had certain judicial powers. They could try and punish the offenders in certain cases. Besides, there were about 12 officials appointed by the state who looked after the affairs of the village. They are collectively known as 'ayagars'. They included the village accountant, village watchman, the superintendent of forced labour, astrologer, the smith, the Kshtriya, the carpenter etc. These officers were paid either by grants of land or from a portion of the agricultural produce. The king had his control over village through an officer called 'Mahanayakcharya'.

5.5 Art and Architecture

The Vijayanagar rulers were great builders. They were the inheritors of the rich traditions of their predecessors, the Cholas, the Pandyas and the Hoysalas. They carried on the architectural activities with such modifications as the changing times demanded. The foundation of the new city of Vijayanagar gave them ample scope to plan and develop it according to their own ideas. Nicolo Conti, an Italian traveller and Abdur Razzaq an ambassador from Persia, who visited Vijayanagar in the 15th century speak highly about the development of art and architecture of the period. The accounts of these travellers, however, shed light on the Vijayanagar city and the magnificent buildings which adorned it. The palace of the king was the most conspicuous building in the city. It is very difficult to understand exactly the architectural design of the building. The walls and pillars were ornamented with sculptures made of stone or wood.

Besides the secular architecture, the most important contribution of the Vijayanagar rulers was in the domain of religious edifices. Temple architecture reached to new height as under the patronage of Krishnadev Raya and Achyuta Raya. It received a new impetus and did not remain stagnant art. New elements were introduced which added to its variety and richness. The Vijayanagar style of architecture abounds in ornamentation but a balance is kept between structure and decoration. The pillars are the most prominent feature of these temples. The important feature of Vijayanagar style of temple and architecture such as monolithic pillars, ornate brackets, decoration on exterior side of the walls etc. a large number of temples were built during this period.

The art of painting received a new impetus under the Vijayanagar rulers. The earlier practice of only painting the outer walls and ceilings of temples was given up and instead images were produced which greatly enhanced the beauty of the buildings. The temples which were built during the Vijayanagar period contain paintings portraying various episodes from the Mahabharata, the Ramayana, and the Puranas etc. The art of painting reached a high degree of excellence during this period.

5.6 Socio-Economic Life

Vijayanagar rulers were the defenders of Hinduism in the South. It was the main task of the Vijayanagar rulers to forge unity the various casts and communities that inhabited the vast empire. Hindus constituted the bulk of the population under the Vijayanagar rule although a fairly large number of Muslims and Jews besides some European traders and businessmen also enjoyed happy and comfortable lives under the benevolent rule of Hindu monarchs. The rulers of

Vijayanagar adopted a policy of religious toleration towards all and did not discriminate between their Hindu and Muslim subjects. The caste system was deeply rooted among the Hindus with all of its inherent vices. The Brahmanas occupied the highest social status and were held in high esteem by the rulers. They wielded tremendous influence in the socio-political life of the people. Their authority in religious and social matters was beyond dispute. The rulers acted on their advice when they interfered in social matters to settle disputes among different communities. The Brahmanas could not be sentenced to death whatever crime they committed. Fernao Nuniz, in his observations about the Vijayanagar empire, records that the Brahmanas are 'honest men, very acute and of much talent, very good at account, lean men and well-formed, but little fit for hard work'.

The upper strata of the south Indian society, including the ruling elite of Vijayanagar, landed aristocracy, businessmen and traders and the Brahmins, in general were very well established. There were many other communities such as artisans, kaikkolas, barbers, dombaras, etc. Artisans consisted of blacksmith, goldsmiths, brass smiths, carpenters, etc. All these classes were fighting among themselves and wanted some social privileges particularly certain honours in public festivals and in temples.

Position of Women

The general condition of woman in the Vijayanagar empire is said to be fairly good. Women of the upper classes occupied a high position in society. Some of them took an active part in social, literary and even political life. The women of the upper middle classes received higher education and some of them took up, to the state craft. The capital of Vijayanagar had women wrestlers, astrologers, sooth sayers and a staff of women clerks and accountants to maintain the accounts of the royal household. Nuniz makes reference to the women scholars and writers, poets, musicians, and singers in the Vijayanagar court. The child marriage was common; the custom in those days did not allow girls for whatever reasons to remain in their parent's home for more than 6 to 8 years after birth. The dowries were freely demanded and proudly given: of the eight forms of marriages allowed in Hindu scriptures, 'Kanyadan' was the most prevalent the evil of bride price was also prevalent. But the society, particularly the Brahman community tried to check it by arriving at a common agreement by which all those indulging in this practice were liable to be punished by the king. The position of women with regard to their husbands was that of a dependant and honourable subordination at least, as long as mutual relations remained cordial. Monogamy seems to have been the rule among the lower society. Polygamy was the privilege of the noble and wealthy. The king of course, kept a large number of wives.

The custom of Sati was prevalent and the Brahmins forcefully commanded this kind of 'self-immolation'. Some contemporary inscriptions make us believe that the Sati was not compulsory but was left to the will of the widows. It, however, seems that most of the widows prefer to immolate themselves with their husbands to escape the harsh treatment by the society. They were not allowed to wear any jewels or ornaments. Their hair were shaved off. These unfortunate widows were treated no better than maids.

Like all other kings, the Vijayanagar emperors had large harems. A few of them were regarded principal queens. Some of the queens accompanied the king to the battle field. Many

others who were attached to the temples and danced and song before the Gods to please them, they were known as 'devaradiyals'. Whatever might have been the position of woman as a girl, bride and widow, she certainly occupied a most respectable position in society as a mother.

Food

As regards food, the Brahmins were vegetarians, but the other castes took meat of all kinds except that of oxen or cows. According to Nuniz, the kings eat all sorts of things, but not the flesh of oxen or cows, which they never kill because they worship them.

