

Chapter 3 The Delhi Sultans

1. Which ruler first established his or her capital at Delhi?

Answer: The Tomara Rajputs were the first rulers who established their capital at Delhi.

2. What was the language of administration under the Delhi Sultans?

Answer: It was Persian.

3. In whose reign did the Sultanate reach its farthest extent?

Answer: The Sultanate reached its farthest extent during the reign of Muhammad Tughluq.

4. From which country did Ibn Battuta travel to India?

Answer: Ibn Battuta belonged to Morocco, Africa and travelled to India.

5. According to the 'circle of justice' why was it important for military commanders to keep the interests of the peasantry in mind?

Answer:

According to the 'circle of justice' it was important for military commanders to keep the interest of peasantry in mind. As is clear from the following:

1. A king survived on soldiers.
2. Soldiers worked for salaries.
3. Salaries came from revenue collected from peasants.
4. Peasant would pay revenue when they are prosperous and happy. This in turn will happen when there is justice and honest governance.

6. What is meant by the 'internal' and 'external' frontiers of the Sultanate?

Answer: The 'internal' frontier means the hinterland of the garrison town.

The 'external' frontier means the areas beyond the hinterland of the garrison towns.

7. What were the steps taken to ensure that muqtis performed their duties? Why do you think they may have wanted to defy the orders of the Sultans?

Answer:

Steps taken to ensure that the muqtis performed their duties well:

1. Appointment of accountants to check the amount collected by the muqtis.
2. Collection of revenues only which were prescribed by the state, not more than that in any circumstances.
3. Fixation of limit to keep the required number of soldiers.
4. They might be shifted to another area.
5. The muqtis may have wanted to defy the orders of the Sultans because restrictions imposed on them were very rigorous.
6. Their appointment was temporary.

8. What was the impact of the Mongol invasions on the Delhi Sultanate? Ans. The Delhi Sultanate mobilised a large standing army in Delhi. It posed a big administrative challenge.

Answer:

- Alauddin Khalji constructed a new garrison town at Siri for his soldiers. He imposed taxes on land to feed the army at the rate of 50 percent of peasant's yield. He began to pay the soldiers in cash.
- Muhammad Tughluq shifted people of Delhi to Daulatabad in south and thus converted Delhi into a garrison town. He also disbanded the army. He also paid the soldiers in cash.

9. Do you think the authors of tawarikh would provide information about the lives of ordinary men and women?

Answer: I don't think like that. It is because the authors of tawarikh lived in cities mainly Delhi. They were not in touch of village people. They often wrote their histories for Sultans in the hope of rich rewards. They had nothing to do with common mass. Hence, it was obvious that the information provided by them would lack ordinary men and women.

10. Raziyya Sultan was unique in the history of the Delhi Sultanate. Do you think women leaders are accepted more readily today?

Answer:

We think that even today women leaders are not accepted more readily. We can see this in respect of 33% reservation of women in parliament.

11. Why were the Delhi Sultans interested in cutting down forests? Does deforestation occur for the same reasons today?

Answer:

The Delhi Sultans were interested in cutting down forests to expand their kingdom which was till then restricted to the Delhi Sultanate.

No, deforestation does not occur for the same reasons today. Today it occurs for additional land for habitation, road expansion, road construction, industries, and urbanization.

12. Find out whether there are many buildings built by the Delhi Sultans in your area. Are there any other buildings in your area that were built between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries? Describe some of these buildings, and draw sketches of them.

Answer:

Yes, there are several. Some of them are Buildings built between 12th and 15th century

- Jamali-Kamali Mosque.
- Sirifort.
- Begumpuri Mosque.
- Moth Ki Masjid.
- Raziyya's Tomb.
- Qutb Minar.
- Tugalakabad Fort
- Firuz Shah Kotla
- Purana Quila .

Sketches: Do this yourself.

Other Buildings

- Lai Quila, Jama Masjid.

Very Short Answer Type Questions

1. Who defeated the Tomara Rajputs and when?

Answer: The Chauhans of Ajmer defeated the Tomara Rajputs in the middle of the 12th century.

2. When did the Delhi Sultanate lay its foundation?

Answer: The Delhi Sultanate laid its foundation in the beginning of the thirteenth century.

3. Name the five dynasties that together made the Delhi Sultanate.

Answer:

- Early Turkish rulers (1206–1290)
- Khalji dynasty (1290–1320)
- Tughluq dynasty (1320–1414)
- Sayyid dynasty (1414–1451)
- Lodi dynasty (1451–1526).

4. Mention the sources that provide a lot of information about the Delhi Sultans. [V. Imp.]

Answer: Inscriptions, coins, architecture and history written in Persian by learned authors are some of the most important sources that provide a lot of information about the Delhi Sultans.

5. Why did the authors of tawarikh write their histories for Sultans?

Answer: They did so in the hope of rich rewards.

6. Why was Raziyya removed from the throne? [V. Imp.]

Answer: Being a woman ruler she was not favoured by anyone. She ruled just for four years and was finally dethroned in 1240.

7. What is a mosque called in Arabic?

Answer: It is called a masjid.

