



# **ALAGAPPA UNIVERSITY**

[Accredited with 'A+' Grade by NAAC (CGPA:3.64) in the Third Cycle  
and Graded as Category-I University by MHRD-UGC]

**KARAIKUDI – 630 003**

**DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**



## **M.A. [History]**

### **321 21**



## **INDIAN CIVILIZATION AND CULTURE FROM 1206 TO 1707 A.D.**

### **II - Semester**



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## INTRODUCTION

### NOTES

At the beginning of the thirteenth century, the Indian sub-continent was repeatedly invaded by foreign rulers like 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. Aibak was followed by Iltutmish, who was followed by Razia Sultan – the first female ruler of the Delhi Sultanate. However, she could not rule for long and the reigns ultimately went into the hands of Jalal-ud-din-Firuz Khilji. He established the Khilji Sultanate. After his death, the Delhi Sultanate was left without any leader. Any subsequent rulers were defeated by Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq. His victory led to the transfer in power of the Delhi Sultanate. Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq and Feroz Shah Tughlaq were the two famous rulers of this 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.

In AD 1526, Babur, a descendant of Timur, from Central Asia, swept across the Khyber Pass and established the Mughal Empire, which lasted for over 200 years. The Mughal Dynasty had taken hold of most of the Indian subcontinent by AD 1600. It went into a slow decline after AD 1707 and finally came to an end following defeat in the Indian Mutiny of 1857.

The Mughal period marked a vast social change in the subcontinent, as the Hindu majority was ruled over by the Mughal emperors. Some emperors showed religious tolerance, others liberally patronized Hindu culture, while some others destroyed the historical temples and imposed taxes on the non-Muslims. During the decline of the Mughal Empire—which at its peak occupied an area slightly larger than the ancient Mauryan Empire—several smaller empires rose to fill the power vacuum, and subsequently contributed to the decline of the Empire.

This book 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 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 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises is also provided at the end of each unit. The Summary and Key Words further act as useful tools for students and are meant for effective recapitulation of the text.

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**BLOCK - I**  
**INDIAN CIVILIZATION AND**  
**CULTURE UNDER DELHI SULTANATE**

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*Delhi Sultanate and Its  
Cultural Contributions*

**NOTES**

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**UNIT 1 DELHI SULTANATE AND  
IT'S CULTURAL  
CONTRIBUTIONS**

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**Structure**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Objectives
- 1.2 Emergence of Delhi Sultanate: The Slave Dynasty
  - 1.2.1 Iltutmish
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**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

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The Delhi Sultanate was a Muslim Sultanate which ruled in Delhi and stretched over large parts of the Indian subcontinent for approximately 320 years. The Delhi Sultanate was ruled by five dynasties: the Mamluk dynasty, the Khilji dynasty, the Tughlaq dynasty, the Sayyid dynasty and the Lodi dynasty.

During the Delhi Sultanate, there was a fusion of Indian civilization with that of Islamic civilization, and the further integration of the Indian subcontinent with a growing world system and wider international networks spanning large parts of Afro-Eurasia, which had an important impact on Indian culture and society, as well as the wider world.

## NOTES

In this unit, the emergence of Delhi Sultanate is been discussed. The invasions carried by Muhammad Tughlaq and the reforms carried by Firoz Shah Tughlaq is also analysed. The unit will also highlight the emergence of the Sayyid dynasty and the Lodhi dynasty.

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### 1.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the emergence of Delhi Sultanate
- Explain the achievements of Alauddin Khilji under the Delhi Sultanate
- Discuss the measures adopted by Khilji during his reign
- Analyse the invasions carried by Muhammad Tughlaq
- Discuss the reforms introduced by Firoz Shah Tughlaq
- Explain the establishment of Sayyid dynasty
- Discuss the contribution of Bahlul in establishing Lodhi dynasty

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### 1.2 EMERGENCE OF DELHI SULTANATE: THE SLAVE DYNASTY

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Towards the end of the ninth century, feudal lords of Persian origin ruled over Transoxiana, Khorasan and some parts of Iran. They had to engage constantly in a fight against the Turkish tribes on their northern and eastern frontiers. This conflict led to the emergence of a new type of soldier known as Gazi. The Turks were mostly worshippers of natural forces and so were Kafirs in the eyes of the Muslims. Therefore, the Gazi soldiers fought against them for political and religious causes. With the passage of time, many Turks became Muslims and started propagating and protecting Islam. They came into conflict with the non-Muslim Turkish tribes. A Turkish slave of the Samanid dynasty named Alaptigin, who was the governor of Khurasan, supported the opposing faction in the struggle for succession in Bokhara. Fearing punishment, he proceeded towards Gazni and subsequently consolidated his position there. He occupied certain parts in Central Asia and laid the foundation of an independent dynasty at Gazni and started ruling from Gazni as his capital.

On the other side, the Samanid dynasty fell and the Gaznavids undertook the task of protecting the Islamic regions against the non-Islamic tribes of Central Asia. After Alaptigin, his son Abu Izhak and then slaves such as Baltagin, Pirai and Subuktugin became his successors. Subuktugin was the only one who was successful. Subuktigin (AD 977–999) turned his attention towards India. Around AD 980, he dispatched a Turkish army against Jaipal in which Jaipal's army had to suffer a heavy loss and he was forced to surrender for peace. He is said to have occupied the whole of Balkh Khurasan, Afghanistan and in addition, the north-

western frontier of India before his death. He was succeeded by his son Mahmud (AD 999–1030) to the throne of Gazni. With his accession, a new chapter started in the history of Islam. He defeated the ruler of Seistan, Khalif-bin-Ahmad and obtained the title of Sultan. Though his empire and his title enjoyed the sanction of the Khalifa but the basis of his power was conquest. Medieval Indian historians consider Mahmud of Ghazni as a soldier of Islam because of his struggle against the tribal invaders of Central Asia.

Many scholars consider Mahmud Ghazni as the first Sultan-i-Azam. This title is not found inscribed on his coins where he is simply referred to as Amir Mahmud and also, this title was not given to him by the Khalifa. The saying of historian Barthold appears to be correct that in the times of Mahmud Ghazni the Ghaznavid Empire appeared in its best form. He first obtained the province of Mansur from Caliph Kadir and then acquired legal recognition and prestige for his empire. The sentiment of Gazni became more consolidated during his reign. Besides, at this time, the Turks gained predominance in the army and administration taking place at this time. The proud Persians had never accepted the language and culture of the Arabs. Thus, before their advent in India, the Turks had not only become the followers of Islam but also had become Persianized. This very culture was propagated by them in India from AD 1200 onwards. Between AD 1000 and AD 1026, Mahmud of Ghazni carried out seventeen invasions of India. His chief invasions were against the Hindushahi rulers of Punjab—Jaipal (AD 1000–1001) and Anandpala (AD 1008–1009), against Nagarkot (Kangra) (1009), Thaneswar (AD 1014), Mathura and Kanauj (AD 1018–1019), against Kalinjar (AD 1021), and Somnath (AD 1020). Mahmud Ghazni died in AD 1030.

Historians do not agree on the motives inspiring Mahmud of Ghazni for his Indian invasions. Some historians describe him as a soldier in the cause of Islam and say that he exhibited his religious fanaticism by breaking the idols of Hindu Gods and forcibly converting the people to Islam. However, nowadays this opinion is not accepted. Actually, his main ambition was to acquire wealth even though he was a breaker of idols. He had no wish to squander away this wealth in India itself. He wanted to utilize it for establishing a vast central Asian empire. This is accepted without any controversy that he had no wish to establish a permanent empire in India because he always returned to Ghazni. He made no arrangements regarding his conquered areas nor did he annex the conquered areas to his empire. Only Punjab and Multan were made an integral part of his Ghaznavid Empire.

The question now arises that if Mahmud had so desired, he could have established his empire in India. It is not easy to answer this question. From one point of view, it can not be said that it was impossible for him to do so because did he desire it himself nor perhaps was it possible to keep a vast country like India under control. There were no Muslim settlements at that time. The small number of people who had embraced Islam had not perhaps done so willingly and apart from other problems, language itself presented a serious problem. Probably, his soldiers also did not want to stay permanently in India. Under such circumstances,

## NOTES

## NOTES

it was not possible for him to set up a permanent empire in India. On the other hand, seeing the contemporary political conditions, it can be maintained that if he wanted he could have done it because there was no powerful central government in India at that time. The country was divided into many small states and they were jealous of each other. The feeling of nationalism was totally absent and they gave more importance to their selfish interests than to the national interest. Hindu society was suffering from many evils such as the caste system; the special prerogatives were acceded to the Brahmins and Kshatriyas. This also could have been a boon for Mahmud. However, the historical fact is that Mahmud could not take advantage of this situation. The credit for this goes to Ghori and his successors. In fact, Mahmud was a conqueror and not an empire builder. Hence, neither did he evince any interest in it nor could he do it.

Muhammad Ghori (who is also known as Muizuddin Muhammad bin Sam) was the younger brother of the ruler of Ghor, Ghiyas-ud-din. He was raised to the throne of Ghazni in AD 1173. Still, he remained loyal to his brother and kept good terms with him. Though he ruled over Ghazni virtually as an independent ruler till AD 1206, he got his brother's name inscribed on the coins and behaved towards him as a feudatory does towards his lord. He invaded India only as his brother's associate and opened the way for the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate.

After Muhammad Ghori, his slave Qutubuddin Aibak sat on the throne of Lahore on 25 June AD 1206. However, from AD 1206 to 1208 he was only a Malik to the brother of Muhammad Ghori at Ghor. At that time the areas of India under Turkish hold were Multan, Uchh, Naherwala, Pursaur, Sialkot, Lahore, Tarain, and Ajmer, Hansi, Kuhram, Meerut, Delhi, Badayun, Gwalior, Banaras, Kanauj, Kalingar, Oudh, Ranthambhore, Malwa, Bihar and Lachnauti. In the conquest of these, Qutubuddin had been associated as a military commander. After the second battle of Tarain (AD 1192), he had suppressed the revolts in Ajmer and Meerut. He had conquered the areas of Hansi, Delhi, Ranthambhore etc. in the absence of Muhammad Ghori. When Muhammad Ghori had come to India in AD 1194 to attack Jaichand of Kanauj, then also Aibak had helped him. In AD 1197 he had defeated Bhimdev II of Anhilwara and thus avenged the defeat of his master. After Ghori's death Aibak declared himself the ruler of the Indian possession and protected and extended the Delhi Sultanate by the former's finding solutions to many problems facing it.

### 1.2.1 Iltutmish

After the sudden death of Qutubuddin Aibak (AD 1210), disorder became rampant in the Delhi Sultanate. A few amirs raised Aram Shah to the throne in Lahore. However, the people of Delhi and the Turkish amirs opposed him for many reasons. Probably, they wanted the highest possible offices for themselves. Perhaps because of Aram Shah being luxury loving and an incapable ruler, he was also opposed. There was controversy whether Aram Shah was Aibak's son or not. Many Amirs declared themselves as independent rulers, for example, the Qubacha of Multan

and Uchh and Alimardan of Bengal. The Turkish chiefs invited the governor of Badayun and Iltutmish to come to Delhi which he accepted readily. Aram Shah proceeded against him as the head of a big army from Lahore to Delhi, but Iltutmish defeated him and Iltutmish became Sultan with the name of Shamsuddin.

### **1.2.2 Razia Sultan**

Razia, better known as Razia Sultana, succeeded her father Shams-ud-din Iltutmish to the Delhi Sultanate in AD 1236. Iltutmish was the first Sultan to nominate a woman as a successor when he chose his daughter Razia as his heir. However, the Muslim nobility was not happy with the decision made by Iltutmish. When Iltutmish died on 29 April, AD 1236, Razia's brother, Ruknuddin Feroze Shah, succeeded his father.

Ruknuddin indulged himself a lot in personal pleasure and debauchery. On 9 November, both Ruknuddin and his mother Shah Turkaan, were assassinated.

After initial reluctance, the nobility allowed Razia to reign as the Sultan of Delhi. It is said that she was active in the affairs of the state even during her father's reign. Whenever, Iltutmish used to go away from his capital, he used to appoint Razia to look after the state affairs. Thus, as a Sultan she proved to be an excellent administrator and was well versed with state affairs. During her reign, there was complete law and order in her state.

As a child and teenager, Razia did not learn the customary behaviour of women in the Muslim society. Razia preferred to wear a man's tunic and headdress, which was contrary to the custom of Muslim society.

She was a good fighter on the battlefield. Razia was also said to be a shrewd politician as she managed to keep her nobles in check. She was able to gain the support of her army as well as subjects. One of her greatest achievements on the political front was to manipulate rebel groups into opposing each other.

Due to all these reasons, everyone expected her to become one of the most powerful rulers of the Delhi Sultanate. However, Razia's relationship with one of her advisers, Jamal-ud-Din Yaqut, an Abyssinian Siddi (Habshi) slave, created a lot of problems. According to some critics, Razia and Yaqut were lovers while others simply called them close confidants. Whatever be the reality, but her favouritism towards Yaqut, appointing him (a non-Turk) as the Superintendent of the Stables, provoked the jealousy of the Turkish nobility. Eventually, a number of provincial governors rebelled against her and refused to accept Razia's authority.

A battle between Razia and Malik Altunia (her childhood friend) took place. In this battle, Yaqut was killed and Razia was imprisoned. In order to escape death, Razia agreed to marry Altunia. By this time, Razia's brother, Muizuddin Bahram Shah, had seized the throne. Altunia and Razia decided to take back the Sultanate from Bahram, but both Razia and her husband were defeated. Both of them fled to Delhi and reached Kaithal where their forces abandoned them. They fell into the hands of Jats and were killed. This is how Razia's reign came to an end.

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### 1.2.3 Balban

Balban, like Iltutmish, was an Ilbari Turk. His grandfather was the head of about 10,000 families of Ilbari Turks. It shows that he was born in a high family. In his childhood only, he fell into the hands of the Mongols who sold him to Khwaja Jamaluddin, a merchant of Basra. Jamaluddin gave him good education and in AD 1232, sold him to Iltutmish. He progressed on the basis of his merit and became first the personal servant of the Sultan and, later, a member of the organization of Turkish nobles named the Forty. Impressed by his ability, Iltutmish married his daughter to Balban. Sultan Razia appointed him on the important post of Amir-i-Shinkar (Lord of the Hunt). Bahram Shah assigned to him the Jagirs of Rewari and Hansi. In the time of Sultan Masud Shah, Balban impressed everybody by his ability in driving out the Mongols. In collision with the other members of the Fort, Balban dismissed Masud and in AD 1246, seated Nasiruddin Mahmud on the throne. This Sultan appointed Balban to the post of chief minister (Wakil or Naib-i-Mumlikat) in AD 1249, that is, three years after his accession. Nasiruddin Mahmud gave all the powers to Balban but put two conditions on him:

- He would not do any such act for which he would be unable to reply before God.
- He would not do such act which should imperil the prestige of the state.

#### Check Your Progress

1. State the main ambition of Mahmud of Ghazni.
2. What were the main invasions carried out by Mahmud of Ghazni?

## 1.3 KHILJI AND TUGLAQ

After Balban, Muiz-ud-din Qaiqabad, grandson of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud ascended the throne of the Delhi Sultanate. Qaiqabad was succeeded by his son, Kayumars. Khilji dynasty was the second dynasty to rule the Delhi Sultanate of India. The Khilji dynasty was a dynasty of Turkish origin who ruled over large parts of south Asia. Alauddin Khilji is recognized as the powerful ruler of this dynasty.

### 1.3.1 Reforms and Assessment of Alauddin Khilji

Alauddin Khilji's original name was Ali Gurshasp. After plotting to murder his uncle, he assumed the title of Abul Muzaffar Sultan Alauddin-duniya-va-din Muhammad Shah Khilji. Among the rulers of the Sultanate in early medieval India, Alauddin occupies an honourable place both as a conqueror and as an administrator.

Alauddin was the son of Shihabuddin Masud, the brother of Jalaluddin Khilji. Nothing is known about his education, but he was an expert in fighting. Alauddin was married to one of the daughters of Jalaluddin, thus, Jalaluddin was also his father-in-law along with being his uncle. Alauddin had to face many challenges when he became the Sultan. He was unpopular among his subjects as he had treacherously killed his uncle to become the Sultan. However, Alauddin proved equal to the task and overcame all difficulties. He destroyed all claimants to the throne, suppressed all conspiring or revolting noble, brought distant provinces under his hold, established a strong administration, restored order and peace within the boundaries of the empire, saved his empire from foreign invasions, extended its territories, looted and brought under his influence entire south India, and thus, brought Khilji dynasty's imperialism and despotism to its zenith.

Alauddin occupies an important place among the rulers of medieval India. He became the Sultan at the age of thirty and within a period of fifteen years, became the most powerful ruler of India. The success which he achieved during his lifetime was unique both in regard to the expansion of the empire and its administration. Indian historian K S Lal writes, 'From a non-entity, he rose to be one of the greatest rulers of medieval India.'

As a person, Alauddin was cruel and selfish. He was devoid of the instinct of love and observed no morality. His only aim in life was to achieve success and he was always prepared to adopt any means to achieve it. 'The end justifies the means' remained his principle. Alauddin murdered his benefactor and uncle Jalaluddin, imprisoned and blinded all his sons, and captured the throne. He kept all the Jalali nobles in good humour till they were useful to him, but as soon as their utility was over, he cruelly finished them all. Alauddin started the practice of killing the wives and children of those nobles who revolted against him. He constructed towers of skulls of the Mongols and either killed their wives and children or sold them as slaves. Jalaluddin killed thousands of 'new Muslims' merely on suspicion and gave their wives and daughters to the murderers of their husbands and fathers. Thus, his punishments against those who opposed him were barbaric. Alauddin neither loved his wives, nor his children whose education and care he always neglected. He possessed no virtue like generosity, kindness and tolerance. Whomsoever he disliked, he got them killed. He was jealous and never permitted anyone to enhance his power and respect. He never allowed anybody to influence him and nobody dared to give him frank advice, except perhaps his friend, Kotwal Ala-ud-Mulk. Alauddin believed that power and authority could be maintained only by maintaining strict discipline, creating awe and fear among all by pursuing a policy of bloodshed and severe punishments. That is why British Indologist and art historian, V A Smith has placed him among the crude and oppressive rulers. He wrote, 'In reality, he was a real savage tyrant with very little regard for justice and his reign, though marked by the conquest of Gujarat, and many successful raids, like the storming of the two great fortresses, was exceedingly disgraceful in many respects.'

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However, Alauddin was a brave soldier, a most capable military commander, a shrewd diplomat, a great conqueror, a successful administrator and a powerful and ambitious Sultan. His primary objective was to gain success and he achieved it in practically all fields throughout his life. Alauddin proved himself a brave soldier and a capable commander even during the reign of his uncle, Jalaluddin, by his successful campaigns of Bhilsa and Devagiri. His campaign of Devagiri in particular has been regarded as a unique achievement in the history of military campaigns. It would be wrong to say that the success of military campaigns during his reign was due to his capable commanders such as Zafar Khan, Nusrat Khan, Alp Khan, Ulugh Khan and Malik Kafur. Certainly, each of them was a capable commander, but Alauddin was superior to them all. All of them accepted him as their leader and obeyed his command and where they failed, he succeeded. All important campaigns in Rajasthan were led by Alauddin. When Nusrat Khan and Ulugh Khan failed to conquer Ranthambhor, Alauddin himself went there and captured it. Similarly, Chittor was also conquered by Alauddin himself. In AD 1299, when the Mongols reached Delhi with a firm determination to fight the Sultan, Alauddin decided to meet their challenge even against the advice of his friend Ala-ul-Mulk. Thus, Alauddin can be considered to be one of the most capable and successful commanders of his age.

Alauddin was an imperialist. Indian historian, A L Srivastava has regarded him as the first Turkish empire-builder in India. Alauddin's conquest of the rest of India was a marvellous achievement particularly, in view of the fact that the Mongols were constantly attacking India at that time with a view to capture its territory. The Mongols attacked India in AD 1298, AD 1299, AD 1305 and AD 1306 and all times were defeated by Alauddin's army. Alauddin extended the frontiers of his empire as much as possible and where he did not annex the territory, he forced the rulers to accept his suzerainty.

Alauddin conquered large parts of north India and except one, forced all the rulers of south India to accept his suzerainty. No Turkish Sultan of Delhi could achieve it and the Tughlaqs who followed them could achieve it only after a hard and continuous struggle. Thus, the conquest of India by Alauddin was his unique achievement.

Alauddin was a great administrator. He made certain innovations in administration. He was not advised by anybody in these administrative reforms, whether civil or military. Certainly, he used to consult his nobles from time to time, but nobody was responsible for his administrative innovations. His friend, Ala-ul-Mulk, was the only individual who could advise him frankly but he had died by the time Alauddin took up his new administrative measures. He organized a large and powerful army. He was the first Sultan of Delhi who kept a large standing army permanently at the centre, started the practice of branding the horses and that of keeping description of the soldiers. He was again the first Sultan who introduced a system of measurement of land as a preliminary step for fixing the state demand of the produce, got the revenue collected by government servants and abolished

the privileges of hereditary revenue officers like the Chaudhries, the Muqaddams and so forth. As regards his market system, it was a novelty which had no parallel throughout the course of medieval Indian history. Besides, Alauddin centralized the entire administration and yet brought about efficiency and perfection in it. Reviewing the success of his administration, K S Lal has concluded, 'Alauddin stands head and shoulder above his predecessors or successors in the Sultanate.'

As an individual, Alauddin was a follower of Islam, he had faith in religion and respected religious people. Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya and Mohammad Shamsuddin Turk were always respected by him. Although himself an illiterate, yet, he was a patron of learning and fine arts. Most of the known scholars of his age had assembled at his court. Amir Khusrao and Amir Hasan of Delhi were patronized by him. During his reign, Delhi became the rival of Cairo and the equal of Constantinople. He also constructed many good buildings including the Fort of Siri, Palace of one thousand pillars called *Hazar Situn* and many mosques, tanks and sarais (rest houses for travellers). His Alai Darwaza, which is an extension of the Qutbi mosque in Delhi, has been regarded as one of the best specimens of early Turkish architecture.

Alauddin suffered from certain weaknesses too. His biggest weakness was that his administration, rather the whole structure of the state, depended on power, and more than that, on fear of a single individual, that is, the Sultan himself. Therefore, it lacked a stable foundation and was destroyed as soon as the Sultan died. After the death of Alauddin—his standing army, his revenue system and his market system remained no more. Not only this, his dynasty lost the throne very soon after him. The successors of Alauddin proved themselves to be incompetent and during the medieval age, no person could safely remain on the throne without showing competence of his own. Therefore, the dynasty of Alauddin also lost its right to rule. However, it was creditable for Alauddin that his many principles of administration remained intact even after his death. Many rulers of medieval age after him pursued several of his administrative principles, both civil and military.

Therefore, with all these weaknesses, Alauddin Khilji occupies an important place among the rulers of medieval India. Most of the modern historians have given him a high place among rulers of Indian medieval history. Historian A L Srivastava concludes, 'A balanced view of Alauddin's work and achievement must give him a high place among the rulers of Delhi during the medieval age.'

### **Alauddin's Successes and Policies**

After he took over the throne, Alauddin's primary task was to consolidate his position on the throne. He lavishly distributed wealth among his subjects so that they soon forget his cruel deed of murdering his uncle, father-in-law and benefactor Jalaluddin Khalji. He also assigned important posts to his loyalists.

Early in his reign, the Mongols invaded his kingdom in AD 1298 and AD 1299; but both the invasions were repulsed successfully. Next, Alauddin punished all those Jalali nobles who had joined him because of the temptation of wealth.

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Many of them were blinded or imprisoned and their wealth was confiscated. However, nobles like Malik Qutbuddin Aibak, Malik Nasruddin and Malik Amir Jalal Khilji were not punished because they had refused to take money while joining the side of Alauddin. Thus, Alauddin finished all claimants to the throne and those nobles who could prove disloyal to him at a later time.

Alauddin proved an ambitious and capable ruler. He formed ambitious schemes for administration and the extension of the empire. He was so much encouraged by his success and conquests that he assumed the title of Sikandar-e-saani, that is, the second Alexander. He also had it recited in the khutba and superscribed on his coins.

Alauddin conquered almost whole of north India and brought almost all rulers of south India under his suzerainty which was not even thought of by the earlier Mamluk Sultans. He also carried despotism to the extreme and established absolute monarchical rule in India for which Sultan Iltutmish had aspired; Raziya Sultana had failed to accomplish and Sultan Balban had only partially succeeded. Alauddin succeeded in every field. The only limitation was that his success was limited only up to his lifetime and he failed in establishing an enduring empire of his dynasty.

Alauddin Khilji introduced several measures and policies during his reign, some of which are as follows:

1. **Theory of Kingship:** Alauddin Khilji was the first Sultan of Delhi who did not pursue Islamic principles in matters of the state. He acted as the ultimate and absolute monarch and with unlimited powers he believed that the Sultan was above all, and that all powers of the state emanate from him. Above all, he had all the capability to act as an absolute monarch. Historian K S Lal writes, 'in a word, like Louis XIV of France, Alauddin Khilji regarded himself to be all in all in the state. During his reign, there was centralisation of the administration and despotism touched its highest mark.'
2. **Policy towards Hindus:** Historians have different views regarding the policy of Alauddin Khilji towards Hindus. We understand that his treatment of Hindus, mostly by his policy of taxation, particularly revenue, affected the Hindus. Historian U N Dey has said that the taxation policy of Alauddin was comparatively not severe, though of course it destroyed the prosperity of the Hindus and peasants. According to him, 'The *khuts* and *muqaddams* at no stage of Indian history ever reached that stage of poverty as is told about his reign.' He further writes, 'The statement of Ziauddin Barani that the wives of the *khuts* and the *muqaddams* were forced to seek jobs in the houses of the *musalmaans* and earn their wages because of poverty, is rather absurd.' Dr Dey is of the opinion that the policy of Alauddin was in no way severe or disrespectful towards Hindus.

### **1.3.2 Reforms and Assessment of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq**

Following the death of Alauddin Khilji in AD 1316, the Delhi Sultanate plunged into confusion. Malik Kafur sat on the throne for a few days, only to be deposed by Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah. During this period, rebellions broke out in Deogir but were harshly suppressed. Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah was soon murdered and Khusrau ascended the throne. However, he too did not last long as some dissatisfied officers, led by Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq, defeated and killed him in a battle. Thus, only four years after the death of Alauddin, the Khilji dynasty came to an end and the power passed into the hands of the Tughlaqs. The founder of the Tughlaq dynasty was Ghazi Malik who ascended the throne as Ghiyas ud-din Tughlaq in AD 1320 and ruled till AD 1412. Ghiyas-ud-din rose to an important position in the reign of Alauddin Khilji and eventually died in AD 1325, when a pavilion built by his son collapsed. There are conflicting accounts on whether this was an accident or a conspiracy by his son to usurp power, so it remains a bit of a mystery. After his death his son Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq proclaimed himself the Sultan.

Three days after the death of Gayasuddin Tughlaq, Prince Juna Khan (Ulugh Khan) declared himself the Sultan of Delhi under the title Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq. After a period of forty days, one morning he decided to celebrate his coronation in Delhi. According to medieval writer Imami, he assured the people that he would follow the footsteps of his father. He distributed gold and silver coins in the public and many titles among the Amirs. Muhammad Tughlaq's reign started and ended with many changes and revolts.

#### **Reforms**

Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq tried to bring about many reforms but most of his plans failed because he was not practical in his thinking. Some of his plans or experiments that failed are the following:

##### **1. Transfer of Devgiri or the transfer of capital**

One of the most misunderstood of the plans of the Sultan was his transfer of the capital. Muhammad Tughlaq wanted to make Devgiri, which he renamed Daulatabad, his capital in place of Delhi. So, it can be maintained that Muhammad Tughlaq made Devgiri his capital so that a central effect could be established over a vast empire and the rebellion in the South could be suppressed easily. However, the immediate effect of the measure went against the Sultan. The people who were forced to go away from Delhi became annoyed with the Sultan. They contributed towards increasing the discontentment against the Sultan. The transfer led to a waste of money, time and human lives because being summer, people were really put through great hardship. Nevertheless, the long-term effects of the transfer were advantageous. As there being two administrative centres in the empire, new roads were constructed. The obstacles to the contacts between north and south India were removed, which led to the migration of many Sufi saints, Ulemas and other scholars to the South. As a result, the Sultan imbibed the Muslim culture,

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and after some time, the powerful Bahmini empire rose there. It led to a cultural integration of the country.

### 2. Use of token currency

After the transfer of the capital, the second scheme of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq was the introduction of token currency. Under this scheme, Muhammad Tughlaq introduced certain reforms in the already prevalent currency and also issued some new coins (metallic and of certain value). Between AD 1329 and 1330, Muhammad Tughlaq issued copper coins. He also issued a gold coin weighing 201.6 grains, which Ibn Battuta called the Dinar. To make daily transaction easier, the Sultan also issued the Dokani or the Sultan's coin. The Sultan declared that the value of the bronze-copper mixed coin was equivalent to that of the silver coins and expected that people would accept them.

However, according to historian Barani, this scheme of Muhammad Tughlaq also proved very disadvantageous to the empire. Due to the prevalence of the token currency, the house of the Hindus virtually became a minting agency. The inhabitants minted those copper coins in large numbers. They paid the revenue with these very coins and also bought things like clothes, arms and other things. If the statement of Barani is correct, it would just be proper to look into the cause of it.

This plan also adversely affected the royal treasury. The Sultan had to exchange these fake coins with real silver and gold coins because of which the royal treasury reached a deplorable state of affairs.

### 3. Expedition to Khurasan

According to Barani, 'Sultan Muhammad amassed a huge army of about 3,70,000 horsemen so as to dispatch it for the conquest of Khurashan. In the army, there were also some Rajput soldiers of Doab and some Mongols. The soldiers were given advance cash salary for one year and some of them were accorded Iqtas (land grants) as well. The officials were given huge sums to buy arms etc.' Historians suggest that the Sultan decided on the Khurasan expedition after his friendship with Tarmashirin, the ruler of Transoxiana. It is said that the triple entente lead an expedition against Abu Saiyyad of Khurasan but the expedition could not be dispatched due to a reason. There was a revolt against Tarmashirin and he was deposed. Neither Ibn Battuta nor any other historian mentions about the Khurasan expedition.

### 4. Increase of land revenue in the Doab

The major plans of the Sultan mentioned by Barani include the increasing land revenue of the Doab. The Sultan increased the land revenue in the Doab to earn 50 per cent of the produce. Though increasing the revenue cannot be said to be a unique measure, the method used by the Sultan to affect them made the whole scheme ridiculous.

As per the instructions of the Sultan, the land revenue officials collected the land revenue very rigidly. The poor peasants got frightened and the rich landlords refused to pay the revenue. At many places, the store houses were put on rent. Barani, rightly mentions that the imposition ruined the peasants. Those who were rich became rebellious; land was laid waste and the progress of agriculture declined. Grain became expensive, rain scarce and so famine became widespread. This continued for years and thousands of people died. The taxes were collected so rigidly that people became poor and beggars. This, undoubtedly, contributed to the unpopularity of the Sultan and discontentment against him increased.

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### 1.3.3 Reforms and Assessment of Feroze Shah Tughlaq

Firoz Shah Tughlaq was a cousin of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq. He was born in AD 1300. His father was Sipahsalar Naib and mother was Bibi Naila (or Nayala). Firoz Shah Tughlaq was a polite, liberal and religious-minded person. He behaved very politely with his ministers, Ulemas, Amirs, and honoured them greatly. He started many programmes and opened many departments for the poor people, old persons, slaves and orphans. Hearing the cries of weeping women and children, he became ready for talks with the rebels of Bengal. In fact, it was difficult for him to behave harshly with anyone. However, he could resort to very harsh measure for the propagation of Islam.

Having no issue of his own, Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq loved Firoz dearly and that is why, after Muhammad's death at Thatta (Sind), the Amirs declared Firoz Tughlaq to be the Sultan of Delhi. He ascended the throne two days after Muhammad's death. At the time of his accession, circumstances were not favourable for him. Due to the strange plans of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq, many regions had become independent, for instance, whole of Deccan, Sind, Gujarat and Bengal. Due to many terrible famines in several areas, they had been desolated and misery and discontent was rife among the people. The Ulemas and Amirs were also discontented because of the hostile policies of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq. To deal with these problems, it was imperative for Firoz Tughlaq that he should please the Ulemas and Amirs and try to win over those areas which, after being conquered, could easily be maintained as a part of the empire. So, he started his administrative campaigns in the two spheres of the internal reforms and the battlefield.

#### As a Conqueror

Firoz was not a very able ruler or commander. He led two expeditions against Bengal but was unsuccessful both the times. Thus, Bengal became free of the hold of the Sultanate. Firoz led campaigns against the rulers of Jaznagar (Orissa) and Nagarkot (Kangra). He did not try to establish his control over these areas, though he destroyed the temples of these places and amassed enough wealth through loot and plunder. His longest expeditions were led in regard to the suppression of a rebellion in Sind. After two and a half years of hardwork, Sultan's army proved successful but the governor or Jam of Sind took advantage of the religious weakness



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of the Sultan and appealed for arbitration to the Su of Uchh-Sayyid Hussain. The clauses of agreement went in favour of the Jam to some extent. The administration of lower Sind was given to the son and brother of the Jam and in return they gave 4 lakh Tankas to him and promised to give more such gift even in future but the control of Tughlaq administration over Sind slowly disappeared.

### **As a Religious Man**

Firoz was a rigid Sunni Muslim and follower of Shariat, the book of Muslim Law. He tried to win the support of the religious leaders by trying to proclaim himself as a true Muslim ruler and his empire as a truly Islamic empire. He was very kind towards the Muslims and did not want to shed their blood in vain. He offered namaz regularly five times a day and kept rozas in the month of Ramzan. However, his attitude was of strict hostility towards the Hindus and Shia Muslims. He desecrated the temples and statues. His religious fanaticism proved very harmful for the Tughlaq dynasty and the Delhi Sultanate.

### **As a Ruler**

Firoz was a good but not a great ruler. He was good because he abolished all the unnecessary and unjust taxes, gave encouragement to agriculture, increased agricultural facilities, helped the unhappy, exempted the government loans from payment, tried to bring an end to unemployment, gave financial help to Muslim girls, widows and orphans, carried out many revisions in justice and penal code, extended patronage to literature and art. By his currency reform, he made transactions easy and also gave shelter to 1, 80,000 slaves. His reign had peace and development. Nonetheless, he was not a great ruler; since, he followed a policy of intolerance to please the Hindus and the Shias. He did not try to bring about political unity in the country by conquering the states of Deccan. He organized the army on the basis of feudalism, which was not good for the Sultanate. He appointed the army and other officials on the basis of their family background and heredity instead of merit and physical ability, which soon had a bad effect on the administrative system. He renewed the Jagir system. This resulted in financial loss to the state and increased oppression on the peasants. To satisfy his fancy of keeping a large number of slaves, he placed a big burden on the royal treasury. Later on, these very slaves started interfering in politics and became a factor in the downfall of the Tughlaq dynasty. His policies led to corruption in the country, insubordination by the Amirs and laziness in the army. He did not solve the problem of succession and that is why when he died in AD 1380, serious political and administrative problems arose.

### **Firoz Tughlaq's Administrative Reforms**

Though Firoz Tughlaq could not prove to be a very capable general, his internal policy was very successful because of his able administration and reform measures. Peace prevailed in his reign and development took place. He brought about following reforms or changes in the administration:

## 1. Judicial organization

Firoz Tughlaq was opposed to severe punishments. He ended punishments like cutting off the limbs and so forth for petty crimes. Praising his judicial system, British historian V.A. Smith writes that this measure of bringing an end to corporal punishments was really worthy of praise. Firoz, in his autobiography *Futuh-at-i-Firozshahi*, has written that severe punishments prevailed before he became the Sultan. He added that in the time of his predecessors, criminals were put to many sufferings like cutting of limbs, extracting the eyes, putting melted glass in their throat, hammering the bones, burning alive, hammering nails in hands and chests, cutting arteries and veins, tearing the body in two equal halves and so forth. By putting an end to these barbarities, the Sultan won for himself the sympathy of the people to a great extent. The Sultan tried to make the judicial system that was based on Shariat, accorded importance to the advice of the Ulemas and Qazis, established courts with the accorded advice of the Ulemas and Qazis, established courts at all important places of the empire, appointed Qazis and Muftis and others to carry out the judicial activities and put an end to the death penalty for the Muslims in general. He issued the instruction that if any traveller died on the way, the feudal chiefs and Muqaddam of the area had to summon the Qazi and Mufti, examine the dead body of the deceased and only after the Qazi certified that there was no wound on the body of the dead should the burial take place.

## 2. Reform in revenue and taxation system

According to Barani, Firoz Tughlaq ordered that Khiraj (land tax) and Jaziya (ordinarily a tax imposed exclusively on Hindus) should be levied in accordance with the produce (Bar Hukme-Hasil). He brought an end to all the other taxes except Jaziya, Khiraj, Zakat and Khums only because these four were mentioned in Shariat. It undoubtedly would have relieved the common people. According to Islamic injunction, he distributed four-fifth of Khums to soldiers, keeping one-fifth for the state. This raised the morale of the army. According to Firoz's biography, he gave the responsibility for collecting the tax of an area to the persons making the highest bid. This auction encouraged the Izaredari system and had an adverse effect on the financial condition of the empire. According to Af, the income of the state was reconsidered. The task of determining the income of the state was given to Khawaja Husamuddin Junaid. He toured the entire area for six years and fixed the income of the state at 6,75,00,000 Tankas.

## 3. Agricultural system

In the agricultural sphere, Firoz carried out the following two major reforms:

- The debts of peasants, taken by them during the famine at the time of Muhammad Tughlaq, were exempted.
- An efficient irrigation system was resorted to, which led to cultivation in quite a large part of the empire.