Most probably the foreign traveller failed to distinguish between the upper and the lowest classes of society in regards of food habits. The markets are always overflowing with abundance of fruits, grapes, oranges, limes, pomegranates, jackfruit and mangoes. Betel leaf was in common use among all classes. It was generally chewed after meals but most of the people went on chewing it throughout the day. In Vijayanagar dancing women were allowed to use the betel leaf in the presence of the king. The intoxicating items were also used on ceremonial occasions.

Festivals

Mahanavami was most important festivals celebrated in Vijayanagar Empire. It was held in honour of Goddess Durga when she kills the Demon Bhandasura, Chanda and Munda. The festival had also significance. It was connected with Indra for plenty and prosperity. This festival was celebrated with great pomp and show for 9 days. During this period the king held the court in public. Animals sacrifices were made to propitiate the goddess. Dance, wrestling matches and other festivities were held. Some other festivals which were celebrated with great enthusiasm were Deepavali, Kartigai, in honour of death of Bali by Vishnu, and Holi.

Games and Sports

Playing cards, chess, chaupar etc. were no doubt practised and Krishnadev Raya's daughters appeared to have been expert in chess. However, there was greater emphasis on games which required physical strength. Wrestling was given the first place and even the king participated in it. Paes mentions that Krishnadev Raya used to wrestle every day. There were about one thousand wrestlers who were paid from the royal treasury. Sometimes there were duels to settle personal scores or even to win a woman. There were gymnasiums for the purpose. Hunting and horse riding were other pastimes. Besides these games, there were also theatre, dance and music performances.

Education and Learning

The monarchs of Vijayanagar were great patrons of education and learning. Their period of rule was made glorious by the renaissance in Sanskrit and Vedic literature. It also witnessed tremendous growth and development of Dravidian languages- Tamil, Telegu, Kannada and Malayalam. The people came from all parts of South India and received patronage from the Vijayanagar court without any regional or sectarian prejudices. The system of education and Vijayanagar did not differ materially from that of ancient India. The primary schools or Pathasalas were attached to the temples. For higher studies there were schools conducted by

Brahman scholars. Vijayanagar rulers were very liberal and allowed just missionaries to established schools where Vernaculars were taught. Palm leaves were used for writing. The printing was first introduced in the Tamil country in 1577 A.D. A large number of works in Tamil, Telegu and Kannada were produced by different scholars during this period.

Economic Condition

The accounts of the foreign travellers including Nicolo Conti, Abdur Razzak, Barbosa and Nikitin who visited the Vijayanagar Empire have paid tributes to its wealth and splendour. According to them the Vijayanagar empire was very rich., extensive, densely populated and flourishing state. The king was more powerful than all the other kings of India. The kingdom owed its prosperity to the growth and development of agriculture and industry, trade and commerce, including the voluminous maritime trade with foreign countries. The population of Vijayanagar was divided into two broad classes - the consumers and the producers. The former class included the aristocracy, the nobles, the officers, the army, the police, priests etc. The producing classes included agriculturists, artisans, weavers, blacksmiths, goldsmiths, carpenters, etc. The upper classes lived a luxurious life. Things were plenty and cheap. According to Abdur Razzak, 'all the inhabitants of Vijayanagar whether high or low, wore jewels and ornaments.' We have contemporary evidence of many travellers which testified to the miserable condition of the poor classes. Nuniz, Varthema and many other travellers who visited South India during the 15th and 16th centuries speak about the poverty and distress of the ryots. The miserable condition of the ryots was mainly due to the heavy taxation.

Industries

The Vijayanagar Empire like the rest of the country was self-sufficient. There were quite a large number of industries which may be grouped under the following heads agricultural manufacture, mines and metallurgy, handicrafts textiles and fisheries. There were diamond mines at Kumool and Anantapur. There were gold mines in Mysore and Hyderabad. Iron mines were found in Mysore. The other mines which were found in large quantities were sulphur and copper. Salt was manufactured near the sea coast. A large number of crafts-men, goldsmiths, jewellers and silversmiths were engaged in the production of various purposes. The pottery industry was mostly con-fined to rural areas. Textile industry was quite flourishing.

Trade and Commerce

There was flourishing inland, coastal and overseas trade and commerce which was an important source of general prosperity. For inland trade the cheap means of transport were kavadis, carts, asses, pack-bullocks and packhorses. The merchant guilds and craft guilds looked after the trade and industry. The principal ports were Bhatkal, Mangalore, Calicut, Cochin, Quilon, Kayal and Pulicat. The Vijayanagar empire had commercial relations with the islands in the Indian ocean, Burma, the Malaya Archipelago, China, Arabia, Persia, South Africa and Portugal. Ships were used for coastal and overseas trade. Vijayanagar had its own ships and the art of shipbuilding was known to them. There was a great demand of horses and elephants. Horses were imported from Arabia. Elephants were imported from Ceylon (Srilanka). Raw products such as spices, cloves, cardamom and cinnamon were imported from Sumatra, Moluccas and Ceylon. Opium came from China. Indians were very fond of precious stones

which were imported from Peru, China and Ormuz. Exports from Vijayanagar were mainly of rice, sugar, wheat and mullet. Rice was exported to Ceylon while coconut was sent to Aden and Ormuz. Ginger was sent to Persia. Textiles had a ready market in foreign markets particularly Ormuz, Malacca, pegu and Sumatra.

Coins

The coins of empire were those of gold, copper and silver. The standard coin of the Vijayanagar rulers was gold which was known as 'Varaha'. Its weight was 52 grains. There were other coins of smaller denominations. Copper coins were in common use in Vijayanagar. Jital was the lowest denomination. There were emblems of different gods and animals on the coins. Many rulers introduced Lakshmi Narayan, Lakshmi Narasimha and Uma Mahesvara on their coins. The influence of Vaishnavism led to the introduction of Venkatesa and his symbols, such as Sankha, Chakra and Garuda on the coins. Bull, however, continued to be used on the copper coins throughout the rule of Vijayanagar rulers. Nagari, Kannada and Telgu were the three scripts used by the Vijayanagar rulers on their coins. Krishnadev Raya used Kannada script on copper coins while Nagari was used for all other coins. Barbosa the Portuguese traveller, who visited Vijayanagar between 1509 A.D. and 1514 A.D. praised the currency system of Vijayanagar and noted the absence of false coinage. No wonder, south India was 'a golden sparrow' of the east during the age of the Vijayanagar Empire and it rightly excited the curiosity and envy of the foreigners who visited its coast in the 15th and 16th centuries.

