

The Delhi Sultans (Easy and Simplified Notes for class 7th)

Introduction:

Have you ever thought about how Delhi became such an important city in India's history? The Delhi Sultans ruled for many years, leaving behind big forts, famous buildings, and stories of their brave battles. They changed the way people lived and made Delhi a powerful place. Let's learn more about these rulers and how they made Delhi so special!

Delhi: From a Small Town to a Great Capital

- **Delhi's Rise:** While big kingdoms like **Kaveri delta** were already powerful, **Delhi** became important only in the **12th century**.
- **First Kingdoms in Delhi:**
 - **Tomara Rajputs** first made Delhi their capital.
 - Later, the **Chauhans of Ajmer** took control.
 - Under the **Tomaras and Chauhans**, Delhi became a **major commercial center** with many **merchants** and its own **coins** called **dehliwal**.
- **Delhi's Big Change:**
 - In the **13th century**, **Delhi** became the **capital** of the **Delhi Sultanate**.
 - Five **dynasties** ruled from Delhi, making it a **powerful capital**.
- **Building the City:**
 - The Sultans built new cities like **Dehli-i Kuhna**, **Siri**, and **Jahanpanah**.
 - These cities helped shape the **Delhi** we know today.

Finding Out About the Delhi Sultans

- **Sources of Information:**
 - We learn about the Delhi Sultans through **inscriptions**, **coins**, **buildings**, and **histories**.
 - These histories, called **tawarikh**, were written in **Persian**, the official language of the time.
 - **Note:** Persian served as the official language of administration and culture.
- **Who Wrote These Histories?:**
 - **Tawarikh** authors were **scholars**, **administrators**, **poets**, and **courtiers**.
 1. They lived in **cities** like Delhi and rarely in **villages**.
 2. They wrote for **Sultans** hoping for **rewards**.
 3. Also, they advised rulers on **just rule** and maintaining an **ideal social order** based on **birth** and **gender**.
- **Different Opinions:**
 - Not everyone agreed with ideas like;
 - **Social Order Based on Birth and Gender**
 - **Women in Power**
 - **For Example:** In **1236**, **Raziyya**, daughter of Sultan Iltutmish, became Sultan because she was more capable than her brothers. However, historian **Minhaj-i Siraj** and **the nobles** were uneasy

about her rule. In 1240, she was removed from the throne for trying to rule independently.

- Other examples include **Rudramadevi** (from Kakatiya Dynasty), who disguised herself as a man to rule, and **Didda**, who ruled Kashmir as a respected leader.

From Garrison Town to Empire: Expansion of the Delhi Sultanate

Garrison Town: It is the place where soldiers live and work.

Empire: It is a large group of states or territories governed by a single authority, often an emperor or empress.

- In the early 13th century, the Delhi Sultans controlled fortified towns, not the surrounding areas.
- They relied on trade, tribute, and plunder for supplies.
 - **Challenges:**
 - Controlling distant regions like Bengal and Sind was tough.
 - The Sultanate faced rebellions, wars, bad weather, and Mongol invasions from Afghanistan.
 - **Key Rulers:**
 - Expansion occurred under **Ghiyasuddin Balban**, **Alauddin Khalji**, and **Muhammad Tughluq**.

Internal Expansion

Strengthening **Hinterlands**:

Campaigns aimed to secure the areas around garrison towns.

Land Use Changes: Cleared forests in the **Ganga-Yamuna doab**.

Expelled hunter-gatherers and pastoralists.

Gave land to peasants and encouraged agriculture.

New Fortresses: Built to protect trade routes and promote regional trade.

External Expansion

Military Campaigns: Started with **Alauddin Khalji** and continued with **Muhammad Tughluq**.

Conquests: Captured elephants, horses, slaves, and precious metals.

Significant Expansion: By the end of Muhammad Tughluq's reign, the Delhi Sultanate expanded significantly, defeating rival armies and collecting taxes.

What is Masjid?

A mosque is called a **masjid** in Arabic. It means a place where Muslims pray to Allah.

- Also known as **masjid-i jami** or **jama masjid**.
- Muslims pray together (namaz) led by a respected male leader called the **imam**. The imam also

gives the sermon (**khutba**) during Friday prayers.

- **Note:** Muslims face **Mecca** during prayer, which is to the west in India. This direction is called the **qibla**.
- Delhi Sultans built many mosques across the subcontinent.
 - These mosques showed their role as protectors of Islam and Muslims.

A closer look: Administration and Consolidation under the Khaljis and Tughluqs

To whom early Delhi Sultans appointed?

- Delhi Sultanate needed trustworthy governors.
- So, rulers appointed special slaves as governors. (instead of aristocrats and landed chieftians)
 - **For Example:** Iltutmish appointed loyal slaves (**bandagan**) to key positions.
 - Khaljis and Tughluqs also promoted humble individuals.
- As a result, new challenges arose among the elites.
 - New Sultans replaced old nobles, causing conflicts during succession.
 - Elites criticized appointments of “**low and base-born**” individuals to high offices.

Military Administration:

- **Governance Structure:** Military commanders managed areas known as **iqta**.
- **Roles of Muqtis:** These commanders, called **muqtis**, were responsible for leading military campaigns and ensuring law and order in their regions.
- **Revenue Collection:** Additionally, muqtis collected taxes to fund their soldiers.

Control Measures:

- Sultans limited muqtis' terms and banned inheritance of positions.
- Revenue monitoring was strict under **Alauddin Khalji** and **Muhammad Tughluq**.

Revenue System:

- The Sultanate controlled land revenue collection.
- Local chieftains lost tax-levying rights.
- Key **taxes** included:
 1. **Kharaj:** 50% tax on crops.
 2. Tax on cattle.
 3. Tax on houses.

Geographical Challenges:

- Many regions remained outside Sultanate control.
- Bengal and southern India became independent post-annexation.

- Dense forests in the Gangetic plain resisted Sultanate forces.

Mongol Invasions:

- Mongols invaded in 1219, increasing attacks on the Sultanate.
- Alauddin Khalji and Muhammad Tughluq faced these challenges.
 - A large standing army was needed in Delhi.

Aspect	Alauddin Khalji	Muhammad Tughluq
Defensive vs. Offensive	Focused on defense against the Mongols. Maintained stability.	Aimed for expansion but faced backlash.
Price Control vs. Token Currency	Controlled market prices to prevent inflation.	Introduced a “token” currency that was distrusted.
Administrative Success vs. Failure	Achieved effective governance; received praise.	Faced failures, leading to rebellions.
Military Management	Raised a large army in a new garrison town (Siri).	Emptied an old city (Dehli-i Kuhna) to house soldiers.
Tax Collection and Revenue	Collected 50% of peasant yields for the army.	Imposed extra taxes during famine, causing unrest.
Public Sentiment	Maintained strong public support through good governance.	Faced resentment due to high taxes and policies.

The Sultanate in the 15th and 16th Centuries

- **Dynasties:** The Sayyid and Lodi dynasties ruled Delhi and Agra until 1526.
- **Independent Regions:** Regions like Jaunpur, Bengal, Malwa, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and southern India had their own independent rulers.
- **Emerging Rulers:** Afghan and Rajput rulers started to gain power.
 - **For example:** Sher Shah Suri (1540-1545) was an Afghan ruler who established the Suri dynasty after defeating Mughal emperor Humayun and capturing Delhi.
 - **Administration Model:**
 - The Suri dynasty adopted effective practices from Alauddin Khalji.
 - Sher Shah’s administration influenced Akbar’s consolidation of the Mughal Empire.

Category

1. Class 7th

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