Produce increased and no famine occurred. The areas irrigated through canals were subjected to one-tenth of water tax. Firoz tried to bring more and

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more land under irrigation. The revenue official's salaries were enhanced so that they might not take bribes from the peasants. Barring the introduction of Jagir system, the agricultural reforms of Firoz are really commendable.

### 4. Encouragement to the Jagir system

According to Shami-Siraj-Af, Firoz Tughlaq distributed all villages, parganas and cities for the payment of salaries to the military officials and the financial condition of the state was all right. The reintroduction of Jagir system by Firoz made big Amirs and chiefs very happy. One of his instructions was that all the officials involved in Sind campaign should have their Jagirs transferred to their sons unconditionally and permanently. Another instruction issued by him was that after the death of a Jagirdar, his Jagir or Iqta should pass to his son, failing which to his son-in-law, failing which to his slave. The revival of the Jagir system proved disadvantageous to the empire. Gradually, these Jagir holders became more and more powerful and later, became contributory to the fall of the Delhi Sultanate. They started taking the services of forced labour from the peasants and exploited them.

### 5. Army organization

Firoz introduced certain new measures to establish a powerful army. Instead of keeping the entire army under the direct control of the centre, he tried to reorganize the army on the basis of Jagirdari or feudal basis. The soldiers came to be paid generally in Jagirs now. Only the irregulars received cash salary from the state. Another important change Firoz introduced was to make the military offices hereditary, which really was a very defective measure. Many soldiers sold their Jagirs to the professional auctioneers at two-thirds or half their value. This encouraged the farming system. The soldiers who did not fall into the clutches of these middlemen fell a prey to the royal officials who gave them only 50 per cent of the revenue, keeping the rest 50 per cent for themselves for public expenditure. Another defect in the system was that the soldiers who collected revenue themselves or through their sons, paid no attention to their military duties and remained busy with the collection of revenue only. Thus, during Firoz's time, the basis of revenue collection came to be the military power and after his death, when the military power of the soldiers ended, it became difficult for these military Iqtadars to collect revenue. Rendering the military post hereditary was also a defective measure. The central government lost its right to test the military merit of the soldiers. Military service became hereditary wherein there was no place for physical ability and merit. The state was left with direct control only over a small cavalry. The loyalty of the soldier Iqtadars was primarily to their military overlords and not to the Sultan. In brief, the military system of Firoz led to the continuous weakness of the state army.

Firoz undertook many activities for the welfare and happiness of the public. He not only reduced the burden of taxation, but also ended the severity of the penal code and opened free hospitals for the treatment of patients. He got about 1200 gardens planted in the vicinity of Delhi, which yielded a big annual income to the state. He got many canals, mosques, palaces, sarais, ponds, tombs and

bathrooms constructed. He established the cities of Firozabad, Fatehabad, Hissar, Jaunpur and Firozpur. He is said to have undertaken the repair work of Qutub Minar. For providing employment, he opened the employment bureau; for the marriage of poor Muslim girls, he opened the marriage bureau; for providing social security to the aged and poor people, he opened the Diwan-i-Istaikak.

### 6. Slave department and its organization

Firoz Tughlaq collected slaves in large numbers. He ordered his Subedars that whenever they invaded any area in connection with revenue collection; well-bodied and good looking children should be selected and sent to the Sultan. He preferred to have slaves as presents from his governors. Gradually, the number of his slaves swelled to about 1, 80,000. Historians are of the opinion that through these slaves, the Sultan wanted to prepare a community loyal to him and his successors. He gave salary and offices to all the slaves. For their maintenance, he opened a separate account and established a separate department. About 1200 slaves were trained in various crafts and worked in various ministerial departments, royal factories and army. Such a large number of slaves also became a contributory factor in the political and economic decline of the Tughlaq empire.

### 7. Currency system

Firoz Shah Tughlaq introduced many changes in the currency system as well. He issued coins of a small denomination in very large numbers so that the common people and traders should not be put to difficulty in daily transactions. He issued coins of copper and silver mixed so that people might not copy them easily and the Sultanate might not be faced with those financial difficulties which it had to face during the time of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq.

### 8. Literature, education and art

Firoz Shah Tughlaq evinced special interest in literature. He opened many Madrasas. He patronized many scholars. Ziauddin Barani and Shami-Siraj-Af were two famous historians of his time. They enjoyed state patronage. Firoz himself was an author of no mean order. He wrote his own biography which is known as *Fatuhah-i-Firozshahi*. He got 300 famous old Sanskrit books translated into Persian by the famous Persian scholar Azuddin Khalid. This translation work is famous as *Daliyal-i-Firozshahi*. During his reign, faculties of religious scriptures, law and Islamic education got encouragement. Firoz also encouraged architecture and gardening. He constructed many buildings and planted about 1200 gardens. Famous historian Woolsey Haig writes about his love of architecture correctly that 'he was fond of construction work and in that respect he equalled the Roman emperor Augustus, if not excelled him.'

### 9. Religious policy

Firoz Tughlaq provided grants to the Ulemas to please them. After the Jazanagar (Orissa) campaign, he distributed about 36,00,000 Tankas as a gift to the Sheikhs and Alims. To please the Ulemas again, he changed the taxation and judicial system so as to suit the requirement of the Shariat. During his reign, the Ulemas usually

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interfered in politics. He followed an intolerant policy towards the Hindus. He imposed Jaziya even on the Brahmins. He got all the paintings of the royal palace removed thinking them to be in opposition to Shariat. Inspired by a fanatic policy, he attacked the temples many a times and brought the idols down. His fanatic policy proved disadvantageous to the Sultanate.

### Firoz Tughlaq's Military and Social Reforms

The various reform measures introduced by Firoz Tughlaq in the fields of society and military are discussed as follows:

- **Military reforms:** Firoz Shah Tughlaq amended many of the military measures introduced by Alauddin Khilji and Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq. He did away with the practice of maintaining a standing army, cash payment of salary to the army, writing descriptive roles, branding the horses, periodical inspection of the army by the state; rather, he organized the army on a feudal basis. The whole responsibility of army organization was left to the feudal chiefs and they were given Iqtas and land grants. These military measures of Firoz Shah Tughlaq did not have any immediate ill-effect but in future, this system proved destructive for the Sultanate.
- **Public welfare activities:** He constructed canals and got new cities inhabited. He constructed four mosques, thirty palaces, five canals, two hundred sarais, five ponds, five hospitals, one hundred burial places, one hundred bridges and twelve hundred gardens.

#### Check Your Progress

3. Why is Alauddin Khilji considered as one of the most crude and oppressive rulers of India?
4. What were the agricultural reforms introduced by Firoz Tughlaq?
5. How was the currency system reformed by Firoz Shah Tughlaq?
6. Why are historians of the opinion that Firoz was a good ruler but not great?

## 1.4 SAYYID AND LODHI DYNASTIES

This section will begin with a look at the establishment of the Sayyid Dynasty.

### 1.4.1 The Establishment of the Sayyid Dynasty

#### Khizr Khan (1414-1421 AD)

Khizr Khan was the founder ruler of the Sayyid dynasty. He claimed to be a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad. But there is no proof of that. Probably, his ancestors originally hailed from Arabia and he utilized this fact in order to strengthen his position on the throne. Khizr Khan had been appointed the governor

of Multan by Firuz Tughluq. He participated in the war of succession which ensued between rival princes after the death of Firuz. Once he had to take refuge at Bayana, but when Timur attacked India and destroyed Delhi, Khizr Khan saw an opportunity and threw his lot with Timur. Timur was pleased with his services, and before Timur left India, he appointed Khizr Khan as the governor of Multan, Lahore and Dipalpur.

Khizr Khan then tried to capture Delhi and finally succeeded in snatching it from the hands of Daulat Khan Lodi in 1414. Khizr Khan never assumed the title of Sultan and remained satisfied with that of Bandgi-i-Rayat-i-Ala and Masnad-i-Ala. He continued to send yearly tributes to Shah Rukh, the son of Timur and, thus, did not challenge his suzerainty, though for all practical purposes, he behaved as an independent ruler. His coins also continued to bear the name of the Tughluq rulers. It was probably necessary because of the shortage of gold and silver. In addition, by issuing coins in the name of the Tughluqs, he tried to keep his subjects, as well as his Turk and Afghan nobles in good humour.

Prior to his accession to the throne, the empire of the Delhi Sultanate was limited to parts of Doab and Mewat. Now with his accession, it nearly doubled its territory as Punjab, Multan and Sind were added to it. This, however, remained the largest territory of the Delhi Sultanate during the reign of Khizr Khan, as he did not attempt seriously to extend it. His limited efforts to recover Etawah, Katehar and Kannauj failed.

Khizr Khan pursued a policy of appeasement towards the Turkish nobles and allowed them to enjoy ownership of their *Jagirs*. Yet, they remained dissatisfied with him and used their positions to occasionally rise in revolt against him. Khizr Khan committed one more mistake. He divided his Iqtas (provinces) into Shiqs (districts) and gave quite a lot of independent powers to district officers, which resulted in local or regional loyalties. Therefore, throughout his reign, Khizr Khan was forced to undertake military expeditions to exact tribute even from those chiefs who formally owed allegiance to him. In this task, he was loyally supported by his minister Taj-ul-mulk. Yet, Khizr Khan failed to permanently subdue the revolting nature of his jagirdars. The Khokhars, under their chief Jasrath, gave him constant trouble in north-east Punjab. The rulers of Gujarat, Malwa and Jaunpur also aspired to conquer Delhi, though they failed to make any serious effort. Thus, Khizr Khan mostly engaged himself in keeping intact the territory of the Delhi Sultanate, which he had acquired in the beginning of his reign.

During his last days, he attacked Mewat and destroyed the Fort of Kotla. He, then, plundered part of the territory of the State of Gwalior and proceeded up to Etawah whose ruler acknowledged his suzerainty. While returning from there he fell ill. He reached Delhi but died shortly on 20 May 1421 AD.

Khizr Khan was wise, just and generous and was free from the vices common in those days. His personal virtues, therefore, won him the affection of his subjects. But as a ruler, he could not achieve much. He failed to solve those problems of the Sultanate which had arisen after the dismemberment of the Tughluq dynasty and had left the country in a state of virtual anarchy after the invasion of Timur. The

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Sultanate of Delhi could not gain ascendancy over other kingdoms in India during his time and therefore, remained one of the states among certain other significant states of northern India.

### 1.4.2 Mubarak Shah (1421-1434 AD)

After the death of Khizr Khan, his son, Mubarak Khan ascended to the throne without any opposition. He assumed the title of Shah, got the Khutba read in his name and also issued coins bearing his name. Thus, he did not accept suzerainty of any foreign power. Like his father, Mubarak too had to undertake punitive expeditions against jagirdars and nobles to collect revenue from them and bring them to submission. He transferred his governors from one place to another in order to assert that their jagirs or Iqtas were not their hereditary property, but a right to be enjoyed with the consent of the Sultan. It meant the assertion of the right of the Sultan. This measure certainly displeased jagirdars and governors who, taking advantage of the weakness of later Tughluq Sultans, had treated their jagirs and provinces as their own property. The measure created trouble for the Sultan who had to fight against his own nobles in order to keep them under his control. The Sultan attacked Badayun, Etawah, Katehar and Gwalior solely for this purpose.

But more than that, Mubarak Shah had to face and fight against foreign enemies like Jasrath, the leader of the Khokhars from the northwest, the ruler of Malwa from the south, and the ruler of Jaunpur from the east, all of whom tried to capture Delhi one after another. However, Mubarak succeeded in foiling their attempts. Jasrath attacked Sarhind, Jallundhar and Lahore several times, but failed to gain any success. Husang Shah, the ruler of Malwa attempted to conquer Gwalior several times, but failed to capture it and Gwalior remained under the suzerainty of Delhi. Ibrahim, the ruler of Jaunpur claimed Bayana, Kalpi and Mewat and tried to capture them many times, but failed. Rather, in March 1428, Ibrahim was defeated in a pitched battle by Mubarak Shah near Bayana and forced to retreat. It was only after the murder of Mubarak Shah that Husang Shah, ruler of Malwa, could capture Kalpi.

Shaik Au, the Naib-Subedar of Kabul, also tried to take advantage of the troubles of Mubarak Shah. He supported Pulad, the rebel governor of Sarsuti, Amroha and Tabarhind and plundered parts of Jalandhar, Firozpur, Lahore and Multan. But, he was defeated in pitched battles several times and therefore, failed to capture any part of the territory of the Delhi Sultanate.

The dissatisfied nobles of Mubarak Shah hatched a conspiracy against him under the leadership of his vazir, Sarwar-ul-mulk, and succeeded in murdering him on 19 February, 1434, while he was supervising the construction of his new town, Mubarakabad on the bank of the river Yamuna.

Mubarak Shah was the ablest ruler of the Sayyid dynasty. He freed the Delhi Sultanate from the nominal suzerainty of a foreign power and issued coins in his name. He succeeded in suppressing the revolts of his nobles and Jagirdars. He also succeeded against his foreign enemies, each of whom tried to capture Delhi. For thirteen years he fought against his internal and external enemies and succeeded

in keeping intact the territory of the Delhi Sultanate, though, of course, he failed to extend it further. However, Mubarak Shah failed to select loyal officers and nobles to serve him and therefore, fell prey to their conspiracy. Except this fault, he was quite successful as compared to other rulers of the Sayyid dynasty. He even built a city, Mubarakabad, and a beautiful mosque there. He also provided patronage to his contemporary scholar, Yahiya-bin-Ahmad Sarhindi who compiled the chronicles of his age and that of his predecessors in a Persian work titled *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi*.

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### 1.4.3 Muhammad Shah (1434-1445 AD)

Mubarak Shah had nominated Muhammad-bin-Farid Khan, the son of his brother as his successor. Farid Khan ascended to the throne after Mubarak Shah's murder and assumed the title of Muhammad Shah. He proved himself an incapable and sensuous ruler and therefore, paved the way for the downfall of his dynasty. During the first six months of his reign, virtually the vazir, Sarwar-ul-mulk, enjoyed the power of the State. The vazir gave positions of importance to his own loyal officers and those Hindu jagirdars who had helped him in the murder of Mubarak Shah. However, the deputy commander-in-chief, Kamal-ul-mulk remained loyal to the Sayyid dynasty, kept his plans secret and formed another group of nobles against the vazir. The vazir sent Kamal-ul-mulk to suppress the revolt at Bayana. That gave Kamal-ul-mulk an opportunity. Once Kamal-ul-mulk took the command of the army, he disclosed his plan to other nobles to displace the vazir from power and then returned to the capital with his army. The vazir tried to murder the Sultan, but as the Sultan himself was a party to the conspiracy against the vazir, he had taken all precautions. Therefore, when the vazir went to murder the Sultan, his bodyguards killed the vazir and his supporters.

Muhammad Shah now appointed Kamal-ul-mulk as his vazir and freely indulged in sensual pleasures. Kamal-ul-mulk was not good as an administrator. The neglect of the affairs of the State by the Sultan and the incapability of the vazir, encouraged both internal and foreign enemies. Mahmud, the ruler of Malwa, attacked Delhi. Muhammad Shah called Bahlul Lodi, the governor of Multan to his help. The battle between the two near Talpat brought no conclusive results. Muhammad Shah, then, negotiated for peace and Mahmud agreed to return, as his own capital was threatened by an invasion by the ruler of Gujarat. Bahlul Lodi attacked him while he was returning and was successful in capturing some booty and imprisoned some of his soldiers.

Muhammad Shah honoured Bahlul Lodi for his timely help, called him his son, gave him the title of 'Khan-i-Khana' and accepted his possession over larger parts of Punjab. It roused the ambition of Bahlul Lodi who attacked Delhi in 1443 in order to capture it. He failed at that time but then waited for a better opportunity.

Muhammad Shah failed to safeguard his kingdom from internal disruption and foreign attacks during the latter years of his reign. The ruler of Jaunpur snatched away some parganas from him. Multan became independent, provincial governors avoided payment of annual tribute and even those nobles who lived within a circle



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of twenty miles around Delhi exhibited tendency of insubordination towards the Sultan. Thus, Muhammad failed as a ruler and the fall of his dynasty began during his reign. He died in 1445.

### 1.4.4 The Lodi Dynasty

Bahlul founded the Lodi Dynasty after murdering the vizar Hamid Khan. The history of the seventy-five years of the Lodi Dynasty is that of bitter conflicts. For Lodi rulers, it was a fight on three fronts. First, they had to fight against equally powerful neighbouring rulers of the states of Jaunpur, Malwa, Gujarat and Mewar; either for the safety of their kingdom or to extend their power and influence. The rulers of each of these neighbouring states probably possessed better strength and resources than the Lodis, but none had the prestige and influence that was attached to the Sultanate of Delhi. Therefore, each of them desired to capture Delhi. This led to their constant conflict with the Lodis. The Lodis also had to wage wars against those nobles and jagirdars of the Delhi Sultanate who, taking advantage of the weakness of previous Sultans had become virtually semi-independent and paid annual revenue only at the point of the sword. The weakness of the later Tughluqs had encouraged tendencies of decentralization and independence among the powerful nobles, courtiers and provincial governors who, therefore, neither feared nor honoured any central authority. The Sayyids had completely failed to check these tendencies. Therefore, when the Lodis attempted for the centralization of administration and restoration of the prestige of the Sultan, they had to contend against all those who represented these tendencies against the interests of a centralized state. Third, the Lodis had to fight hard against their own Afghan nobles. Those very Afghan nobles who were the source of strength of the Lodi rulers proved to be their enemies. The Afghans possessed certain virtues, viz. spirit of independence, equality and chivalry. But then, these very virtues proved detrimental to the efforts of the Lodi Sultans for centralisation and the establishment of a strong monarchy at the centre. The worst problem of the Lodi Sultans was the tribal instinct of independence of their Afghan nobles and that was primarily responsible for their downfall. The Afghan nobles failed to recognise the need of a strong centralized state under one leader and therefore, failed to cooperate with their Sultans which, ultimately, gave a favourable opportunity to the Mughal ruler, Babur, to attack and conquer India.

#### **Bahlul Lodi (1451-1489)**

Sultan Bahlul Lodi, the founder of Lodi dynasty, had a humble beginning. He belonged to the Shahu Khel clan of the Lodis which formed an important branch of the Afghans. The members of this clan first settled themselves in India in the territory around Lamghan and Multan. They served the Turkish Sultan of Delhi. Later in 1341, Malik Shahu, the progenitor of the Lodi rulers in India killed the governor of Multan and occupied it. But it brought no fruitful result because Sultan Muhammad Tughluq attacked and conquered Multan immediately after his successful adventure. The successors of Malik Shahu, therefore, contented themselves by carrying on trade with India. One among them, the grandson of

Shahu, Malik Bahram settled himself in Multan early in Firuz Shah's reign and accepted service under its governor, Malik Mardan Daulat. Bahram's eldest son, Malik Sultan Shah Lodi served the first Sayyid ruler, Khiz Khan very well, and in return got the title of Islam Khan and the governorship of Sarhind. The father of Bahlul, Malik Kala was the brother of this Islam Khan. Malik Kala himself was a brave person and established himself as an independent chief. But he died before the birth of Bahlul. Islam Khan, Bahlul's uncle and governor of Sarhind, therefore, brought Bahlul up under his care. Islam Khan found Bahlul to be diligent and daring, thus, he married his daughter with him, and nominated him his successor. Therefore, after the death of Islam Khan, Bahlul became the governor of Sarhind. He went on increasing his power and influence, and for the timely help which he gave to Sultan Muhammad Shah against the ruler of Malwa, was awarded the title of Khan-i-Jahan and also the possession over Punjab. Bahlul, afterwards, attempted twice to capture Delhi but failed. But when vazir Hamid Khan called him to Delhi, he saw an opportunity. Sultan Ala-ud-din Alam Shah had already left for Badayun while Hamid Khan was an imprudent man. Hamid Khan first did not trust Bahlul and did not permit the Afghans to enter the court. But Bahlul proved shrewder than him. He showed perfect courtesy and servility to Hamid Khan and made him believe that he had no more ambition than continuing to be the commander of the army. He asked his followers to behave as simpletons in the presence of the vazir. Hamid Khan, therefore, felt perfectly satisfied with them and allowed Bahlul and his Afghan followers to visit the audience hall daily. Bahlul, one day, went with his followers to pay the usual courtesy to the vazir and there Qutub Khan, a cousin of Bahlul, put a chain round the hands of Hamid Khan and told him that it was in the interest of the State that he should take rest for some time. Thus, Bahlul easily imprisoned Hamid Khan and got him killed afterwards. He invited Ala-ud-din Alam Shah to come to Delhi. The offer was refused. He, then, ascended the throne in Delhi on 19 April 1451 under the title of Sultan Abul Muzaffar Bahlul Shah Ghazi and had his name proclaimed in the Khutba.

### **An Assessment of Bahlul Lodi**

Sultan Bahlul Lodi proved himself to be a competent monarch. It was due to his diplomatic skills and military talents that the Lodi dynasty could find a place in the history of the Delhi Sultanate. Bahlul was brought up under the protection of his uncle and received the title of Malik from Sultan Muhammad Shah and the governorship of Sarhind from his uncle, all due to his merit. When Bahlul ascended to the throne of the Delhi Sultanate, the empire extended only to Palam, near Delhi. But, by the time Bahlul died, the Delhi Sultanate had expanded from Panipat to the frontiers of Bihar and included important cities like Delhi, Badayun, Baran Sambhal, Rapri, etc. A part of Rajasthan was also under him and the rulers of Gwalior, Dholpur and Ban paid tribute to him. Prior to his accession to the throne, his weak predecessors had succeeded only in destroying the power and prestige of the Delhi Sultanate. Jagirdars and nobles in the Sultanate had developed a rebellious nature and the rulers of the neighbouring kingdom of Jaunpur had defeated and disgraced the later Sayyid rulers and extended their sway up to Etawah and

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Shamsabad. Bahlul proved a capable commander. He brought the rebellious nobles and jagirdars to submission and annexed to his empire the kingdom of Jaunpur which had successfully challenged the Delhi Sultanate for the last 85 years.

Bahlul was a courageous soldier and a successful general. A scholar during his time named Abdulla wrote, 'From the day, he (Bahlul) became king, no one achieved a victory over him; nor did he once leave the field until he had gained the day, or been carried off wounded.' Though the statement is an exaggerated one, yet, there is truth in it. Bahlul was, certainly, a determined commander. But Bahlul was also a realist and cunning as well. He believed in the principle that the end justified the means, and therefore, did not hesitate to have recourse to treachery or fraud when it was necessary to achieve his objective. He employed foul means in dealing with the vazir, Hamid Khan and the Sharqi ruler Husain Shah. This does not mean that he lacked chivalry and generosity. Once his objective was achieved, he could afford to be generous with his enemy as well. He captured twice the wife of his enemy ruler, Husain Shah, but sent her back to her husband honourably both times. Dr K S Lal comments on this, 'For a victorious Muslim Sultan in medieval India this treatment was unique.' He also permitted the defeated Husain Shah to enjoy the income of some parganas.

Bahlul was diplomatic, possessed commonsense and understood his limitations and circumstances. He did not try to conquer any other kingdom except that of Jaunpur. His dealing with his Afghan nobles was even more realistic. He gathered them around his throne, respected them, gave them large jagirs and high offices, treated them as friends, ate food with them, sat with them on one carpet, visited their houses in case of their illness or when they were displeased, kept faith in them and in return won their loyalty and love. Of course, this policy suffered from a serious weakness. It reduced the position of the Sultan to that of a 'chief among equals'. This policy suited the Afghan concept of sovereignty, but it could not help in restoring the prestige of the Sultan and in building up a strong centralised government. On the contrary, this practice inflamed the ambitious and independent spirits of the Afghan nobles and added to their strength and resources so that they contested against the successors of Bahlul for power and prestige, which contributed largely to the downfall of the Lodi dynasty. But the policy certainly helped Bahlul in achieving his objectives. He could consolidate and utilise the strength of the Afghans in the interest of the State. He, probably, had no other alternative. He needed the cooperation of the Afghan nobles to strengthen his position on the throne and consolidate his empire. Dr Iqtidar Hussain Siddiqi has clearly stated that Bahlul himself believed in a despotic monarchy like the Turks, but he had to compromise his principle with the independent tribal instincts of the Afghan nobles. Whether Bahlul pursued this policy as a matter of principle or as a matter of compromise cannot be ascertained for certain. But it is certain that it helped Bahlul. Whatever happened afterwards could not be foreseen by Bahlul and he had no control over the future. But, during his time, the Afghan nobles helped him in establishing his empire and raising his prestige. It was a sufficient proof of the success of Bahlul in dealing with his Afghan nobles.

Bahlul was not a successful administrator. He also did not get time to look after his kingdom. In this field, his only significant act was to issue the coin named Bahluli which remained the medium of exchange until the reign of Akbar. However, Bahlul was a just and generous king. He was always prepared to look after the welfare of his subjects and did not waste public funds for personal intemperance or on exhibition of false glory and prestige.

Bahlul was a laborious, courageous, honest, kind-hearted and a religious minded-person. It is said that never a beggar or a poor man was turned away from his door without some offering. He was courteous and friendly to everybody. He always respected scholars and religious persons. He was intelligent and witty. He practised the principles of Islam in his personal life and avoided licentious life. But he was not a fanatic and pursued a tolerant policy towards his Hindu subjects. Rai Pratap Singh, Rai Karan Singh, Rai Nar Singh, Rai Trilok Chand, and Rai Dandu were some among many other notable Hindu nobles at his court.

The significant achievements of Bahlul were the conquest of Jaunpur, the suppression of the rebellious nobles, particularly the Rajput chiefs of the Doab and the restoration of the lost authority of the Sultan. He achieved much for his dynasty and prepared the way to achieve further for his son and successor, Sikandar Lodi.

### **Sikandar Shah Lodi (1489-1517)**

Bahlul had nominated his third son, Nizam Khan, as his successor. But, after his death, the Afghan nobles pushed forward the claim of his second son, Barbak Shah, who was the ruler of Jaunpur at that time or that of Azam Hamayun, son of his eldest but deceased son, Khwaja Bayezid. The claim of Nizam Khan was challenged on the grounds that his mother was the daughter of a goldsmith. Isa Khan Lodi, who was the cousin of the deceased Sultan even abused the mother of Nizam Khan who was pleading the case of her son. When Khan Khan Farmuli defended her, he rebuked him and said, 'You are a servant and have nothing to do with the affairs of royal relations'. The arrogant behaviour of Isa Khan weakened the cause of Barbak Shah Khan Khan. Farmuli immediately declared, 'I am the servant of Sultan Sikandar, and not of anybody else'. The vazir Khan-i-Azam Umar Khan Sarwani was already in favour of Nizam Khan. Therefore, eventually, the majority of the nobles favoured Nizam Khan who ascended the throne on 17 July 1489 with the title of Sikandar Shah.

### **Achievements**

Sikandar Shah (or Sikandar Lodi) justified the nomination of his father and proved himself to be his father's most capable son. Sikandar Shah destroyed all claimants to the throne, and of those nobles as well who had opposed his candidature. Sultan Bahlul Lodi had annexed only Jaunpur to his kingdom, Sikandar extended his empire further. Sultan Bahlul, of course, had kept his Afghan nobles under his control, but had compromised the position of the Sultan with the rights of the nobles. On the other hand, Sikandar Shah destroyed the power of the nobility, finished all rebellious nobles and forced others to obey and respect him as the

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Sultan. Thus, Sikandar succeeded more than his father in extending the empire and restoring the prestige of the Sultan and therefore, can be rightly considered to be the greatest Lodi Sultan.

First, Sikandar Shah suppressed all those opponents who could dispute his succession. He forced his uncle Alam Khan to leave Rapri, separated him from Isa Khan and ultimately forced him to leave his kingdom. Alam Khan fled to Gujarat. Isa Khan, who had opposed Sikandar's succession, was defeated next and wounded in a battle. He died some days later. His nephew, Azam Humayun, was also defeated and Kalpi was snatched away from him. Tatar Khan, the governor of Jhatra and another opponent to his succession, was also defeated though generously allowed to remain in possession of his jagir. Thus, within a year of his succession, Sikandar Lodi destroyed or brought to submission all his opponents and claimants to the throne.

Sikandar asked his elder brother Barbak Shah, the ruler of Jaunpur, to accept his suzerainty so that the empire remained united. But Barbak Shah did not agree to it. Sikandar Shah then attacked and defeated Barbak Shah though allowed him to continue as titular ruler. But he divided the kingdom into small principalities where he appointed his own loyal officers. Barbak Shah, however, proved a failure. There occurred an uprising in Jaunpur under the leadership of the chief of the Bachgoti tribe, Juga. Barbak Shah failed to suppress it and fled. Sikandar Shah immediately attacked the rebels and suppressed them. Juga fled to Bihar. Sikandar Shah again placed Barbak Shah on the throne of Jaunpur. But again a revolt took place against him. The local powerful jagirdars who were instigated by the previous ruler of Jaunpur, Husain Shah, challenged his authority. Barbak Shah again failed to suppress the revolt and fled from his capital. Sikandar suppressed the rebellion, again placed Barbak Shah on the throne, but ultimately, finding him incapable, imprisoned him and appointed his own governor at Jaunpur.

The rebellions of jagirdars of Jaunpur gave an opportunity to Sikandar Shah to conquer Bihar. Husain Shah was in league with those jagirdars and had provided shelter to their leader, Juga. Sikandar Shah asked him to surrender Juga which he refused. He then attacked Husain Shah who fled to Bihar. In 1494, Husain Shah in an opportunistic move, attacked Sikandar Shah when he was busy in suppressing the revolts of jagirdars of Jaunpur. Again he was defeated near Banaras and was forced to flee. Sikandar Shah pursued Husain Shah until he crossed into Bengal where he spent the rest of his life as a pensioner of the ruler of Bengal, Ala-ud-din Husain Shah. Bihar was then annexed to the territory of the Delhi Sultanate. Sikandar Shah also attacked Tirhut from Bihar. The Rai of Tirhut accepted his suzerainty without fighting.

The army of Delhi had pursued Husain Shah up to the border of Bengal. Ala-ud-din Husain Shah did not like the occupation of Bihar by Sikandar Shah, but thought it prudent to come to terms with the Sultan of Delhi. A treaty was signed between the two by which both parties agreed not to attack each other's territory. Bihar was accepted as part of the Delhi Sultanate and Ala-ud-din Husain Shah agreed not to give shelter to enemies of Sikandar Shah.

The internal strife in the state of Malwa provided Sikandar Shah an opportunity to interfere in its affairs. However, he restrained himself and restricted his interference to a minimum. He helped Sahib Khan, one of the princes of Malwa, in capturing only Chanderi and kept him under his control.

Sikandar Shah also succeeded partially against the Rajput states. He conquered Dholpur, Mandrail, Utgir, Narwar and Nagaur. He defeated the ruler of Gwalior, but failed to annex Gwalior to his territory. Sikandar also established the city of Agra in 1504 primarily to keep control over the Rajput rulers.

Thus, the conquest of Bihar was the only remarkable success of Sikandar Lodi from the point of view of the extension of the Imperial territory. Besides, he kept Jaunpur under his control and raised his prestige among the Rajput chiefs by defeating some among them. Sikandar wisely realised the limitations of his resources and therefore, tried to maintain peaceful relations with other neighbouring Muslim kingdoms. His policy towards Malwa and Bengal was guided by the same considerations.

The one serious problem before Sikandar Shah was to keep under control the independent and rebellious nature of his own Afghan nobles. In this endeavour, he asked all his governors and officers to submit proper accounts of their income and expenditure and punished the defaulters. The governor of Jaunpur was punished on this very account and compelled to pay the embezzled money of the state. He started sitting on the throne and compelled his nobles to show formal respect to him in the darbar (court) and even outside. He framed certain rules which were observed by all his nobles and governors to honour the Sultan, i.e., the governors were asked to receive his farmans (orders) six miles ahead of their capitals. Sikandar made no distinction between the rich and the poor while dispensing justice. He organized an efficient espionage system which helped him a lot in keeping his nobles under his control. He posted spies and informers at every important place including the houses of his nobles. His system proved quite efficient and he was so well-informed about everybody and everything significant in the State that the people believed that the Sultan was assisted by supernatural powers. All these measures succeeded and Sikandar Shah was successful in controlling the tendencies of tribal independence of his nobles. However, he was not cruel or disrespectful in his treatment towards his nobles. Of course, he expected respect from them and desired disciplinary behaviour from them. But, otherwise, he cared to satisfy their personal emotions and respected the old and the experienced ones amongst them.

Sikandar's sole motive had been to restore the authority of the Sultan and in that he succeeded. One time, nearly twenty-two nobles at the court conspired to dethrone him and place his younger brother, Fateh Khan, on the throne. Fateh Khan divulged this conspiracy to the Sultan. All those nobles were either banished from the court or killed. After that, no revolt or conspiracy took place against the Sultan during his reign.

Sikandar Shah was a laborious, generous, just and well-meaning Sultan. He worked hard from morning till midnight to supervise the administration. He dispensed impartial justice to all his subjects. He encouraged trade and agriculture.

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He abolished all internal trade duties. He was provided with a rate-list of all articles everyday so that he could assess the economic condition of the common people. He maintained peace and order within his kingdom. All this helped in the economic prosperity of the State. He was also a kind ruler and free food was provided to the poor and needy persons from the royal kitchen everyday. He cared for capable and learned people whose name-list was handed over to him after every six months, and each of whom was provided economic help from the State according to one's capability. Thus, the reign of Sikandar Shah was that of peace, order, prosperity and progress. The disorder which had prevailed in the administration of the Delhi Sultanate after the death of Sultan Firuz Shah was removed by Sikandar Shah.

Sikandar Shah, however, behaved as a fanatic in religious matters and proved intolerant to other faiths. Historians from Sikandar's time have described him as a fanatic-king. Nizam-ud-din Ahmed wrote, 'His (Sikandar's) bigotry in Islam was so great that in this regard he went beyond the bounds even of excess.' He had given the proof of his bigotry even as a prince when he had desired to prohibit Hindus from bathing in the sacred tank at Thaneshwar. When he became the Sultan he destroyed Hindu temples, broke their images and raised mosques in their places. According to a contemporary historian, Sikandar broke the sacred image of the temple of Jwalamukhi at Nagarkot and gave its pieces to butchers to use them as weights. He also destroyed the temples and their images at Mathura, Mandrail, Narwar and Chanderi. He also prohibited Hindus from shaving and bathing in the river Yamuna at Mathura. He also encouraged Hindus for conversion to Islam.

It has been said in favour of Sikandar that he tried to check certain bad customs of Islam as well. He prohibited the processions of Tazias at the festival of Muharram. He forbade the visit of Muslim women to the shrines of saints. He ordered the destruction of the mosques at Jaunpur built up by Sharqi rulers though withdrew his orders afterwards on the advice of the Ulema. Among modern historians, Dr K.S. Lal has also given a reasonable argument in his favour. He writes, 'Indeed Indian society was undergoing a change.' This change was also due to the teachings of the fifteenth century socio-religious reformers like Kabir and Guru Nanak. In such a situation of reformation within Indian society, the acts of bigotry and prejudice, even if there were few, appeared to be so out of sync with the changes taking place in Indian society that they shocked even the Persian chroniclers. In the fourteenth century, Sikandar Lodi's attitude would have caused no surprise. He would have been considered one among the common run of monarchs. But in the fifteenth century, his bigotry was particularly noticeable. Hence, the assertion of the chroniclers, 'Yet, whatever, has been expressed in favour of Sikandar Shah, it does not make him free from the charge of bigotry.' The majority of modern historians blame him for being intolerant towards the majority of his subjects.

However, Sikandar Shah was a successful ruler. In his last days, he went to Bayana and, while returning from there, he fell ill. He reached Delhi but, then, died on 21 November 1517.

## **Sultan Ibrahim Lodi (1517-1526 AD)**

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When Sikandar Lodi died, all his sons and important nobles were present in the capital and it was unanimously decided by all that while the eldest son of the Sultan, Ibrahim would be the ruler at Delhi, his younger brother Jalal Khan would be the ruler at Jaunpur. Therefore, Ibrahim ascended the throne of Delhi after his father and assumed the title of Shah. Ibrahim Lodi remained the last ruler of the Lodi dynasty. His reign began with the conflict against his brother Jalal Khan; the conquest of Gwalior remained the only significant conquest of his reign; and, his conflict with the state of Mewar weakened and lowered his prestige.

But the most notable feature of his reign was his conflict against the Afghan nobility. Of course, it is certain that Babur who defeated him and destroyed the rule of the Lodi dynasty was a more capable commander. He possessed better military resources and therefore, the fate of the Afghans could not be otherwise than what happened in the First battle of Panipat. But it is also a fact that the conflict of Sultan Ibrahim with his nobility was also one of the primary causes of the downfall of the Lodi dynasty.

### **Ibrahim Lodi: An Assessment**

Ibrahim was a capable, laborious, just and well-meaning Sultan. He sincerely desired the welfare of his subjects and succeeded in it. His subjects remained prosperous and contented under his rule. Thus, as a ruler, he proved himself equal to his father and grandfather. He was a courageous, dauntless soldier and a fairly successful commander. In 1525, when Daulat Khan Lodi and Alam Khan Lodi attacked Delhi, they succeeded in destroying the main army of the Sultan, yet, Ibrahim stayed back in the field only with his body-guards and when, in the morning, he found the enemy soldiers busy in plunder, he attacked them and forced them to flee. It was a rare daring act on the part of the Sultan. Similarly, Ibrahim Lodi did not withdraw from the battle of Panipat and died fighting. Firishta writes, 'He fought to the bitter end and died like a soldier.' Niamatullah also wrote, 'No Sultan of India except Sultan Ibrahim has been killed on the battle-field.' Thus, Ibrahim was unique in chivalry, courage and determination.