8. What is the literal meaning of mosque?

Answer: It refers to a place where a Muslim prostrates in reverence to Allah.

9. What is called the qibla?

Answer: The direction towards which Muslims turn while offering prayer or namaz.

10. Why did the early Delhi Sultans favour their slaves?

Answer: The slaves were totally dependent on their master. Therefore the Sultan could trust and rely upon them.

11. What was the duty of the muqtis?

Answer: The duty of the muqtis was to lead military campaigns and maintain law and order in their iqtas.

12. Why were accountants appointed by the state?

Answer: They were appointed to check the amount of revenue collected by the muqtis.

13. Why did the authors of Persian tawarikh criticise the Delhi Sultans? [Imp.]

Answer: They did not like the Sultanate's policy of appointing the 'low and base-born' to high offices.

14. Name the three types of taxes collected during the Sultanate period.

Answer:

1. Tax on cultivation called Kharaj and amounting to about 50% of the peasant's yield.
2. Tax on cattle
3. Tax on houses.

15. For how many years the Suri dynasty rule?

Answer: The Suri dynasty ruled for only 15 years.

Short Answer Type Questions

1. Who were the authors of tawarikh? Write in brief about them. [Imp.]

Answer: The authors of tawarikh were learned men. They were secretaries, administrators, poets and courtiers who recounted events as well as advised rulers on governance, emphasising the importance of just rule. The authors of tawarikh lived in cities mainly in Delhi and therefore they were cut off from the village. They used to write histories in praise of the Sultans and in return got rich rewards. These authors advised rulers that they should follow an ideal social order based on birthright and gender distinctions. Common mass had nothing to do with their ideas.

2. Who was Raziyya? Why was she not accepted as a Sultan inspite of being talented? [V. Imp.]

Answer: Raziyya was Sultan Iltutmish's daughter. She became Sultan in 1236. She was very talented. According to the chronicler of the age, Minhaj-i-Siraj, she was more able and qualified than all her brothers. But she was not accepted when she became a ruler. Those were the days when women were not allowed to enjoy independent identity. They were supposed to be subordinate to men. This led to her removal from the throne in 1240.

3. What were the four stages in the making of a manuscript?

Answer:

The four stages in the making of a manuscript are:

- Preparing the paper
- Writing the text
- Melting gold to highlight important words and passages
- Preparing the binding.

4. How did the Khaljis and Tughluqs help the people of humble birth? How did it lead to political instability?

Answer: The Khaljis and Tughluqs raised people of humble birth who were often their clients, to high political positions. They were appointed as generals and governors. However, this also introduced an element of political instability. Slaves and clients, the people of humble birth, were loyal to their masters and patrons but not to their heirs. Now Sultans had their own servants. As a result the accession of a new monarch often saw conflict between the old and the new nobility.

5. Why did large parts of the subcontinent remain outside the control of the Delhi Sultans? What were the repercussions? [V. Imp.]

Answer: Large parts of the subcontinent remained outside the control of the Delhi Sultans because they were very far from Delhi. For example, it was difficult to control Bengal from Delhi. This helplessness of the Delhi Sultans paved the way for distant provinces to get independence. Even in the Gangetic plain there were forested areas that Sultanate forces could not penetrate. It was a golden opportunity for the local chieftains to establish their rule in these regions.

6. How did the chieftains arrange for their defence?

Answer: The chieftains fortified themselves in mountains, in rocky, uneven and rugged places as well as in bamboo groves. The bamboo had unique features. It was strong and even fire could not affect it because its several parts were intertwined making them very strong. The chieftains lived in these forests which served them as rampart. They had everything necessary for life such as cattle, crops, water, etc. inside the forests. Thus, they were safe. Only powerful armies could subdue them.

7. Why did Alauddin control the prices of goods in Delhi? What did he do for this?

Answer: Alauddin gave great importance to his soldiers because it was they who could defend the Sultanate from outsiders. He decided to pay their salaries in cash rather than iqtas. The soldiers would buy their supplies from merchants in Delhi and it was thus feared that merchants would raise their prices. To stop this, Alauddin controlled the prices of goods in Delhi. For this Alauddin instructed officers to carefully survey prices. The merchants who did not sell their goods at the prescribed rates were punished.

8. Describe in brief Tughluq's policy of 'token' currency.

Answer: Tughluq did not control prices of the goods. Instead, he used a token currency, made out of cheap metals, and not of gold and silver. People in the 14th century did not believe in these coins. They saved their gold and silver coins and paid all their taxes to the state with this token currency. This cheap currency could be counterfeited easily.

9 Who was Sher Shah Sur? What do you know about his administration?[V. Imp.]

Answer: Sher Shah Sur (1540–1545) established a powerful state. He started his career as the manager of a small territory for his uncle in Bihar and eventually challenged and defeated the Mughal Emperor Humayun. Sher Shah captured Delhi and established his own dynasty known as the Suri dynasty. Although the Suri dynasty ruled for only a short period i.e. 15 years, it introduced an administration that borrowed elements from Alauddin khalji and made them more efficient. The great emperor Akbar followed the techniques of Sher Shah's administration while consolidating the Mughal Empire.