5.7 Decline of Vijaynagar

Kingdom and the War of Rakshasi-Tangdi

The Muslim Kingdom of Deccan saw it clearly that Ram Rai was taking advantage of their mutual dissensions. All of them got scared of the growing power of Vijaynagar and decided to come together, forgetting their mutual differences. All the Muslim states decided to enter into a confederation against Vijaynagar. Vijaynagar had inflicted greatest harm on Ibrahim Qutubshah and Hussain Nizamshah. Therefore, they took the keenest interest into the formation of the confederation. Historians differ widely on the causes of the formation of this confederation and the background of the ear of Rakshasi-Tangdi. Ferishta writes that the rulers of Vijaynagar had assaulted the Muslim women, desecrated the mosques and disrespected the Holy Quran. But no independent evidence corroborates this view. Hindu historians mention that the five Muslim Sultans were in opposition to Ram Rai but Muslim historians leave out the name of Berar from it. There is difference of opinion also on the question as to which Muslim Sultans took the lead in forming the great confederation against Vijaynagar.

According to Ferishta, this plan originated with Adilshah of Bijapur whereas Shirazi attributes it to Husain Nizamshah of Ahmadnagar. Whatever be the case, the actual cause of the formation of this confederation was that the power of Vijaynagar had increased greatly and all the Muslim Sultans of the Deccan felt jealous of it. They realized that they would not be able to rule peacefully unless and until the power of Vijaynagar was suppressed. The naughty behavior of Ram Rai of Vijaynagar can also be held responsible for this confederation and the ensuing war. Whatever be the causes of the war, there is doubt in the fact that Ibrahim Qutubshah of Golkunda took solid steps towards bringing together Ali Adilshah and Hussain Nizamshah who

were engaged in mutual conflict for the control over Sholapur. Ibrahim Qutubshah made both the other rulers to give up their mutual hostility for the common cause of defeating Vijaynagar and consolidated their friendship by a matrimonial alliance. In accordance with this agreement Hussain Nizamshah married his daughter Chand Bibi to Ali Adilshah and gave Sholapur in dowry. The elder son of Hussain Nizam shah named Murtaza married the sister of Ali Adilshah.

In AD 1559, Ibrahim Qutubshah of Golkunda himself married the daughter of Hussain Nizamshah. Ali Bidarshah of Bidar also joined the confederation when the formation of the confederation was complete. He demanded of the ruler of Vijaynagar that he should return the forts of Raichur, Mudgal etc. Ram Rai did not heed the demand. Then the combined Muslim armies of the Deccan Sultans advanced towards Vijaynagar (28 December AD 1564) and encamped at Taliota. According to Ferishta, this battle was fought at Talikota but the actual field of the battle was between the two villages Rakshsi and Tangdi. Therefore, historians refer to it not as the battle of Talikota but as the battle of Rakshsi and Tangdi. Both the armies stood opposite each other for some time and the actual battle started on 25 January AD 1565.

Initially, the armies of Muslim confederation were defeated but later on the Muslim artillery spelled ruin in the Vijaynagar army and its cavalry disordered them. In the time of this crisis, the Muslim generals in the Vijaynagar army went over to the side of their co-religionists along with their armies and dealt a fatal blow in the midst of the battle. Ram Rai was encircled and Hussain Nizamshah immediately imprisoned and murdered him so that Ali Adilshah might not press for his release. The victors entered Vijaynagar and encamped there for five months and perpetrated massacre, plunder, desecration and destruction in such a manner that Vijaynagar whose beauty was praised by all the foreign travellers alike was ruined to such an extent that its reconstruction was rendered impossible. The period of the glory of the Vijaynagar Empire is said to have ended after this war. Although the Vijaynagar Empire continued to shrink and lost its political significance in South India, the next ruler Tirumal entered into a treaty with the Deccan Sultans and gave them back all the regions that Ram Rai had snatched from them. It is said that in AD 1568 Vincent II, the son of the actual ruler Tirumal Rai, who was ruling in the name of nominal ruler Sedative Rai had made Penougonda his new capital, and murdered the nominal ruler Sadashiv Rai. With this, the third dynasty of Vijaynagar came to an end and was founded the Aravidue dynasty.

Chief rulers of this dynasty were-Tirumal Rai (AD 1568-1572), Shir Ranga I (AD 1572-1585), Venkata Rai li (AD 1586-1614), Shir Ranga li (AD 1614-1617), Ramdev Rai (AD 1618-1630), Venkata III (AD 1630-1642) and Shir Ranga III (AD 1642-1649). In 1649, this kingdom had to surrender itself before Bijapur and Shri Ranga III stayed on in Mysore and died there only in AD 1672 dreaming of regaining his lost kingdom

5.8 Causes of the Conflict between Vijaynagar and Bahamani Empires

Let us analyse the causes of the conflict between Vijaynagar and Bhamani Empire.

The region of Raichur Doab

The most important cause of the conflict between the two empires was the region of Raichur of Doab. Both the powers wanted to establish their hold over this fertile region, situated

between the rivers Krishna and Tungabhadra. This remained the single most important cause of conflict in the reigns of Bukka Rai 1, Harishar II etc.

Diamond mines

Some historians are of the opinion that there were diamond mines in the Golkunda region of Bahamani Empire and the rulers of Vijaynagar wanted to make their empire prosperous by establishing their hold over them.