But Ibrahim Lodi was also a rash Sultan. He failed to understand the character and sentiments of his own race. He decided to crush the power of his nobility and remained adamant about it till the end. He could not understand that his Afghan nobles could compromise their self-respect and spirit of independence only gradually. They were already learning to respect the Sultan because of the tactful policy of his father. He only needed to pursue the same policy further. On the contrary, Ibrahim provoked their rebellious nature by directly attacking their self-respect and position of power. He lost several opportunities to compromise with them due to his adamant nature. It resulted in a direct conflict between the Sultan and his nobles which certainly weakened the empire. Of course, Babur won the battle of Panipat because of better weaponry, strategy and generalship, yet, it is certain that had he faced the united Afghan empire extending from Punjab to Bihar, his task would have been difficult. Sultan Ibrahim had reduced his military strength, his territory and his resources in fighting against his own Afghan nobles.

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### Check Your Progress

7. What were the main mistakes of Khizr Khan during his reign?
8. What were the chief tasks of Bahlul Lodhi?

## 1.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The main ambition of Mahmud of Ghazni was to acquire wealth even though he was a breaker of idols. He had no wish to squander away this wealth in India itself. He wanted to utilize it for establishing a vast central Asian empire.
2. The main invasions carried out by Mahmud of Ghazni were against the Hindushahi rulers of Punjab—Jaipal (AD 1000–1001) and Anandpala (AD 1008–1009), against Nagarkot (Kangra) (1009), Thaneshwar (AD 1014), Mathura and Kanauj (AD 1018–1019), against Kalinjar (AD 1021), and Somnath (AD 1020). Mahmud Ghazni died in AD 1030.
3. Alauddin Khilji is considered as one of the most crude and oppressive rulers of India as he started the practice of killing the wives and children of those nobles who revolted against him. He constructed towers of skulls of the Mongols and either killed their wives and children or sold them as slaves. Jalaluddin killed thousands of ‘new Muslims’ merely on suspicion and gave their wives and daughters to the murderers of their husbands and fathers. Thus, his punishments against those who opposed him were barbaric.
4. The agricultural reforms introduced by Firoz Tughlaq were as follows:
  - (a) The debts of peasants, taken by them during the famine at the time of Muhammad Tughlaq, were exempted.
  - (b) An efficient irrigation system was resorted to, which led to cultivation in quite a large part of the empire.
5. Firoz Shah Tughlaq reformed the currency system by bringing about many changes. He issued coins of a small denomination in very large numbers so that the common people and traders should not be put to difficulty in daily transactions. He issued coins of copper and silver mixed so that people might not copy them easily and the Sultanate might not be faced with those financial difficulties which it had to face during the time of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq.
6. Historians are of the opinion that Firoz was a good ruler but not great because he abolished all the unnecessary and unjust taxes, gave encouragement to agriculture, increased agricultural facilities, helped the unhappy, exempted the government loans from payment, tried to bring an end to unemployment, gave financial help to Muslim girls, widows and

orphans, carried out many revisions in justice and penal code, extended patronage to literature and art. Though he failed at the military front but his reign witnessed peace and development.

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7. The main mistakes of Khizr Khan during his reign are as follows:
  - (a) He pursued a policy of appeasement towards the Turkish nobles and allowed them to enjoy ownership of their *Jagirs*. Yet, they remained dissatisfied with him and used their positions to occasionally rise in revolt against him. Khizr Khan committed one more mistake.
  - (b) He divided his Iqtas (provinces) into Shiqs (districts) and gave quite a lot of independent powers to district officers, which resulted in local or regional loyalties.
8. Bahlul Lodi's chief tasks were to re-establish the lost authority of the Sultan, to establish the pre-eminence of the Afghans in the kingdom, to suppress the rebellious nobles and jagirdars, to preserve his kingdom from jealous neighbours and to strengthen his gains.

## NOTES

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### 1.6 SUMMARY

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- Towards the end of the ninth century, feudal lords of Persian origin ruled over Transoxiana, Khorasan and some parts of Iran.
- Therefore, the Gazi soldiers fought against them for political and religious causes. With the passage of time, many Turks became Muslims and started propagating and protecting Islam.
- On the other side, the Samanid dynasty fell and the Gaznavids undertook the task of protecting the Islamic regions against the non-Islamic tribes of Central Asia.
- After Balban, Muiz-ud-din Qaiqabad, grandson of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud ascended the throne of the Delhi Sultanate.
- Alauddin Khilji's original name was Ali Gurshasp. After plotting to murder his uncle, he assumed the title of Abul Muzaffar Sultan Alauddin-duniya-vadin Muhammad Shah Khilji.
- Alauddin occupies an important place among the rulers of medieval India. He became the Sultan at the age of thirty and within a period of fifteen years, became the most powerful ruler of India.
- As a person, Alauddin was cruel and selfish. He was devoid of the instinct of love and observed no morality.
- Alauddin was a great administrator. He made certain innovations in administration. He was not advised by anybody in these administrative reforms, whether civil or military.
- Alauddin was an ambitious ruler. Nevertheless, he was a practical statesman as well. He realized the limitations of his ambitions.

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- Alauddin Khilji was the first Sultan of Delhi who did not pursue Islamic principles in matters of the state. He acted as the ultimate and absolute monarch and with unlimited powers he believed that the Sultan was above all, and that all powers of the state emanate from him.
- Following the death of Alauddin Khilji in AD 1316, the Delhi Sultanate plunged into confusion. Malik Kafur sat on the throne for a few days, only to be deposed by Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah.
- Three days after the death of Gayasuddin Tughlaq, Prince Juna Khan (Ulugh Khan) declared himself the Sultan of Delhi under the title Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq.
- Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq tried to bring about many reforms but most of his plans failed because he was not practical in his thinking.
- Muhammad Tughlaq wanted to make Devgiri, which he renamed Daulatabad, his capital in place of Delhi. So, it can be maintained that Muhammad Tughlaq made Devgiri his capital so that a central effect could be established over a vast empire and the rebellion in the South could be suppressed easily.
- Firoz Shah Tughlaq was a cousin of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq. He was born in AD 1300. Firoz Shah Tughlaq was a polite, liberal and religious-minded person. He behaved very politely with his ministers, Ulemas, Amirs, and honoured them greatly.
- Firoz was not a very able ruler or commander. He led two expeditions against Bengal but was unsuccessful both the times.
- In essence, then, Firoz Shah Tughlaq was an able ruler but not a great leader. He tried to care for the welfare of the people as far as he could not follow such policy amongst all classes so that they remain satisfied and grateful to the state.
- According to Barani, Firoz Tughlaq ordered that Khiraj (land tax) and Jaziya (ordinarily a tax imposed exclusively on Hindus) should be levied in accordance with the produce (Bar Hukme-Hasil).
- According to Shami-Siraj-Af, Firoz Tughlaq distributed all villages, parganas and cities for the payment of salaries to the military officials and the financial condition of the state was all right.
- Firoz Shah Tughlaq amended many of the military measures introduced by Alauddin Khilji and Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq.
- Khizr Khan was the founder ruler of the Sayyid dynasty. He claimed to be a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad.
- After the death of Khizr Khan, his son, Mubarak Khan ascended to the throne without any opposition. He assumed the title of Shah, got the Khutba read in his name and also issued coins bearing his name.
- Mubarak Shah had nominated Muhammad-bin-Farid Khan, the son of his brother as his successor. Farid Khan ascended to the throne after Mubarak Shah's murder and assumed the title of Muhammad Shah.

- Bahlul founded the Lodi Dynasty after murdering the vizar Hamid Khan. The history of the seventy-five years of the Lodi Dynasty is that of bitter conflicts.
- Sultan Bahlul Lodi, the founder of Lodi dynasty, had a humble beginning. He belonged to the Shahu Khel clan of the Lodis which formed an important branch of the Afghans.
- Sultan Bahlul Lodi proved himself to be a competent monarch. It was due to his diplomatic skills and military talents that the Lodi dynasty could find a place in the history of the Delhi Sultanate.
- Sikandar Shah (or Sikandar Lodi) justified the nomination of his father and proved himself to be his father's most capable son. Sikandar Shah destroyed all claimants to the throne and of those nobles as well who had opposed his candidature.
- Sikandar Shah was a laborious, generous, just and well-meaning Sultan. He worked hard from morning till midnight to supervise the administration.
- Ibrahim was a capable, laborious, just and well-meaning Sultan. He sincerely desired the welfare of his subjects and succeeded in it.

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### 1.7 KEY WORDS

- **Assassination:** It refers to the killing of a prominent person, either for political or religious reasons.
- **Khums:** It refers to religious obligation of any Muslim army to pay one-fifth of the spoils of war and this tax was paid to the caliph or sultan, representing the state of Islam.
- **Theory of Kingship:** It refers to a political and religious doctrine of royal and political legitimacy. It asserts that a monarch is subject to no earthly authority, deriving his right to rule directly from the will of God.
- **Ulema:** It refers to a body of Muslim scholars who are recognized as having specialist knowledge of Islamic sacred law and theology.
- **Zakat:** It refers to a form of alms-giving treated in Islam as a religious obligation or tax, which, by Quranic ranking, is next after prayer in importance.

### 1.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

#### Short-Answer Questions

1. What was the main aim of Alauddin Khilji?
2. Why is Alauddin Khilji's campaign to Devagiri considered as a unique achievement in the history of military campaigns?
3. What were the various measures adopted by Alauddin Khilji during his reign?

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4. Why did Alauddin not annex the territories of the vanquished rulers of the south?
5. Write a short note on the religious beliefs of Firoz Shah Tughlaq.
6. Why did the use of token currency proved disastrous for the empire of Tughlaq?
7. Why did Muhammad Shah failed to safeguard his kingdom from internal disruption?

### Long-Answer Questions

1. 'Alauddin occupies an important place among the rulers of medieval India'. Discuss the statement.
2. Analyse the role of Alauddin Khilji as an administrator.
3. What were the various reforms carried out by Muhammad Tughlaq? Explain in detail.
4. Discuss the development and peace which prevailed during the reign of Firoz Shah Tughlaq.
5. Explain the strategies which were adopted by Bahlul in establishing Lodhi dynasty.
6. Examine the problems faced by Sikandar Shah during his reign under the Lodhi dynasty.

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## 1.9 FURTHER READINGS

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## UNIT 2 INDO-ISLAMIC CULTURE OF THE DELHI SULTANATE

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*Indo-Islamic Culture of  
The Delhi Sultanate*

### NOTES

#### Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Administration of the Delhi Sultanate
  - 2.2.1 Administrative Impact
  - 2.2.2 Economic Conditions
- 2.3 Socio-Economic Conditions
- 2.4 Religious Conditions
  - 2.4.1 Religious Policy of Delhi Sultanate
- 2.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 2.6 Summary
- 2.7 Key Words
- 2.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 2.9 Further Readings

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### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

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The Muslim conquerors retained their Islamic identity after their successful invasions and thus, created new administrative systems. They revolutionized the existing systems of social conduct and ethics which influenced Hindus too. They introduced new cultural codes which led to a reformed Indian culture as it was a mixture of new and ancient Indian culture. The administration system of the Delhi Sultanate was military and the Sultanate had most of the powers though he was guided by many ministers. The nobles were the most respected class in the society.

The culture was also reformed as the culture of Muslims was exotic and extravagant. The Muslim culture added more weight to the prevalent culture and added a new dimension. The birth of Urdu literature too was acknowledged by historians. The dress, manners and food, especially among the aristocracy in Northern India, underwent a certain reorientation under the influence of the Muslims. Persian literature too gained prominence during this period and a number of texts were translated in Persian.

The main feature of Indian culture was its extreme tolerance. The Hindus absorbed all the new features without destroying anything which existed earlier. Various forms of religions existed during that time such as Buddhism, Jainism, Vaishnavism, Saivism and there were many worshippers of Shakti. Sufism and Bhakti movement were also the most popular forms of religions which were developed during the Delhi Sultanate.

In this unit, the administration of the Delhi Sultanate and its economic impact on the state has been explained. The growth of culture, the development of language and literature has also been analysed. The unit will also highlight the religious

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developments during the Delhi Sultanate with special reference to Bhakti and Sufi movements.

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### 2.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the administration of the Delhi Sultanate
- Explain the economic impact after the Turkish invasions
- Analyse the growth and development of culture in the Delhi Sultanate
- Interpret the development of language and literature under Delhi Sultanate
- Explain the religious conditions of Delhi Sultanate
- Analyse the importance of Sufi and Bhakti movements

### 2.2 ADMINISTRATION OF THE DELHI SULTANATE

The Sultanate administration was basically military and its rulers were self-willed despots. However, as no one can administer the state alone, the Sultanate rulers also needed assistance and advice. Therefore, from the beginning, the Sultanate established systematic administration. During this period, the position of the Sultan was supreme and he was vested with political, legal and military powers. He also was responsible for judicial administration. The Sultan took the advice of his advisors but was not bound by it.

#### Main Departments of Administration

The country was divided into regions, each of which was handed over to the principal general. The king, in addition, had ministers to advise him but there was no definiteness about ministers. The chief of these ministers was known as 'wazir' who was the head of entire administration. He had his secretariat and to help him there was a chain of officers. Next to the 'wazir' was head of the military department. In addition there were two civil 'dewans'. The first of whom looked after religious matters, holy institutions, scholars and so on and the second looked after correspondence. 'Prant', like the centre, established various departments. The 'prants' were divided into 'shikos', whose head was known as 'shikdar'. The 'shikos' were divided into 'sarkars', 'sarkars' into 'parganas' and 'parganas' into villages. Urban administration was run by a centralised bureaucracy, but the villages had some sort of self-rule.

#### 2.2.1 Administrative Impact

Let us discuss the administrative impact of the Delhi Sultanate.

#### Relations of Indian Sultans with Caliph established

Before the Turks, no ruler of India considered any foreign person, office or institution about him but the Delhi Sultanate was subordinate to the Caliphate if only in name.

Most Sultans pretended to acknowledge the Caliph only as the constitutional ruler and themselves as only his representative. Though the Turkish Sultans of India were independent, yet they took the help of the name of the Caliph to give stability to their rule and considered themselves a part of the wider Islamic world for example, Shamsuddin Iltutmish requested the Caliph for Mansur which called him a faithful deputy, around AD 1220 towards the end of his reign. By that time Iltutmish had firmly established his hold on the throne. Though after Iltutmish the Sultans of the Slave (Mamluk) dynasty got this from Caliph, but all of them got Caliph's name inscribed on the Khubta and their coins and assumed such titles which showed that they acknowledged the Caliph as their overlord. In fact, it was a mere formality which was kept by the Sultans. In reality the Sultan was a sovereign and independent ruler.

### Law of Succession

Among the Turks there was no clear and definite rule of succession. They neither followed the principles of hereditary succession like the Rajputs nor did they follow strict Islamic injunctions in this respect. According to the Islamic principles, it was essential that the Sultan should be a male and all his vital organs should be intact and he should have faith in Islam. The Turks made Razia their Sultan even though she was a woman, Qaiqubad was not dethroned even after he was paralyzed. Nasiruddin Khusru did not show any particular respect towards Islam still he was recognized as Sultan. Islamic law enjoins the election of a ruler but in practice any of the issues of the Sultan was chosen as the successor to the throne. In the Turk's period, the Amirs played an important role in giving any direction to the rulers of succession. Sometimes a powerful general usurped the throne. The Turks found no way out of such a situation.

### Turkish monopoly of high offices

It is clear from the *Tabkat-I-Nasiri* of Minhaj-us-Siraj and *Tarikh-I-Firozshahi* of Ziauddin Barani that in the Mamluk period all the central, provincial and district level important posts were monopolized by the Turkish. Before Balban they were known as 'The Forty'. High officials were known as the Khan, Malik or Amir. They considered themselves at par with the royalty. That is why often there was a conflict between them and the Sultan. It was a novel political experience for India that royalty and nobility should indulge in open conflict for a long time.

### Iqta System

The Turkish conquest put an end to the independent small kingdoms of India. Iltutmish and Balban extended the Delhi Sultanate by their policy. As the administration during the initial period was a military administration, army was made the basis for administrative decentralization also. This resulted in the growth of the Iqta system. They divided their empire into many Iqtas or areas. Every Iqta was placed under the administrative charge of a chief military commander. But these Iqtadars were not the independent rulers of their areas. Their tenure and transfer depended upon the will of the Sultan. Every Iqtadar had to be obedient to the Sultan. In case of revolt, he was accorded suitable punishment. From the income of the Iqta (area of revenue forming) the Iqtadar met the expenditure of

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the army stationed under them and sent to the Sultan his share. The Sultan had the right to check the account of the Iqtadars. The Iqtadar was responsible not only for revenue collection but also for the maintenance of order in his area. In fact, the Turks had taken recourse to the Iqta system to break the feudal traditions of the Rajputs and to bring distant areas in contact with the Central Government.

### Decline of Feudalism

Before the advent of the Turks, the basis of the Rajput power was local feudal chieftains. The Turks displaced the main Rajput feudal chiefs and brought some under their control on their own condition. They could not bring any area under their control without the permission of the Sultan, nor could they keep their independent army. Power was transferred from feudal chiefs to the Sultan. The Sultan had the right to determine the demand of revenue increase it or decrease it.

### Changes in the Military Sphere

The conquest of the Turks brought about many changes in the army organization. War now ceased to be monopoly of one particular class i.e. the Kshatriyas and the recruitment to the army was opened to all the trained men. In place of the feudal armies, the Sultans organized their permanent standing armies whose recruitment, description and training were all looked after by the central Government. Now instead of infantrymen, cavalry and archers were recruited in large numbers. Elephants gave place to trained horses. Suitable arrangements were made for the security of country's frontier and Rajput ideals were completely abandoned.

### 2.2.2 Economic Conditions

- (i) **Encouragement to Trade:** After the Turkish invasions and conquests, the Indian political outlook became wider and the isolation of the situation was lessened and the trade was encouraged. According to Sir Jadunath Sirkar, the contact with the countries of Asia and Africa which had broken away in the eighth century was re-established by the Turkish conquest at the end of the twelfth century. After Turkish conquest contact came to be established with outside countries and the urban revolution gave encouragement to cities and markets. After their conquest, Delhi, Lahore, Lakhnauti, Surat and Multan became centres of various occupations and trade and commerce increase rapidly in their cities. In this period, the internal and external trade of the country was encouraged and the Indian traders started trading on a large scale with China and Ghazni.
- (ii) **Effect on Industry:** According to Professor Habib, spinning wheel came to India from Iran in the twelfth century which helped in the advancement of cloth industry. The cities of Bengal and Gujarat became famous for the cloth.
- (iii) **Change in the taxation system:** The Turks introduced in India the Islamic system of taxation for the first time. They chiefly imposed four taxes viz., Jakat, Khams, Jiziya and Khiraj. Zakat was levied only on the Muslims. It was compulsory for every Muslim to voluntarily give about 2 ½ per cent of

their income as tax. Jaziya was levied only on non-Muslims. Khams or war booty was introduced by the Turks for the first time as a definite source of state income. 20 per cent of it was given to states and the rest 80 per cent was distributed amongst the soldiers. Kharaj or land tax was fixed by the Mamluk Sultans at 1/3 of the price. With the exception of the land tax, rest three were new for Indians though some old taxes like customs were also continued in this period.

- (iv) **Growth of Medieval Economy:** According to Professor Habib, it was the Turkish conquest in India which led to the growth of the medieval economy in India. Seeing in the perspective of the contemporary situation, this economy was developed from many angles. Turks brought with them many artisans and technicians. It is by which agricultural surplus could be utilized. They encouraged the growth of cities, expressed by Habib and Nizam in their book where they say that the trade got encouragement with the establishment of contacts with the outside world with the Turkish conquest and growth of cities. The uniformity of legal system, taxation, system and growth of currency gave encouragement to the traders and extended their sphere of activities.

#### Check Your Progress

1. What was the role of the dewans in the administration of the Delhi Sultanate?
2. What was the Iqta system?

## 2.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Culture includes the society, the religious condition, literature and art and architecture of that period. The culture of the Muslims was for long either an exotic one or a class culture confined to a certain group that basked in the sunshine of the King's favour. The monotheism of Islam led to the birth of a similar movement among the Hindus. Certain aspects of Bhakti movement were coloured by the iconoclastic character of Islam. Kabir was the most representative figure. Muslim literature and painting had a certain originality which enriched the fabric of Indian culture. In the literary sphere, the development of Urdu language and the birth of historical writings are some of the colossal Muslim contributions to Indian culture.

During the reign of the Delhi Sultanate, the society was divided into different sections. After the advent of the Muslims, the society constituted the foreign Muslims, the Indian Muslims and the Hindus. Among them, the foreign Muslims constituted the ruling class. The next section was that of the Indian Muslims who were either converted to Islam or were the descendants of the converted Muslims. The Hindus also formed a part of the society at that time and were divided among themselves on the basis of castes.

The foreign Muslims were respected and were the most privileged section of the society. All high offices of the state were kept reserved for them. They

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yielded great influence in society and administration. But the foreign Muslims were not united. They claimed different nationalities as the Persians, the Afghans, the Arabs, the Turks, and the Abyssinians. The Turks claimed and maintained their superiority over all others up to the thirteenth century. Their position broke after the Khiljis captured the power of the state.

The foreign Muslims looked down upon the Indian Muslims because most of them were converted to Islam from among low-caste Hindus. The foreign Muslims regarded them neither of blue blood nor conquerors of this country. Therefore, Indian Muslims were not given equal status either in society or in administration. During the total period of the Sultanate only few Indian Muslims enjoyed high offices of the state. The caste-system of the Hindus affected the Muslims, especially the Indian Muslims. They continued to maintain divisions among themselves on the basis of their previous castes. Thus, both the foreign and Indian Muslims were divided among themselves on the basis of their different nationalities and birth. The Muslims were also divided on the basis of religious sects, education and professions. *Sunnis* and the *Shias* differed from each other on the basis of sects while soldiers and scholars were divided among each other on the basis of their professions. There was another class, the Ulema, who constituted the religious community among the Muslims and claimed pre-eminence over all others.

The slave system was prevalent among the Muslims and the Hindus and slaves were sold and purchased in the open market. The slaves were treated well though their property and lives were the property of their masters. The slaves of the Muslims were better off as compared to the slaves of the Hindus. The Sultans and nobles kept slaves in huge numbers provided education and gave them training and opportunity to rise in their lives and many of them rose to the position of prominence in the state. The women in the Hindu society enjoyed respect in the family and participated in the religious ceremonies. They received education and many of them had acquired scholarly fame. Yet, in general their status had deteriorated in the society and they suffered from many social evils. There was no widow remarriage, therefore, the widows either became *sati* at the pyre of their husbands or passed their lives as women-hermits.

The *Purdah* system and child marriages adversely affected the education and position of women in the society. *Devadasi* system was another social evil which was prevalent among the Hindus. Muslim women did not enjoy a respectable status in the society. Polygamy was extensively prevalent among the Muslims. Every Muslim had a right to keep at least four wives while the rich among them kept hundreds or thousands as wives or slaves. *Purdah* system was strictly observed among the Muslim women. They were devoid of education because of this social custom.

Generally, the Hindus were vegetarians and the Muslims were non-vegetarians. Among the Muslims, the Sufis, or the people who were under their influence avoided eating meat. Both the Hindus and the Muslims built good houses for themselves where all comforts of life were available. There was a marked progress in the use of clothing and ornaments. All sorts of clothes made of silk,

cotton and wool were used by the people and there was improvement in them. Both the Hindus and the Muslims liked to use ornaments. All types of ornaments from head to toe were used by both males and females and were made not only of gold and silver but of pearls, diamonds and precious stones. The people engaged themselves in all sorts of entertainments. Different sports (hunting, duels among men, fighting among animals, horse-polo) were their usual entertainments and fairs and religious festivals were also common among both the Hindus and the Muslims.

### Development of Language and Literature under the Delhi Sultanate

The growth of literature during the age of the Delhi Sultanate was not restricted to Sanskrit and Persian but evolved in other regional languages as well. The Sultans of Delhi and the ruler of provincial dynasties patronized various scholars.

#### Sanskrit Literature

Development of new languages and growth of rich corpus literature took place in the medieval period. According to some historians, the patronage of the Sanskrit language declined during the Delhi Sultanate because the rulers of the Sultanate emphasized the patronage of Persian language. However, historical records show that this period witnessed the growth of rich amount of Sanskrit literature because poetical works called the *Kavya* and the texts that laid down laws called the *Dhramashastras*, were composed during this period.

Various small political establishments in central and south India patronized Sanskrit during the first half of the medieval period. In western India, Hemachandra Suri was known to have composed works in Sanskrit. Many dramas were also written during this period. A new style of writing called the *champu*, which was a mixture of prose and poetry, also emerged during this period. Rajput kings patronized the works of their family histories like the *Prithvirajavijaya* and the *Hammirmahakavya* and these were written in Sanskrit. Udayaraja, a court poet of Sultan Mahmud Begarha of Gujarat, wrote Sultan's biography and this poetry was named *Rajavinoda*.

Kalhan's *Rajtarangini* is the history of the kings of Kashmir from Jayasimha to Sultan Zainul Abidin and it was written by Jonaraja in the 12th century AD.

The second *Rajtaranginni* was also written by Jonaraja. Srivara wrote the history of the region till 1486. Some semi historical texts, such as *prabandhas*, were also written during the period.

The rulers of Vijayanagar, Nayakas of Tanjor and the chiefs of Travancore and Cochin patronized Sanskrit language after the 15th century. Many genres of Sanskrit literature like Slesh Kavyas, Mahakavyas, Champu Kavyas, the historical Kavyas and Natakas continued. Some of the important writers of this period were Govinda Dikshita (writer of *Sahitya Sudha* and *Sangitsudhanidhi*); Nilanatha Dikshit (a minister in the court of the Nayaka of Madurai); Appaya Dikshita (in the court of the Nayaka ruler of Vellore) and Chakrakavi (who was patronized by the rulers of Kozhikode).

The historical Kavyas depict the social perception of the writers as well as the exploits of various rulers. Some of the Mughals like Dara Shukoh were also

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mentioned in these Kavyas. The credit of composing a *prasasti* to honour Nrisimha Sarasvati of Benaras is also given to the Mughal prince. A few works were composed in the courts of the rulers of Bijapur and Golconda but by and large Sanskrit literature began to decline during this period.

### Persian Literature

With the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, a new literary style and language was introduced in the sub continent. Writings of Amir Khusrau contributed a lot to the development of Persian literature. He was born in a family of Turkish immigrants and he started writing poetry in the reign of Sultan Balban. He was a disciple of Nizamuddin Auliya and his patrons were Jalaluddin Khalji, Alauddin Khalji and Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq. According to historians, he composed ninety-nine works on various themes and wrote numerous verses of poetry. He used forms like lyric, epic, elegy and ode to write poetry. His writing style is the representative of the first Persian style, called *Sabaq-i-Hindi* (the Indian style), that was composed in the Indian background. Some of his important works include *Mutla-ul-Anwar*, *Laila Majnun*, *Shirin Khusrau* and *Ayina-I-Sikandari*. These works were dedicated to Alauddin Khalji. *Tuhfat-us-Sighar*, *Nihayat-ul-Kamal* and *Baqiya Naqiya* are some of his popular Diwans (Ghazals). He is also the writer of masnavis (narrative poems) like *Miftah-ul Futuh* (narrating the military success of Jalauddin Khalji), *Tughlaq Nama* (giving an account of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq's rise to power) and *Khazain-ul Futuh* (describing Alauddin Khalji's conquest of the South). These masnavis are considered to have great historical and literary value. Shaikh Najmuddin Hasan was another important Persian poet in the court of Alauddin Khalji.

During the period of the Delhi Sultanate, the court chronicles were an important part of the literature. Some of the important court chronicles were *Futuh-us Salatin* by Isami, the *Tabaqat-I-Nasiri* by Minaj-us Siraj and the *Futuhat-I Firozshahi* by Feroz Shah Tughlaq. Ziauddin Barani also contributed a lot to the Persian literature of this period. The *Fatwa-I Jahandari* and the *Tarikh-I Firozshah* were some of his important works.

A new form of Sufi literature developed during this period. It was known as the *mal'fuzat* and was written in the form of dialogue of the Sufi saints. *Fawa'id-ul Fu'ad* written by Amir Hassan Sijzi that has the anecdotes of the Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya and *Khair-ul-Majalis* with the anecdotes of Sheik Nasir ad-Din Mahmud were some of the important works written in this form. Many works were translated into Persian during this period. The first Persian translation of Sanskrit stories was the *Tuti Nama* (book of the parrot) by Zia Nakshabi. The *Rajtarangini* and the *Mahabharatha* were also translated into Persian during this period. A number of Sanskrit works were translated into Persian during the reigns of Feroz Tughlaq and Sikandar Lodi.

Persian continued to be the official language even in Mughal courts. The interesting fact about Mughal rulers and princes is that they also maintained a tradition of writing. Babur, the first Mughal emperor, wrote his memoirs in Turkish which was later translated into Persian by Abdur Rahim Khan Khanan. Humayun

also wrote a Persian diwan. Prince Dara Shukoh wrote *Sakinatul Auliya* which was a biographical account of the Sufi saint Miya Mir and his disciples. He is also the writer of the *Majm'aul Bahrain* (Mingling of two Oceans). Writers like Faizi, Urfi, Ghani Kashmiri, Talib and Bedil – who wrote in the genre of *Sabaq-i-Hindi* (the Indian style) – were patronized by the Mughals. *Tabashir al Sabh* was one of the important works of Faizi. He also translated a number of Hindu religious books into Persian language. Abdur Rahim Khan Khana was considered a talented scholar and poet during the reign of Akbar and Jahangir. Abul Fazl, a great scholar historian, was patronized by Akbar. According to many historians, Akbar maintained a library which had more than four thousand books.

Abu Talib Kalim, author of the *Padshahnama*, and Ali Quli Salem were important poets during the reign of Shah Jahan. Adil Shahi rulers of Bijapur patronized Persian literature in the south. Mulla Zuhuri and Malik Qummi were considered important Persian poets in the south. The Qutab Shahis of Golconda patronized Muhammad Hussain Tabrezi and many other poets. The development of Persian literature in the Mughal court influenced the development of regional literature to a great extent. Persian also influenced languages like Punjabi, Sindhi, Kashmiri and Pushtu.

### Development of Regional Languages

Regional languages such as Hindi, Assamese, Marathi, Bengali, Oriya and Gujarati developed during the medieval period. In the 14th century, Malayalam emerged as an independent language in the South. The growth of these regional languages led to the emergence of regional polities as well as to the decline of Sanskrit. Some of these regional languages started to be used as a medium in the administrative work. The propagation of Bhakti movement in regional languages also enabled the development of these languages.

### Hindi and Urdu

Regional dialects such as *Haryanvi* and *Braj bhasa* which are spoken in areas around Delhi and Punjab influenced the development of Urdu language. Urdu adopted the Persian script and its literary tradition. The word Urdu refers to an army or camp in Turkish. Due to this fact, it is believed that this language emerged from the dialect spoken in the Turkish camp. *Hindivi* is also considered to be the origin of Urdu and Hindi. The works of Amir Khusrau are believed to have laid the foundation of this language. The use of this language in the Deccan led to the development of a literary speech called the Dakhni. Gujarat, Golconda, Bijapur, Bidar and Aurangabad were the major centres of this language. Sayyid Banda Nawaz Gesudaraz, an important Sufi in the Bahamani kingdom, was the oldest writer of this tradition. Ibrahim Adil Shah II, the sultan of Bijapur, was a patron and author of a book on music in the Dakhni language. Hindi developed between the 7th to 8th centuries and the 14th century. It was described as Veergatha Kala (age of heroic poetry) or the Adi Kala (early Period). Many Rajput rulers patronized poems on the theme of glorified chivalry and bravery and these were written in the Rajasthani dialect of Hindi. Some of the important works in this dialect are the *Prithviraja Raso* of Chand Bardai, the *Visaldeva Raso* and *Hamir Raso*. The

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authenticity of many of these works has been doubted on various grounds. Many works of Buddhists and Jains belong to this period. Due to the increasing use of the language in expressing Bhakti traditions and ideas, the development of the language touched new heights during the 14 and the 15 centuries.

Bhakti saints like Tulsidas used the Awadhi dialect of Hindi others like Surdas used *Braj bhasha* and Mira Bai used the Marwari dialect of Rajasthan. The Sufi saints used new dialects to reach out to more people. Chishti saints continued using Hindi to compose and sing their devotional music.

### Bengali

The earliest examples of the Bengali language are found in the folksongs called *Charyapads*, which were composed between the 10 and 12th centuries. The works of Srikanandi and Kavindra are considered important in Bengali language. The growth of the Bhakti movement and the composition of various hymns associated with Chaitanya in Bengali language spurred the development of this language. Brindabandas's *Chaitanya Bhagavata* or *Chaitanya Mangal* in Bengali gave an important account of the saint's death and also reflects the social condition of that time. Lochandas is said to have introduced a new style of folk songs known as Dhamali. The popularity of narrative poems called the Mangal Kavyas grew during this period. Puranas are the origins of this narrative form. These poems propagated the significance of local deities like Chandi and converted Puranic gods like Siva and Vishnu into household deities.

### Assamese and Oriya

The 13th century works of Hara Gauri Samyada and Hema Sarasvati Prahladacharita are considered the first works in Assamese. The Bhakti movement led to the development of Assamese literature as well. The growth of Assamese poetry was stimulated with the introduction of Vaisnavism by Shankaradeva in Assam. Madhavadas, a disciple of Shankaradeva, wrote the *Bhakti-ratnvali*. It deals with various characteristics of Bhakti and the *Baragitas* that depicted Krishna's life in Vrindavan. The Puranas were translated in Assamese as well.

The works of Saraladasa are considered the first works of Oriya literature. Madhusudana, Sasasiva and Bhima composed a number of kavyas on Puranic themes. The Rasa Kallol, on the theme of love between Radha and Krishna, was also written during this period. Ushabhilasa of Sisu Sankara Dasa and the Rukminibibha of Kartik Dasa are other important works. The works of Upendra Bhanja (1670–1720) led to a new era of Oriya literature in the subsequent period.

### Literature in South India

Villiputturar was considered an important literary figure in the south during this period. He is credited with the beginning of the tradition of using Sanskrit words and literary expressions. Commentaries written by Vaishnava scholars and Tolkappiyam and the Kural- commentaries on works of the sangam age are other important works in Tamil. A number of philosophical works and commentaries on the Puranas are also important parts of the Tamil literature. The *Sivadarumottaram* and the *Saiva Samayaneri* both written by Marainanarbandar and

*Irusamayavilakkam* written by Haridasa in the medieval period were important works of Tamil literature. The *Cidambarapurana* (1508) by Purana Tirumalainathan and the *Palanittalapuranam* by Balasubramanya Kavirayar were noteworthy works in the field of philosophy.

The Champu genre of literary writing (mixture of prose and poetry) were popularized by a famous Telugu poet- Errapragada. He was also popular for translating the *Bhagavata Purana* into Telugu. Krishnadeva Raya, a Vijayanagaram ruler, wrote the *Amuktamalyada* in Telugu. Nandi Timmaha, writer of the *Parijatapaharan*, and Allarrani Peddana were the most famous poets of his court. Rama Raja Bhushan is known for the *Vasucaritra* and the *Hariscandra Nalopakhyanam*.

Jain writers dominated the literary compositions of the period in the Kannada speaking regions. The works of Basava and his followers form an important feature of Kannada literature. Hoysala rulers also patronized the literature of this language. The *Vadi Vidyananda* of Geroppa is a popular anthology of Kannada poets. The Jain scholar Salva wrote *Aparajiyasataka* (Philosophical work), the *Trilokararara* (work on cosmology) and the *Bharataesvaracarita* (the story of king Bharata).

#### Check Your Progress

3. How were the Muslims divided during the reign of Delhi Sultanate?
4. What was malfuzat?
5. Name some of the famous court chronicles of Persian literature.

## 2.4 RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS

The growth of literature during the age of Delhi Sultanate was not restricted to Sanskrit and Persian but evolved in other regional languages as well. The Sultans of Delhi and the ruler of provincial dynasties patronized various scholars who produced historical, religious literature in other fields of knowledge. Al-Beruni was a well known Persian scholar during Mahmud of Ghazni's rule. The Hindu rulers of Warangal and the Vijayanagara Empire promoted Sanskrit literature. This period was unique in the sense that it saw the beginning of literature in various Indian regional languages.

Little is known about in the field of education and the detailed curriculum of the madrasas, but it appears that medicine was accorded high importance. The earliest surviving work, written in the year AD 1329 by Zia Muhammad *Mazmua-i-zial* is based on Arabic and Indian sources and gives local equivalents of Arab medicines. Others followed with combinations of Arab, Greek and Indian works, bringing together the medical knowledge of three cultures. Very few literary works have survived from the period of the Sultanate. With the exception of a number of major pieces by poets like Amir Khusrau or Hasan, the only enduring were those included in general histories, like the poems of sangreza, the first poet of

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eminence born in India, or Ruhani's poem of the conquest of Ranthambhor by Iltutmish.

Perhaps the most important literary contribution during the Delhi Sultanate was in the field of history. Ancient Indian culture produced no historical literature and surviving Muslim works are vital primary sources. These works are richly varied. While many glorify or exaggerate the role of their royal patrons, the basic historical facts are sound. The historian Alberuni is particularly notable for his fascinating insights into the political philosophies of different monarchs and for his portrayal of individual personalities.

With the collapse of the power of the Sultanate in the 15th century, the rise of the provincial kingdoms fostered the growth of regional languages. While Hindu rulers had patronized Sanskrit language as the language of religion and the Epics, Muslim rulers supported the common languages of the people. Ironically, it was the Muslims who were responsible for the first translations of the Sanskrit Epics into the provincial languages.

