

UNIT 112 – UPSC - Khalji Dyanasty

India's History : Medieval India : Jalaludin Firuz Khalji establishes the Khalji dynasty

Khilji followed The Slave Dynasty

The struggle between the monarchy and the Turkish chiefs continued till one of the Turkish chiefs Balban (Ulugh khan) (1265 AD - 1285 AD) ascended the throne. During the earlier period he held the position of naib or deputy to Nasiruddin Mahmud, a younger son of Iltutmish. He broke the Chahalgami and made the Sultan all important. Through changes in the organisation of the army and administration, he was able to control any revolt among the nobles. Balban got rid of many of his other rivals by fair and foul means. But there is no doubt that with his accession to the throne there began an era of strong, centralised government.

After Balban's death, there was again confusion in Delhi for some times. In 1290, the Khilji's, under the leadership of Jalaluddin Khilji, wrested power from the incompetent successor of Balban.

The founder of the Khalji Dynasty in South Asia, Malik Firuz, was originally the Ariz-i-Mumalik appointed by Kaiqubad during the days of decline of the Slave Dynasty. He took advantage of the political vacuum that was created due to the incompetence of the successors of Balban. To occupy the throne, he only had to remove the infant Sultan Kaimurs. On June 13 1290, Malik Firuz ascended the throne of Delhi as Jalal-ud-din Firuz Shah. Khaljis were basically Central Asians but had lived in Afghanistan for so long that they had become different from the Turks in terms of customs and manners. Thus the coming of Khaljis to power was more than a dynastic change. As majority of the Muslim population of Delhi was Turk, the arrival of a Khalji ruler was not much welcomed. Yet Jalal-ud-din managed to win the hearts of the people through his mildness and generosity. He retained most of the officers holding key positions in the Slave Dynasty. His own nephew and son-in-law Alauddin Khalji, killed Jalal-ud-din and took over as the new ruler. Alauddin's reign is marked by innovative administrative and revenue reforms, market control regulations and a whirlwind period of conquests. It is considered the golden period of the Khalji rule. However, before the death of Alauddin, his house was divided into two camps. This resulted in the ultimate collapse of the Khalji dynasty. On one side were Khizar Khan (Alauddin's son and the nominated heir to the throne), Alp Khan (Khizar's father in law and the governor of Gujrat) and Malika-i-Jehan (wife of Alauddin and sister of Alp Khan). Malik Kafur led the other camp, who was one of Alauddin's most trusted nobles. Malik Kafur managed to win the battle of politics and succeeded in making Shahab-ud-din Umar, a young prince of six years old, as the successor of Alauddin and himself became his regent. However, later his own agents killed Malik Kafur.

Alauddin Khalji introduces controversial policies

Alauddin Khalji, murdered his uncle Jalaluddin Firoze to gain the throne. It was his ambition to establish a vast empire. He introduced more controversial policies. All religious lands were confiscated and marriages between noble families were sanctioned by the King. The Emperor also introduced market and price control for foodgrains, cloth and other essentials. The land revenue was raised and made more efficient. Thus the Emperor enforced a highly centralised system of government.



He extended the boundaries of the Delhi Sultanate and brought almost the whole of India under his sway. Alauddin conquered Gujarat, Ranthambhor, Chitor, Warangal, the Hosala & Pandaya kingdoms. He also took effective measures to keep the Mongols out of his Indian empire, and so followed the policy of strengthening the defense force. Alauddin died in 1316.



Alauddin Khalji introduced the first permanent standing army in India. The emperor was the commander-in-chief of the army, followed by the Ariz-i-mamalik (war minister). Khaljis' army also introduced the huliya whereby a description was recorded

of each soldier and the cavalry used the "dagh" (branding of the horses) with the royal insignia. These became permanent features in medieval Indian armies.

KHALJI DYNASTY AD 1290 - 1320	
1290 - 1296	Feroz Shah II Khalji
1296	Ibrahim Shah I Qadir Khan
1296 - 1316	Muhammad Shah I Ali Garshasp
1316	Umar Shah
1316 - 1320	Mubacirak Shah
1320	Khusraw Khan Barwari