Imperialist Ambition

Some scholars are of opinion that the rulers of both the Vijaynagar and the Behan kingdoms were imperialist and ambitious. They wanted to extend their empire to include the entire Deccan and therefore, the conflict went on between the two in order to acquire the new regions and sometimes to regain their lost territory.

Rewati Dwipa (Goa)

Some historians are of the opinion that the Kings of Vijaynagar wanted to occupy the Revati Dwipa to augment their foreign trade and to acquire horses of superior breed as this island was situated on the western coast of the Bahamani Empire's boundary.

Growing Power of Vijaynagar

By AD 1560, Vijaynagar had come to occupy the highest position in the southern India. It had suppressed completely the power of the three Kingdoms of Ahmadnagar, Golkunda and Bidar and the existence of Bijapur was on the mercy of Vijaynagar. This growing power of Vijaynagar terrorized the Muslim Sultanates of the Deccan and forgetting their mutual differences, they decided to form a confederation and launch a struggle against Vijaynagar.

Hurting the religious sentiments of the Muslims by Vijaynagar

According to some scholars, Vijaynagar perpetrated many atrocities in its struggle against Ahmadnagar (AD 1522). Many Muslim women had to suffer humiliation. The Vijaynagar armies not only desecrated the mosque but also insulted the Holy Quran. This led the Sultanates rising on the decline of Bahamani kingdom to come together in a fight against Vijaynagar.

Haughtiness of Ram Rai

According to some historians, the abandonment by Ram Rai of the old defensive policy following the Vijaynagar rulers and his adaptation of a new strategy of making the Muslim states fight against one another and his haughty behaviour towards the Deccan Sultanates after his numerous victories were the major factors that led to the ultimate fierce battle (Battle of Rakshsi Tangdi) between the five Muslim states rising due to the decline of the Bahamani Kingdom and the Vijaynagar empire.

Jealousy of the Power of Vijaynagar

In fact, Bahamani and Vijaynagar empires were the patron of two different cultures viz. the Muslim and the Hindu. Both the empires followed expansionist policies. Each considered the other as a danger to its existence. When the Vijaynagar Empire acquired a deal of power by AD 1560, the Muslim Sultans grew jealous of it. Because of the matrimonial alliances, they drew near to each other and now began to consider themselves powerful enough. Ali Adilshah then demanded the return of the forts of Raichur, Mudgal and other forts which were not heeded by Ram Rai. This led to the battle of Rakshsi Tangdi.

5.7 BAHMANI KINGDOM: ADMINISTRATION AND DECLINE

An ambitious Afghan, Alauddin Hasan in AD 1347, founded Bahamani Empire. He had gradually enhanced his power under a Brahmin named Gangu so he was called Hasan Gangu. The Brahmin had treated him kindly and had professed that he would be a Sultan one day. According to Ferishta, it was due to his gratefulness to the Brahmin that Hasan later on assumed the title Bahamani and his accession he assumed the title of Alauddin Hasan Bahmani Shah. But Ferishta's opinion is not accepted these days. It is said that he considered himself to be a descendant of a semi-mythical Persian warrior called Bahaman Shah. Whatever may be the reason behind the assumption of this title, it is certain that because of this title his empire came to be called the Bahamani Empire. The rise of this empire is attributed to the following factors:

Mistaken policies of Muhammad Tughlaq

Because of the fantastic plans and defects of the character of Muhammad Tughlaq there was a wide spread feeling of revolt against him everywhere. Following his imperialist policies, he brought major parts of the Deccan under him and took many measures for the establishment of consolidated administration there. For every group of hundred villages, he appointed officials called Amiran-i-Sadah, who were also called 'Sadi'. They were responsible for the collection of revenue and kept the local troops under control. Because of these powers, these officials became very powerful and when revolts spread everywhere against Muhammad Tughlaq, these Sadi Amirs also raised the banner of revolt in the western and the southern India, taking advantage of the opportunity. The revolt of the Sadis originated in Gujarat and in order to suppress it Muhammad Tughlaq came to Bharoach and ordered the Governor of the Deccan Amir-ul-Mulk to send all the Sadis under Amiran-i-Sadah of Daulatabad to Bharoach. According to the historian Neelkanth Shastri, "Muhammad Tughlaq had summoned all the Sadis of Daulatabad because he suspected their honesty."

He writes further that many of the foreign officials of the revenue department of Daulatabad had been unsuccessful in recognizing the amount which was expected of them. According to the Sultan's orders, the Governor of Daulatabad sent these hundred Amirs to Bharoach under armed escorts.' It is said that Muhammad Tughlaq had caused hundreds of Amirs of Malwa to be murdered mercilessly before this. When these Amirs learned this, they rose in revolt after the first day of their journey and came back to Daulatabad. They held a secret conference and within the next three days chose one Ismil Khan, the eldest among them as their leader. After defeating the Governor of Muhammad Tughlaq in Daulatabad, Ismile khan declared himself as the emperor of Deccan under the title of Nasiruddin Shah.

He conferred the titles of Amir-Ur-Umra and Zafar Khan on Hasan, the chief of the confederacy of Amirs. On learning about this revolt, Muhammad Tughlaq himself came to Daulatabad from Bharoach at the head of a vast army and imprisoned the rebels in the Daulatabad fort. Some of the rebels, under the leadership of Hasan Gangu (Zafar Khan), including the brother of Ismile Khan ran away from the fort and reached Gulburga. Soon they encircled the Daulatabad fort where Amirani-Sadah and his army was imprisoned. But before he could free the fort of the Daulatabad of the rebels, he got the news of the revolts in the Gujarat and had to go back to suppress them.

Immediately Zafar Khan and his supporters, who had already occupied Gulburga and Sagar made an effort to free the fort of the Daulatabad of the remaining army of Muhammad-Bin-Tughlaq. He defeated the army of Muhammad Tughlaq very easily. murdered its commander and forced the army to run away to Malwa.