### 2.4.1 Religious Policy of Delhi Sultanate

During the time of the Delhi Sultanate, religion played an important part and was an essential part of the culture. All ancient religious sects in India like the Vedic religion, Buddhism, Jainism, Vaishnavism, Shaivism and Tantric sects existed in numerous forms. Islam, which was the religion of the state during the entire period of the Delhi Sultanate, formed the basis of their religious policy. They left no stone unturned in their effort to spread the religion among their subjects. While ruling the state, the Sultan had to discharge his religious duty along with his political one. It was his responsibility to convert the non-Muslim land to a Muslim region. Sultans like Firoz Tughlaq and Sikandar Lodi left no stone unturned to propagate Islam among their subjects. But to rulers like Ala-ud-din Khilji and Muhammad Bin Tughlaq, this was a secondary task.

All the rulers of the Delhi Sultanate pursued a discriminatory policy between their Muslim and non-Muslim subjects the majority of which were Hindus. In matters of land revenue the Muslims had to pay less than the Hindus. Even the Hindu traders paid double trade tax as compared to the Muslim traders. Foreign Muslims alone were entitled high titles of the state while the Hindus and even non-Muslims were not considered for them. The Hindus were unfavourably discriminated in the dispensation of justice. They had to pay the religious tax *Jaziya*. Restrictions were imposed on the religious pilgrimages of the Hindus. Hindu educational institutions, temples and images were destroyed and mosques were raised in their places and the religion of the Hindus was disrespected during the rule of most of the Sultans. Thus, the Hindus were not only referred to as *Zimmis* and *Kafirs* but also were treated as such in practice.

The period of the Delhi Sultanate was the period of struggle between the Hindus and the Muslims and they contested fiercely against each other both in the sphere of politics and religion. The policy of the Sultans was that of religious intolerance. The religious propaganda adopted by the Sultans was mainly to defend

their established empire in India. The Sultans acted according to the spirit of their age and that was natural and practical for them. But no Sultan of the Sultanate could realize that it was impossible to convert all Hindus to Islam or to destroy the strength of Hinduism by sheer physical force. This kept them devoid of loyalty and cooperation of the majority of their subjects. Though the religious administration of the Sultans suffered from certain defects yet it fulfilled the need of the time.

Religious conditions under the Delhi Sultanate transformed radically with the decline of few religions. As opposed to this, Sufism and the Bhakti movement were gaining more acceptance. During the initial years of their rule, all ancient religious sects in India took to Vedic religion and Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Vaishnavism and Shaivism existed in different forms. However, with time many religions declined or were concentrated only in some parts of India. Among the Muslims, the *Sunnis* and the *Shias* constituted the majority. An interesting trend during this time was the rise of Sufism among the Muslims and Bhakti movement among the Hindus.

Sufism, an old religious sect, had entered India prior to the advent of the Delhi Sultanate. Once the Muslims settled in India, Sufism gained importance. A large number of Sufi saints came into India and settled themselves in various parts of the country. Sufism was based on religious views customary among the Indians such as love towards God, non-violence, and practice of self-discipline. These values were common among the Hindus, Buddhist and Jains in India. According to Sufi philosophy, there is one God, and everybody and everything is a part of him. The Sufis, pious Muslims, followed the laws laid down in the Shariat and looked on it as the true way to attain salvation. The Sufi saints lived a simple aesthetic life and believed in the renunciation of all worldly goods and enjoyment. They looked down upon idol worship of any sort. They viewed God as kind and compassionate and therefore they did not fear him but loved him. They regarded desire as a folly of humans and therefore laid great stress on giving it up. Music was closely associated with remembrance of God and therefore they engaged themselves in music and dance with rapture while remembering God. The Sufis believed in Guru (Master) whom they called Pir and thought that to come close to God one needs the help of a Guru. The Sufis were divided into different sects, most important of them being the Suravardi sect and the Chisti sect. The influence of Suravardi sect remained limited only to Sindh, Punjab and Multan but the Chisti sect became well accepted all over India including Punjab, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and south India. Many Sufi saints became quite popular during the period of the Delhi Sultanate, the most important of them being Shaikh Muin-ud-din Chisti, Baba Farid-ud-din, Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, Nizam-ud-din Auliya, Khwaja Shaikh Taki-ud-din and Malik Muhammad Jaysi.

Another noteworthy feature during the period of Delhi Sultanate was the Bhakti movement. Bhakti was seen as a way to attain salvation. The Bhakti movement arose among the Hindus in the medieval period as a challenge to Islam. The saints of the Bhakti movement believed in an all-powerful God who could be called by different names such as lord Rama, lord Krishna, lord Shiva or Allah.

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They were not in the favour of the caste system nor did they believe in idol worship. According to them, to attain salvation, one must concentrate only on Bhakti. The Bhakti saints believed that a devotee needed a Guru who could help and guide him to attain salvation, though that could be achieved only by the grace of God while the grace of God itself could be achieved only by one's own effort.

The Bhakti saints spread their ideas to their followers through their teachings in simple languages, poems and prayers. However, the personal example of their lives, and their devotion, had the greatest impact on their followers. The saints propagated their ideas in Indian regional languages rather than in Sanskrit. The pioneers of the Bhakti movements were Ramanuja, Nimbakara and Madhavacharya. Bhakti movement rose to popularity through Ramananda who flourished in the fourteenth century. Other Bhakti saints like Kabir, Guru Nanak and Chaitnya contributed a lot in the expansion and popularity of Bhakti movement.

### Check Your Progress

6. What were the main beliefs of the Bhakti movement?
7. Name important Sufi saints of the Delhi Sultanate period.

## 2.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The first dewan looked after religious matters, holy institutions, scholars and so on and the second dewan looked after correspondence in the Sultanate.
2. The empire was divided into many Iqtas or areas. Every Iqta was placed under the administrative charge of a chief military commander. But these Iqtadars were not the independent rulers of their areas. Their tenure and transfer depended upon the will of the Sultan. Every Iqtadar had to be obedient to the Sultan.
3. The Muslims were divided on the basis of religious sects, education and professions. *Sunnis* and the *Shias* differed from each other on the basis of sects while soldiers and scholars were divided among each other on the basis of their professions. There was another class, the Ulema, who constituted the religious community among the Muslims and claimed pre-eminence over all others.
4. *Mal'uzat* was a form of Sufi literature and was written in the form of dialogue of the Sufi saints. *Fawaid-ul Fu'ad* written by Amir Hassan Sijzi that has the anecdotes of the Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya and *Khair-ul-Majalis* with the anecdotes of Sheik Nasir ad-Din Mahmud were some of the important works written in this form.
5. Some of the most famous court chronicles of Persian literature are *Futuh-us Salatin* by Isami, the *Tabaqat-I-Nasiri* by Minaj-us Siraj and the

*Futuh-at-I Firozshahi* by Feroz Shah Tughlaq. Ziauddin Barani also contributed a lot to the Persian literature of this period. The *Fatwa-I Jahandari* and the *Tarikh-I Firozshah* were some of his important works.

6. The Bhakti movement believed in an all-powerful God who could be called by different names such as lord Rama, lord Krishna, lord Shiva or Allah. The Bhakti saints believed that a devotee needed a Guru who could help and guide him to attain salvation, though that could be achieved only by the grace of God while the grace of God itself could be achieved only by one's own effort.
7. The most important Sufi saints which belonged to the period of Delhi Sultanate were Shaikh Muin-ud-din Chisti, Baba Farid-ud-din, Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, Nizam-ud-din Auliya, Khwaja Shaikh Taki-ud-din and Malik Muhammad Jaysi.

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## 2.6 SUMMARY

- The Sultanate administration was basically military and its rules were self-willed despots. However, as no one can administer the state alone, the Sultanate rulers also needed assistance and advice.
- The king, in addition, had ministers to advise him but there was no definiteness about ministers. The chief of these ministers was known as 'wazir' who was the head of entire administration.
- Before the Turks, no ruler of India considered any foreign person, office or institution about him but the Delhi Sultanate was subordinate to the Caliphate if only in name.
- Sultans pretended to acknowledge the Caliph only as the constitutional ruler and themselves as only his representative.
- Though the Turkish Sultans of India were independent, yet they took the help of the name of the Caliph to give stability to their rule and considered themselves a part of the wider Islamic world.
- Islamic law enjoins the election of a ruler but in practice any of the issues of the Sultan was chosen as the successor to the throne.
- It is clear from the *Tabakat-I-Nasiri* of Minhaj-us-Siraj and *Tarikh-I-Firozshahi* of Ziauddin Barani that in the Mamluck period all the central, provincial and district level important posts were monopolized by the Turkish.
- The Turkish conquest put an end to the independent small kingdoms of India. Iltutmish and Balban extended the Delhi Sultanate by their policy.
- The Iqtadar was responsible not only for revenue collection but also for the maintenance of order in his area.
- Before the advent of the Turks, the basis of the Rajput power was local feudal chieftains. The Turks displaced the main Rajput feudal chiefs and brought some under their control on their own condition.

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- War now ceased to be monopoly of one particular class i.e. the Kshatriyas and the recruitment to the army was opened to all the trained men.
- After the Turkish invasions and conquests, the Indian political outlook became wider and the isolation of the situation was lessened and the trade was encouraged.
- According to Professor Habib, it was the Turkish conquest in India which led to the growth of the medieval economy in India.
- The uniformity of legal system, taxation, system and growth of currency gave encouragement to the traders and extended their sphere of activities.
- Culture includes the society, the religious condition, literature and art and architecture of that period.
- The culture of the Muslims was for long either an exotic one or a class culture confined to a certain group that basked in the sunshine of the King's favour.
- The foreign Muslims were respected and were the most privileged section of the society. All high offices of the state were kept reserved for them.
- The foreign Muslims regarded them neither of blue blood nor conquerors of this country. Therefore, Indian Muslims were not given equal status either in society or in administration.
- The Muslims were also divided on the basis of religious sects, education and professions. *Sunnis* and the *Shias* differed from each other on the basis of sects while soldiers and scholars were divided among each other on the basis of their professions.
- The slave system was prevalent among the Muslims and the Hindus and slaves were sold and purchased in the open market.
- The *Purdah* system and child marriages adversely affected the education and position of women in the society.
- The growth of literature during the age of the Delhi Sultanate was not restricted to Sanskrit and Persian but evolved in other regional languages as well.
- Development of new languages and growth of rich corpus literature took place in the medieval period.
- With the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, a new literary style and language was introduced in the sub continent. Writings of Amir Khusrau contributed a lot to the development of Persian literature.
- Regional languages such as Hindi, Assamese, Marathi, Bengali, Oriya and Gujarati developed during the medieval period.
- Regional dialects such as *Haryanvi* and *Braj bhasa* which are spoken in areas around Delhi and Punjab influenced the development of Urdu language.
- Brindabandas's *Chaitanya Bhagavata* or *Chaitanya Mangal* in Bengali gave an important account of the saint's death and also reflects the social condition of that time.

- The works of Saraladasa are considered the first works of Oriya literature. Madhusudana, Sasasiva and Bhima composed a number of kavyas on Puranic themes.
- Villiputturar was considered an important literary figure in the south during this period. He is credited with the beginning of the tradition of using Sanskrit words and literary expressions.
- The growth of literature during the age of Delhi Sultanate was not restricted to Sanskrit and Persian but evolved in other regional languages as well.
- With the collapse of the power of the Sultanate in the 15th century, the rise of the provincial kingdoms fostered the growth of regional languages.
- All the rulers of the Delhi Sultanate pursued a discriminatory policy between their Muslim and non-Muslim subjects the majority of which were Hindus.
- Sufism, an old religious sect, had entered India prior to the advent of the Delhi Sultanate. Sufism was based on religious views customary among the Indians such as love towards God, non-violence, and practice of self-discipline.
- Another noteworthy feature during the period of Delhi Sultanate was the Bhakti movement. Bhakti was seen as a way to attain salvation.

## NOTES

### 2.7 KRY WORDS

- **Champu:** It refers to a form of writing which was a mixture of prose and poetry.
- **Iqta system:** It refers to a system in which land was divided into smaller units and each of the Iqta was assigned under the charge of a military commander.
- **Kharaj:** It refers to a type of individual Islamic tax on agricultural land.
- **Sufism:** It refers to a mystical form of Islam, a school of practice which emphasizes the inward search for God and shuns materialism.
- **Wazir:** It refers to the position of a high-ranking political advisor or minister.

### 2.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

#### Short-Answer Questions

1. What was the role of the Sultan in the Delhi Sultanate?
2. State the role of Amirs during the Turkish period.
3. How was the Delhi Sultanate administration divided?
4. Why did foreign Muslims look down upon the Indian Muslims?

5. What was Dhamali?
6. Write a short note on the development of Persian literature.

### Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the economic impact after the Turkish invasions.
2. How was the society divided during the period of Delhi Sultanate? Explain in detail.
3. Analyse the position of slaves during the Delhi Sultanate period.
4. Explain the development of language and literature during the Delhi Sultanate period.
5. Discuss the religious policy of the Delhi Sultanate.

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## 2.9 FURTHER READINGS

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### NOTES

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## UNIT 3 ART, ARCHITECTURE, AND DECLINE OF DELHI SULTANATE

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*Art, Architecture, and  
Decline of Delhi Sultanate*

### NOTES

#### Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Objectives
- 3.2 Art and Architecture under Sultanate
- 3.3 Mongols and Timur Invasions and their Results
  - 3.3.1 Khilji Sultans and the Mongols
  - 3.3.2 Effects of the Mongol Invasions
- 3.4 Decline of the Delhi Sultanate
- 3.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 3.6 Summary
- 3.7 Key Words
- 3.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 3.9 Further Readings

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### 3.0 INTRODUCTION

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The rulers of the Delhi Sultanate were considered as iconoclastic pillagers because of their destructions to the temples of Hindus, Buddhists and Jain. Their monuments gave rise to the beginnings of the Indo-Islamic art and architecture. Qutub-ud-din-Aibak was the first sultan of the Delhi Sultanate and he started the construction of Qutb Minar which was completed by his successor Iltutmish.

The Mongol Empire invaded the Indian subcontinent from 1221 to 1327. They occupied various parts of modern Pakistan and other parts of Punjab. However, they suffered serious defeats when the Delhi Sultanate led a campaign against them. There were various reasons which led to the decline of the Delhi Sultanate; however, primarily there was no universal law of succession.

In this unit, the art and architectural styles and the various elements used in the construction of monuments have been discussed. The ways in which Mongols and Timur invaded have been explained. The unit will also discuss the reasons which led to the decline of Delhi Sultanate.

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### 3.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the architectural styles of Delhi Sultanate
- Analyse the various elements used in the construction of monuments

*Self-Instructional  
Material*



- Discuss the ways in which Mongols invaded Delhi Sultanate
- Discuss the reasons which led to the decline of Delhi Sultanate

## NOTES

### 3.2 ART AND ARCHITECTURE UNDER SULTANATE

Delhi Sultanate period brought with itself several changes to the style of architecture prevalent in the country. The latest design that was incorporated in the Sultanate period was the inclusion of square-plan mausoleums. It became an integral part of the octagonal plan. The surrounding colonnade was the structure that was most developed during the Lodi rule. The representation of the same is at the time of Muhammad Shah's Tomb in the year 1443 and during the time of Sikandar Lodi's Tomb in the year 1517 that is seen in the very popular Lodi Gardens.

The biggest addition was the double dome structure that was practiced in East Asia before it came to India. Interestingly, it was done to create a distinctive effect along with balancing the height of the structure while keeping the beauty of the structure intact. It was a structural mathematical resolution to the single dome that left a void. Neither could it be kept low, nor would it make a difference with the entire monumental effect. In order to resolve the problem, double dome technique was deployed that would provide the much required thickness to the structure and cover up the extra space with two shells while leaving enough space inside and outside. The inside part served as ceiling to the building that would form the layer to the structure and support outer crown of the building. However, this structural change took place keeping in mind the entire structure that was not disturbed. Another thing is that the exterior would provide ample effect to the exterior towards its elevation. The example of this is seen in the structures in Delhi with the structures pertaining to Sikandar Lodi and Taj Khan. When it comes to fully formed double dome, the first instance seen is in that of Humayun's tomb.

The beginning of architectural style was at the time of Delhi Sultanate with the establishment of Qutub complex that is located in Mehrauli in modern era. However, at the same time twenty-seven Jain and Hindu temples were destroyed. Then the same material was used for creating new structures that contained arches, it is to be noted that during that time no domes were used. It was just the beginning of many more things to come. Minarets were erected with the destroyed temple material, but due to building things in haste many of these re-constructed buildings soon collapsed.

Qutub Complex monuments that were constructed from the rubble of temples at that time are as follows:

- **Alai Darwaza:** The Mamluk dynasty was not skilled enough when it came to styling and creating a better structure; their creation did not include false arches and domes. It was not until the Alai Darwaja in the

complex of Qutub, that these differences were seen. It was built by Ala-ud-din Khilji in 1311 AD.

- **Quth Minar:** Afghan architecture inspired the construction of this world famous minar. The reason behind the construction of this Minar was to mark the victory of Mohammed Ghori. Qutub-ud-din is the architect behind the construction of this monument. It was however, finished by Iltutmish. Firoz Shah and Sikandar Lodi are credited to have repaired it through time. The notable feature of this monument is that like other buildings of the Mughal era, this too was built with the remnants of temples and other Hindu buildings. This was the reason that the inlaying of the building was similar to that of the temples. Other things include floral patterns, designs of chains and bells that were used to adorn the minar.
- **Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque:** This was the first ever mosque to be built in Delhi with the invasion of Islamic invasion. Apparently, it is also the oldest of surviving structures when it comes to Ghurids architecture. This too was something that was constructed from the desecrated temples and their rubble, which was nothing more than the parts of temples left after destroying them. The design at that time was not professional, it was more of an amateurish attempt to put together pieces and build something new from it.
- **Alai Minar:** Alauddin was ambitious in his pursuits to build something that would be better than the existing structure of Qutub Minar. He tried, but unfortunately after the completion of first storey he died and the structure till date remains as it is. It is now no more than the oldest of structures that stands in the complex of Qutub Minar. In the same courtyard, the strongest iron pillar stands that is 7.5m long. It is said to have been made during the reign of Chandragupta II in the 4th century. This was the mark of dedication of the ruler and his contribution to Vishnu temple; this is evident with the inscription on it. However, with the Islamic conquest this too was confiscated by the Mughals. This pillar is one of its kinds made from pure wrought iron, the top is adorned with Gupta style inscription, and it is known never to rust and has survived as it is since almost 1,600 years.

## NOTES

### Other Buildings

- **Tughlaqabad:** Tughlaq Dynasty is also known for construction and its biggest example is Tughlaqabad which is known for its stone ramparts. The most important building is the massive tomb that belongs to Sultan Ghiyasuddin. This fort is built with beautiful red sandstone structure that is crowned with white marble dome, which becomes its crowning glory and marks it as the most brilliant piece of architectural design. Another marvel of wonder in construction goes to their yet another brilliance of construction in Firozabad.

This contains Firoz Shah Kotla's fort. This, however, could not withstand time and only ruins remain till date. The complex is now used as a mosque for Friday prayers.

## NOTES

### Introduction of Islamic Architectural Elements in Construction

The influence on architectural style consists of re-building and modulating structures from the time of Abbasids and up to the Qajar dynasty. There were many experiments to the structures and existing designs in the Islamic buildings.

The different design that now consisted of upper angles within a square room to achieve a spherical or octagonal dome was already evident in the Sasanian architectural style. These were called squinches that were split in spherical triangles and made into subdivisions with differences of inches into it. This would result in a complex style that was sufficient to support massive structures forming a beautiful pattern to withstand the weight of the entire structure.

Another design would be the rib vault. It consisted of ribbed vaults upon spherical dome; this was the biggest characteristic of the design that was seen in the Islamic east. This design was evident in buildings of prominence that was more evident in the Safavid architecture.

Other designs incorporated in the prime structure of the building included ribs that intersected and formed a decorative pattern. This was the additional element in the architectural design that was seen in later period as seen in the design of Ahmed Sanjar's Tomb situated in Merv.

### Domes

Byzantine Empire was the time when there were many domes. It was incorporated during the Ottoman Empire who developed it within their monuments and different buildings. Central domes that were wide in structure and bigger in diameters were constructed during that time; these were added on the top of the building. The most notable feature is that despite their massive structure, the biggest thing is that the structure was still practically weightless.

When Constantinople was captured by the Ottomans there were many churches in the Byzantine era, the biggest and the most notable of them was Hagia Sophia. It has a great historical significance. It is well known for its spherical shell like shape of the dome, done up with brick and mortar ribs that not only support it but also beautify it completely. It is a massive structure that is designed differently without any wooden centre.

Hagia Irene was one of the earliest in the Byzantine church, that is done up with different ribs of dome and weaved into a shell much like the Roman domes from the west and for this reason, it is only visible when one is inside the building. The apex of the dome incorporates ribs and shells that come up to the centre part

of the entire structure of the shell. The thing to observe about is that all the shells and ribs form a single structure of the whole building from within. It is majestic and spectacular to see it all centralize into unity.

The earlier structures of Byzantine era consisted of separate elements where apex and the ribs were designed in a distinct pattern within the central medallion. For this reason, they stand out and are easily sighted by the onlookers. When one looks at the structure, the ribs look more pronounced and one can make out the medallion complete with ribs and shells within the dome.

### **Muqarnas**

Muqarnas or cupola that is an architectural element of geometric pattern weaved into a structure too would form a part of the designs. These came into the picture with northeastern Iran during the 10th century. This is the most beautiful and fascinating form of ornamental structuring with the subdivision of geometric pattern into the vaulting structure. It was superimposed on the pointed arch and due to its design; it was often referred to as honeycomb vaults. These were made by mixing different materials that included wood or stucco, stone and bricks. The design was most famous in the western Islam that was often designed on the outside of any structure within a dome. However, the design was often depicted in the inside structure of the building within East.

### **Ornaments**

The most common design related to the Islamic architecture is that of the inclusion of ornamental forms that were complicated, elaborated, geometrical and interlaced. These patterns often included designer motifs, floral designs and even beautiful calligraphic inscriptions that used to decorate buildings. The text was specifically chosen to serve specific purpose for the given building that included elaborate inscriptions. Often quotations from Quran were used in the buildings.

The patterns consisting interlaced and floral designs with floral and geometrical designs were used largely in adorning the buildings. These were supposed to be the mark of God and proof of his existence. The simplicity of the structure along with complex and intricate design was supposed to depict the manifestation of and presence of Allah, the only one God. It was not only about the design, but the way an artist would define spirituality without the use of Christian art and its iconography. It is to be noted that non-figural ornaments are a part of the buildings and mosques as it is their style of adorning and beautifying the structure. Additionally, the inclusion of Islamic art and embellishments too speak for its uniqueness in the pattern and design complete with calligraphy that often was the spoken word of God.

Incorporating calligraphy within the structure was more for the respect of the Islamic art and their culture. It served as a link between the people and Islam. Quran and its verses always played an integral part in the depiction of cultural

## **NOTES**

designs within the buildings or prominence that also include Islamic proverbs and passages from Quran. Contemporary artists seek inspiration and often used it as a form of drawing and adorning the buildings within their work.

## NOTES

### Architectural Forms

There were different forms within the architectural style and design as used by the artists in the Islamic world in different regions. The most popular style would include the buildings during the period of Abbasids that used the T-Type mosques and the design of central dome structures that are a part of Anatolia mosques. Modern designs too were incorporated within different structures of the mosques in the 20th century.

Under the rule of Umayyads, the most popular style was that of Arab-plan that was used in the earliest constructed mosques. The design was that in rectangular or in the shape of square that had a courtyard and a prayer hall that was covered. Courtyards were designed so as to be able to house large number of people and to shield them from warm weather, just for the ease of worshipping especially during the Friday prayers.

The earliest of structures of the prayer halls would include flat roofs that would include columns to support the massive structure.

The Ottomans introduced a different style to the entire structure during the 15th century with the dome shaped structure that would shield the prayer hall. It also contained smaller domes apart from the bigger one that was more often centralized. The other domes however, were constructed more for the purpose of beautifying the structure.

### Architectural Elements

When it comes to recognizing specific design elements within the Islamic style there are two such elements which make it evident about their style.

- **Minarets or towers:** These were often used in the watchtower design more for the purpose of utility due to the fact that these were often torch-lit. However, most of these were not able to survive the time. The oldest at this time is situated in Tunisia, Great Mosque of Kairouan; this is the only oldest minaret in the entire world that is said to have survived through time. It is depicted as a square tower that is massive in shape with three sections that are superimposed.
- **Pishtaq:** This is more of a gateway that leads straight to the prayer hall and is attached to a mosque. It is similar to a vaulted hall or a space with three walls on the side as one side is open for entrance. Pishtaq literally means a portal in the Persian language that protrudes from a building. To adorn it, calligraphy is used within a band like structure surrounding it complete with tile work and geometric pattern.

### **Check Your Progress**

1. What was the most common design of Islamic architecture?
2. Why was Qutb Minar build?
3. What were the two main architectural elements of the Islamic style?

### **NOTES**

## **3.3 MONGOLS AND TIMUR INVASIONS AND THEIR RESULTS**

We will in this section discuss the invasions of Mongols and Timur and their consequences.

### **Iluttmish**

Soon after the rise of the Turks, a terrible warlike race arose in the Central Asia under the leadership of Timurchin (Changez Khan). They invaded many areas from Japan to Central Asia and made people a victim of their atrocity. India had the first taste of their invasions when in AD 1221 the Shah of Khwarizim sought refuge with Sultan Iluttmish having fled for fear of Changez Khan. Astute Iluttmish sent him back on the plea of unsuitable climate. Fortunately for India, Changez Khan had to return from the Indian frontier regions only due to the political exigencies in Central Asia. Thus, was averted a terrible trouble brewing over India.

### **Baharamshah and Masud**

After a period of about 20 years of peace on the North-Western frontier region, in AD 1441, Tahir crossed the river Indus as the head of a vast army and the entire area up to river Ravi passed into the hands of the Mongols. River Ravi came to be the practical boundary line between the Sultanate and the area under effective occupation of the Mongols. Sultan Bahram could not do anything against this. The Sultan Baharam could not do anything. Another adverse affect of the Mongol invasions on the Delhi Sultanate was that in AD 1245. Multan and Sind were occupied by the successors of rebels, Hassan Kargil and Kabir Khan respectively. Both these provinces were won over again by the Sultan in AD 1225 in Masud's time by Balban.

### **Mongol and Nasiruddin**

The second invasion of the Mongols occurred under Sali Bahadur in AD 1247. They besieged Multan. During the time of the reign of Sultan Nesiruddin they were given rupees One lakh as the war indemnity by the Governor of Multan. Next, they laid siege at Lahore and compelled its Governor as well as to accept their sovereignty. Probably till AD 1250 even Multan and Sind were also under the

## NOTES

Mongol occupation. One of the powerful Governors of the Sultanate, Sher Khan, at first succeeded in driving the Mongols out of Multan Sind but later on he went over to the side of the Mongols and they again got an opportunity to occupy Lahore. Balban, who was the Prime Minister at the time, made large scale preparations to stop the Mongol advance. He fought the Mongols bravely but the frontier of the Delhi Sultanate shrank to river Beas instead of Jhelum, perhaps for sometime he agreed to Sind, Multan and Western Punjab in the hands of the Mongols. Later, he brought Multan under his control, still the Mongol threat continued to persist there. For sometimes, Balban adopted a policy of friendship towards the Mongols and made Sultan Nasiruddin send his ambassador in the court of the Mongol Chief, Halaku. He again made Sher Khan a friend of the Sultanate and appointed him the Governor of Bhatinda.

### **Mongols during the period of Balban**

In AD 1266, Balban became the Sultan. The Mongol invasions increased during his time. To meet the situation, he took recourse to the dual policy of strength and diplomacy. To increase his strength, he got the forts of Bhatinda, Sunam and Samana repaired and constructed some new forts in the frontier provinces. He posted a powerful army on the river Beas to stop the Mongol advance. He reorganized the army and appointed only brave and self respecting Turks and Afghan soldiers. He increased the strength of the army in the frontier provinces and provided them enough modern weapons. To facilitate the military campaigns, he provided it with good roads and transport facilities. He entrusted his youngest son, Bugra Khan with the task of the defence of Multan and the Frontier provinces and the regions of Sunam and Samana were handed over to his elder son Muhammad. Bhatinda and Dipalpur were assigned to Sher Khan who had already been appointed as governor of Bhatinda in AD 1258. He himself remained in Delhi, not leaving the capital for even a long tour of the frontier even once. He sent his ambassadors to the Court of Halaku and when the ambassadors of Halaku came to Balban's court, he accorded a grand welcome to them. As a result of these various methods adopted by Balban, the frontiers of the Delhi Sultanate became strengthened greatly and many forceful invasions of the Mongols were rendered unsuccessfully so much so that they had to suspend their invasions for sometimes. In AD 1279, they launched their attack again and trampled the regions till Sunama but Balban's son, Muhammad with the under the leadership of Mubarak Bakhtiyar, drove the Mongols out of the Western leadership of Timur. They again attacked Lahore and Dipalpur. The elder son of Balban, Muhammad whom Balban had appointed his heir apparent, was killed (1286) defending the Multan – Beas Frontier. Balban's army forced the Mongols to retreat but Balban died the same year in the grief for his son. Among Balban's successors, Kaikubad had to face two Mongol invasions. In their invasions, the Mongols plundered heavily the regions from Multan to Lahore but in the end they had to go back disappointed. After Kaikubad, power passed to the hands of the Khiljis.

### 3.3.1 Khilji Sultans and the Mongols

*Art, Architecture, and  
Decline of Delhi Sultanate*

#### **Jalaluddin and the Mongols**

In Jalaluddin's time was just invasion of Mongols, under Halaku's son Abdullah. The Sultan himself stopped their army near Sunama and defeated them. Many Mongols were killed and about 1000 Mongol officials and horses fell to the Delhi Sultanate. Many Mongols embraced Islam and the Sultan married his daughter to one of them called Alagu. He allowed the Mongols to settle down in the vicinity of Delhi. Later on these Mongols became a nuisance for the Delhi Sultans.

#### **Alauddin and the Mongols**

The Mongol invasions during the time of the so called Slave Dynasty were nothing in comparison to that of Alauddin Khilji's time. Alauddin confronted four important invasions of the Mongols. First invasion occurred in AD 1296 under the leadership of Daud. The friend and General of the Sultan, Zafar Khan defeated them and killed them in large numbers. According to Barani, many Mongols were infuriated by this success of the Sultan. The second Mongol invasion of Alauddin's time occurred in AD 1297. This time they conquered the fort of Sibi near Multan and they were defeated again by Zafar Khan and sent about 17,000 of their men as prisoners to Delhi. According to Barani, the prestige of Zafar Khan increased so much as a result of this success that the Sultan himself and his brother Ulugh Khan became jealous of him but the prestige of Zafar Khan among the people was greatly enhanced. The third Mongol invasion during Alauddin's reign was launched in AD 1299 under Qutulug Khwaja to occupy Delhi. They besieged Delhi and severed the supply line. Alauddin's friend, the Kotwal of Delhi Alla-ul-Mulk, advised the Sultan not to stake everything in an attack on them but the able Sultan disregarded his advice. Alauddin sent a vast army against them. The right flank was commanded by Rustam-I-Hind, Zafar Khan and the left by Ulugh Khan. Because of his jealous nature, Ulugh Khan did not come to the aid of his brother at a time of a great crisis and the Mongol soldiers encircled Zafar Khan and killed him. But Alauddin's army succeeded in driving back the Mongols and the victory lay with the Sultan. The fourth invasion of Alauddin's time occurred in AD 1330 under the leadership of Targi. Mongols besieged the capital from all sides. The Sultan got no aid from outside. A large part of the Sultan's army had already proceeded on the campaign against Telangana. Alauddin was forced to take refuge in the Siri fort. But the Mongols besieged this as well but were unable to storm the fort even after a siege of two months. Though the Mongols went back, they had left this warning to the Sultan that the Sun of Delhi Sultanate would be set if he did not organize a vast and extending army.

Alauddin took the following steps to stop the Mongol invasion:

- He organized a big and powerful army. In place of the old and inexperienced soldiers he recruited young and experienced soldiers.
- He strengthened the forts near Bias.

#### **NOTES**



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- Siri Fort and Palace came to be used at the new capital.
- He got old forts repaired and new ones built.
- Army was supplied with an adequate quantity of modern weapons.
- A strong wall was constructed around the capital so that the Mongols were unable to enter the capital.
- He appointed able and loyal officials in the North-West Frontiers region.
- He strongly enforced his price control and market reform regulations in order to increase the discipline and efficiency of the army.
- He posted only those people in the frontier region who were more capable in the military field rather than the administrative field and clear instructions were issued to them that the work of defence was to be given the first priority.
- He entrusted the work of defence of the forts of Samana, Dipalpur and Multan to Gazi Tughlaq (later on Gayasuddin Tughlaq) The Mongols feared even his name.
- He got the thousands of the Mongols settled in the vicinity of Delhi by Jalauddin, murdered. These measures of Alauddin undoubtedly increased the strength of the Delhi Sultanate, greatly and all the subsequent invasions of the Mongols were rendered unsuccessful.

### Tughlaq Sultans and the Mongols

- (i) **Gayasuddin and Mongols:** One Mongol invasion took place in the time of Gayasuddin Tughlaq but they were defeated and many of them were brought to Delhi as prisoners.
- (ii) **Muhammad Tughlaq and Mongols:** In AD 1328–1329 another invasion took place under Tarmashirin in the time of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq. There is great difference of opinion among the historians with regard to his Mongol policy. According to some, he bribed them to retreat, according to others he defeated the Mongols and himself chased them till Kalanaur.
- (iii) **Firoz Tughlaq and his successors and Mongols:** During the last years of the Tughlaqs, there took place the Mongol invasion under Timur Lane due to which the Sultanate had to suffer a tremendous loss of men, money and prestige. He massacred the population of Delhi for many days.

### The Sayyid rulers and the Mongols

Due to Timur's invasions, soon the Tughlaq rule was supplanted by the Sayyids by one of the deputies of Timur called Khizr Khan and it prepared the background for Babur's invasions, taking place about 127 years later which laid the foundation of the Mughal Dynasty.

## Lodhi rulers and the Mongols

Babur carried out many invasions of India before AD 1526 but he finally ended the Delhi Sultanate in AD 1526 by defeating Ibrahim Lodhi in the first battle of Panipat.

### 3.3.2 Effects of the Mongol Invasions

The effect of Mongol invasions was as follows:

- During the time of Balban and Alauddin Khilji, the state had to spend a major part of the revenue in the military preparations which had an adverse effect on the financial system.
- Alauddin Khilji had to increase the land revenue to 50 per cent of the produce and reverse the Khams system to yield 4/5 of the plunder to the state and only 1/5 for the soldiers. He ended the land grants which adversely affected the social and economic life of many Jagirdars.
- Various military reform measures adopted by Balban and Allaudding Khilji like repair of old and construction of new fort, branding of the horses, and descriptive roll of the soldiers rendered the army very strong.
- Balban lost his dear and capable son Muhammad because of the Mongol invasions. He died in this grief and in the absence of any capable ruler, subsequently the Slave Dynasty fell, yielding power to the Khiljis.
- Many people of both sides lost their lives as a result of the Mongol invasions.
- Due to Mongol invasions, Balban adopted a policy of not going very far from the capital ever which led the revolts in the distant provinces. The Sultan had to spend money to suppress it and it also led to indiscipline in the empire e.g. the Governor of Bengal, Tughril Begh revolted three times.
- Jalaluddin allowed thousands of the Mongols to settle in the vicinity of Delhi. They embraced Islam and these new Muslims created many problems for Alauddin.
- Some historians hold that the Mongol invasions rendered inactive the relations of India with Iran, Turkey, and Egypt for many years because the routes leading to these countries were rendered unsafe due to the Mongol invasions.
- Because of the Mongol invasions the Sultan could not devote much attention towards public welfare activities which rendered the nature of the state military or semi-military.
- According to Professor Qureshi, Mongol invasions had two good effects on Delhi Sultanate. Firstly, many able men came to India from Central Asia. They got patronage under the Delhi Sultanate and rendered useful services to it e.g. Takhruddin, who had already worked as Wazir in Central Asia, founded the administrative system in Iltutmish's time. Secondly, the mongol invasions rendered the Delhi Sultans active leading to many important military and administrative reforms.

## NOTES

## NOTES

### Timur's Invasion

Timur, also known as Amir Timur and Tamerlane was the founder of the Timurid Empire in Persia and Central Asia. He invaded India in 1398 when it was ruled by Mahmud Shah Tuglaq. He defeated the Sultan's army and went on to plunder Delhi. In the three days of pillage and plunder of Delhi most of its inhabitants were massacred under Timur's orders. Timur's invasion and destruction of Delhi continued the chaos that was still consuming India, and the city would not be able to recover from the great loss it suffered for almost a century. Timur's invasion also resulted in the destruction of the Tughlaq dynasty. After Timur left, his nominee Khizr Khan captured Delhi for himself and proclaimed himself the new Sultan. He was the first of the Sayyid Dynasty.

#### Check Your Progress

4. What were the steps taken by Alauddin to stop Mongol invasion?
5. What were the good effects of Mongol invasions on Delhi?

### 3.4 DECLINE OF THE DELHI SULTANATE

The period between AD 1206–1526 is known as the Sultanate period in the history of India. During this period of about 320 years, five ruling dynasties ruled successively. The so called Slave dynasty (AD 1206–1290) Khilji dynasty (AD 1290–1320), Tughlaq dynasty (AD 1320–1414), Sayyid dynasty (AD 1415–1451) and Lodhi dynasty (AD 1451–1526). The average ruling period of each dynasty was about seventy years. This period is very short in comparison with the reigning period of the Mughals of 250 years (including 15 years of the Sur dynasty of Afghan rule). Why was there a repeated change of dynasty in the Sultanate Period? Why did the Sultanate decline and disintegrate? It is attributed to several causes which are as follows:

#### Autocracy of the Sultans

The Sultans of the Delhi Sultanate were autocratic and despotic. They had in them the powers of the Executive, Legislative and Judiciary combined. There was no control of any cabinet or representative assembly over them. Many Sultans did not even care about the religious leaders or the Ulemas. They fixed as their aim to rule continuously either on the basis of their military power or the rigid penal code. Barring a few Sultans like Alauddin Khilji, a majority of Sultans were indifferent to the public welfare activities. They spent a major portion of their treasury not on constructive works but on military organization and construction of forts, and military expeditions. Rule of such Sultans could not continue for a long time.