Popularity of Zafar Khan

Zafar Khan soon became very popular amongst the Amirs and the army because of his many achievements. Luck also favoured Zafar Khan. Ismile Shah abdicated power in the favour of Zafar Khan. The army and the people at Daulatabad had welcomed this decision of his. As a result, Hasan Gangu alias Zafar Khan declared himself the king on the 3rd August, AD 1347, with the title of Abul Muzaffar Allauddin Behmanshah and the empire established by him came to be called the Bahamani empire.

5.8 Rise and Extension of Bahamani Empire

Allauddin Hasaan Bahamani (3 August, AD 1347-11 February, AD 1358)

He ruled for eleven years. He proved himself to be a great conqueror and a powerful ruler. He adopted a policy of incessant conquests to extend his small kingdom. He built his capital at Gulburga and named it Ahsanabad and decorated it with beautiful buildings. When he died on 11 February, 1358, his empire extended to river Baniganga in the north, Krishna in the South, Daulatabad in the West to Bhorgir in the East. For purposes of administration, he divided his empire into four parts and appointed a Governor for each. Three of them were named after their famous cities as Galburga. Daulatabad, Bidar and the fourth one was called Berar. According to Ferishta, the cause of the success of the first Bahamani Sultan was his generosity.

He wrote that on being asked by someone as to the secret of his success, the Sultan said that it was possible because of his mercy for everyone be his friend or enemy and his policy of goodwill towards the poor. According to Isami, he was the first Muslim ruler of India who ordered that Jaziya should not be levied on the Hindus and allowed all agricultural produce to be imported in his kingdom without any duties. If the statement of Isami is true, it would have to be conceded that Hasan believed in a policy of secularism for which he needs to be praised.

Muhammad I (11 February, AD 1358-21 April, AD 1375)

After the death of Allauddin Hassan Bahmanshan, his son Muhammad I ascended the throne on 11 February, AD 1358. He was very industrious and in forces an able administrator and the administrative system started by him not only continued to be in the Bahamani empire for a long time but it also influenced the administrative system of the kingdoms arising on the ruins of the Bahamani Empire. He kept the entire Bahamani kingdom divided into four provinces (Tarafs)-Daulatabad, Bidar, Berar and Gulburga. He appointed four governors over them. But the title of each governor was different e.g., the governor of Daulatabad was called Masnad-I-Ali, that of Berar Majlis-I-Ali, that of Bidar Azam-I-Humayun and that of Gulburga Malik-I-Nayak. Out of the four governors, the governor of Gulburage was supposed to be the most important. He only wielded authority over Bijapur.

He established a council of eight ministers along with Vakil us Sultanate or Chief Peshwa and adopted the decentralization of the administration. The other ministers of his period were Wazir-I-Kul (Minister for Supervision), Amir-I-Jumla (Finance), Wazir I-Ashraf (Foreign Affaris), Nazir (Deputy Finance Minister), Peshwa (Deputy Prime Minister), Kotwal and Sadar Dahan (Justice). He reorganized the bodyguard force and divided them into four military departments. He took rigid measures to stop dacoits and thagi and murdered about two hundred dacoits. He started the use of gunpowder (first of all) which brought about a revolution in the military organization. Muhammad I was not only an able administrator but also was a great conqueror. He fought many battles against Vijaynagar and Teler gana. He acquired Golkunda after defeating Telengana but his wars against Vijaynagar failed to ring about any territorial gain for the Bahamani Empire. He died in AD 1375 He got the world famous mosque of Gulburaga constructed.

Allauddin Majahid (21 April, AD 1375-16 April, AD 1378)

After Muhammad I's death, his nineteen year old son Mujahid ascended the throne. He demanded from the Vijaynagar empire some areas of Raichur Doab, but as was expected the demand was refused and there upon he invaded Vijaynagar but was defeated. On 16 April 1378, his uncle Daud Khan murdered him and became the Sultan.

Daud Khan (16 April, AD 1378-21 May, AD 1378)

The Amirs helped the sister of Mujahid to hatch a plot against the murderer Daud Khan. He was murdered in Jama Masjid of Gulburga by a man named Bakka.

Muhammad Shah II (21 May, AD 1378-20 April, AD 1379)

Muhammad Shah II was peace loving. He took special interest in religion and literature. He invited poet Hafiz from Persia, who however could not reach because of a storm. During the time of famine, he liberally helped the people from the royal treasury but he died of a fever in April AD 1379.

Giyasuddin alias Tahamtan (4 April, AD 1379-14 June, AD 1397)

He became the Sultan at the age of seventeen. He appointed many Persians on important posts which was not liked by staunch Sunnis and one of them Tugalchin blinded and dethroned

him. He placed on the throne his younger brother Shamsuddin Daud and himself became his regent.

Shamsuddin Daud II (14 June, AD 1397-11 November AD 1397)

The daughters of Sultan Mahmood II were married to Firoz and Ahmad, the Sultan had brought them up as his sons, Both the princesses inspired their husbands to avenge the death of their brother. After some initial reverses, their husbands succeeded in bringing Tugalchin and Malik Daud under their control in November 1397. Shamsuddin Daud II was forced to abdicate the throne. Now Firoz Tajuddin ascended the throne as Tajuddin Firoz Shah.

Tajuddin Firoz Shah (11 November, AD 1397-22 September, AD 1422)

Tajuddin was a very healthy and an intelligent Sultan. According to Ferishta, he was the blessed of the Sultans of Bahamani Kingdom. Initially, he was very liberal and possessed high character but gradually his character declined. It is said that he appointed the Brahmins on the high posts and earned his livelihood by selling the copies of Holy Quran. He waged wars against Warrangals (Telangana), king Kherla and Harihar II of Vijaynagar. He defeated the Vijaynagar as well in AD 1398 and AD 1406 but was himself defeated in AD 1420. He had to surrender the eastern and western forts of his empire to Vijaynagar. This defeat had a very adverse effect on him and he had to abdicate his throne in favour of his brother Ahmadshah.