### **Invasions of Mongols**

From the time of Ilutmish to the time of Muhammad Tughlaq, there were continuous severe Mongol invasions. Even though powerful Sultans like Balban and Alauddin coldly arrested these terrible invasions, the country had to suffer heavy losses in men and money. The Sultans could not pay any attention towards administration so that the administration of the Sultanate could not be consolidated.

### **Islamic concept of the Sultanate**

During the time of the Delhi Sultanate, very often, the Sultans tried to give an Islamic concept to the State. They exacted Jizia from the non Islamic people. A majority of sultans adopted a rigid policy towards the Hindus. They desecrated the temples and built mosque on them and hurt the sentiments of the Hindus by breaking the idols. Some historian thinks that during the time of Muhammad Tughlaq, Harishar and Bukka founded the Vijaynagar Empire so that the Hindus could be protected. This empire became very powerful within a few years.

### **Weakness in the Sultanate army**

The rulers of the Delhi Sultanate did not modernize their army. They paid attention towards new war techniques and building up of artillery. Gradually they stopped paying adequate attention to the defense of the North West Frontiers. During their reign (a period of 320 years) they never thought of preparing a national army. Like the Hindu rulers they also included elephants in their army which proved very harmful in the Battle of Panipat. They were defeated in the first battle of Panipat due to their not having artillery.

### **Lack of a definite law of Succession**

An important cause for the downfall of the Delhi Sultanate was the lack of a definite law of succession. If we see the history of the Delhi Sultanate we would find that the struggle for throne started even from the time of Slave dynasty. Qutubuddin Aibak had to struggle against Yalduz and Qabacha. To save the Sultanate from a civil war, Ilutmish declared his eldest child Razia as the Sultan but the Amirs did not comply with it and she had to wage war to seize the throne from her brother Ruknuddin Firozshah. The last of the Slave Sultans was assassinated by his very general Jalaluddin. Alauddin Khilji acquired the throne by assassinating his uncle and father-in-law. Gyasuddin Tughlaq had also acquired the throne forcibly by assassinating the last Sultan of the Khilji dynasty. It is said that Juna Khan had plotted very cleverly to kill Gyasuddin in which he succeeded. Briefly, then, it can be said that there were no clear and definite laws of succession in the Delhi Sultanate and the succession was decided on the basis of sword and intrigues. Because of these constant struggles and intrigues Delhi Sultanate had to suffer tremendous loss of men and money which weakened the Sultanate and its downfall was accelerated.

## **NOTES**

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### **Responsibility of Muhammad Tughlaq**

As a result of the fantastic plans and certain drawbacks of nature, there were repeated rebellions in the different parts of his empire. He had to work hard to suppress the revolts in Bengal, Mabar, Warrangal, Kampila, Avadh, Gujarat and Sind. Being of a suspicious nature, Muhammad Tughlaq ran from one part of his empire to the other in order to deal with these rebellions. When he was busy in suppressing the revolts in the South, his army suffered from plague epidemic which led to two thirds of his army to perish. This was a loss which the Sultan could never fulfill. When he came towards the North, parts of Deccan had become independent.

In the South, Harishar and Bukka laid the foundation of the Vijaynagar Empire and some foreign chiefs founded the Bhamani empire near Daulatabad. This very time Bengal became independent. Thus, during the life time of Muhammad Tughlaq the disintegration of the Delhi Sultanate started due to policies. Because of his wrong policies not only the provincial governors revolted but there was widespread discontent even in the army. Because of his liberal religious policy and his indifference towards the Ulemas, the religious leaders, the fanatic Suuni Muslims were also annoyed with him. During that period Muslim religious leaders had a great influence over Muslim populace. His scheme of token currency, increase in taxation in the Doab schemes of conquest of Korasan affected the economic condition of the Sultanate very adversely.

### **Religious fanaticism of Firozshah Tughlaq**

Firozshah Tughlaq adopted a policy of hostility towards the Hindus to please some fanatic Muslims and the Ulemas descanted the temples of Jagannathpuri and Jawalaji and also their idols. Firoz was not even a capable army commander and organizer. He led two campaigns against Bengal but was unsuccessful both the times. He achieved success in his campaign against Gujarat after a long campaign of 2 years due to the army losing its way in the Rann of Kutch. It had to suffer heavy losses. He made the military and administrative posts hereditary the evil effects of which had to be borne by his successor rulers. His slave system hardened the Sultanate with the economic burden of looking after about 80,000 slaves. These very slaves whom he trusted openly participated in the intrigues after them. He did not try to win over those territories which were a part of the Delhi Sultanate during the time of Muhammad Tughlaq. Had he done so, the prestige and influence of the Sultanate might have increased. He blindly distributed Jagirs to please the Amirs and the Ulemas.

### **Incapable successors of Firoz**

Firoz was succeeded by six rulers of the Tughlaq dynasty namely Gayasuddin Muhammad Shah (AD 1388–1389), Abu Bakr (AD 1389–1390), Nasiruddin Muhammad Shah (AD 1390–1394), Nasratshah and Sasiruddin (AD 1394–1414). They were all worthless and pleasure loving. The Amirs made them puppets in their hands by their intrigues. The Amirs became so powerful that they started

seating on the throne whenever they liked and deposed Sultans at their will. In reality there was no one among the successors of Firoz who could retrieve the deteriorating situation of the Sultanate. As a result, disorder became widespread everywhere in the Sultanate and revolts broke out in the provinces. One after the others, the states went on becoming independent in the North and South and the Sultanate collapsed like a house of cards.

### **Invasion of Timur**

During the last years of the Tughlaq dynasty (AD 1398) Amir Timur invaded India from Samarkand. This invasion dealt a blow to the Delhi Sultanate. This resulted in a heavy loss of men and money to the country, the dying empire received a heavy blow and it shrunk only to a few miles in the vicinity of Delhi. On the basis of contemporary historical sources it can be said that for three months there was no Sultan of Delhi. Delhi suffered a famine because the Mongol invaders looted the storehouses of grains. This invasion made the condition of the country so deplorable that it became impossible to keep the country organized together. Taking advantage of such a situation the provincial Governors declared themselves independent and power passed into the hand of Khizar Khan.

### **Responsibility of the rulers of Sayyid dynasty**

After the Tughlaq dynasty, the power in the Sultanate passed into the hands of Sayyids. Like the successors of Firoz Shah Tughlaq all the rulers of this dynasty were incapable and worthless. Because none of them paid any attention to the administrative reforms or the extension of the empire disorder spread everywhere and the country became progressively poorer. During the period of this dynasty Doab, Katehar, Sirhind, Gwalior became centres of revolts. The Sultans remained incapable of suppressing them. The last Sultan of this dynasty Sultan Allauddin Shah went to Badyun leaving his capital so that he could lead a comfortable life over there. The power passed into the hands of Baholol Lodhi.

### **Weaknesses and mistake of the rulers of the Lodhi dynasty**

There were three Sultans in the Lodhi dynasty-Baholol Lodhi, Sikandar Lodhi and Ibrahim Lodhi. Out of these three, Sikandar Lodhi was the only capable ruler. He tried to reestablish the prestige of the Delhi Sultanate but he could not achieve much success in this task. He did not follow a liberal policy towards the majority of the Hindus. He broke many temples and idols. Because of his hot tempered nature and obstinacy, he antagonized all his Amirs and Governors and also that of the Sultanate. As a result, the powerful officials like Daulat Khan Lodhi and Alam Khan invited the ruler of Kabul, Babur, to attack India and the disintegration of the Sultanate was accelerated.

### **Invasion of Babur**

The immediate cause of the downfall of the Delhi Sultanate was the invasion of Babur. He defeated the last of the Lodhi Sultan badly in the battle of Panipat in AD 1526. Babur established his control over Delhi and Agra and founded the Mughal empire.

## **NOTES**

## NOTES

Briefly, there were many causes for the downfall of the Sultanate. We cannot hold any one Sultan or dynasty responsible for it. There were some problems in the Sultanate right from the beginning which continued all along like the feudal nature of the Sultanate, adoption of a religious fanatic policy by majority of rulers, military power being the basis of the Sultanate, struggles between the Sultan and his Sirdars and between local administrators and big Zamindars, not following a definite law of succession, provincial and geographical problems etc. Many of the Sultans tried to solve only some of these problems but they could not find a standing solution to it. The people did not understand the significance of a powerful central government. The Sultans of the Sultanate Period were in no condition able to bring about the basis changes in the society. Whenever the central government became weak, subversive and regionalists tendencies became manifest. That is why the economic and administrative conditions of the Sultanate deteriorated day by day and it fell finally.

### Check Your Progress

6. State the immediate cause of downfall of the Delhi Sultanate?
7. Why did Firozshah Tughlaq adopted a policy of hostility towards the Hindus?

## 3.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The most common design related to the Islamic architecture is that of the inclusion of ornamental forms that were complicated, elaborated, geometrical and interlaced. These patterns often included designer motifs, floral designs and even beautiful calligraphic inscriptions that used to decorate buildings.
2. Qutb Minar was build to mark the victory of Mohammed Ghori. Qutub-ud-din is the architect behind the construction of this monument. It was however, finished by Iltutmish.
3. The two main architectural elements of the Islamic style were as follows:
  - (a) Minarets or towers: These were often used in the watchtower design more for the purpose of utility due to the fact that these were often torch-lit.
  - (b) Pishtaq: This is more of a gateway that leads straight to the prayer hall and is attached to a mosque. It is similar to a vaulted hall or a space with three walls on the side as one side is open for entrance.

4. The steps taken by Alauddin to stop Mongol invasion were as follows:
  - (a) He organized a big and powerful army. In place of the old and inexperienced soldiers he recruited young and experienced soldiers.
  - (b) He strengthened the forts near Bias.
  - (c) Siri Fort and Palace came to be used at the new capital.
  - (d) He got old forts repaired and new ones built.
  - (e) Army was supplied with an adequate quantity of modern weapons
5. According to Professor Qureshi, Mongol invasions had two good effects on Delhi Sultanate. Firstly, many able men came to India from Central Asia. They got patronage under the Delhi Sultanate and rendered useful services to it e.g. Takhruddin, who had already worked as Wazir in Central Asia, founded the administrative system in Iltutmish's time. Secondly, the mongol invasions rendered the Delhi Sultans active leading to many important military and administrative reforms.
6. The immediate cause for the downfall of the Delhi Sultanate was the invasion of Babur. He defeated the last of the Lodhi Sultan badly in the battle of Panipat in AD 1526. Babur established his control over Delhi and Agra and founded the Mughal Empire.
7. Firozshah Tughlaq adopted a policy of hostility towards the Hindus to please some fanatic Muslims and the Ulemas desecrated the temples of Jagannathpuri and Jawalaji and also their idols. He blindly distributed Jagirs to please the Amirs and the Ulemas.

## NOTES

### 3.6 SUMMARY

- Delhi Sultanate period brought with itself several changes to the style of architecture prevalent in the country.
- The latest design that was incorporated in the Sultanate period was the inclusion of square-plan mausoleums.
- The beginning of architectural style was at the time of Delhi Sultanate with the establishment of Qutub complex that is located in Mehrauli in modern era.
- Afghan architecture inspired the construction of this world famous Qutb Minar. The reason behind the construction of this Minar was to mark the victory of Mohammed Ghori.
- Alauddin was ambitious in his pursuits to build something that would be better than the existing structure of Qutub Minar.
- Tughlaq Dynasty is also known for construction and its biggest example is Tughlaqabad which is known for its stone ramparts.



## NOTES

- The influence on architectural style consists of re-building and modulating structures from the time of Abbasids and up to the Qajar dynasty.
- Byzantine Empire was the time when there were many domes. It was incorporated during the Ottoman Empire who developed it within their monuments and different buildings.
- The earlier structures of Byzantine era consisted of separate elements where apex and the ribs were designed in a distinct pattern within the central medallion.
- Muqarnas or cupola that is an architectural element of geometric pattern weaved into a structure too would form a part of the designs.
- The most common design related to the Islamic architecture is that of the inclusion of ornamental forms that were complicated, elaborated, geometrical and interlaced.
- Incorporating calligraphy within the structure was more for the respect of the Islamic art and their culture.
- The Ottomans introduced a different style to the entire structure during the 15th century with the dome shaped structure that would shield the prayer hall.
- In AD 1266, Balban became the Sultan. The Mongol invasions increased during his time. To meet the situation, he took recourse to the dual policy of strength and diplomacy.
- In Jalaluddin's time was just invasion of Mongols, under Halaku's son Abdullah. The Sultan himself stopped their army near Sunama and defeated them.
- The Mongol invasions during the time of the so called Slave Dynasty were nothing in comparison to that of Alauddin Khilji's time. Alauddin confronted four important invasions of the Mongols.
- The Sultans of the Delhi Sultanate were autocratic and despotic. They had in them the powers of the Executive, Legislative and Judiciary combined.
- The rulers of the Delhi Sultanate did not modernize their army. They paid attention towards new war techniques and building up of artillery.
- Firozshah Tughlaq adopted a policy of hostility towards the Hindus to please some fanatic Muslims and the Ulemas desecrated the temples of Jagannathpuri and Jawalaji and also their idols.
- The immediate cause of the downfall of the Delhi Sultanate was the invasion of Babur. He defeated the last of the Lodhi Sultan badly in the battle of Panipat in AD 1526.

### 3.7 KEY WORDS

- **Muqarnas:** It refers to an architectural element of geometric pattern weaved into a structure too would form a part of the designs.
- **Pishtaq:** It refers to a gateway in a monument which leads straight to the prayer hall and is attached to a mosque.
- **Rib Vault:** It refers to a design in a monument which consists of ribbed vaults upon spherical dome.
- **Sasanian Architecture:** It refers to the Persian architectural style which reached a peak in its development during the Sasanian era.

### NOTES

### 3.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

#### Short-Answer Questions

1. What is the architectural style of Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque?
2. How were ornaments incorporated in the structural design of monuments?
3. Why was calligraphy considered as a means of respecting Islamic art and culture?
4. How were the prayer halls designed?
5. What were the strategies adopted by Balban to control Mongol invasions?
6. Name the five ruling dynasties of Delhi Sultanate.

#### Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the architecture style under Delhi Sultanate.
2. What were the various Islamic architectural elements used in the monuments? Explain.
3. Analyse the effects of Mongol invasions.
4. How did Alauddin confronted the invasions of the Mongols? Discuss in detail.
5. Discuss the various factors which led to the decline of Delhi Sultanate.

### 3.9 FURTHER READINGS

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## NOTES

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**BLOCK - II**  
**BHAKTHI MOVEMENT, SUFISM AND SIKHISM**

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*Bhakti Movement - I*

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**UNIT 4 BHAKTI MOVEMENT - I**

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**NOTES**

**Structure**

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Objectives
- 4.2 An Overview of the Bhakti Movement
  - 4.2.1 Origin of Bhakti Movement
  - 4.2.2 Factors Responsible for Bhakti Movement
  - 4.2.3 Main Features of Bhakti Movement
- 4.3 Religious Reformers: Ramanand, Kabir, Guru Nanak.
- 4.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 4.5 Summary
- 4.6 Key Words
- 4.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 4.8 Further Readings

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**4.0 INTRODUCTION**

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The Bhakti Movement was a theistic devotional trend which originated in South India and gradually spread to all the parts of India. It was considered as a revolutionized social reform in Hinduism and provided an individual-focussed part to the masses. It also brought a change in people's perspectives and was accepted in all the strata of the society as it did not pay any heed to religion or caste.

Scholars have opined that the Bhakti movement was a revival and recontextualisation of ancient Vedic traditions. The popularity of the movement is also because of the bhakts who went across the continent to spread the message of the Bhakti movement

In this unit, the establishment of the Bhakti Movement, the factors which led to the rise of the movement have been analysed. The main features of the Bhakti Movement have also been discussed. The unit will also highlight the views and messages preached by renowned reformers of the Bhakti Movement.

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**4.1 OBJECTIVES**

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the origin of the Bhakti Movement
- Analyse the factors which led to the Bhakti Movement

- Identify the main features of the Bhakti Movement
- Discuss the ideas of religious reformers and their views on the Bhakti Movement

## NOTES

### 4.2 AN OVERVIEW OF THE BHAKTI MOVEMENT

With the dawn of 11<sup>th</sup> century during the medieval times, various religious Movements spread in different parts of India. These are collectively known as the *Bhakti* Movement. The objective of the Movement was to reform Hinduism and Hindu society, which at that time, was suffering from many serious ills. The chief advocates of this Movement were Ramanuja, Jayadev, Namdev, Chaitanya, Ramananda, Kabir and Guru Nanak. These reformers strongly denounced the evils in Hindu society, including superstitious practices, formalism and caste system. However, their chief emphasis was on *Bhakti* that is true devotion to god. The Movement began to be known as the *Bhakti* Movement and its advocates as the *Bhaktas*.

#### 4.2.1 Origin of Bhakti Movement

There was nothing new in the fundamental teachings of the *Bhakti* saints. The belief in the unity of god, discarding the worship of images and *Bhakti* as a mode of salvation were already well-known concepts in the Indian religious system. The first two can be traced back to the time of the Vedas.

The *Bhakti* cult was developed to a large extent by the Vaishnava sects during the early part of Christian era. All these ideas are abundantly found in the Upanishads. Similar ideas are also found in the *Bhagavata Purana*.

Author, Jadunath Sarkar writes, 'All the higher thinkers, all the religious reformers, all the sincere devotees among the Hindus from the earlier times have proclaimed one and only one supreme god behind the countless deities of popular worship and have declared the equality of all true admirers and placed simple sincere faith above religious ceremonies. They have all tried to simplify religious ceremonies, they have all tried to simplify religion and bring it to the doors of the commonest people'.

Therefore, what really happened after the Muslim conquest was a reemphasis on the essential monotheistic character of the idea of god and the superiority of the path of devotion over ritualistic sacrifices and mere books of knowledge and wisdom.

The *Bhakti* Movement has been presented as a Hindu response to the growing influence of Islam and it found acceptability among the lower classes. Though some scholars accepted this view, but others believe that this assessment is not entirely convincing, as in the Hindu religious system *Bhakti* is an essential constituent of religious pursuit, it is mentioned in the *Upanishads* as well as the

*Bhagavat Gita* where Shri Krishna himself said that even the humblest devotee could reach him through simple devotion.

The *Bhakti* Movement started in south India at around 6<sup>th</sup> century AD, spread through Karnataka and Maharashtra and from around the 15<sup>th</sup> century, it spread to north India, Bengal and Orissa.

The 12 Alwar Vaishnavite and 63 Nayanar Saivite saints developed the Movement in south India. The Saivite saint Appar is said to have converted the Pallava king Mahendra Varman into Saivism. Other great saints were Sambandar and Manikkavasagar. The writings of these saints were collected in the *Tirumurai*, which has been called the Tamil Veda.

## NOTES

### 4.2.2 Factors Responsible for Bhakti Movement

The following factors led to the development of Bhakti Movement:

- **Ills in Hinduism:** In the Middle ages, Hinduism had greatly degenerated. It has lost its ancient purity and appeal. Superstitions, caste system and ritualism have taken the place of fundamental principles of Hindu religion. At this juncture, some bold reformers came forward, denounced the evil practices of Hinduism and started *Bhakti* Movement to reform it.
- **Danger of Islam:** The advent of Islam in the primary parts of 11<sup>th</sup> century on the political scene of India and its danger to Hinduism was another important factor for the rise of *Bhakti* Movement. Gradually, Islam became so powerful that it challenged Hinduism and tried to overpower it by force.
- **Selection of *Bhakti* Marg:** In order to combat the Islamic danger successfully and to reduce its impact on Indian society, some religious leaders and reformers of that time laid stress on the *Bhakti* Marg to popularize Hinduism and to diminish the impact of Islamic.
- **Destruction of Hindu religious shrines and idols:** The Muslim invaders not only made invasions, but they also interfered with the religion of Hindus. To establish their hegemony, the Muslim rulers mercilessly destroyed famous Hindu religious shrines and idols of worship. They imposed religious tax on Hindus and not allowed them freely go to their temples for worship. The Hindus therefore choose the path of devotion or *Bhakti*.

### 4.2.3 Main Features of Bhakti Movement

The following are the main features of *Bhakti* Movement:

1. **Purity of Heart:** The followers of *Bhakti* cult condemned the rigidity, idol worship, fasts and ritualism that were prevalent among Hindus from early times. The exponents of *Bhakti* cult revealed the simple way to realize the God through the purity of heart.

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2. **Denounced idol worship:** The exponents of *Bhakti* cult condemned idol worship. According to them, man should do his duty or *karma*. God is omnipresent and so there is no use to worship the image. Saints like Kabir emphasized the worship of Nirguna *Brahma* or god having no definite shape.
3. **Self-surrender:** The religious saints of *Bhakti* Movement preached that man should surrender himself completely to the will of god. He should not have any attachment with worldly affairs and there should be complete unity between man and god.
4. **Faith in spiritual Gurus:** The saints of *Bhakti* Movement also advocated that people should have great faith in spiritual Gurus, who guide them sincerely and bring them to light from darkness of life and to knowledge from utter ignorance. They felt that without the guidance of Guru, one could not expect to be on the right path. Therefore, faith in spiritual guru is essential.
5. **Opposition to caste system:** Almost all the saints of *Bhakti* Movement strongly denounced the caste system, which they boldly accepted was not a part of the true Hindu religion. They said that even persons belonging to low class having greatest love to god were far superior to the Brahmins who did not worship god. Thus, the saints preached unity among the people and tried to reduce the evil impact of caste system on the society.
6. **Attack on ritualism:** The proponents of *Bhakti* Movement denounced ritualism in Hindu religion. They said the real purpose of religion was the sincere worship of god with devotion. As soon as rituals disappear from the religion, the society would be reformed of its own.
7. **Use of vernacular languages:** The saints of the *Bhakti* cult both in south India and in north India expressed their ideas in the local vernacular languages so that common people could understand their messages. Saints like Kabir and Namdev used Hindi language for their preaching, whereas Nanak used the local Punjabi language; likewise, Meera Bai wrote in Rajasthani language and Chaitanya preached in Bengali language. Since these saints preached and expressed their ideas in the spoken languages of the common people, their preaching and ideas soon became widely popular. The most significant thing was that the exponents of *Bhakti* cult belonged to the ordinary class of society. In spite of the absence of royal patronization, the *Bhakti* cult became widely popular. Unquestionably, for its popularity, the vernacular language played a vital role.

### Check Your Progress

1. What was the main objective of the Bhakti Movement?
2. Why did the proponents of Bhakti Movement denounce ritualism in Hindu religion?

### 4.3 RELIGIOUS REFORMERS: RAMANAND, KABIR, GURU NANAK.

We will in this section discuss the religious reformers of the Bhakti Movement.

#### Reformers of Bhakti Movement

The following were the reformers of the *Bhakti* Movement:

**Ramanuja:** Scholars believe that the first great exponent of Bhakti Movement was Ramanuja. He was born in the primary part of 11<sup>th</sup> century at Perumbudur, near Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu. He was a great Vaishnava who preached the worship of Narayana and Laxmi. He travelled all over India and finally settled at Srirangam.

He was of the firm conviction that man can get rid of the bondage of life only through the devotion of god. He preached the unity of god and the aim of his teaching was the refutation of Sankara's absolute Monism or Mayavada and the establishment of *Bhakti* within the philosophy of Vedanta.

According to Ramanuja, *Brahma* is the only one supreme reality and the individual souls are the attributes of *Brahma*. He said that the way to *Moksha* was through *Karma*, *Gyana* and *Bhakti*. The individual souls could attain god by *Bhakti*, according to him.

Besides being a religious preacher, he was also a social reformer. He condemned the caste divisions and improved the condition of Sudras by allowing them to enter temples. He was a learned scholar and is credited with the composition of *Vedanta Sangraha*, the *Bhasyas of Badrayanas*, *Vedanta Sastras* and *Bhagawad Gita*.

**Nimbarka:** The next leader of *Bhakti* Movement was Nimbarka (Nimbarkaracharya), a younger contemporary of Ramanuja. He was a worshipper of Lord Krishna and Radha. He advocated the principle of self-surrender to God. According to him, the way to *Nirvana* was *Bhakti*.

**Madhavacharya:** He ranks with Adi Sankara and Ramanuja as one of the three great exponents of the Vedanta school of philosophy. He believed that the final aim of man is *Bhakti* to Hari, which leads to *Moksha*. Release from transmigration of soul or from the cycle of birth and death is possible only by means of *Gyana* (knowledge) and *Bhakti* (devotion).

**Namdev:** In Maharashtra, the preachers of *Bhakti* cult were Narahari, Namdev, Eknath and Tukaram. Of them, Namdev exercised a profound influence on the people. He was born 1270 in Maharashtra. He travelled to different parts of the country and preached in Marathi language. Like other saints of *Bhakti* Movement, he condemned superstitions, ritualism and social evils prevailing in the Hindu society. He preached sincere devotion to god or *Bhakti*. Hindus as well as Muslims were his followers.

#### NOTES



## NOTES

**Jayadev:** The first great reformer and advocate of *Bhakti* Movement in Eastern India was Jayadev. According to historical sources, he was a court poet in Bengal in 12<sup>th</sup> century AD. However, modern scholars claimed that he belonged to Orissa. His great work is the *Gita Govinda*. Lord Krishna and Radha are the subjects of this great Sanskrit work. Jayadev stood for sincere devotion or *Bhakti* towards god for the attainment of *Mukti* or liberation of soul.

Ramananda was a great religious reformer and proponent of *Bhakti* Movement in medieval India. He was the disciple of Raghavananda, (the disciple of Ramanuja). He has been described as the bridge between the *Bhakti* Movement of the south and the north India. However, he is the first saint who started the *Bhakti* Movement in north India.

Like other religious preachers, he emphasized the love and devotion of god. He condemned caste system. People of almost all the classes and castes were his disciples. He raised the status of women and gave sanctity to family life. The great saint of *Bhakti* Movement Kabir made him his guru. He used the language of the common people in his preaching. He preached the worship of lord Ram and Sita. His followers like Kabir, Pipa and Ravidas spread his message far and wide.

**Kabir:** He was one of the prominent saints of *Bhakti* Movement and belonged to the school of *Nirguna Iswara*. He was the main disciple of Ramananda. Scholars believe that he was born to a Brahmin widow who threw him near a tank and was picked by a weaver, Nirk and his wife Nima.

He grew up he took up his father's profession, but his real interest was spiritual talks and worship of lord Ram. Kabir believed in one god. He rejected both the Vedas and the Quran, and the supremacy of the *Brahmanas* and Mullahs. He opposed the caste system and image worship. He also denounced false practices and empty formalism. His faith in theory of *karma* was remarkable. He emphasized the unity of god and path of love, devotion and *Bhakti*. According to him, Ram and Rahim, Krishna and Karim, Makka and Kashi were the expressions of the same god. However, he criticized the Muslim form of prayer, the fast of Ramadan and the reverence of tombs and graves. He made a significant contribution in bringing about Hindu-Muslim unity.

Like his guru Ramananda, he preached in Hindi. Although Kabir was an illiterate, he was the author of many poems, which contain his teachings. The most important of his works are the *Bijak*, *Sabads*, *Sakhis*, *Mangal*, *Basant*, *Holi* and *Rekhtal*. His *Dohas* or couplets are very popular.

**Guru Nanak:** Another great reformer of the same period was Guru Nanak. He was born at Talwandi in Sheikhpura district of West Punjab. From his childhood days, he evinced keen interest towards spiritualism and neglected his studies. He adopted various professions for his livelihood but could not succeed in either, as his real interest lay in the spiritual affairs and the worship of god. He travelled not only in various parts of India, but also in foreign countries like Ceylon, Mecca and Madina and Tibet.

He preached the unity, greatness and glory of one god. He taught his followers to repeat constantly the name of god. Like Kabir, he expressed firm faith in the theory of *Karma* and condemned caste system. By taking the philosophies of both Hindus and Islam, he established a separate sect in Hindu order.

**Ramananda:** He was a 14th-century Vaishnava devotional poet saint, who lived for most of his life in the city of Varanasi. He was inspired by the south Indian Vedanta philosopher Ramanuja as well as the Nathpanthi ascetics of the Yoga school of Hindu philosophy. Ramananda accepted disciples without discriminating anyone by gender, class, caste or religion, and according to some, his disciples included later Bhakti movement poet-saints such as Kabir, Ravidas, and others.

### Check Your Progress

3. What was the final aim of man according to Madhavacharya?
4. State the aim of teaching of Ramanuja.

## 4.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The objective of the Bhakti Movement was to reform Hinduism and Hindu society, which at that time, was suffering from many serious ills.
2. The proponents of *Bhakti* Movement denounced ritualism in Hindu religion. They said the real purpose of religion was the sincere worship of god with devotion. As soon as rituals disappear from the religion, the society would be reformed of its own.
3. Madhavacharya believed that the final aim of man is *Bhakti* to Hari, which leads to *Moksha*. Release from transmigration of soul or from the cycle of birth and death is possible only by means of *Gyana* (knowledge) and *Bhakti* (devotion).
4. Ramanuja preached the unity of god and the aim of his teaching was the refutation of Sankara's absolute Monism or Mayavada and the establishment of *Bhakti* within the philosophy of Vedanta.

## 4.5 SUMMARY

- With the dawn of 11<sup>th</sup> century during the medieval times, various religious Movements spread in different parts of India.
- The objective of the Bhakti Movement was to reform Hinduism and Hindu society, which at that time, was suffering from many serious ills.

## NOTES

## NOTES

- The chief advocates of Bhakti Movement were Ramanuja, Jayadev, Namdev, Chaitanya, Ramananda, Kabir and Guru Nanak.
- There was nothing new in the fundamental teachings of the *Bhakti* saints. The belief in the unity of god, discarding the worship of images and *Bhakti* as a mode of salvation were already well-known concepts in the Indian religious system.
- The *Bhakti* cult was developed to a large extent by the Vaishnava sects during the early part of Christian era. All these ideas are abundantly found in the Upanishads. Similar ideas are also found in the *Bhagavata Purana*.
- The *Bhakti* Movement has been presented as a Hindu response to the growing influence of Islam and it found acceptability among the lower classes.
- The *Bhakti* Movement started in south India at around 6<sup>th</sup> century AD, spread through Karnataka and Maharashtra and from around the 15<sup>th</sup> century, it spread to north India, Bengal and Orissa.
- In Maharashtra, the preachers of *Bhakti* cult were Narahari, Namdev, Eknath and Tukaram. Of them, Namdev exercised a profound influence on the people.
- The first great reformer and advocate of *Bhakti* Movement in Eastern India was Jayadev. According to historical sources, he was a court poet in Bengal in 12<sup>th</sup> century AD. However, modern scholars claimed that he belonged to Orissa.
- Kabir was one of the prominent saints of *Bhakti* Movement and belonged to the school of *Nirguna Iswara*. He was the main disciple of Ramananda.
- Guru Nanak preached the unity, greatness and glory of one god. He taught his followers to repeat constantly the name of god. Like Kabir, he expressed firm faith in the theory of *Karma* and condemned caste system.

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## 4.6 KEY WORDS

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- **Moksha:** It refers to various forms of emancipation, enlightenment, liberation, and release.
- **Karma:** It refers to the spiritual principle of cause and effect where actions and intents of an individual influence the future of that individual.
- **Ritualism:** It refers to the practice of a ritual, especially when excessive or without regard to its function.
- **Vernacular Language:** It refers to the *language* or variety of a *language* which is used in everyday life by the common people of a specific population.

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## 4.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short-Answer Questions

1. Name the main advocates of the Bhakti Movement.
2. How did Bhakti Movement develop in South India?
3. What are the main features of the Bhakti Movement?
4. Write a short note on the philosophy preached by Jayadev.
5. What was the main message preached by Guru Nanak Dev?

### Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the origins of the Bhakti Movement.
2. Explain the factors which led to the development of the Bhakti Movement.
3. Why is Ramanuja considered as the first great exponent of Bhakti Movement? Discuss in detail.
4. Explain in detail any two reformer's role in popularizing the Bhakti Movement in India.

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## 4.8 FURTHER READINGS

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### NOTES

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## UNIT 5 BHAKTI MOVEMENT - II

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### NOTES

#### Structure

- 5.0 Introduction
- 5.1 Objectives
- 5.2 Religious Reformers
- 5.3 Results of Bhakti Movement
- 5.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 5.5 Summary
- 5.6 Key Words
- 5.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 5.8 Further Readings

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### 5.0 INTRODUCTION

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In the previous unit you were introduced to the Bhakti Movement. In this unit, the discussion on Bhakti movement will continue.

The unit will analyse the roles of various reformers in promoting the Bhakti Movement. The emergence of Bhakti Movement in various parts of India and the factors which led to the rise in the Movement will also be explained. The unit will also explain the impact of Bhakti Movement in India.

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### 5.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the roles of different religious reformers in promoting Bhakti Movement
- Explain the spread of Bhakti Movement in North India and South India
- Analyse the social, economic and political factors responsible for the rise of Bhakti Movement in India.
- Interpret the features of Bhakti Movement.
- Discuss the impact of Bhakti Movement.

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### 5.2 RELIGIOUS REFORMERS

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We will in this section discuss the role of religious reformers in promoting Bhakti Movement.

## Chaitanya

The saint who played a pivotal role in transforming the *Bhakti* Movement in Eastern India was Sri Chaitanya. He was born in 1485 in Nadia, Bengal, and spent most part of his life in Jagannath Puri in Orissa.

Before settling down in Puri, he travelled to various places of the country including Vrindavan and preached his idea of oneness of god and pure *Bhakti*. It was in Vrindavan that he became the greatest devotee of Lord Krishna.

He strengthened the foundation of Vaishnavism in Bengal and Orissa and preached the doctrine of love for the worship of Krishna. Chaitanya condemned the caste system prevailing in medieval Indian Hindu society and preached universal brotherhood. He introduced *Kirtana* (or recitation of holy names of Ram and Krishna with music) to appeal god and laid emphasis on *Bhakti*. He was the first saint of *Bhakti* Movement who gave equal importance to *Raja* and *Rank*, women and lower caste people to participate in his *Kirtana* processions and took the medieval *Bhakti* Movement to its peak.

## Mirabai

Mirabai was the first women saint of *Bhakti* Movement in medieval India. She was born in the village Kudki in Rajasthan and was married to Bhojraj in 1516. Bhojraj died early. After the death of her husband, she devoted herself completely to religious pursuits. Rana Vikramaditya tried to eliminate her by poisoning, but failed.

She was a great devotee of Krishna. She believed that the only way of *Mukti* or salvation is *Bhakti*. She said that sooner or later, everyone was to meet his lord. According to her, time was a great factor and it could be shortened by the intensity of ones affection for the lord.

Mirabai was not a reformer or a preacher like Kabir, nor did she present a special worldview like Tulsidas. She accepted all the tenets of *Bhakti* and followed them all through her life.

## Tulsidas

Tulsidas was a great poet and a devotee of Lord Ram. He was a contemporary of Emperor Akbar. It is believed that on account of a taunt of his wife, Tulsidas is said to have taken the life of a Sanyasin. He was the author of the famous *Rama Charita Manas*. In this book, he makes an exposition of religious devotion of the highest order. He laid stress upon Gyana (knowledge), *Bhakti* (devotion), *Puja* (worship) and *Dhayna* (meditation). Amongst all this, *Bhakti* is supreme and he believed that man could reach the supreme soul only through *Bhakti*. You can read more about his life and works in Unit 3 of this book.

## NOTES

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**Raidas**

Raidas was born in the holy city of Banaras and was a leather worker. He was a great disciple of Ramananda. Raidas condemned fasts, caste distinctions and pilgrimage. He was a proponent of *Bhakti* cult and tried to bridge the gap between the Hindus and Muslims.

**Check Your Progress**

1. What was the main role of Chaitanya in the Bhakti Movement?
2. State Tulsidas's doctrine in the Bhakti Movement.

**5.3 RESULTS OF BHAKTI MOVEMENT**

The Bhakti Movement enjoys a very significant position in the history of India. The missionaries made use of regional languages for propagating the Bhakti Movement. Hence, the Bhakti Movement helped in the development of regional languages such as Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, Kannada and so forth. Due to the usage of regional languages for the dissemination of the Bhakti Movement, unlike Sanskrit, the concepts and doctrines professed by the missionaries directly appealed to the masses. As the caste system was condemned by the Bhakti saints, people belonging to the lower classes were brought up to a position of great importance. The Bhakti Movement was also responsible for uplifting the position of women in the society. Furthermore, the Bhakti Movement presented to the people a simple religion, devoid of any complex rituals. The people were required to profess sincere devotion to God.

**Spread of the Bhakti Movement in South India**

The Shaiva Nayanar saints and Vaisnava Alvar saints of South India spread the concept of bhakti among different sections of the society from the seventh to the tenth century. Some of these saints belonged to the lower strata of society and some were women. The saints during the Bhakti Movement preached bhakti in a deep and passionate manner and encouraged spiritual equality among all. The Alvar and Nayanar saints made use of Tamil language instead of Sanskrit for the purpose of preaching and composing songs in praise of God. This was one of the reasons attributed for the immense popularity of the Bhakti Movement.

The South Indian bhakti saints condemned the Jains and Buddhists who were honoured in the courts of South Indian monarchs of that era. Also, these saint bards fought back against the supremacy of the orthodox Brahmins by making bhakti within the reach of all without any caste and sex discrimination.

However, the Bhakti Movement which spread in South India had certain shortcomings. It never resolutely opposed Brahminism or the caste systems at the social level. Brahminical rituals such as worship of idols, recitation of the Vedic

mantras and pilgrimages to sacred places carried on in spite of the dominant stress on bhakti as the higher mode of worship. The Bhakti Movement was primarily pitched against the Jains and Buddhists and not the Brahmins. This perhaps was also the reason why the Brahmin dominated temples played a significant role in the growth and spread of the Bhakti Movement in South India. The philosophical and social base of the caste system was not challenged by the saints of South India. Consequently, the Bhakti Movement of the South in the long run fortified that hierarchical system rather than putting an end to it. Eventually, after the Movement reached its pinnacle in the tenth century, it slowly got merged with the traditional Brahmanical religion. Despite these shortcomings, the Bhakti Movement of South India in its peak time was successful in supporting the cause of religious equality and, thus, the Brahmins had to accept the right of the low caste to preach, to have access to bhakti as a mode of worship and to have access even to the Vedas.

### **Spread of the Bhakti Movement in North India**

Several socio-religious Movements thrived in North and East India and Maharashtra from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century. The essence of these Movements was the emphasis on bhakti and religious equality. Almost all the Bhakti Movements of the Sultanate period have been associated with one or the other South Indian Vaishnava Acharya. Due to these reasons, many scholars formed this opinion that the Bhakti Movements of the Sultanate period were continuance or resurrection of the older Bhakti Movement. They debated that philosophical and religious links existed between the two either due to interaction or diffusion. Thus, Kabir and other leaders of non-conformist monotheistic Movements in North India are supposed to have been the followers of Ramananda who, one at a time, is believed to have been connected with Ramanuja's philosophical order. Similar beliefs are prevalent about Chaitanya. It is said that he belonged to the philosophical school of Madhava. This Movement is also believed to have been connected with Nimbarka's school because of its emphasis on Krishna bhakti.

There are many resemblances between the older Bhakti Movement of South India and several Bhakti Movements that spanned through the Sultanate and Mughal periods. Like the South Indian Bhakti Movement, the Vaishnava Bhakti Movements of North and Eastern India and Maharashtra (barring a few) demonstrated democratic tendencies in the sphere of religion.

Like the South Indian Bhakti Movement, most of the Vaishnava Movements of the later period were eventually embraced into the Brahminical religion, though in the process of communication, the latter underwent various modifications. The Bhakti Movement was never a single Movement except in the broad doctrinal sense of a Movement which laid emphasis on bhakti and religious equality. The Bhakti Movements of medieval India were different in many important respects in comparison with the older South Indian bhakti tradition. Heterogeneity could be seen even among the Bhakti Movements which thrived in medieval India. Each one of them had its own regional individuality; social, historical and cultural settings. Thus, the non-conformist Movements founded on widespread monotheistic bhakti

## **NOTES**



enclosed features that fundamentally varied from various Vaishnava Bhakti Movements.

### **Political Factors Responsible for Rise of the Bhakti Movement**

#### **NOTES**

It is largely believed that the popular Bhakti Movement could not establish itself firmly in northern India before the Turkish subjugation as Rajput-Brahmin alliance dominated the socio-religious situation which refused to accept any secular Movement. The Turkish conquest dealt a death blow to the Rajput-Brahmin alliance. The arrival of Islam and the establishment of Turkish political authority battered the influence and esteem of the Brahmins. Thus, the path was cemented for the advent of monotheistic Movements supporting anti-caste and anti-Brahminical philosophy. The Brahmins had indoctrinated the common people to believe that the images and idols in the temples were not simply symbols of god but were actually gods themselves who owned celestial powers and who could be handled by them (Brahmins). The victorious Turks took away from the Brahmins their temple treasure and state support. Thus, the Brahmins suffered both in terms of wealth and in terms of ideology. The non-conformist sect of the nathpanthis was the foremost to benefit from the diminishing power of the Rajput-Brahmin alliance. This sect had reached its peak in the beginning of the Sultanate period. The declining power of the Brahmins and the new political situation eventually created an environment for the development of the popular monotheistic Movements and other Bhakti Movements in North India.

### **Social and Economic Factors Responsible for Rise of the Bhakti Movement**

It has been said that the Bhakti Movements of medieval India characterized sentiments of the common masses against feudal tyranny. Based on this perspective, components of revolutionary opposition to feudalism can be traced in the verses of the bhakti saints like Kabir, Nanak, Chaitanya and Tulsidas. It is in this background that time and again medieval Bhakti Movements are seen as the Indian counterpart of the Protestant Reformation Movement in Europe. Nevertheless, there is nothing in the verses of the bhakti saints which suggests that they symbolized the class interests of the peasants against the cruel feudal state. The Vaishnava bhakti saints broke free from orthodox Brahminical system only so much that they were believers of bhakti and religious equality. Generally, they continued to adhere to the basic principles of orthodox Brahminism.

The more fundamental monotheistic saints refused to accept orthodox Brahminical religion completely but even they did not call for a coup against the state and the ruling class. This is the reason why the Bhakti Movements cannot be called the Indian variant of European Protestant Reformation which was a much larger social turmoil connected with the decline of feudalism and the rise of capitalism. This, nevertheless, does not mean that the bhakti saints did not care about the living conditions of common people. They always tried to identify themselves in one way or another with the suffering of the common people.

Let us now study the significant features of the Bhakti Movement.

*Bhakti Movement - II*

### **Prominent Features of the Bhakti Movement**

Although the missionaries of the Bhakti Movement belonged to different parts of India, spoke different languages and gave different sermons, yet there was a marked similarity in their views and thinking. The ideas shared by the monotheistic saints can be summarized as follows:

1. The Bhakti Movement was focused on monotheism or the worship of one God. Monotheistic saints thought of Ram and Rahim, Ishwar and Allah as different names of one God who is the Supreme Being. In other words, they laid emphasis on the unity of self with God.
2. The saints of the Bhakti Movement laid stress on Bhakti or devotion to God. According to them, that was the only means to attain salvation. In their opinion, the only way to realize God was through supreme devotion. Hence, bhakti was higher than gyana or knowledge and karma or action. They did not believe in any other formalities like ceremonies or rituals necessary for worshipping God.
3. The Bhakti Movement supported the requirement of a guru who would guide the devotee towards attainment of salvation. They believed that a true guru was the main source who could alone assist in attaining unity with God. He alone could show the path of light to reach the correct destination. A guru could lead the follower from the materialistic world to the spiritual world.
4. Equality of men or universal brotherhood was yet another fundamental feature of the Bhakti Movement. In fact, the Bhakti Movement stood against racial discrimination, caste hierarchy and other such social evils which had made the lives of common people very difficult. Monotheistic saints believed that all men created by God were equal and, hence, they should be treated equally.
5. The Bhakti saints intensely condemned the Hindu practice of image worship. They were against ritualism, false practices, blind faiths and dogmas. They found no meaning in rituals and sacrifices. They had belief in a formless and shapeless God which was the supreme power. Anybody, irrespective of caste, colour and creed, could access Him by means of simple and selfless devotion.
6. The main emphasis of the Bhakti Movement was on bhakti or passionate love for God, so they considered self-purification an essential feature to be imbibed by all. This purification could be attained by practicing high moral values like truthfulness, non-violence, harmony, morality and human values.
7. The approach of self-surrender constituted another important principle of the Bhakti Movement. The rituals and ceremonies being performed by the common masses did not assist in the realization of God. Observing fasts,

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going on pilgrimages, offering prayers was considered completely unworthy, if they were not accompanied by purity of thought or a feeling of submission to God.

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### Impact of Bhakti Movement

The Bhakti Movement that initially began in South India by Shankaracharya in the ninth century spread over the other parts of the country and by the sixteenth century was a mighty mystical power to reckon with, particularly after the Movements launched by Kabir, Nanak and Shri Chaitanya. Distinguished Indian social reformer and author, M G Ranade, in his book *The Rise of Maratha Power* sums up the deep impact of this spiritual awakening. 'The main results of Bhakti Movement were the development of vernacular literature, modification of caste exclusiveness, sanctification of family life, elevation of status of women, preaching of humaneness and tolerance, partial reconciliation with Islam, subordination of rites and ceremonies, pilgrimages, fasts etc, learning and contemplation to worship God with love and faith, the limitation of excess of polytheism and the uplift of the nation to a higher level of capacity both of thought and action.'

To be precise, the effect of the Bhakti Movement was felt in all domains of Hinduism. It transformed the religion to a large extent. The evils of caste system, the unnecessary ritualism and Brahminical orthodoxy of Hinduism got a setback due to the influential voices of distinguished socio-religious reformers during the Bhakti Movement.

The Bhakti Movement brought about the following changes in the Indian society:

- The Bhakti advocates raised their voice against all immoral acts being carried out in the society like infanticide and sati and fortified banning of wine and tobacco. Malpractices of adultery and sodomy were also discouraged. They aimed at setting up good social order upholding high moral values.
- Another notable impact of the Movement was the coming closer of the Hindu and Muslim communities. The Bhakti Movement worked towards reducing the increasing bitterness between the two communities. The saints of the Bhakti Movement and the Sufi saints spread the message of friendship, goodwill, patience, peace and equality among all.
- The Bhakti Movement introduced a dynamic method of worship and belief in God during this period. From then on, more impetus was given to devotion and love for God. Bhakti or devotion for the Almighty was the dominant subject of this Movement.
- The essence of tolerance, harmony and respect for each other, set forth by the Bhakti saints had another everlasting impact – the emergence of a new cult of worship by both Hindus and Muslims. It is known as the cult of Satyapir. It started under the initiative of King Husain Shah of

Jaunpur which later paved the way for the spirit of liberalism adopted by Akbar.

- Different vernacular languages and literature of the country got a boost due to the widespread of the Bhakti Movement. Kabir, Nanak and Chaitanya preached in their respective vernacular tongues – Kabir in Hindi, Nanak in Gurmukhi and Chaitanya in Bengali.
- In Orissa, a new style began in Oriya literature because of the Bhakti Movement and medieval Vaishnavism of Shri Chaitanya. Five distinguished writers—Achyuta, Balaram, Jagannath, Yasobanta and Ananta heralded the age of Panchasakha literature, known for its socio-religious exposition of Bhakti.

*Bhakti Movement - II*

## NOTES

### Check Your Progress

3. How was the Bhakti Movement spread in Southern India?
4. What does monotheism, as spread by the Bhakti saints, mean?

## 5.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Chaitanya was the saint who played a pivotal role in transforming the *Bhakti* Movement in Eastern India. He was born in 1485 in Nadia, Bengal, and spent most part of his life in Jagannath Puri in Orissa. He strengthened the foundation of Vaishnavism in Bengal and Orissa and preached the doctrine of love for the worship of Krishna.
2. According to Tulsidas, religious devotion is the highest order of devotion to attain God. He laid stress upon Gyana (knowledge), *Bhakti* (devotion), *Puja* (worship) and *Dhayna* (meditation). Amongst all this, *Bhakti* is supreme and he believed that man could reach the supreme soul only through *Bhakt*.
3. The Bhakti Movement in South India was spread because of two saints, Shaiva Nayanar saints and Vaisnava Alvar. They spread the concept of bhakti among different sections of the society, using Tamil from the seventh to the tenth century. Some of these saints belonged to the lower strata of society and some were women. The saints preached bhakti in a deep and passionate manner and encouraged spiritual equality among all.
4. Bhakti Movement was focused on monotheism or the worship of one God. Monotheistic saints thought of Ram and Rahim, Ishwar and Allah as different names of one God who is the Supreme Being. In other words, they laid emphasis on the unity of self with Go.

## 5.5 SUMMARY

### NOTES

- The Bhakti Movement is one of the significant Movements in the history of social-religious Movements in India.
- The Bhakti Movements began in the ninth century, then spread over the other parts of the country and by the sixteenth century, it was a mighty mystical power to reckon with.
- The saint who played a pivotal role in transforming the *Bhakti* Movement in Eastern India was Sri Chaitanya.
- Mirabai was the first women saint of *Bhakti* Movement in medieval India. Tulsidas was a great poet and a devotee of Lord Ram. He was a contemporary of Emperor Akbar.
- The Movements launched by Kabir, Nanak and Shri Chaitanya made this a very impactful Movements.
- The Shaiva Nayanar saints and Vaisnava Alvar saints of South India spread the concept of bhakti among different sections of the society from the seventh to the tenth century.
- Several socio-religious Movements thrived in North and East India and Maharashtra from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century. The essence of these Movements was the emphasis on bhakti and religious equality.
- The declining power of the Brahmins and the new political situation eventually created an environment for the development of the popular monotheistic Movements and other Bhakti Movements in North India.
- The Bhakti Movements of medieval India characterized sentiments of the common masses against feudal tyranny. However, they did not go against the state like the Protestant reformation Movement in Europe.
- The Vaishnava bhakti saints broke free from orthodox Brahminical system only so much that they were believers of bhakti and religious equality. Generally, they continued to adhere to the basic principles of orthodox Brahminism.
- One of the main feature was the Bhakti Movement was focused on monotheism or the worship of one God.
- The saints of the Bhakti Movement laid stress on Bhakti or devotion to God. The Bhakti saints intensely condemned the Hindu practice of image worship.
- The Bhakti advocates raised their voice against all immoral acts being carried out in the society.
- The Bhakti Movement introduced a dynamic method of worship and belief in God during this period.

## 5.6 KEY WORDS

- **Alvar:** It refers to the Tamil poet-saints of South India who were devoted to the Hindu god Vishnu or his avatar Krishna in their songs of longing, ecstasy and service.
- **Bhakti:** It refers to a form of devotion and love for a personal god or a representational god by a devotee.
- **Monotheism:** It refers to the doctrine or belief that there is only one God.
- **Nayanars:** It refers to a group of 63 saints during the 6th to 8th century and they were devoted to the Hindu god *Shiva* in Tamil Nadu.

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## 5.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

### Short-Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on Raidas contribution in promoting Bhakti Movement.
2. What were problems faced by the Bhakti saints in South India.
3. How important was the role of a guru in Bhakti Movement?
4. Did the Bhakti saints support image worship? If no, why?
5. Who started the Bhakti Movement and when did it start?

### Long-Answer Questions

1. Compare the Bhakti Movement in South India and North India.
2. What were the social and economic factors which led to the rise of Bhakti Movement in India?
3. Analyse the five prominent features of the Bhakti Movement.
4. Explain the impact of Bhakti Movement in India.

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## UNIT 6 SUFISM, SIKHISM AND THEIR IMPACTS

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### NOTES

#### Structure

- 6.0 Introduction
- 6.1 Objectives
- 6.2 Sufism and Indian Society
- 6.3 Rise of the Sikhs
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### 6.0 INTRODUCTION

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Sufism is a mystical form of Islam which emphasizes on the inward search for God. It became more impactful because of the presence of khanqahs as it served a place where people belonging to all the strata of the societies could discuss social, cultural or theological things. The mystical form of Islam was introduced by Sufi saints and they preached the true meaning of God to the masses. Through khanqahs, Sufis were able to present the true form of God and discuss their ideas. Sufi scholars were able to influence social, economical and philosophical development in India.

Guru Nanak preached the true meaning of Sikhism to the people; however, it was because of Guru Angad Singh that the message of Sikhism was preached all over the world. He travelled and visited all religious places to preach the idea of Sikhism. He strengthened the base of Sikhism. Sikhism played an important role as it comprised elements of both Hinduism and Islam. Sikhism symbolizes the great plurality of modern India as it happily co-exists with so many other religious faiths.

In this unit, the emergence of Sufism and Sikhism as popular forms of religion has been discussed. The importance of khanqah and the impact of Sufism have been explained. The unit will also highlight the basic elements of Sikhism and its impact on Indian religion.

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### 6.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the importance of Sufism
- Analyse the various Sufi orders



- Discuss the impact of Sufism
- Explain the emergence of Sikhism
- Interpret the impact of Sikhism in India

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### 6.2 SUFISM AND INDIAN SOCIETY

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Sufi teaching began with Sufism and the teaching was more focused on the relationship between the teacher and student. It is this chain of initiation that is often referred to as Silsila. The Silsila became the primary mode of teaching with the Sufis that would be connected to the Shaykh of order and then it would be linked to the Prophet Muhammad. There were five prominent Sufi orders, Qadiri, Mujaddedi, Chishti, Naqshbandi and Shadhili that were named after the Shaykh pertaining to a specific order. This was the first most important aspect of Sufism; the second was that of Sufi Meditation. It is essential to the teaching of the Sufi shaykhs included in the Tariqa. Some Sufi Shaykhs were known to begin the Sufi meditation practices and to formulate them.

#### **Sufi Tariqahs**

Even though Sufism emerged from the Islamic world, however, it still found a favourable ground in India due to the khanqah or the lodge or dormitory that was solely run by Sufis. These were also called Jamaat Khana which comprised of halls large enough to house gatherings. These were organized establishments that would receive waqf or fiscal grants; they did not receive any funding from royal court. These dwelling places soon evolved and became prominent in India due to the spread and acceptance of Sufism in India.

It was due to the establishment of Sufi khanqah that the master-teacher and student relationship became stronger and fruitful. The students would seek teaching and study, pray, worship and read together. The literature of Sufis were more connected to the academic side of teaching that also included theological and jurisprudential works often confined to madrasa. The mystical works included teaching comprised of discourses, hagiographical writing and letters by the master. These three became the means of knowledge dissemination.

The code of conduct or the Adab was studied by Sufis and many Sufi saints wrote texts that are related to the divine connection that was widely spread in India. The Sufi thought was widely accepted in the country and was favoured by the masses in general that is still held in awe and respect by Indians. To the Muslims, it became a source of social history and religious order.

Khanqah was not limited to teaching and spreading Sufism, it also served the purpose of providing community shelter. Soon, many such facilities were built in the remote and rural areas especially Hindu vicinities. The Chishti order was the first to establish it in the light of generosity and hospitality. Always welcoming and open to the visitors, it was all about spirituality and giving basic education. It soon became symbolic with brotherhood, peace and equity that made it more popular

amongst the Muslims. Soon, it evolved as centres for theological, cultural and social orders that attracted many people hailing from different religions and backgrounds, it is said due to this many were converted to Sufism.

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### **The Sufi Orders**

The various Sufi orders are discussed as follows:

#### ***Shadhiliyya***

The founder of Shadhiliyya order is said to be Imam Nooruddeen. Later on it evolved into Fassiya branch and was referred to as the Fassiyatush Shadhiliyya that became the most wide spread order and the most practiced one. It is said to be founded by Sheikh Aboobakkar of Kayalpatnam and Sheikh Mir Ahmad belonging to Madurai. In Tamil Nadu, Mir Ahmad is remembered and revered through his tomb called the Madura Maqbara.

#### ***Chishtiyyah***

Chishtiyyah became a well-known order that was widely spread and followed in Persia and Central Asia. The first ever saint of this order is said to be Abu Ishaq Shami and later on it was formally established as Chishti order in Afghanistan by the name of Chishti-i-Sharif. The Chishtiyyah is said to have emerged with the world famous Sufi saint Moinuddin Chishti who ardently campaigned it throughout India that is followed even today and practiced by many. The venerated saint is often formally referred to as Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti and he is said to have belonged to sistan or the southwest Afghanistan or the eastern Iran. During his formative years he travelled extensively to Middle East, Central Asia and South Asia. His influence spread at the time when he arrived in Delhi in the year 1193 that was the time when things were transforming fast with the end of the Ghurid reign. After that he decided to settle in the city of Ajmer in Rajasthan, this happened at the time when the Delhi Sultanate was established.

Soon all the spiritual activities undertaken by Moinuddin Chishti were creating an impact on Islam and the southern part of India. It was the Chishti order that began the khanqah that was established to reach out to local communities, established with an intention of reaching out to as many people as possible and spreading Islamic teachings through the use of charity work. The movements grew with the dervishes and their spiritual teaching and they were widely accepted without any coercion or bloodshed. Chishtis were fast becoming popular due to the khanqahs and their ideology of simplistic life and its teachings that pertained to peace, humanity and generosity. It is due to their spiritualistic efforts and their teaching that they gained importance amongst Hindus, every cast of Hindus started giving them importance. The concrete evidence of the Chishti and the influence of his teaching is the tomb of Moinuddin Chishti that is till date held in great respect by people of both the religions and casts.

His fame is said to have spread all over the world and the tomb is now a pilgrimage destination for many. During the time of Akbar, he was revered so much that the Emperor himself would visit the pilgrimage that set a tradition to the

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followers of Chishti. After Chishti, there were eight prominent successors or saints namely, Qutubuddin Bakhtiar, Fariduddin Ganjshakar, Nizamuddin Auliya, Chiragh Dehlavi, Sayed Kareemi, Akhi Siraj Ainae and Ashraf Jahangir Semnani.

### ***Suhrwardiyyah***

Abdul-Wahir Abu Najib as-Suhrawardi is said to be the founder of Suhrwardiyyah order of the Sufi movement. His guru was Ahmad Ghazali who had an elder brother called Abu Hamid Ghazali. The spiritual teaching of Ahmad Ghazali is what established this order that became a prominent one in the medieval Iran, which is prior to the arrival of Persian immigrants in India that happened with the invasion of Mongols.

The role of Abu Najib cannot be denied in the spreading of this order as he was the nephew of Suhrawardi and brought it into the mainstream. Then it was transformed into written treaties that included theories on Sufism, this was carried out by Abu Hafs Umar. He mostly translated the text called *Gift of Deep Knowledge* or the *Awa'rif al-Mar'if* that became the handbook of teaching at madrasas and became one of the popular teaching books related to the Suhrawardiyya. During the same time, the movement spread on a global level due to the contribution of Abu Hafs who became an ambassador to this order. He began teaching Sufism in Baghdad, the rulers of Ayyubid residing in Syria and Egypt too experienced the touch of this order. He was a spiritual and a political leader of the Sufis who established himself on a global level. His strategy to keep a cordial relationship with other nations and political leaders in the Islamic empire led to his popularity across borders. He was widely accepted and respected for his positive influence and attitudes that lead to the approval of the Sufi orders by many.

### ***Kubrawiyyah***

Kubrawiyyah order is said to have been established by Abul Janaab Ahmad who was also known as Najmuddin Kubra, he belonged to Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan border. He was a Sufi saint who was widely accepted and revered for his teaching in Kashmir, Iran and Turkey. His education was of great significance to many generations who were keen to follow the path of Sufism, students were often (who were his disciples) referred to as saints and became noted saints in history.

The order established by him gained prominence during 14<sup>th</sup> century. Along with his students, he was able to make a lot of spiritual contributions pertaining to the Sufi literature that included mystical psychology, literature and mystical treatise. The most popular texts written by him were *Mirsad ul Ibad* and *al-Usul al-Ashara*. These texts quickly became popular with the mystics of India and were frequently followed and referred to in spiritual studies.

### ***Naqshbandiyyah***

Naqshbandiyyah order originated from Yusuf al-Hamadani who resided in Central Asia. The formal recognition came to this order with Bahauddin Naqshband who

organized it in Turkic and Tajik languages. For this reason, in the Naqshbandi order, his name became quite popular. However, if we talk about how the order came to be introduced in India then the contribution of Khwaja Muhammad al-Baqi Billah Berang is to be noted.

The order soon became prominent and primarily influenced the Mughal elites, all this happened due to the family and ancestral ties that date back to the founder of the order, Babur who was the founder of the Mughal Dynasty in the year 1526. He is said to be the one who initiated the order; this happened before he conquered India. It is due to the royal links that the order quickly became popular and widely followed by the masses during that time.

### ***Qadiriyyah***

The founder of Qadiriyyah order was Abdul-Qadir Gilani who belonged to Iran and soon became popular with the Muslims residing in South India.

### ***Sarwari Qadiri***

The founder of Sarwari Qadri was Sultan Bahu; it was almost a branch of the Qadiriyyah order. For this reason, it is quite similar to the Qadiriyyah order. However, there are instances where it differed from other orders in Sufism; these were seclusion, dress code and other tedious exercises that were often followed by other Sufi orders. The primary philosophy with this order is related to the connection of the heart with Allah and this world was often written on the heart of the one who would follow this order, thus, it clearly became a differentiator of this order and its followers.

### ***Syncretic Mysticism***

Syncretic Mysticism was the religion that contributed largely to Sufism and its mystical aspects in India. Even the Bhakti movement gained prominence at that time due to the mysticism that was spreading throughout the country between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries especially in south India. The Bhakti movement and Sufism were so similar in their practices that often one would find it difficult to site a distinction between the two. Often it was confusing to tell apart Hindus from Muslims. The Bhakti movement followed a tradition of puja or prayer and kirtan or praise to the Gods, the same was followed by the Sufis. Singing and worshipping one God was similar in both spiritual orders. The mystical philosophy as developed by the Brahmins in the Bhakti movement was quite similar to that of the one advocated by the saints in Sufism. Bhaktis were of the belief that there is a different reality that lies beyond the illusion of life; this should be first recognized that will set one free from the death and birth cycle or reincarnation. It was the Moksha or salvation from the earth that was advocated by Hinduism. The teachings of Sufi mystics were similar to the concept that included akhirah, duniya and tariqa.

It was due to the prominence and the popularity of Sufism that the Afghani rulers in Delhi Sultanate were assimilated. The culture that came to emergence was the syncretic medieval culture that was established with a humanitarian cause and tolerant to non-Muslims. The growth of this ideology and the stability was due

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to the efforts of the Sufi saints who contributed largely to it through their vernacular literature and through the use of devotional music. The yogic practices were even undertaken by Sayyid Muhammad Ghaus gwaliori amongst his Sufi circles. Literature too was included in both the movements that formed a major part of the syncretic influence at the time of the Sultanate. The medieval era where the two movements were parallel to each other were influencing the masses positively and helping in spreading peaceful lifestyle amongst both the religions, thus it can be said that they coexisted in harmony during that time.

### **Rituals of Shrine**

When it comes to following and establishing rituals, the most controversial would be that of the grave visits related to the Sufi saints. These later on became shrines for the followers of Sufism that were established in many parts of India. This ritual became significant and was called ziyarat. An example of such a ritual is that of Masjid Nabawi belonging to Prophet Muhammad that is situated in Saudi Arabia.

It is to be noted that the tomb of the saint was often a site of veneration and Baraka or blessings continued to be with the deceased saint and would be beneficial to the one visiting their pilgrimage. It was done to show the devotion towards the Sufi saint. Rituals like providing donations or waqf to the pilgrimage by the nobles and the kings was common at that time.

The practices that were formed and followed by the Sufi saints influenced the masses. Traditions related to religion were followed according to the calendar dates. However, visiting shrines or graves of saints was unacceptable by the orthodox Islamic followers and the purists, however, the ritual prevails and even after centuries, many still follow it.

### **Sufism and its Impact on Music**

Music during the time of the Sultanate was infused with tradition and religious influence. The hymns sung in local language were popular and familiar to many people. For this reason the devotional music pertaining to Sufis became instantly popular amongst the masses and was successful too. It was through the music that they were able to transmit Sufi ideas to the public. In the form of instrumental music and hymns in local languages, people were quickly influenced and connected to the mystic feel that the music exuded. Music was a way of providing spiritual ecstasy to anyone listening to it.

It is through music that the emergence of whirling dervishes who used to clad themselves in white cloaks was largely depicted. The Sufi traditions included poetry and music that became a source of teaching and educating the students. Today, Sufi songs are known as qawwali. With this comes the contribution of the most well-known poet, Amir Khosraw, who was influenced by Chishti.

### **Impact of Sufism on the Sultanate**

With the emergence and the establishment of Sufi orders, there were many changes that Islam and the masses saw during the Sultanate and the medieval period. The

areas and the reasons that became influential and are till date largely accepted are as follows:

- Efforts of Sufi mystic lead to widespread spirituality and positive impact of religious movements on the masses in India.
- Sufi scholars coming from different parts of Asia largely influenced and helped in development of India on social, political and economic front.
- It was due to the Sufi movement that Islam branched out to the mystical form that made it popular amongst the masses in general.
- Preaching in local languages, which had a mass appeal, was another way of reaching out to majority of people. Often the hymns and the preaching was dubbed in different languages like Arabic, Punjabi, Urdu, Turkish and Sindhi.
- Sufism soon became a force that was positive and impacted the moral and social structure of the society influencing the traditions of Hinduism.
- Devotional practices and the simplistic traditional lifestyle of the Sufi saints attracted people from different backgrounds. The idea of modest living prevailed at that time.
- Use of folk songs and mystical tales too were included in Sufism and its practices that are followed by people till date.
- The resolve of Sufi saints in abstinence from community and religious conflicts is something that helped in prevalence of peace amongst the masses. It can be said that due to this, peace prevailed during the Sultanate era and the two religions co-existed in harmony.
- Adopting and accommodating people regardless of religion or background again became an idea that was accepted by people and highly appreciated.
- The belief of treating everyone as equal, being tolerant to the non-Muslims, piety, and humanity were considered pillars to Islam in India with the prevalence of mysticism.

#### **Check Your Progress**

1. What were the main beliefs of the Bhaktis?
2. Name the five prominent Sufi orders.

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### **6.3 RISE OF THE SIKHS**

Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak, a religious leader and a social reformer during the fifteenth century in the Punjab region. Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh religion, was born to a Hindu family in Nanakana Saheb in Lahore. He exhibited deep interest in religious matters and started exploring the mysteries of life. He travelled widely to spread his faith after he became the 'Enlightened One'. Several

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people became his followers and they came to be known as Sikhs. He believed that there is only one God who is omnipotent. The religious practice was formalized by Guru Gobind Singh on 30 March 1699. Guru Gobind Singh initiated five persons from different social backgrounds to form Khalsa. The first five, Pure Ones then baptized the Guru into the Khalsa fold.

Generally, Sikhs had amicable relations with other religions. However, during the Mughal rule in India (AD1556–1707), the emerging religion had strained relations with the ruling Mughals. Prominent Sikh Gurus were martyred by Mughals for opposing some Mughal emperors' persecution of Sikhs and Hindus.

The Sikh religion began when Babur invaded India and founded the Mughal Empire. His grandson, Akbar, supported religious freedom and after visiting the langar of Guru Amar Das got a favourable impression of Sikhism. As a result of his visit, he donated land to the langar and the Sikh gurus enjoyed an optimistic relationship with the Mughals until his death in AD1605. Jahangir, Akbar's successor, however, saw the Sikhs as a political threat because of the growing power of the Sikhs. Jahangir ordered Guru Arjan Dev to change a passage about Islam in the *Adi Granth*. *Adi Granth* was the religious scripture of the Sikhs. Guru Arjan Dev refused to do so. In addition, Guru Arjan Dev was also arrested for supporting the rebellious Khusrau Mirza, the eldest son of Jahangir. Emperor Jahangir, therefore, ordered to torture the Guru to death. The death of Guru Arjan Dev led the sixth Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Har Gobind to declare Sikh sovereignty. He created the Akal Takth and also established a fort for defending Amritsar. Jahangir captured and imprisoned Guru Har Gobind at Gwalior to assert power over the Sikhs. Jahangir released the Guru after several years when he no longer felt threatened by the Sikhs. The Sikh community did not have any further issues with the Mughal Empire until the death of Jahangir in 1627.

After the death of Jahangir, his son Shah Jahan ascended the throne. After becoming the Emperor, Shah Jahan declared a proclamation banning the teaching of any other religion except Islam. As a result of this proclamation, several constructed temples were demolished and the construction of new temples was also banned. This alerted the Sikhs to be prepared to defend Amritsar. One day a squad of Sikhs, while hunting reached near Lahore where the royal family was also hunting. The Sikhs set their hawk in pursuit of a quarry. The royal hunters also released their hawk from the other side. The hawk of the Sikhs caught the prey and brought it to them. The royal hawk in pursuit of the prey also came to the Sikhs. The Sikhs caught the royal hawk. When the royal hunters came and demanded their hawk, the Sikhs refused. On return, the royal hunters complained to Kulij Khan, the governor of Lahore. He dispatched General Mukhlis Khan with an army of seven thousand soldiers to attack Amritsar. On 15 May 1628, when the Guru came to know about the arrival of the royal army, he ordered his generals to take up positions. The Sikhs and the royal army of Mughals clashed near Pipli Sahib. When the Guru reached Lohgarh fort, he ordered Sikhs to fire the stone cannon. The army retreated due to volley of stones being thrown from the fort.

However, the royal family kept on fighting till dusk. The next day, the Guru killed Mukhlis Khan with a sword and the royal army fled. This encounter is often called the First Battle of the Sikhs with the Mughal.

Shah Jahan took offense of this encounter and after several attacks and assaults on Amritsar forced the Sikhs to flee and to retreat to the Sivalik hills. The next guru, Guru Har Rai, maintained the guruship in these hills by defeating local attempts to seize Sikh land and playing a neutral role in the power struggle between two of the sons of Shah Jahan, for control of the Mughal Empire.

The ninth Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur, moved the Sikh community to Anandpur and travelled extensively to visit and preach in defiance of Aurangzeb, who attempted to install Ram Rai as the new guru. Guru Tegh Bahadur aided Kashmiri Pandits in avoiding conversion to Islam and was arrested by Aurangzeb. When offered a choice between conversion to Islam and death, he chose to die rather than compromise his principles and was executed.

Guru Gobind Singh assumed the guruship in 1675 and to avoid battles with the rajas of the Shivalik hill moved the guruship to Paonta. There he built a large fort to protect the city and garrisoned an army to defend it. The growing power of the Sikh community alarmed the Shivalik hill rajas who attempted to attack the city but Gobind Singh's forces routed them at the Battle of Bhangani. He moved on to Anandpur and established the Khalsa, a collective army of baptized Sikhs, on 30 March, 1699. The establishment of the Khalsa united the Sikh community against various Mughal-backed claimants to the guruship. In 1701, a combined army of the Sivalik Hill rajas and the Mughals under Wazir Khan attacked Anandpur.

In late 1704, the tenth guru of the Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh called the Sikhs to join him in Anandpur Sahib, where he continued resistance against hill chiefs and Mughal forces. Among the hundreds who joined him were mothers, wives and sons, and the brothers of Mai Bhago. Though greatly outnumbered, the valiant Sikhs fought so cleverly and courageously that they could not be beaten. By the spring of 1705, the Mughals followed a cruel recourse by cutting off supply lines and hoped to starve the Sikhs. The Sikhs held out for seven months (from May until December) while supplies dwindled. Aware of the Sikh's desperate plight, the hill rajas offered a treaty of safe passage for anyone willing to leave Anandpur. Starving Sikhs coerced Guru Gobind Singh to accept terms of the treaty and leave the fortress. The Khalsa retreated but regrouped to defeat the Mughals at the Battle of Muktsar in 1705.

Guru Gobind Singh took the martyrdom of his innocent young sons, Baba Zorawar Singh and Baba Fateh Singh and that of his revered mother Mata Gujriji at Sirhind in 1704 at the behest of the then Mughal governor Wazir Khan with utmost seriousness and concern. After finishing his task at Talwandi Sabo he headed towards south India in pursuit of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. However, Aurangzeb passed away in 1707 while fighting in the South. In 1707, Guru Gobind Singh accepted an invitation by Aurangzeb's successor Bahadur Shah I to meet

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him. The meeting took place at Agra on 23 July 1707. The Guru was received with honour and stayed with the Emperor until November. In August 1708 Guru Gobind Singh visited Nanded. There he met a Bairâgî recluse, Madho Das, and converted him to Sikhism, giving him a new name, Banda Singh. From there in 1708, he dispatched Madho Dass Bairagi, now popularly known as Banda Singh Bahadur, to Punjab. He was assigned the mission of putting an end to the tyranny of the Mughal rule in Punjab. He was handed a *Hukamnâma* by Guru Gobind Singh, urging his devotees to follow him. Meanwhile, in Nanded, the Guru was attacked by two Pathans as per the orders of Wazir Khan of Sirhind. The Guru died on 7 October 1708.

Guru Gobind Singh's devotees known as Malwai and Mujhali joined Banda Singh Bahadur once he had crossed Delhi. The number of these devotees was in thousands. Thus, the combined forces of Banda Singh and the devotees were able to run over the areas of Sonapat, Kaithal, Samana, Kapuri, Shahbad and Chhat Banur. The huge army then campaigned at Chappar Chiri which was just twelve kilometres from Sirhind. On 12 May 1710, Wazir Khan was defeated by the huge Sikh force at Chappar Chiri and on 14 May, the Sikhs under the leadership of Banda Singh Bahadur took control of Sirhind.

Banda Singh Bahadur during his fight against the Mughals destroyed each and every city where the Mughals had ruled and had shown cruelty towards the followers of Sikhism and especially the followers of Guru Gobind Singh. He also executed Wazir Khan who was responsible for the death of the two sons of Guru Gobind Singh and Pir Budhu Shah. Banda Singh Bahadur controlled the land between the rivers Sutlej and the Yamuna. He made Lohgarh the capital of Sikhs. He even struck coinage in the names of Guru Nanak Dev and Guru Gobind Singh during his rule.

The success of Banda Singh Bahadur was detrimental for the Mughals and it enraged the Mughal emperor who issued strong imperative orders to the governor of Lahore to kill or capture the Sikh Chief Banda Singh Bahadur and his followers. The Mughal emperor also ordered several Mughal and Hindu rulers to attack the Sikhs wherever they came face to face with them. The emperor also ordered all the Mughal and Hindu rulers to march to Lahore with their armies with a mission to destroy the Sikhs. Several rulers including the Faujdars of Gujrat, Eminabad, Aurangabad, Pasrur, Batala, Patti, and Kalanaur, and the Hindu Rajas of Katauch and Jasrota marched to Lahore and assembled their forces at Lahore. They were all ready to fight against the Sikhs and Banda Singh. Banda Singh Bahadur, on the other hand, was aware of the preparations being made against him at Lahore. To protect himself and the Sikhs, Banda Singh decided to build a mud fortification at Kot Mirza, a small village between Kalanaur and Batala. The fort, however, could not be completed and before its completion the Sikhs were attacked by the combined forces of the Hindus and the Mughals. Banda Singh faced the armies of the Mughals and Hindus with all his might and bravery that surprised the Mughal and the Hindu armies and their chiefs. Despite his best efforts, Banda Singh was

forced to fall back upon Gurdas Nangal since he was not prepared to fight against the Mughals and the Hindus.