Even though he suffered defeat ultimately in the battlefield, he patronized literature and art during his reign. He patronized many foreign scholars in his court and also took a keen interest in architecture and built a palace of Firozabad with four vast doorways on the bank of the river Bhima.

Shihabuddin Admad II (22 September, AD 1422-14 July, AD 1436)

He is known in the Indian history as the first Sultan of the Bahamanis of Bidar because he shifted his capital from Gulburga to Bidar immediately after his accession (on 1 November, AD 1422). According to the historians, he affected the transfer because he wanted to get freedom from the intrigue ridden atmosphere of Gulburga where many royal murderers lived. According to another opinion, he shifted his capital because of the healthy climate and fertile soil of Bidar. According to a third opinion, Bidar was situated at the centre of the Bahamani Empire that is why it was made the capital. He named Bidar as Muhammadabad.

He appointed Khalaf Hassan, who was instrumental in his acquisition of throne, as his Wakil-Sultanate or Prime Minister. He waged a war against Vijaynagar to avenge the defeat of his brother. He defeated the rule of Vijaynagar on the battle-field, acquired vast wealth and assassinated many people over there. In AD 1424, he attacked Telengana, occupied Warrangal and made it a part of the Bahamani Empire. In AD 1425 he invaded Mahur and murdered its king along with 6,000 of his supporters. In AD 1429 he defeated the Sultan of Malwa named Hoshangshani but himself suffered a defeat at the hands of Ahmadshah Gujarati and was forced to sign a treaty. After his defeat at Gujarat, the chiefs of Telengana made an unsuccessful bid for freedom. During his reign jealousy increased between the two groups of Amirs viz., Deccanis and Afaquis (Iranis, Arab and Turkish Amirs) Sultans sympathy towards the Afaquis accelerated it all the more. He died in AD 1436.

Allauddin Ahmad II (14 July, AD 1436-4 March, AD 1458)

During his lifetime, the effect of the foreign Amirs increased. He sent his brother Muhammad to ask the ruler of Vijaynagar named Devrai II to give him the pending tribute before leading a military campaign against Vijaynagar. He was successful in this effort of his but he became very vain as a result of this success and claimed equal share with the Sultan in the Sultanate. But he was defeated. The Sultan however pardoned him and made him the governor of Raichur Doab. For the rest of his life he was loyal to his brother. In AD 1436 Allauddin Ahmad II led a campaign against the ruler of Sangameshwar. He was successful there also and the ruler of Sangameshwar had to marry his daughter to the Sultan. The Sultan of Kandesh carried out invasions against Alauddin and got help from the Sultan of Gujarat and the Rai of Gondwana.

The Bahamani Commander of Berar was imprisoned in the fort of Namala and Nasir Khan got his name inscribed on the main mosque of the province. During the time of this crisis the Afiqis or the foreign Amirs advised the Sultan to fight against Nasir Khan with full preparations. Their leader (Malik-ut-Tuzzar Khalaf Hassan Basari) was successful as well which led to an increase in the influence of foreign Amirs at the court and the decline of the Deccani nobles. Seeing the successes of the Bahamani empire, the Rai of Vijaynagar effected a reform in his army, recruited thousands of Muslims in his army and with their help conquered the fort of Mudgal in Raichur Doab and also plundered Nusartabad, Sagar and Bijapur. The Sultan once again carried out a successful campaign against Vijaynagar and captured the fort of Mudgal and also claimed the revenue due. Allauddin's character became worse as the age increased and he remained immersed in pleasures. The Deccani nobles made a plan to effect an end to the foreign nobles. In AD 1446-1447, Konkan was attacked and an army of Afakis was sent under the leadership of Khalaf Hassan

The ruler of Sangameshwar was also helping the Deccani nobles in this intrigue. In this war, the Afakis were defeated and their leader Khalaf Hassan was killed along with his many associates. The remaining Amirs were charged with treachery and the Deccani nobles made the Sultan to murder them. It is said that about 22,000 Afakis were murdered on the occasion of a royal feast. The Deccan established their control over their property but the Sultan repented heavily when he came to know the truth through Qasim Beg and some foreign nobles and he also gave death punishment to the Deccanis. He, again, started giving big offices to the Afakis as against the Deccanis. The brother-in-law of the Sultan, Jalal Khan, revolted in Golkunda and declared himself the Sultan. To suppress this revolt, a foreign noble named Mahmud Gawan was appointed. He suppressed the revolt successfully but the Sultan pardoned the rebel Jalal Khan. The Sultan died due to a deep wound on 4 March, AD 1458.

Humayun Shah (4 March, AD 1458-11 September, AD 1461)

After the death of Allauddin Ahmad II his son Humayun, who, being the eldest son had already been appointed as heir apparent by his father, succeeded him on the throne. He was a very severe natured man. He removed his younger brother Hassan Khan and his supporters from his way before becoming the Sultan. He appointed Mahmud Gawan as his Prime Minister. Because of his ability the Sultan succeeded in suppressing three revolts against himself. He was

assassinated by his own servants while he was drunk on 11 September, AD 1461. People were jubilant over his death because they were fed up with him because of his cruel nature.

Ahmad Hassan and his Regency (11 September, AD 1461-30 July, AD 1463)

Humayun was followed by his eight years old son on the throne. The administrative council formed during the reign of Humayun himself started running the administration. It consisted of three members including the queen mother Makdoom-i-Jaha-Nargis and Mahmud Gawan.

The queen mother had the decisive power. The Hindu kings of Telangana and Orissa and Mahmood I of Malwa launched an attack on the Bahamani Kingdom. The Bahamani kingdom defeated Telangana and Orissa, but was defeated by the armies of Malwa. Queen mother and her younger son Mahmud III were forced to take refuge in the fort of Firozabad. Mahmud Gawan appealed to Mahmud Bigar of Gujarat for help, which was accepted by him, and the army of Malwa was driven back. On the 30 July, AD 1463 Ahmad Hassan died and his younger brother Mahmud III ascended the throne.