Gurdas Nangal was an old village and had no fort. The Sikhs upon being forced to step back by the Mughals and the Hindus had to take shelter in the *ihata* (enclosure) of Bhai Duni Chand. The enclosure was big enough to shelter Banda Singh and all his men and also had a strong wall around it. During their stay in this enclosure, the Sikhs and Banda Singh tried their best to accumulate all necessities, ration and ammunitions so that they could fight against the Hindus and the Mughals. They even dug a moat to gather enough water. The small army of Sikhs was able to defeat several enemies who attempted to fight against the Sikhs.

The Sikhs many times invaded the enemy camps and carried away whatever they could for their men. The Hindus and the Mughals were not able to catch the Sikhs even once and this struggle continued for months resulting in huge losses on both sides. The enemies were able to tighten their grasp around the Sikh enclosure and made it impossible for the Sikhs to even move out of their enclosure. The provisions the Sikhs had in stock were exhausted and in absence of food stocks, the Sikhs resorted to eating animals. Since they had no provision of firewood, the Sikhs ate raw flesh. Many Sikhs died due to dysentery while others were starved to death. They were even forced to eat rough plants. They were in such deplorable condition that they even resorted to eating human flesh. The battle of the Sikhs for their life continued for eight months after which their physical system got completely wrecked and many Sikhs died because of this. The place became unfit for human habitation because of the smell of the decayed and the decomposed bodies of the Sikhs. The Sikhs were unable to stay strong and defend themselves because of their condition but they were not ready to surrender. The Sikh enclosure of Gurdas Nangal fell into the hands of the Mughals on 17 December 1715. The Sikhs along with their leader Banda Singh Bahadur were captured and made prisoners. Banda Singh along with 700 Sikhs was sent to Delhi where they were tortured to death because they refused to convert to Islam.

After the death of Banda Singh Bahadur, there was lot of turbulence among the Sikhs and there was no able ruler or general who could help Sikhs regain their lost glory. The relations of the Sikhs and the Mughals further deteriorated and Sikhs gradually lost control over all their territories.

### **6.3.1 Sikhism and its Impact**

Guru Nanak got great satisfaction in serving the poor and needy. An important story of his childhood tells us that once his father gave him some money to start a business in the neighbouring town. On the way, Nanak saw some sadhus (hermits or sages) who had not eaten for many days. Nanak purchased food for them with the money given by his father and they had a good meal. When Nanak's father asked him what business venture he started with the money, he replied that he made a 'most profitable bargain'. On noticing that Nanak was not interested in business his father sent him to Sultanpur Lodhi, a town in Kapurthala district of

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Punjab. Here, Nanak was employed as a storekeeper by the local ruler. This duty was discharged by Nanak with great integrity.

It was during his stay at Sultanpur Lodhi that Nanak got his enlightenment. According to popular traditions, one morning when Nanak went for a dip in the river Beas flowing nearby, he was absorbed in the thoughts of God and was ushered into the divine presence. Blessed by the Almighty, Nanak came out of the river to preach the holy name of the God. The first words that Nanak uttered after his enlightenment were 'there is no Hindu and there is no Musalman'. At a time when the Hindus and the Muslims were engaged in sectarian conflicts, these words heralded Nanak's new mission of reconciliation of the two.

### Basic Elements of Sikhism

The basic concepts of Sikhism are discussed in the following section.

#### Concept of *Ishwar*

The basic belief of Sikhism is that God exists as a real entity and not just as an idea or a design. The Gurus have described God in numerous ways in their hymns that are included in the Guru Granth Sahib. These hymns emphasize on the unity of the deity.

The best definition that any Sikh can give to the concept of God in Sikhism is by quoting the *Mulmantra*—the fundamental creed of Sikhism, which occurs at the beginning of Sri Guru Granth Sahib. It is mentioned in the first verse of the Guru Granth Sahib as follows:

There exists but one God, who is called The True, The Creator, Free from fear and hate, Immortal, Not begotten, Self-Existent, Great and Compassionate.

Sikhism is a monotheistic religion and it urges its followers to practice strict monotheism. It believes in only one supreme God who, in the unmanifest form, is called Ek Omkara. In the manifest form, God is called Omkara and he has the following several attributes:

- Kartar (The Creator)
- Akal (The Eternal)
- Sattanama (The Holy Name)
- Sahib (The Lord)
- Parvardigar (The Cherisher)
- Rahim (The Merciful)
- Karim (The Benevolent)

He is also called as *Wahe Guru*—the one true God. Sikhism also does not believe in *Avataravada*, i.e., the doctrine of incarnation. It says that the Almighty God does not incarnate Himself in various *Avatars*. Sikhism is strongly against idol worship.

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Sikhism assumes that God is *Karta Purakh*, the maker being. He created the whole spatial universe not from some pre-existing forcible elements, but from his own self. So, the universe is his emission. It is not a *maya* or illusion but it is real. As Guru Arjan Singh said, 'True is He and true is His creation because all have exhaled from God himself.' But God is not identical with the universe. Rather, the universe is contained within him. Sikhism also believes that God is *Akal Murat* (eternal being) and *Nirbhay* (fearless). Thus, in Sikhism, God has been described in three different aspects, i.e., God in Himself, God's relation to creation and God's relation to man. God by himself is *nirguna* (without attributes). He is timeless, formless and boundless. Whenever it suits Him, he becomes *saguna* (with attributes) and sees himself in conception.

God's relation with man is unique as the latter is his most precious creation. He is the only species which has the ability to think and understand. It has been said by Guru Arjan that once the soul has been born as a human being, its endeavour should be to unite with God. For this, the human being should have a craving for the Lord. Sikhism assigns the following characteristics to God:

- Worship and meditation are only meant for God.
- He is the creator, upholder and also the destroyer.
- God is kind.
- God is wise.
- With His grace, he comes to stay in our mind and body.
- He is the ultimate protector of all living things.
- Only God's will can ensure that poverty, pain and disease are eradicated.
- God is everywhere.

Sikhism lays huge stress on equality between male and female, good work ethic and leading a righteous married life. Sikhism enunciated thus 'of all the religious rules and observances, *grihasthya* (the homestead) is supreme. It is from here that everything else is blessed.'

### Concept of *Shabad*

*Shabad* means hymn. In Sikhism, a *shabad* is a sacred song that is selected from Sikhism's scripture Guru Granth Sahib. *Shabad* is connected with *surti*, which has to be attuned to the melody of *shabad* to realize God. In this process, it becomes the Guru and *surti*, absorbed in its melody, is its follower. For achieving union of *surti* with *shabad*, one has to continuously remember God and try to mould one's life to truthful living. It is not a simple affair.

### Concept of Guru

Almost all the great religions of the world highlight the need of a preceptor or Guru or holy man for the achievement of salvation. The Vedas list the qualities of a religious guide. Even Guru Nanak has highlighted that bliss can be attained only through a Guru. Sikhism does not identify any chosen prophets. Guru Nanak Sahib did not insist on a human or physical Guru. Rather, his Guru was God Himself.

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The importance of the Guru in Sikhism can hardly be overemphasized. What is important in Sikhism is not the person but the word. It is said in Sikhism, 'The word is the Guru. The Guru is the word. If the devotee follows what the word says, surely the Guru will save him.' This is the reason why Guru Gobind Singh installed the Granth Sahib as the Guru of all times. He had observed that Sikhs do not need any man as their Guru as the word is now with them. Guru Arjan Sahib had said, 'Without a Guru, liberation cannot be won. The Guru is my boat, which will ferry me across the rough ocean of existence.'

Guru Granth Sahib is the living embodiment of the ten Gurus of the Sikhs. It is the living flame of the name, which lights the lamp of the disciple. There is no place for a living Guru in the Sikh religion because *Gurbani* is Guru and Guru is *Gurbani*. This is the permanent Guru concept of Sikhism. When a Sikh is in doubt about any principle of Sikhism, he refers the matter to the *Panth* for a decision or clarification. This is the progressive Guru concept of Sikhism.

### Check Your Progress

3. How did Guru Nanak receive enlightenment?
4. State the basic belief of Sikhism.

## 6.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Bhaktis were of the belief that there is a different reality that lies beyond the illusion of life; this should be first recognized that will set one free from the death and birth cycle or reincarnation.
2. The five prominent Sufi orders, Qadiri, Mujaddedi, Chishti, Naqshbandi and Shadhili that were named after the Shaykh pertaining to a specific order.
3. It was during his stay at Sultanpur Lodhi that Guru Nanak received enlightenment. According to popular traditions, one morning when Nanak went for a dip in the river Beas flowing nearby, he was absorbed in the thoughts of God and was ushered into the divine presence. Blessed by the Almighty, Nanak came out of the river to preach the holy name of the God. The first words that Nanak uttered after his enlightenment were 'there is no Hindu and there is no Musalman'. At a time when the Hindus and the Muslims were engaged in sectarian conflicts, these words heralded Nanak's new mission of reconciliation of the two.
4. The basic belief of Sikhism is that God exists as a real entity and not just as an idea or a design. The Gurus have described God in numerous ways in their hymns that are included in the Guru Granth Sahib.

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## 6.5 SUMMARY

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- Sufi teaching began with Sufism and the teaching was more focused on the relationship between the teacher and student.
- Even though Sufism emerged from the Islamic world, however, it still found a favourable ground in India due to the *khanqah* or the lodge or dormitory that was solely run by Sufis.
- It was due to the establishment of Sufi *khanqah* that the master-teacher and student relationship became stronger and fruitful.
- Music during the time of the Sultanate was infused with tradition and religious influence. The hymns sung in local language were popular and familiar to many people.
- The resolve of Sufi saints in abstinence from community and religious conflicts is something that helped in prevalence of peace amongst the masses. It can be said that due to this, peace prevailed during the Sultanate era and the two religions co-existed in harmony.
- Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak, a religious leader and a social reformer during the fifteenth century in the Punjab region.
- Generally, Sikhs had amicable relations with other religions. However, during the Mughal rule in India (AD1556–1707), the emerging religion had strained relations with the ruling Mughals.
- The basic belief of Sikhism is that God exists as a real entity and not just as an idea or a design. The Gurus have described God in numerous ways in their hymns that are included in the *Guru Granth Sahib*.
- Sikhism assumes that God is *Karta Purakh*, the maker being. He created the whole spatial universe not from some pre-existing forcible elements, but from his own self.
- In Sikhism, a *shabad* is a sacred song that is selected from Sikhism's scripture *Guru Granth Sahib*.

## NOTES

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## 6.6 KEY WORDS

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- **Khanqah:** It refers to a building which is designed specifically for gatherings of a Sufi brotherhood and is a place for spiritual retreat and character reformation.
- **Mysticism:** It refers to the practice of religious ecstasies, together with whatever ideologies, ethics, rites, myths, legends, and magic may be related to them.
- **Shabad:** It refers to a sacred song that is selected from Sikhism's scripture *Guru Granth Sahib*.

- **Silsila:** It refers to the primary mode of teaching with the Sufis that would be connected to the Shaykh of order and then it would be linked to the Prophet Muhammad.

## NOTES

### 6.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

#### Short-Answer Questions

1. What are the basic elements of Sikhism?
2. State the most important aspect of Sufism.
3. Write a short note on Syncretic Mysticism.
4. What was the effect of Sufism on music?
5. How is *shabad* connected with *surt*?
6. What are the basic attributes of God in Sikhism?

#### Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the importance of Sufi Tariqahs in promoting Sufism
2. Explain the various Sufi orders.
3. How did Sufism impact the Sultanate? Discuss in detail.
4. Explain the role of the ten Sikh gurus in promoting Sikhism.
5. Discuss the importance of Guru in Sikhism.

### 6.8 FURTHER READINGS

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**BLOCK - III**  
**VIJAYANAGAR AND BAHMINI RULERS**

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*Vijayanagar and Bahmini  
Kingdoms - I*

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**UNIT 7 VIJAYANAGAR AND  
BAHMINI KINGDOMS - I**

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**NOTES**

**Structure**

- 7.0 Introduction
- 7.1 Objectives
- 7.2 Glories of Vijayanagar Rulers
- 7.3 Glories of Bahmini Rulers
- 7.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 7.5 Summary
- 7.6 Key Words
- 7.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 7.8 Further Readings

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**7.0 INTRODUCTION**

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The Vijayanagara Empire was founded in the Deccan Plateau region in South India. It was established in 1336 by Harihara I and his brother Bukka Raya I of Sangama Dynasty. The empire rose to importance as a culmination of attempts by the southern powers to ward off Islamic invasions by the end of the 13th century. The Saluva dynasty was created by the Saluvas, who were natives of the Kalyani region of northern Karnataka in modern India.

The Bahmini Sultanate was a Muslim state of the Deccan in South India and one of the major medieval Indian kingdoms. It was the first independent Muslim kingdom in South India. The unit will discuss both these kingdoms in detail.

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**7.1 OBJECTIVES**

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the establishment of Vijaynagar empire
- Identify the rulers of Sangam dynasty
- Analyse the achievements of the Sangam dynasty
- Explain the methods adopted by the rulers of Saluva dynasty
- Discuss the glories of Bahmini rulers



## 7.2 GLORIES OF VIJAYANAGAR RULERS

### NOTES

During the last years of Muhammad Tughlaq's reign (AD 1324–1351), when disorder spread in most of the areas of his empire because of the mistaken policies and many regions declared their independence, the Hindus of South India also did not deter from taking advantage of the situation. They founded the Vijaynagar Empire in AD 1336 under the leadership of Harihar and Bukka, two of the five brothers namely Harihar, Kampa I, Bukka I, Marappa and Madhuappa. According to the inscriptions of the later kings, they were the sons of Chandervanshi Sangam of the Yadav family. Both these brothers were in the service of Pratap Rudra II of the Warrangal kingdom. When Gayasuddin Tughlaq conquered Warrangal in AD 1323, they came away to Kampili. In AD 1325, a cousin of Muhammad Tughlaq named Bahauddin Gurshasp revolted against him in Sagar and the Sultan himself suppressed the rebellion. Bahauddin sought refuge with the ruler of Kampili to his empire. Among the six officials whom Muhammad Tughlaq took as captives to Delhi were these two brothers also who either voluntarily or forcibly embraced Islam, and they became the favourites of the Sultan.

In AD 327–1328, a chain of revolts started against Muhammad Tughlaq in Bidar, Daulatabad, Gulberga, Mabbar, Telengana and Kampili. Muhammad Tughlaq dispatched Harihar and Bukka to Kampili in the South so that they should quell the rebellious Hindus and take over the reins of administration from the Governor of that place namely Malik Muhammad. What transpired in the South after the departure of these two brothers is not at all clear because of mutual contradictory accounts of Muslim historians and traditional stories of the Hindus. Still both sources agree on one point that soon after the two brothers gave up Islamic religion and founded the Vijaynagar Empire. They had founded this kingdom in Kampili (modern Karnataka state).

Under the influence of a saint, Vidyaranya, to immortalize their father's memory and declared themselves independent of the control of Muhammad Tughlaq. This empire was ruled by three successive dynasties between AD 1336 and AD 1565 namely Sangam Dynasty, (AD 1336–1485), Saluba Dynasty (AD 1485–1506) and Tuluva Dynasty (AD 1506–1565). Out of these three, the first two dynasties were contemporaneous with the united Bahmani Kingdom and the third was the contemporary of the five Muslim kingdoms namely Bidar, Berar, Bijapur, Ahmednagar and Golkunda that arose on the decline of the Bahamani Empire.

Following is a brief account of the rise and fall of the Vijaynagar Empire or a brief political description of its rulers:

### **Sangam Dynasty (1336–1485)**

Let us analyse the various rulers of the Sangam dynasty.

**(i) Harihar I (AD 1336–1353)**

After laying the foundation of the Vijaynagar Empire in collaboration with his brother Bukka, Harihar first of all forced the area of Gutti and neighbourhood to acknowledge his suzerainty on the southern bank of the river Tungabhadra at a place called Anegandi. They established the city of Vijaynagar. On 18 April, 1336 Harihar accomplished his coronation ceremony according to Hindu rites. With the help of his brother Bukka, Harihar started extension of his empire rapidly. In AD 1346 Ballal, the last Hoysala king was killed in a campaign against the Kingdom of Ma'bar. Taking advantage of this situation, Harihar annexed the Hoysala kingdom to the Vijaynagar Empire. Before his death, Harihar extended his kingdom along the sea coast east to west in the areas, in the north to river Krishna and the river Kaveri in the South.

In the reign of Harihar I, the first struggle against the Bahamani Empire (established in AD 1346) took place when he established his control over the fort of Raichur situated between the river Krishna and Tungabhadra. Harihar compensated to some extent the loss of Raichur fort by attacking the Kingdom of Ma'bar in AD 1356 and achieving success in acquiring certain areas from Ma'bar. Harihar I not only extended his kingdom but also prepared an outline of its administrative system. Following the Kakatiya ideal, he organized his kingdom into Sathals and Nadus and appointed Brahmin officials to run the administration. He also paid attention to the progress of agriculture.

**(ii) Bukka I (AD 1353–1377)**

According to some scholars, Bukka I had become joint ruler with his brother as early as AD 1346 and had his capital at Gutti but after his brother Harihar's death in AD 1353, he succeeded him as the sole heir and ruled till AD 1377. He sent his ambassador to establish diplomatic relations with China. He was mostly engaged in conflict with the Bahmani Sultans, Muhammad I and Mujahid which resulted in great ruin of Vijaynagar. During his time, there were three conflicts between Vijaynagar and the Bahmani Empire (AD 1360, 1365 and 1367). The main cause of the conflict was the ambition of both the kingdoms to establish their control over Raichur Doab. Being situated in the midst of rivers Krishna and Tungabhadra, this area was very fertile. But Bukka was not successful in this campaign and he could not regain the Raichur Doab which was lost during the time of Harihar.

When Muhammad II ascended the throne of Gulbarga in AD 1378, the conflict between these two states came to a halt because the new Bahmani Sultan was peace loving. In the reign of Bukka I, his son Kampan achieved success in defeating the sultan of Ma'bar. He forced the northern and southern Arcot to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Vijaynagar Empire. According to a Sanskrit poem named 'Madura Vijayam' written by Kaman's wife Ganga Devi, he achieved his success between AD 1365 and 1370. Bukka I died in AD 1377. He was a great warrior, statesman and a lover of knowledge. Following a tolerant and liberal policy, he established a feeling of unity between the followers of Jainism and Vaishnav

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sects. Undoubtedly, he could not recover the Raichur area from the Bahmani empire but they did not lose any area of their empire either.

He got many old temples repaired and with the help of many Hindu scholars got literary works composed on religion, philosophy and law chief amongst which is the commentary on the Vedas written by Sayanacharya. Praising the strength and prosperity of the Vijaynagar Empire during his time, Farishta writes that the Bahmani rulers maintained their superiority on the basis of their bravery whereas the rulers of Vijaynagar far excelled them in strength, wealth and extent of the empire.

### (iii) Harihar II (1377–1404)

After Bukka I, his son Harihar II ascended the throne and he ruled for twenty-seven years (AD 1377–1404) and consolidated the power of Vijaynagar Empire in the whole of South India. He assumed the titles of Maharajadhiraj and Rajpameshwar. He was a great warrior and conqueror. He established his control over the areas of Canara, Mysore, Kanchi, Trichnapalli and Chingliput. In AD 1398, his son Bukka Rai II invaded the Bahamani kingdom for establishing his control over the Raichur Doab.

The Bahamani ruler Firozshah defeated him. In 139, a peace treaty was concluded in which the ruler of Vijaynagar had to pay a big indemnity. Harihar II died in August 1404 and his death was followed by a war for succession amongst his sons. In this struggle his third son Devrai I succeeded ultimately. During the period of struggle at first Virupaksha became the ruler from whom the throne was snatched by Bukka II after only a few months and he ruled for two years (AD 1405–1406). He was followed by Devrai I on the 5 November AD 1406.

### (iv) Devrai I (AD 1406–1422)

During his reign Devrai I came into conflict with the Bahamani Sultan Firozshah. Two causes are attributed to this conflict. According to one description, it was caused by the firm ambition of Firozshah to carry on a Jihad (religious war) against Vijaynagar whereas according to Farishta the blind love of Devrai for a beautiful daughter of a farmer of Mudgal was the cause of this conflict. Whatever be the case, Firoz initially suffered a defeat in the ensuing conflict but later on Devrai was defeated and according to the terms of the treaty, he had to marry his daughter to Firozshah and surrender the fort of Bankapur.

On the other hand, the Reddis of Kondavidu invaded Vijaynagar and took away Udaigiri which Vijaynagar kings could only reconquer in AD 1413. During peacetime, Devrai gave attention to the construction works. He constructed a dam on the river Tungabhadra and diverted canals from there to get away with the water scarcity in the city. The canals were used to irrigate the neighbouring fields as well. He also built a dam on the river Haridra. For irrigation purposes, these canals added about 3½ lacs to the royal revenue. It was during the time of this ruler that the Italian traveler Nicolo Conti came to Vijaynagar and he has given a vivid description of the city.

During Devrai's reign, ample grants were given to the temples and the priests. After the death of Devrai (AD 1422) for a few months, his son Ramchandra ascended the throne followed by his second son Vir Vijay Rai. Various guesses are made about the reign period of this ruler. According to Nilkantha Shastri, his reign period roughly covered the period between AD 1422–1426. Probably he suffered defeat at the hands of the Bahmani ruler Ahmadshah and had to give an enormous sum as the war indemnity.

**(v) Devrai II (AD 1426–1446)**

Vijay Rai was followed by his son Devrai II on the throne in AD 1426. In AD 1428, he conquered and annexed the Kingdom of Kondavidu. Then he launched an attack on the Gajpati kingdom of Orissa because after the integration of Knodavidu kingdom with Vijaynagar, a struggle ensued amongst their feudatories but the struggle between Vijaynagar and Orissa was not prolonged because of the intervention of Allauddin of Rajmundri and a compromise was reached. Later on, Devrai defended the Reddi kingdom from the Kalinga invading army. Devrai invaded and annexed the Kerala Kingdom to the Vijaynagar Empire. Devrai II was not only a great conqueror but was also a great organizer, and a patron of art and literature. To recognize his army, he not only recruited the Muslims in it but also added to the number of horses in it and arranged for training in archery.

According to Farishta, he recruited about 2,000 Muslims in his army and gave Jagirs to them. These Muslim soldiers trained the Hindus in the art of archery, but some historians do not accept this statement of Farishta on the excuse that on the basis of historical sources, it is proved beyond doubt that there were about 10,000 Muslim soldiers in the army of Devrai. He also imported horses from Arab countries in very large number. Undauntedly, the efforts of Devrai II resulted in an improvement in the army but at the same time burdening the state economy though Devrai II extended his patronage to many literates and poets as well. Famous Telugu poets Shrinath was the court poet of Devrai II. It is said that he was showered with an immense quantity of gold coins. Devrai II was probably a liberal from the religious point of view. He gave full freedom to the Muslims to construct mosques in his kingdom. His reign saw the sojourn of the famous Persian poet Abdurrazaq to Vijaynagar. He had greatly praised Vijaynagar and Devrai II. This great ruler died about in middle of AD 1446.

**(vi) Mallikarjun or Devrai the elder (AD 1446–1466)**

After the death of Devrai II, at first Vijayrai II ascended the throne, followed soon in May 1447 by his own son in AD 1447, Mallikarjun who is also called Devrai the elder. During his reign period, the decline of Vijaynagar Empire started. He was unable to check the invasions of the Gajpatis of Orissa and the Bahamani Sultans and had to sign on humiliating treaties. Dissensions and disorder became rampant everywhere in the kingdom. Probably, he died in July AD 1465 and Virupaksha II became his successor. Howsoever incapable Devrai the elder might have been from military point of view, he maintained the love of his predecessors towards the Hindu culture. He gave grants to the Brahmins and the temples.

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### **(vii) Virupaksha II (AD 1465–1485)**

He is said to be the last ruler of the Sangam Dynasty. He was a very luxury-loving ruler and used to drink excessively. During his time, both the internal revolts as well as foreign invasions were accelerated. A great part of the empire along with the regions of Goa, Damol and Chaol went over to the Bahmani Empire. The greatest blow to his power was dealt at the Eastern coast where his authority was reduced to being only a nominal. But the powerful chieftain of Chandgiri named Narsinga Saluva also rendered some valuable services to the Vijaynagar Empire.

He started a campaign against the Gajpatis of Orissa, occupied Udaipur, and suppressed the Kapileshwar. He drove out the Orissians from the eastern Coast and himself occupied the Godavari regions. In AD 1485, the eldest son of Virupaksha II assassinated his father but seated his younger brother Pachha Rao on the throne instead of ascending himself. He, in turn, assassinated his elder brother and himself got immersed in luxury. In such a situation, Saluva Narsingh of Chandgiri attacked Vijaynagar, conquered it and began the reign of the Saluva dynasty in Vijaynagar.

### **Saluva dynasty (AD 1486–1505)**

Let us analyse the various rulers of the Saluva dynasty.

#### **(i) Saluva Narsingh**

He founded the second ruling dynasty of Vijaynagar in AD 1486. He ruled for six years. He had to spend his time and energy in fighting against many feudatories and bringing them under control. He achieved success against his integral enemies but was defeated and captured by Gajpati Purshottam of Orissa. He had to give over to Purshottam the fort of Udaigiri and the neighbouring region only then he was released from the prison but he achieved victory over Tulu region and the port areas of Honavar, Battakul, Baknur and Mongolore so that he could resume the horse trade with the Arab countries. He died in AD 1491. The greatest contribution of Saluva Narsingh is that he saved Vijaynagar from an imminent ruin and reconquered the entire area, lost his preceding rulers of Vijaynagar.

#### **(ii) Regent Narsa Naik and Immadi Narsingh (AD 1493–1504)**

Saluva Narsingh was followed on the throne by his eldest son, Immadi Narsingh. He was a minor, therefore, Commander Narsa Naik became his regent. Gradually, however, he usurped the entire power. When the prime came of age there was a difference of opinion between the two where upon the commander imprisoned him in the fort of Penukonda. For the next twelve to thirteen years Narsa Naik was the real ruler of Vijaynagar. In April AD 1493, he snatched many forts of Raichur Doab from Kasim of Bidar. But due to the lack of discipline in the army, the victory soon turned into defeat. Raichur and Mukdala were again lost. He, however, waged a successful campaign against the rulers of Bijapur, Bidar, Ma'bar and Shrirangapattam. From the inscriptions of his successors, it is proved that he forced the Chera, Chola and Gajpati rulers to accept the suzerainty of the

Vijaynagar empire. In AD 1503 continued regent, Narsa Naik died and was followed by his son Vir Narsingh who was also a regent.

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### **Tuluva Dynasty (AD 1505–1565)**

Let us analyse the various rulers of the Tuluva Dynasty

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#### **(i) Vir Narsingh (AD 1505)**

According to some historians, Vir Narsingh founded the Tuluva dynasty in AD 1505. During his time there were revolts everywhere. He suspected his stepbrother Krishna of harbouring rebellious tendencies and ordered his Prime Minister Saluva Tikka to take out his eyes who, however, freed Krishna, taking mercy on his tender age and befooled Vir Narsingh by showing him the eyes of a goat. Probably, in AD 1505, Vir Narsingh died and his cousin brother Krishnaria became the ruler of Vijaynagar thus founding the third ruling dynasty of Vijaynagar in real sense.

#### **(ii) Krishnadeva Raya (AD 1505–1529)**

Krishnadeva Raya is supposed to be the real founder of the third dynasty of Vijaynagar. He ascended the throne on 8 August AD 1505. He had to face many problems at the time of his accession. But, gradually, he overcame all the difficulties and began an era of successes for Vijaynagar again. The rebellious feudal chieftain of Ummutur wanted to occupy a very large part of Karnataka. The Gajapati rulers of Orissa had under their control the northeastern districts of Vijaynagar Empire and the ruler Prataprudra had assumed an attitude of open hostility and aggression. Though the Bahamani kingdom had been divided into five parts, yet there was a pressure from the side of the Bijapur state.

The Portuguese were fast assuming control over the Ocean trade. In spite of all these difficulties, Krishnadeva Raya achieved some important successes during the years of his reign which were as follows: (a) In AD 1509, he defeated the ruler of Bihar, Sultan Manmudshah, near Adoni. He had attacked Vijaynagar seeing Krishnadeva Raya surrounded by many difficulties; (b) In AD 1510, he suppressed the rebellious chieftain of Ummutur; (c) In AD 1512, Krishnadeva Raya started a campaign against Yusuf Adilshah of Bijapur and took away the Raichur Doab from him. Then he turned his attention towards Prataprudra Gajpatti of Orissa so that the eastern parts of the empire should be snatched from him. He organized a separate campaign to conquer each fort and arranged for the sending of confidential commanders to organize their administration after their conquests.

In AD 1514, he captured the fort of Udaigiri and imprisoned the uncle and aunt of the ruler of Orissa. His inscriptions speak of his achieving success in conquering many small forts like Achhanaki, Venukonda, Belankonda, and Nagarijunkonda. He also occupied the fort of Kondavidu. He remained in his capital from AD 1516–1519. The last victory of Krishnadeva Raya was against the ruler of Bijapur, Khan Ismile Adilshah. He tried to reconquer the area of Raichur Doab and dashed to the ground the famous fort of Gulburga and thus, the influence of Vijaynagar became supreme over all the kingdoms of the South. But the results

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of these victories were that Krishnadev himself became very playful and placed inciting conditions before the rulers of the defeated kingdoms.

He detained the emissary of Adilshah for about a month in his own kingdom and sent a message that if Sultan Adilshah came and prostrated himself before Krishnadeva Raya and kissed his feet, only then would he return all his forts and other areas. The five Muslim kingdoms, which rose on the disintegration of the Bahamani kingdom, gradually realized the growing power of Vijaynagar and a feeling of combining against Vijaynagar gained ground amongst them. Krishnadeva Raya died in about AD 1529.

### Check Your Progress

1. What was the greatest contribution of Saluva Narisingh under his reign?
2. How did Harihar I organized his kingdom?
3. What was the main cause of conflict between Vijaynagar and the Bahmani Empire?

## 7.3 GLORIES OF BAHMINI RULERS

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

As a result 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.

### **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

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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 force 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 Gulbura 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 Affairs), Nazir (Deputy Finance Minister), Peshwa (Deputy Prime-Minister), Kotwal and Sadar IJahan (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 Telengana. He acquired Golkunda after defeating Telengana but his wars against Vijaynagar failed to bring 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.

**Gayasuddin 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.

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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 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 Narnala and Nsir 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 Afaquis 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 Afaquis 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 Afaquis 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 Afaquis 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 Makdoo-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

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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. Mahraud 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 to 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 Purushotan 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 Bechamani 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 to 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.

### Check Your Progress

4. What was the policy adopted by Allauddin Hasaan Bahamani?
5. Why is Shihabuddin Admad II considered as the first Sultan of the Bahamanis of Bidar?
6. How was Humayun Shah assassinated?

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## 7.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The greatest contribution of Saluva Narisingh under his reign was that he saved Vijaynagar from an imminent ruin and reconquered the entire area, lost his preceding rulers of Vijaynagar.
2. Following the Kakatiya ideal, Harihar I organized his kingdom into Sathals and Nadus and appointed Brahmin officials to run the administration. He also paid attention to the progress of agriculture.
3. The main cause of conflict between Vijaynagar and the Bahmani Empire was the ambition of both the kingdoms to establish their control over Raichur Doab. Being situated in the midst of rivers Krishna and Tungabhadra, this area was very fertile.
4. Allauddin Hasaan Bahamani 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.
5. Shihabuddin Admad II considered 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.
6. Humayun Shah 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.

## 7.5 SUMMARY

- During the last years of Muhammad Tughlaq's reign (AD 1324–1351), when disorder spread in most of the areas of his empire because of the mistaken policies and many regions declared their independence, the Hindus of South India also did not deter from taking advantage of the situation.

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- Vijaynagar Empire was founded in AD 1336 under the leadership of Harihar and Bukka, two of the five brothers namely Harihar, Kampa I, Bukka I, Marappa and Madhuappa.
- In AD 1327–1328, a chain of revolts started against Muhammad Tughlaq in Bidar, Daulatabad, Gulberga, Mabar, Telengana and Kampili.
- After laying the foundation of the Vijaynagar Empire in collaboration with his brother Bukka, Harihar first of all forced the area of Gutti and neighbourhood to acknowledge his suzerainty on the southern bank of the river Tungabhadra at a place called Anegandi.
- In the reign of Harihar I, the first struggle against the Bahamani Empire (established in AD 1346) took place when he established his control over the fort of Raichur situated between the river Krishna and Tungabhadra.
- The five Muslim kingdoms, which rose on the disintegration of the Bahamani kingdom, gradually realized the growing power of Vijaynagar and a feeling of combining against Vijaynagar gained ground amongst them. Krishnadeva Raya died in about AD 1529. 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).
- 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.
- As a result of the fantastic plans and defects of the character of Muhammad Tughlaq there was a wide spread feeling of revolt against him everywhere.
- Zafar Khan soon became very popular amongst the Amirs and the army because of his many achievements.
- After the death of Allauddin Hassan Bahmanshan, his son Muhammad I ascended the throne on 11 February, AD 1358.
- Tajuddin was a very healthy and an intelligent Sultan. According to Ferishta, he was the blessed of the Sultans of Bahamani Kingdom.
- Shihabuddin Admad II 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).
- 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.

## 7.6 KEY WORDS

- **Doab:** It refers to rich tract of land lying between two converging, or confluent, rivers.
- **Nizar:** It refers to the position of a native court official who acts as a treasurer and perform other similar duties.
- **Sunnis:** It refers to the member of the largest branch of Islam. A Sunni is a Muslim who believes that the caliph Abu Bakr was the rightful successor to Muhammad after his death.

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## 7.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

### Short-Answer Questions

1. List the revolts started against Muhammad Tughlaq during AD 327–1328.
2. What were the measures adopted by Muhammad Tughlaq to establish consolidated administration in his reign?
3. How did the first struggle take place during the reign of Harihar I?
4. What were the main achievements of Krishnadeva Raya?
5. Write a short note on the life of Bakka I.
6. What kind of constructions took place during the reign of Devrai I?
7. Why did Shihabuddin Admad II shifted his capital from Gulburga to Bidar?

### Long-Answer Questions

1. How was Vijayanagar empire founded? Discuss in detail.
2. Explain the strategies adopted by the rulers of the Sangam dynasty.
3. 'Devrai II was not only a great conqueror but was also a great organizer.' Analyse the statement.
4. Discuss the life of the last ruler of the Sangam dynasty.
5. Why is Krishnadeva Raya considered as the real ruler of Vijayanagar? Explain.
6. Discuss the establishment of the Bahmini kingdom.



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## 7.8 FURTHER READINGS

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### NOTES

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## UNIT 8 VIJAYANAGAR AND BAHMINI KINGDOMS - II

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*Vijayanagar and Bahmini  
Kingdoms - II*

### NOTES

#### Structure

- 8.0 Introduction
- 8.1 Objectives
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  - 8.2.1 Development of Art and Architecture under the Vijayanagar Empire
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  - 8.2.3 Development of Art and Architecture under the Bahmini Empire
- 8.3 Decline of Vijayanagar and Bahmini Empire
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### 8.0 INTRODUCTION

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Vijayanagar Empire has been described by historians as Rome of India. Its capital Hampi, consists of various monuments, temples and palaces which had great architectural styles. The palaces are considered as the most impressive sites of Vijayanagar Empire. The rulers of the empire, especially Krishna Deva Raya contributed a lot and provided a rich culture of art and architecture in the Vijayanagar Empire.

During the Bahmini rule, most of the forts were built again and modified to suit military requirements. Forts such as the Gulbarga, Daulatabad, Gawilgarh, Narnala, Pargana and Raichur were built at strategic places and were great examples of architectural style. The architectural works of the Bahmini rule also include some idgahs which were built at Daulatabad, Gulbarga, Bidar and Kovilkonda. The prayer niches were also provided in the walls.

There were many causes which led to the downfall of Vijayanagar Empire and Bahmini Empire. A series of wars, despotic government, lack of a powerful successor after the death of Krishna Deva Raya, lack of control over provincial governors and social evils and so on were some of the causes which led to the fall of Vijayanagar Empire.

The Bahmini Empire ruled for 180 years approximately. There were several causes which led to the downfall of the empire. However, the most important cause was that the rulers were tyrants and mostly remained busy in fighting among themselves and with the neighbouring Vijayanagar Empire.

In this unit, the development of art and architecture of the Vijayanagar Empire and Bahmini Empire have been explained. The unit will also analyse the causes which led to the fall of these two empires.

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### 8.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the development of art and architecture under the Vijayanagar Empire.
- Identify the structure of various monuments and palaces of Hampi
- Explain the contribution made by Krishna Deva Raya under the Vijayanagar Empire
- Analyse the development of art and architecture under the Bahmini Empire
- Discuss the causes which led to the fall of Vijayanagar Empire and Bahmini Empire

### 8.2 ART AND ARCHITECTURE UNDER VIJAYANAGAR AND BAHMINI EMPIRE

Both the Vijayanagar Empire and the Bahmini Empire encouraged the development of art and architecture. You will read about the art and architecture of these Empires in this section.

#### 8.2.1 Development of Art and Architecture under the Vijayanagar Empire

The best examples of art and architecture of the Vijayanagar Empire are witnessed at Hampi, which was the capital city of this Empire.