Shahabuddin Mahmud III and the Regency (13 July, AD 1463-22 March, AD 1482)

After the death of Ahmad Hassan (alias Nizamuddin III) his younger brother Mahmud Khan ascended the throne assuming the title Muhammad III. He was only nine years old therefore the Regency continued to run the administration even in his time. One member of the Regency Khwaja Jahan-revolted and for this treachery the queen mother punished him by getting him hanged. Mahmud Gawan, who was devoting great attention towards the education of Baby Sultan was given the title Amir-ul-Umra and he was ordered to stay in the capital itself. When the Sultan was fifteen years of age, the queen mother left the politics and the Sultan began to rule under the supervision of Mahmud Gawan. In the Prime Minister ship of Mahmud Gawan the Bahamani Empire not only achieved cultural progress but also for the first time it was extended from the Koromandal Coast to the Arabian Sea Coast.

In the reign of Mahmud III in AD 1472 Bankapur was invaded, whose ruler Virkan surrendered. Next four-five years were spent in struggle with Orissa in AD 1474-1475 because of the misbehavior of the officials at Kondavidu. The people there had risen in revolt and had murdered the Governor. After a prolonged struggle the ruler Purushotam Gajpati was forced to surrender but, soon after, in AD 1480-1481, the army posted at Kondavidu revolted and went over to the side of Vijaynagar ruler Rai Narshingh. The Bahamani Sultan suppressed this revolt and invaded Vijaynagar to teach the kingdom a lesson. Vijaynagar was defeated and a major part of it was annexed to the Bahamani empire. This was the last and the most important achievement of Mahmud Gawan. The Deccanis plotted against him. To prove the charges framed by them, they got a plain paper stamped and on it a forged letter was drafted in the name of Raja Purushotam on the behalf of Mahmud Gawan. In it was written that the people were fed up with Sultan Muhammad because of his cruelty and drunkenness and that he should invade the Bahamani kingdom. When this letter was shown to the Bahamani Sultan became very angry.

Though Mahmud Gawan repeatedly asserted that he had no concern whatsoever with that letter but Sultan paid no heed to it and ordered his Abyssinian Slave Gulam Jouhar to slay the

Wazir at that very spot. It was done (5 April, AD 1481). Thus was killed the only adviser of the Bahamani empire who was honest and able alike. After Mahmud Gawan's death when the Sultan came to know about the plot of the Deccani nobles against Gawan, he was deeply grieved and himself died within a year on 22 March, AD 1482.

The Successors of Mahmud III and the Decline of the Bahamani Empire (AD 1482-1527)

Mahmud III was followed by his younger son Mahmud Shah as Sultan. He was very incapable and pleasure loving. Since he was only twelve years of age, he made Nizamulmulk his Regent or Malik Naik. The struggle between the two sections of the Amirs increased because of their selfish interests. It is said that on the incitement by the Deccani nobles the Sultan issued the orders of the massacre of the Turks and about 4000 people were done to death. After the domination of the Deccani nobles for four years the Sultan made an unsuccessful attempt to get Nizamulmulk assassinated during the Telangana campaign so that he should be able to get out of their strangle hold. He became inclined towards the African Group. On the other hand, the Governor of Telangana revolted and there was revolt in Goa and Chakan as well which was assisted by Amir Yusuf Adil, staying at Bijapur at that time. He had left the port of Bidar in anger. Malik Hassan tried to capture the treasury for becoming the Sultan himself. The Sultan thereupon ordered the Governor of Bidar Dilpasane Khan to assassinate him. In November 1487 the Deccani noble, in alliance with their African counterpart, tried unsuccessfully to slay the Sultans.

In AD 1490, Yusuf Adil Khan of Bijapur, and Fathulla Imadulmulk of Berar declared their independence in AD 1512. Qutubul Mulk of Golkunda and Barid-UI-Mulk of Bidar also declared themselves independent as also like the Nizamulmulk of Ahmednagar. Sultan Mahmud III and three of his immediate successors (who were only nominal Sultans) remained a puppet in the hands of Barid UI-Mulk of Bidar and after his death that of his son Amir Ali Brid. The last Bahamani Sultan was Kalimulla Shah. In AD 1527 with his death ended the Bahamani Empire as well and on its ruins arose five independent kingdoms

- (1) Baridshashi Kingdom of Bidar
- (2) Adilshashi Kingdom of Bijapur
- (3) Nizamshashi Kingdom of Ahmednagar
- (4) Imadshahi Kingdom of Berar and
- (5) Qutubshahi Kingdom of Golkunda.

5.9 Causes of the downfall of Bahamani Kingdom

Many causes were responsible for the decline of the Bahamani Kingdom. Chief causes amongst which were:

(1) Internal intrigues and Civil Wars: In its 175 years of reign the Bahamani Dynasty had in all seventeen Sultans; out of which five were assassinated, three deposed, two blinded and two died of excessive drinking. It can be said, therefore, that due to the lack of any definite rules of succession, incessant intrigue royal household as well as the highest officials caused monetary and physical damage to it and contributed to the growth of indiscipline. During the reign of Sultan Shahabudding Mahmud, the Queen mother ordered Khan-i-Jahan to be hanged.

(ii) Partisanship of the Decanis (original inhabitants) and the Afaquis (foreign settlers): Some historians say that the Bahamani Kingdom was founded by those Amirs who had come and settled in India from Persia, Turkey etc. There was a deep enmity between them and the original inhabitants the Deccan is who had embarrassed Islata. They wanted to give the entire credit for every success to their party and put the blame for every failure on the opposite group. In this party rivalry an able man like Mahmud Gawan became a victim. He had served the Bahamani Kingdom for thirty-five years but the party politics led to his assassination and within a short time short his death, the Bahamani Kingdom disintegrated.

(iii) Religious fanaticism of some rulers: Some of the Bahamani rulers were religious fanatics and they did not show real sympathy towards their Hindu subjects. The Bahamani Sultans considered it their God-given duty to propagate Islamic culture in the Deccan. Since Muslims numbered less than the Hindus, many a time they raised the slogan of Jihad (crusade) and the Muslim soldiers lost their lives in large numbers in the ensuing warfare. Fanatic Sultans tried to carry out a general massacre of the Hindus quite a numbers of times, which aroused the fanaticism of the Hindus as well, and thus the Bahamani empire grew weak progressively.

(iv) Defective Foreign Policy: Bahamani Sultans followed a policy of warfare and enmity towards all their neighbouring states like Malwa, Khandesh, Gujarat, Telangana, Vijaynagar etc. Majority of the Sultans tried to win popularity by their military achievements; very few of them utilized their time for the public welfare activities. Their attitude weakened the Bahamani Kingdom.

(v) Excessive authority given to Provincial Governors: Ever since the time of founders of the Bahamani Empire, the Governors of four major provinces (who were called Tarafs) were given the right to collect revenue and maintain a big army. The centre had no great control over them. Mahmud Gawan tried to divide them into eight parts and tried to bring them under the greater control of the centre but the Sultans following him could not arrest their ambition and soon after his death, they started proclaiming themselves independent and the central Government could do nothing against it.

(vi) Financial Disparity: Some historians hold opinion that an important cause of the downfall of the Bahamani Empire was financial disparity prevailing there. A Russian merchant Atansiuv Nikitn, who stayed in Bidar in AD 1470-1474 wrote that the population of the empire was too much but the condition of the common man was miserable, whereas the Amirs were very rich and lived a luxurious life. Briefly then, the party groupings in the Bahamani court, administrative defects and a protected struggle against Vijaynagar and other kingdoms contributed to its downfall.

5.10 Let Us Sum Up

The Vijayanagar Empire was founded by Harihara I in the 14th century. This was the last great Hindu empire in medieval India. It not only resisted the onslaughts of Islam successfully but also championed the cause of Hindu civilisation and culture in the south for almost three centuries. The first dynasty of Vijayanagar is named after Sangama. Harihara and his successor Bukka probably did not assume imperial titles.

Krishnadev Raya was one of the most famous kings in the history of India. He ascended the throne in 1509 A.D. He had charming personality, courage and presence of mind. But he had to face early difficulties in his career. The throne of Vijayanagar was not a bed of roses for the new king. He had to face the enemies from all sides. But a gallant and active warrior, he was always successful in the wars that he waged throughout his reign period.

The Vijayanagar empire gradually developed a centralised administration with all its branches carefully organised. The concept of kingship among the Vijayanagar rulers were very high. In his book on polity, Krishnadev Raya advise the king that “with great care and according to your power you should attend to the work of protecting (good) and punishing (the wicked) without neglecting any thing that you see or hear’

The empire was divided into a number of provinces under able Governors. Due care was taken in the selection of the Governor son the basis of their proven ability as commanders and administrators. Their loyalty to the emperor was considered the high virtue. In spite of the vastness of the empire, he was careful in maintaining his undisputed supremacy over the Governors and the vassals. Through an efficient mechanism, the king used to gather vital information, which ensured perfect law and order and promoted peace, harmony and material prosperity. The Chola traditions of village self-government continued under Vijayanagar rulers also. However the growth of hereditary Nayakship curtailed their former freedom and initiative. Village councils looked at the local administration. Land was owned either by temples or landlords. Tenant farmers paid fixed share of the crops.

It is clear from foreign accounts and other sources that unbounded prosperity prevailed in the Vijayanagar Empire. There were well organised guilds of artisans. The guilds provided employment, organised labour, controlled production and distribution. Merchant’s guilds were also functioning. The principal industries were related to textiles, mining metallurgy and perfumery. The king was taking personal interest for the development in internal and external trade. He encouraged trade of elephants, horses, precious gems, pearls and sandal wood, etc.

5.11 Key Words

<i>Dharam Shastra</i>	:	Religious text
<i>Nayaks</i>	:	Leaders
<i>Kotwal</i>	:	Police officer
<i>Athavana</i>	:	Revenue Department
<i>Dandnayak</i>	:	Magistrate
<i>Rayyas</i>	:	Provinces
<i>Kottam</i>	:	District
<i>Ayagars</i>	:	Village Officers

5.12 Check Your Learning

1. Trace the history of the rise and fall of the Vijayanagar Empire in the history of Southern India.
2. Write an account of the Hindu Empire of Vijayanagar.

3. Discuss the career and achievements of Krishnadev Raya of Vijayanagar Empire.
4. Discuss the chief features of the administration of the Vijayanagar Empire.
5. Discuss the socio-economic life of the people of Vijayanagar Empire.
6. What was the economic condition of the people in Vijayanagar Empire?
7. How was the Bahamani Kingdom formed? Discuss in detail.
8. Asses the causes for the downfall of the Bahamani Kingdom.

5.13 Suggested Reading

Aiyangar, S.K.	:	Sources of Vijaynagar History
	:	Krishnadeva Raya of Vijaynagar
Shastri, Nilakantha	:	Vijayanagar-Origin of the city and empire
Dikshit, G.S. (ed)	:	Early Vijaynagar, studies in its History and culture
Fillioxat, Vasundhara (ed):		Vijayanagar

5.14 Hints/Answers to Questions in Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress-I

1. Harihara I was the founder of the Vijoyanagar Empire in the 14th century.
2. Saluva Narasimha was the founder of the Saluva dynasty in 1485 AD.
3. Vira Narasimha was the founder of the Tuluva dynasty.
4. The Gojapati ruler of Orissa, Prataprudradeva was defeated by Krishnadeva Roy.
5. The court of Krishnadeva Roy was adorned with eight celebrated Telegu, poets known as 'ashta - diggatas.

Check Your Progress-II

1. The share of the state was one-sixth of the produce.
2. Three foreign travellers are Nicolo Conti, Abdur Razzaq and Paes.
3. The standard coin of the Vijoyanagar rulers was gold, which was known as Varaho.



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