#### **Hampi**

Founded by Harihara and Bukka in 1336, Hampi fell to the Muslim rulers of North India in 1565 after the disastrous battle of Talikota and subsequently lapsed into decline and abandonment. The ruins of the historical monuments have stood the ravages of man and time and still evoke memories of the grandeur of a bygone era.

It was set amidst an awesome boulder-strewn landscape along the banks of the Tungabhadra River, 12 km away from the sleepy town of Hospet in Bellary District. 'The city is such that the pupil of the eye has never seen a place like it, and the ear of intelligence has never been informed that there existed anything to equal it in the world,' marveled a 15th century Persian ambassador. The city had the following features:

- There were opulent palaces, marvellous temples, massive fortifications, baths, markets, aquaducts, pavilions, stables for royal elephants and elegantly carved pillars.
- This was a city whose merchants offered diamonds, pearls, fine silks, brocades, horses and according to one Portuguese visitor, ‘every sort of thing on earth’.

Most of the important structures and ruins are in two areas, which are generally referred to as the Royal Centre and the Sacred Centre. The Royal Centre in the southwest part of the site contains structures that seem to have been palaces, baths, pavilions, royal stables and temples for ceremonial use. The Sacred Centre is situated on the northern edge of the city along the banks of the holy Tungabhadra River.

Hampi has the following major marvelous examples of art and architecture:

- **King’s Palace:** It is the largest enclosure including two major platform structures, an underground chamber which must have served as a treasury or private audience hall, several other platforms, double fortification walls and several interesting architecture elements.
- **Mahanavami Dibba:** Equally impressive is the massive Mahanavami Dibba, where the king once sat on gem-studded golden thrones and watched processions pass by. The platform sports densely carved bands of horses, soldiers and depiction of the various aspect of courtly life.
- **Queen’s Bath:** It has a very plain exterior, but the interiors are stunningly ornate with graceful arched corridors projecting balconies and lotus shaped fountains that used to spout perfumed water for ladies of the court.
- **Lotus Mahal:** It is a visually appealing structure has two levels, with open pavilions at the bottom and balconies above. An elegant example of the fusion of the Hindu and Muslim style of architecture, the Mahal derives its name from the beautiful, geometrically-arranged cusped arches which resemble the petal of a flower opening to the sun.
- **Elephant Stables:** These are imposing edifices with an arched entrance and many domes that once housed the magnificent state elephant.
- **Pushkarni:** The stepped water tank, excavated in the mid-1980s, was originally a part of the palace complex. Almost lyrical in its beauty, the tank is a tiered structure crafted from rectangular pieces of granite.
- **Hazara Rama Temple:** It was a royal temple reserved for ceremonial use. The entire temple is embellished with bas-reliefs depicting the scenes from the Ramayana. The walls are richly carved with friezes, depicting processions of horses, elephants dancing girls and soldiers attired in

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splendid weaponry. Inside, four exquisitely sculpted granite pillars add to the beauty of *ardha mandapa*.

- **Vijaya Vittala Temple:** The Vijaya Vittala Temple is Hampi's crowning glory, with a magnificent stone chariot standing in the temple courtyard. Equally impressive is the large *ranga mantapa* with 56 musical pillars that resound with musical chimes when struck.
- **Virupaksha Temple:** Dedicated to Lord Shiva and his consort Padmadevi, this is the only temple that is still used for worship. Parts of the temple predate the Vijayanagar Empire. The temple, with nine storied gopuram towers is the other structure at Hampi. The ceiling of the *ranga mandapa* is beautifully painted with scenes from the Puranas.
- **Lakshminarasimha:** The 6.7 m monolith depicting the man-lion form of Vishnu is seated on a seven-hooded serpent.
- **Badavilinga:** Located next to the Lakshminarasimha statue, it is a 3m high monolithic Linga and its base stands permanently in water that flows around it.
- **Ganesha Images:** Two Ganesha images (Sasuvekalu and Kadalekalu) can be seen on the slopes of Hemakuta Hill. One of them is enclosed in a temple with unusually tall pillars, while the other is in an open hall.

### Features of Temple Structures

The following are the features of the temple structures:

- Vijayanagar temples are regularly surrounded by a strong enclosure.
- Small shrines comprise a garbhagriha (sanctum) and a porch.
- Medium sized temples have a garbhagriha, shukanasi (antechamber), a navaranga (antrala) linking the sanctum and outer mandapa (hall), and a ranga mantapa (enclosed pillared hall).
- Large temples possess tall Rayagopuram built with wood, brick and stucco in Chola style.
- The term Rayais added to show a gopura built by Vijayanagar Rayas.
- The summit of the gopuram has a shalashikhara looking like a barrel made to rest on its side.
- Large life-sized statues of men, woman, Gods and Goddesses adorn the gopuram.
- This Tamil dravida influenced style became famous during the rule of king Krishna Deva Raya and is witnessed in South Indian temples constructed over the next 200 years.

- The Chennakesava Temple in Belur and the temples at Srisailam and Srirangam are the examples of Rayagopuram.
- In addition to these structures, medium sized temples also possess a closed circumambulatory (Pradakshinapatha) passage around the sanctum, an open mahamantapa (large hall), a kalyanamantapa (ceremonial hall) and a temple tank to serve the requirements of yearly celebrations.
- Temple pillars regularly have engravings of charging horses or hippogryphs (Yali) — horses standing on hind legs with their fore legs lifted and riders on their backs. The horses on some pillars stand seven to eight feet tall. On the other side of the pillar are common carvings from Hindu mythology.
- Pillars that do not have such hippogryphs are usually rectangular with beautification on all sides. Some pillars have a bunch of smaller pillars around a central pillar shaft. The bottom supports of these pillars have pictures of Gods and Goddesses.
- Carvings of Hippogryphs evidently show the adroitness of the artists who created them.
- The mantapas have been constructed on square or polygonal plinths with carved friezes that are four to five feet high. They also have ornate stepped entrances on all four sides with miniature elephants or with Yali balustrades (parapets).
- The mantapas are supported by ornate pillars. The thousand pillared style with large halls supported by many pillars was admired; for example, the 1000 pillared Jain basadi at Mudabidri.
- Larger temples have a distinct shrine for the female deity. Hazara Rama, Balakrishna and Vitthala temples at Hampi are some examples of this.
- Some shrines in the Vitthalapura area within Vijayanagar were consecrated especially for Tamil Alwar saints and for the great Vaishnava saint, Ramanujacharya.
- Architecturally, they are dissimilar in that each shrine has a figure depicting the saint for whose worship the temple was constructed.
- Each place of pilgrimage has its own enclosure, and a separate kitchen and pilgrim feeding hall.

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### Palaces

The archaeological excavations at Hampi have revealed the palaces that the Vijayanagar Empire had built. Most palaces stand within their own complex defined by high tapering walls built by stone or layered earth. Palaces are approached via a sequence of courts with passageways and doorways requiring numerous alterations in direction. All palaces face east or north. The larger palaces have side

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extensions giving the complex a symmetrical shape. Palaces were constructed on raised platforms built of granite. The platforms have numerous tiers of mouldings with well-decorated friezes. The decorations can be floral, Kirtimukha shapes (demon faces), geese, elephants and sporadically human figures. Pillars, beams and rafters within the palace were made of wood as evidenced by ash found during excavations. The top was built of brick or lime concrete, while copper and ivory were employed for finials. Palaces usually comprised multiple levels with each flight of stairs beautified by balustrades on either side, with either yali (imaginary beast) or elephant sculptures. The doorway steps into palaces and temple mantapas were likewise decorated. Water tanks within the palace complex have ornamental water spouts such as the carved torso of the Nandi with a gaping mouth to permit water flow into the tank. Other structures usually found within a palace complex are wells and shrines.

### 8.2.2 Contributions of Krishna Deva Raya in Art and Architecture

Krishna Deva Raya built some of the wonderful temples and was a devotee of Lord Venkateshwara of Tirupati. He was much concerned about the wellbeing of the people and undertook usual tours of the Empire to get first-hand information. According to Domingo Paes, 'the city of Vijayanagar was as large as Rome, very beautiful and the best provided city in the world. Krishna Deva Raya built a new city near Vijayanagar and named it as Nagalapura after his mother Nagala Devi. He also constructed the Krishnaswamy and Vithalaswamy temples and a number of secular buildings in the imperial capital whose remains are still found at Hampi.' His name is associated with the Vittala Temple, the Krishna Temple and the Virupaksha Temple. Krishna Temple is a ruined temple, south of Hampi and Hemakuta hill. It was built by after his military campaigns in Orissa. The temple is contained in twin enclosures. Parts of the temple and its complex have collapsed, and while some renovation has been done, it is generally in poor condition.

Krishna Deva Raya was a major patron of the Virupashka Temple. The most elaborate of all structures in the temple, the central pillared hall, is said to be his addition to this temple; so is the gateway tower providing access to the inner courtyard of the temple. Inscriptions on a stone plaque installed next to the pillared hall discuss his contribution to the temple. It is recorded that Krishna Deva Raya commissioned this hall in AD 1510.

### 8.2.3 Development of Art and Architecture under the Bahmini Empire

We will in this section discuss the development of art and architecture under the Bahmini Empire.

#### Bijapur

The one-time capital of the Adil Shahi kings (1489-1686), Bijapur is dotted with mosques, mausoleums, palaces, fortifications, watchtowers and strong gateways, with the massive Gol Gumbaz dominating the landscape for miles around.

**Gol Gumbaz:** One will gaze in wonder at this magnificent mausoleum of Mohammed Adil Shah in Bijapur. An acoustic and architectural wonder, it houses the world's second largest dome, unsupported by pillars. Built in 1659, its most arresting features are the seven-storeyed octagonal pillars at the four corners and the heavy bracketed cornice below the parapet. The Gol Gumbaz is an enormous cube of stone and masonry, capped by gigantic domes. The amazing whispering gallery, distinctly echos the faintest whisper eleven times.

### **Bidar**

Bidar is the northern-most district of Karnataka. Medieval Bidar was widely renowned for its splendour, as a seat of learning, cultural marvels and as a capital city. Bidar is situated almost in the centre of 'geographical' Deccan and on the eastern border of the 'historical' Deccan. It was a meeting place of several shades of culture from the very beginning.

The history of Bidar had a lot of ups and downs and stories of treachery and bloodbath. However, it was also marked by good administration and development of art, architecture and literature. The historical monuments and sites, in and around Bidar city, belong to different periods of history- pre-Kakatiya, Tughluq, Bahmini, Barid Shahi, Adil Shahi, Mughal and Nizami. As far as the architecture is concerned, there is an intermixture of Hindu, Turkish and Persian artisanship. Some of the designs and decorative patterns seen in the monuments of Bidar are unique to India.

**Bidar Fort:** The fort is considered as one of the most formidable forts of the country. The main citadel complex housed the royal palaces, mahals and a mosque. Both the citadel complex and the city had separate forts for protection. The plan of the Bidar city fortification is pentagonal. There are five gateways for entry into the city fort. It is the main citadel complex fort which is considered the strongest. Engineers and architects of various countries were employed for its designing and construction.

**Bahmini Tombs:** The Bahmini Sultans were fond of constructing huge sepulchres or tombs/graves. Several majestic mausoleums of their period are at Ashtur, 4km east of Bidar. A visit to Bidar is incomplete without a visit to Ashtur.

In all there are twelve magnificent tombs in a row, which together give a very impressive look. Beautiful arches, niches and lofty domes all make up these tombs. The tomb of Ahamad Shah-al-Wali is known for its walls on which verses are written in gold with a dark background. The interior is decorated with fine paintings.

The tomb of Sultan Alauddin-Shah II consists of tile panels and carvings on the black stone margins of arches which are very impressive. Other tombs here are built up of trap masonry. The arches on the tombs are elegantly decorated with stucco work.

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**Madarasa of Mahmud Gawan:** Mahmud Gawan was considered a great lover of learning. He founded the Madarasa which was built and maintained on the lines of the Madarasa of Khurasan. This imposing and spacious institution is considered an architectural gem, and an important landmark of Bidar. The structure is rectangular in shape and is built on an area of 4624 sq. mt. The building is attractively decorated with blue tiles, the fragments of which can be seen even today.

The Madarasa was a three storeyed building housing a mosque, a library, lecture halls, professors' quarters and students' cubicles facing an open courtyard. Arabic, Persian, theology, philosophy, astronomy and mathematics were taught here, with free boarding and lodging facilities provided.

The tomb of Mahmud Gawan situated on a wide platform to the south of Bidar city is a simple structure with a stone tablet speaking about a 'martyr without fault' and his 'unjust execution'.

### **Gulbarga**

Gulbarga, the largest district in Karnataka, is a land where the past melds with the present. This historically rich region of the Deccan has been part of a number of kingdoms, prominent among which are the Rashtrakutas and the Bahminis. A treasure home of architectural delights, Gulbarga is justly famous for the grandeur of the many Indo-Saracenic monuments that dot the landscape. Making it a destination that takes one back through the pages of history.

**Gulbarga Fort:** Said to have been built originally by Raja Gulchand of Warangal, Gulbarga Fort was later strengthened by Alauddin Bahaman. The Fort, occupying an area of 20 acres with a circumference of 3 km has a double fortification with a 30 ft moat between the walls and reflects a blend of West Asian and European military architecture. The cannons used by the Bahminis, including one of 25 ft, are placed inside the Fort.

**Jumma Masjid:** Completed in 1367, this grand mosque inside the Fort is a delightful monument that is still well-preserved. Resembling the mosque at Cardova in Spain, the Jumma Masjid covers an area of over 38,000 sq. ft. Five large domes and 250 arches add to the beauty of this mosque, which displays a strong Persian touch in its architecture.

**Dargah of Khwaja Banda Nawaz:** A Sufi saint who lived in Gulbarga from 1407 to 1422, Khwaja Banda Nawaz, is revered by Muslims and people of other faiths. His dargah has verses from the Quran, painted in gold as well as paintings in the Turkish and Iranian styles. A library in the premises has over 10,000 rare books on history, philosophy and religion. The annual Urs of the saint on the 15th of the Zakid month draws devotees from around the country.

### Check Your Progress

1. What were the main features of Hampi city?
2. Why is Bidar Fort considered as one of the most formidable forts of the country?
3. What is the structure of the Lotus Mahal?

### NOTES

## 8.3 DECLINE OF VIJAYANAGAR AND BAHMINI EMPIRE

We will in this section discuss the decline of Vijayanagar and Bahmini Empire.

### 8.3.1 Vijayanagar Empire

Vijayanagar became the supreme power of the Deccan by AD 1560. For about twenty months, Ram Rai kept his control over the Muslim rulers. It would not be wrong to say that the military might of Vijayanagar kept under control the three Muslim kingdoms of Ahmadnagar, Golkunda and Bidar and kept Bijapur at the mercy of Vijayanagar.

### Decline of Vijayanagar 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 Vijayanagar and decided to come together, forgetting their mutual differences. All the Muslim states decided to enter a confederation against Vijayanagar. Vijayanagar 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 war of Rakshasi – Tangdi. Ferishta writes that the rulers of Vijayanagar 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 Vijayanagar.

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 Vijayanagar 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

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and until the power of Vijayanagar was suppressed. The naughty behavior of Ram Rai of Vijayanagar 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 Vijayanagar 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 Vijayanagar that he should return the forts of Raichur and Mudgal. Ram Rai did not heed the demand. Then the combined Muslim armies of the Deccan Sultans advanced towards Vijayanagar (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, the Muslim artillery spelled ruin in the Vijayanagar army and its cavalry disordered them. In the time of this crisis, the Muslim generals in the Vijayanagar army went over to the side of their co-religionists along with their armies and dealt a fatal blow during 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 Vijayanagar and encamped there for five months and perpetrated massacre, plunder, desecration and destruction in such a manner that Vijayanagar 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 Vijayanagar Empire is said to have ended after this war. Although the Vijayanagar Empire continued to shrink and lost its political significance in South India, the next ruler Tirumal entered 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 Vijayanagar came to an end and was founded the Aravidue dynasty.

The chief rulers of this dynasty were-Tirumal Rai (AD 1568-1572), Shir Ranga I (AD 1572–1585), Venkata Rai Ii (AD 1586–1614), Shir Ranga Ii (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.

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### **Causes of the Conflict between Vijayanagar and Bahmini Empires**

Let us analyse the causes of the conflict between Vijayanagar and Bahmini 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 Ria I, Harishar II etc.

#### **Diamond mines**

Some historians are of the opinion that there were diamond mines in the Golkunda region of Bahmini Empire and the rulers of Vijayanagar 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 Vijayanagar 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 Vijayanagar 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 Bahmini Empire's boundary.

#### **Growing Power of Vijayanagar**

By AD 1560, Vijayanagar 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 Vijayanagar. This growing power of Vijayanagar terrorized the Muslim Sultanates of the Deccan and forgetting their mutual differences, they decided to form a confederation and launch a struggle against Vijayanagar.

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### Hurting the religious sentiments of the Muslims by Vijayanagar

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

### 8.3.2 Bahmini Empire

Many causes were responsible for the decline of the Bahmini Kingdom. The chief causes were as follows:

- (i) **Internal intrigues and Civil Wars:** In its 175 years of reign the Bahmini 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 Shahabuddin Mahmud, the Queen mother ordered Khan-i-Jahan to be hanged.
- (ii) **Partisanship of the Deccanis (original inhabitants) and the Afakis (foreign settlers):** Some historians say that the Bahmini Kingdom was founded by those Amirs who had come and settled in India from Persia and Turkey. There was a deep enmity between them and the original inhabitants the Deccanis who had embarrassed Ismaila. 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 Bahmini Kingdom for thirty-five years, but the party politics led to his assassination and within a short time after his death, the Bahmini Kingdom disintegrated.
- (iii) **Religious fanaticism of some rulers:** Some of the Bahmini rulers were religious fanatics and they did not show real sympathy towards their Hindu subjects. The Bahmini 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 number of times, which aroused the fanaticism of the Hindus as well, and thus the Bahmini Empire grew weak progressively.
- (iv) **Defective Foreign Policy:** Bahmini Sultans followed a policy of warfare and enmity towards all their neighbouring states like Malwa, Khandesh, Gujarat and Telangana, Vijayanagar. 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 Bahmini Kingdom.

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Kingdoms - II*

- (v) **Excessive authority given to Provincial Governors:** Ever since the time of founders of the Bahmini 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 Bahmini 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 Bahmini court, administrative defects and a protected struggle against Vijayanagar and other kingdoms contributed to its downfall.

## NOTES

### Check Your Progress

4. State any one cause for the downfall of Bahmini Empire.
5. Name the five independent kingdoms of Bahmini Empire.
6. List the rulers of Aravidue dynasty.

## 8.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The following were the main features of the Hampi city:
  - (a) There were opulent palaces, marvellous temples, massive fortifications, baths, markets, aqueducts, pavilions, stables for royal elephants and elegantly carved pillars.
  - (b) This was a city whose merchants offered diamonds, pearls, fine silks, brocades, horses and according to one Portuguese visitor, ‘every sort of thing on earth’.
2. Bidar Fort is considered as one of the most formidable forts of the country because of its construction and design. The main citadel complex housed

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the royal palaces, mahals and a mosque. Both the citadel complex and the city had separate forts for protection. The plan of the Bidar city fortification is pentagonal. There are five gateways for entry into the city fort. It is the main citadel complex fort which is considered the strongest.

3. The Lotus Mahal is a visually appealing structure has two levels, with open pavilions at the bottom and balconies above. An elegant example of the fusion of the Hindu and Muslim style of architecture, the Mahal derives its name from the beautiful, geometrically-arranged cusped arches which resemble the petal of a flower opening to the sun.
4. An important cause of the downfall of the Bahmini 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 Bahmini court, administrative defects and a protected struggle against Vijayanagar and other kingdoms contributed to its downfall.
5. The five independent kingdoms of Bahmini Empire were: (1) Baridshahi Kingdom of Bidar, (2) Adilshahi Kingdom of Bijapur, (3) Nizamshahi Kingdom of Ahmednagar, (4) Imadshahi Kingdom of Berar and (5) Qutubshahi Kingdom of Golkunda.
6. The chief rulers of Aravidue dynasty were-Tirumal Rai (AD 1568-1572), Shir Ranga I (AD 1572–1585), Venkata Rai Ii (AD 1586–1614), Shir Ranga Ii (AD 1614–1617), Ramdev Rai (AD 1618–1630), Venkata III (AD 1630–1642) and Shir Ranga III (AD 1642–1649).

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## 8.5 SUMMARY

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- Both, the Vijayanagar Empire and the Bahmini Empire encouraged the development of art and architecture.
- The best examples of art and architecture of the Vijayanagar Empire are witnessed at Hampi, which was the capital city of this Empire.
- Founded by Harihara and Bukka in 1336, Hampi fell to the Muslim rulers of North India in 1565 after the disastrous battle of Talikota and subsequently lapsed into decline and abandonment.
- The Vijaya Vittala Temple is Hampi's crowning glory, with a magnificent stone chariot standing in the temple courtyard.
- The archaeological excavations at Hampi have revealed the palaces that the Vijayanagar Empire had built. Most palaces stand within their own complex defined by high tapering walls built by stone or layered earth.

- Palaces usually comprised multiple levels with each flight of stairs beautified by balustrades on either side, with either yali (imaginary beast) or elephant sculptures.
- Krishna Deva Raya built some of the wonderful temples and was a devotee of Lord Venkateshwara of Tirupati.
- Vijayanagar became the supreme power of the Deccan by AD 1560. For about twenty months, Ram Rai kept his control over the Muslim rulers.
- Vijayanagar had inflicted greatest harm on Ibrahim Qutubshah and Hussain Nizamshah. Therefore, they took the keenest interest into the formation of the confederation.
- Initially, the armies of Muslim confederation were defeated but later, the Muslim artillery spelled ruin in the Vijayanagar army and its cavalry disordered them.
- Some scholars are of opinion that the rulers of both the Vijayanagar 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.
- The Vijayanagar armies not only desecrated the mosque but also insulted the Holy Quran. This led the Sultanates rising on the decline of Bahmini kingdom to come together in a fight against Vijayanagar.
- Some historians say that the Bahmini Kingdom was founded by those Amirs who had come and settled in India from Persia and Turkey.
- Some of the Bahmini rulers were religious fanatics and they did not show real sympathy towards their Hindu subjects.
- Some historians hold opinion that an important cause of the downfall of the Bahmini Empire was financial disparity prevailing there.

## NOTES

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### 8.6 KEY WORDS

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- **Confederation:** It refers to an organization which comprises of a number of parties or groups in an alliance.
- **Fortification:** It refers to a type of defensive wall or other reinforcement in a monument built to strengthen a place against attack.
- **Mausoleum:** *It refers to* an impressive building housing a tomb or group of tombs.
- **Sepulchers:** It refers to a small room or monument which is cut in rock or built of stone and in it a dead person is buried.



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## 8.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### NOTES

#### Short-Answer Questions

1. How was the royal temple of Hampi designed?
2. Why is the Vijaya Vittala Temple Hampi's crowning glory?
3. What was the role of Krishna Deva Raya in developing architecture in Vijayanagar?
4. Why was Mahmud Gawan considered as a great lover of learning?
5. What is the structure of Bahmini tombs?
6. Why did the struggle between the two sections of Amirs increased?
7. What were the two most prominent culture of Bahmini and Vijayanagar Empires?

#### Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the causes of the downfall of Bahmini Empire.
2. Explain the art and architecture style of the monuments in Hampi.
3. Analyse the main features of the temple structures of Hampi.
4. How was art and architecture developed under Bahmini Empire? Discuss in detail.
5. Identify the causes and conflicts which led to the fall of Vijayanagar Empire.

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**BLOCK - IV**  
**MUGHAL DYNASTY, HINDU RULER**  
**AND MARATHAS**

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*The Mughal Dynasty and their  
Cultural Contributions - I*

**NOTES**

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**UNIT 9 THE MUGHAL DYNASTY  
AND THEIR CULTURAL  
CONTRIBUTIONS - I**

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**9.0 INTRODUCTION**

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The Mughal Dynasty was established by Babur when he defeated Ibrahim Lodhi in the First Battle of Panipat in 1526. The dynasty was its zenith over all the majority part of Indian subcontinent. It was the third largest empire of the Indian subcontinent. However, Humayun's exile wavered the empire but his triumphant return from Persia, further improved the hold of the Mughal Dynasty. He also brought Persian culture in the Mughal Empire, thus, adding to the rich culture of the Mughal Dynasty.

Akbar extended the Mughal Empire in all directions and controlled almost the entire Indian subcontinent north of the Godavari River. He also allowed free expression of religion, and attempted to resolve socio-political and cultural differences in his empire by establishing a new religion, *Din-i-Ilahi*. He left his successors an internally stable state, which was in the midst of its golden age.

## NOTES

The Mughals made a major contribution to the Indian subcontinent with development of their unique architecture. Most of the monuments built by them have been regarded as World Heritages Sites in the existing times. Along with this, language and literature and painting were also promoted at a large scale by all the rulers of the Mughal Dynasty.

In this unit, the establishment of Babur's rule in Delhi, his achievements and the problems faced by Humayun have been discussed. The achievements of Akbar and his new religious policy have been explained. The unit will also highlight the rich culture which prevailed during the era of the Mughal Dynasty.

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### 9.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Analyse the architectural style of the monuments under Babur's reign
- Explain the life and achievements of Humayun
- Identify the factors which led to the adoption of liberal policy by Akbar
- Explain the religious policy of Akbar
- Analyse the culture contributions made by Babur, Humayun and Akbar

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### 9.2 BABUR

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Babur, who laid the foundation of the Mughal Empire in India in AD 1526, belonged to the family of Chaghatai Turks. Born on 14 February 1483, his great grandfather was Timur who was widely regarded as the most powerful king of Central Asia. Babur's successful invasion of India in AD 1526 saw the end of the Lodi Dynasty and the beginning of a new power—the Mughal Dynasty. The history of India since the Battle of Panipat till AD 1857 is interspersed with conflicts and rivalries between Mughal rulers and the Rajput princes. The Hindu Rajputs, who had enjoyed dominance in Rajputana (present-day Gujarat, Rajasthan and parts of Haryana), were displaced from power following the invasion of the Mughals.

Babur led two important and decisive battles—the Battle of Panipat and the Battle of Khanwah—that speak volumes about his personality. At the First Battle of Panipat in AD 1526, Babur, with only 12,000 soldiers with him, subdued Ibrahim Lodi's much larger force. The very next year, Babur displaced the Rajputs from power who had enjoyed the stronghold of Rajputana for a long time. Similar to the First Battle of Panipat, Babur with a much smaller army conquered the enemy by applying novel ways of warfare.

These great victories achieved over the main powers of northern India were the base for Babur's kingdom, from which he could consolidate his rule in northern

India. Unlike his predecessor, Timur, Babur did not return to Kabul after plundering and looting the wealth of India. Instead, Babur decided to stay back and strengthen his hold over the wealthy cities. The Battle of Ghaghara was the last battle of Babur in India. By then, he had succeeded in establishing the Mughal Empire in India and there was none to challenge his power in northern India.

Babur's character has been praised by all historians—both modern and contemporary. He was numberless man of many virtues and excellences. He was kind, generous, courageous, and a cultured man. He was a good judge of human nature and circumstances. He was fond of music and gardening and constructed many buildings in India. Babur was a Sunni Muslim and had faith in God. He was a scholarly king. Babur did not get time to receive proper education as he engaged himself in fighting, from as early as the age of eleven. Yet, the knowledge he acquired and the command he had over Turkish language has assigned him a place in the world of scholars. He possessed good knowledge of Arabic and Persian while he was also a scholar of Turkish. Babur was a gifted poet and his prose memoir—the *Baburnamah*—is much acclaimed.

Babur was a determined soldier and an experienced general. After becoming a successful commander, he never lost courage or determination to rise. He learnt from his defeats. He learned *tulghuma* warfare from the Uzbeks, ambuscade from the Mongols and the Afghans, use of fire-arm and artillery from the Persians, and the effective use of mobile cavalry from the Turks. Besides, he made a clever synthesis of all these tactics of warfare. That made him a successful commander and, therefore, he won every battle in India. Also, Babur could inspire his followers, get their loyalty and command obedience from them. He never feared fighting against larger armies than that he commanded.

### 9.2.1 Babur as an Empire Builder

With Babur's conquest of Hindustan began the long reign of the Mughal Empire in India. Babur brought with him Mughal architecture. Even though Mughal architecture in India was in its nascent stage during the reign of Babur, many important monuments were erected during his time.

The types of structures that evolved during Babur's regime were neither representative of any particular region, nor did they have any regional manifestations. Rather, Mughal architecture under Babur was just a beginning of an imperial movement, impressed only by local influences, as it displayed similar uniformity in its architectural character as well as in its structural principles in whichever part of the empire it was established. These elegant styles evolved gradually due to the presence of exceedingly skilled local artisans in those provinces possessing potential indigenous cultures. Mughal architecture in India thus, began flourishing in the true sense during the 16th century, in the regime of the first Mughal Emperor, Babur.

## NOTES

## NOTES

Mughal architecture during Babur was indeed that redefined phase, which saw the most able chiselling of gardens, fondly referred to as *Baghs* in Urdu. Many Hindu temples during the time of Babur underwent transformation. To the pre-existing Hindu particulars, Babar amalgamated Muslim styles and designs borrowed from Persian and Turk culture.

Even though he was in awe of Indian architecture and craftsmanship, he insisted that the dominant style of structures erected upon during his time be modelled upon *Khurasani*, that is, Timurid illustrations. It is assumed by historians that the Hasht Behisht garden at Agra was such a confluence of these many styles.

Textual records from the period throw light on the style of the garden, which seems to have had a large *Pishtaq* on each of four sides, connecting galleries and four small interior chambers.

Besides gardens, during his reign, Babur erected numerous monuments, fine tombs and *madrassas*. He converted many of the dilapidated Hindu temples into mosques. The Jama Masjid at Sambhal and Babri Masjid in Ayodhya are testimonies of Mughal architecture. It can be said here that the architectural styles developed during the reign of Babur formed the founding base of the confluence of Persian style with Hindu styles, which was to become the norm in later years.

A few structures erected during Babur's time withstood the vagaries of nature and time. These include the Jama Masjid at Sambhal and Kabuli Bagh Mosque at Panipat.

### **Kabuli Bagh Mosque, Panipat**

Kabuli Bagh Mosque, built in AD 1526, is an impressive structure located at Panipat, a historical town situated on the banks of the Yamuna. Panipat is about 92 km north of New Delhi.

Babur erected this mosque after the First Battle of Panipat to commemorate the victory over Sultan Ibrahim Lodi. The mosque is housed inside an enclosure having octagonal towers at its corners. The building has its entry on the north which is made of bricks with red sandstone. The entrance has a lintel bracket-type opening encased in a huge arch. The spandrels are decorated with arched recesses covered in rectangular panels.

The main prayer hall of the mosque has annexes on sides, which are crowned with hemispherical domes sitting on low drums. Its high facade, divided in panels, is plastered with lime. A masonry platform called the *Chabutra-I-Fateh Mubarak*, constructed by Humayun (the eldest son of Babur), bears an inscription that dates back to AD 1527.

Age and climate has ravaged the structure to an extent. Kabuli Bagh Mosque is now protected as a heritage building.

## Jama Masjid, Sambhal

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One of the mosques constructed by nobles under Babur's orders is at Sambhal, approximately 140 km east of Delhi. It was constructed in AD 1526 by Mir Hindu Beg, a key noble in the court of both Babur and Humayun. Built a year before Babur's Kabuli Bagh mosque in Panipat, the Sambhal mosque is the first surviving Mughal building in India. The entrance to the complex is through a gate on the east that opens to a huge walled courtyard. The prayer chamber, resembling the one at the Panipat mosque, is rectangular with a large square central bay. Its entrance is set into a high *Pishtaq*. The chamber is flanked on both sides by three-bayed double-aisled side wings. A single dome surmounts the central bay and a small flat dome surmounts each bay of the side wings. The mosque's *Pishtaq* and other features show resemblances to 15th century *Sharqi* structures; this implies that the services of local artisans and designers were also sought in the erection of these architectural marvels.

## NOTES

## Babri Masjid

A second mosque, possibly built in response to Babur's general orders, stands at Ayodhya, today in Faizabad district, on the banks of the River Saryu (a tributary of Ghaghara River). This very Mughal architecture during Babur is however the most arresting of the illustrations present in India in contemporary times, acknowledged as the Babri Masjid. Unlike the other mosques built under Babur's aegis, the Babri Masjid is a single-aisled three-bayed kind. It is also however considerably smaller than the other two. The central bay's *Pishtaq* is much higher than the flanking side bays, but all three bays incorporate arched entrances. Most of the mosque is stucco-covered, over a rubble or brick core, but carved black stone columns from a pre-12th century temple are embedded onto both sides of the central entrance porch. The mosque is surmounted by three prominent domes (demolished in 1992). Babri Masjid, amidst its colossal existence, breathes the sighs of history, whilst reflecting the development of Mughal architecture during Babur's regime.

Babur ruled India for less than five years before his unfortunate death in AD 1530. Although he had reigned for only a short time, he was the man who introduced Timurid architectural concepts and most importantly, the rationally organized four-part paradise garden, a factor which was to forever be omnipresent in Mughal architecture, not only during Babur's reign, but also his successors'. Four rulers of this dynasty after Babur— Humayun, Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan— played a major role in the further development of Mughal architecture.

The achievements of Babur can be summarized as follows:

- Babur fought and defeated Sultan Ibrahim Lodi in the First Battle of Panipat in AD 1526. The outcome of the battle saw the establishment of the Mughal Empire in India and the end of the Delhi Sultanate.

## NOTES

- In AD 1527, Babur defeated the combined forces of the Rajputana under the command of Rana Sanga of Mewar and Mahmud Lodi in the Battle of Khanwah. The result of the battle saw the end of the dominance of the Rajput kingdoms, including Marwar, Gwalior, Ajmeer, and Ambar.
- In AD 1529, Babur engaged the Afghans who were powerful in eastern India, Bengal, Bihar, Assam, and Orissa, in the Battle of Ghagra. These forces led by Mahmud Lodi were defeated and scattered.
- Thus, after these initial conquests in India, Babur's territory extended from Kabul in the west to Gogra in the east, from the Himalayas in the north to Gwalior in the south.
- Being a patron of arts Babur welcomed many artists to his court from across the world. He was well-versed in Arabic, Turkish and Persian, and also penned his autobiography, the *Tuzuk-i-Baburi*, in Turkish.
- Babur ruled over his empire only for a short duration of four years, a good part of which was spent in widening his empire. Hence, he was unable to bring about any transformation in administrative, judicial and financial fields.

### Check Your Progress

1. Name the two most important battles led by Babur.
2. Why was Kabuli Bagh Mosque built by Babur?

## 9.3 HUMAYUN

Humayun was born in Kabul on 6 March 1508. He was the eldest son of Babur. His mother was Mahim Begum; and Kamran, Askari and Hindal were his brothers. Proper arrangements were made for his education. He had good knowledge of Arabic, Persian and Turkish. He had keen interest in philosophy, astrology and mathematics. To give him administrative training, Babur appointed him the governor of Badakshan. In early 1526, he went against Hamid Khan and defeated him near Hissar Firoza. The same year, he got the districts of Hissar Firoza and Sambhal. After the defeat of Ibrahim Lodi, Babur sent Humayun to capture Agra. At Sambhal, he fell ill in AD 1529. Babur, grief-stricken at the sight of his son's deteriorating health, sacrificed himself so his son could live. It is said a saint told the emperor that Humayun could only be saved if Babur gave up something most valuable to him; Babur deemed that his life was the most valuable thing he could give up. After the death of Babur, Humayun occupied the Mughal throne on 30 December 1530.

## Early Difficulties of Humayun

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Humayun's reign was not all smooth sailing initially. He had his share of problems. Let us look at some of them.

- **Conspiracy by Khalifa and other people:** Babur died on 26 December, AD 1530. On the same day his prime minister, Nizamuddin Ali Muhammad tried to flout the succession of Humayun to the throne and raised Mehdi Khawaja instead. This plot, however, ended on the very third day. However, Humayun neither gave hard punishments to the rebels, nor removed them from the high offices. Babur had counselled Humayun to deal kindly with his subordinates. Humayun was a man of soft nature. In fact, his kind nature led him to many difficulties.
- **Disorderly administration:** Humayun ascended a throne which was then unstable and insecure. Babur had bequeathed an empty treasury and an ill-organized kingdom to him. Babur could rule over India for only four to five years, and most of this period was spent in wars. He died before he could consolidate his vast empire. Humayun inherited an empire which was beset with many difficulties.
- Babur had paid little attention towards the administration of his vast empire. The empire, although vast, lacked cohesion and internal unity and comprised both big and small *amirs* of the kingdom. Babur had not implemented any land policy which was common to all the areas under his kingdom. Rather, he had allowed the policies from the earlier rule to continue. This created numerous problems for Humayun, as each area under his kingdom followed a different policy. Similar was the case with the judicial system. Thus, in his ambition to bring as much area under the Mughal Dynasty as possible, Babur had passed on a kingdom which was rife with problems to his son.
- **Economic problems:** No doubt Babur left almost an empty treasury for Humayun. But Humayun worsened the economic problems due to his ill management of the treasury. The meagre amount that was left in his coffer was spent on military activities or distributed amongst his *amirs*, soldiers, and relatives in order to please them. Because of the lack of money, Humayun could not carry on military preparations to face his enemies.
- **Unreliable army:** The army which Humayun inherited from his father could not be relied upon. This army was not infused with national feeling and enthusiasm. It consisted of men of different cultures such as Mughals, Uzbeks, Afghans, Indian Muslims, Turks, the Hindus and the Persians, who had little in common with each other. The commanders of the armies were jealous of one another. Their internal disunity and rivalry made the Mughal army non-dependable. In fact, a majority of these soldiers were selfish and were ready to cheat the emperor, if it suited their purpose.

## NOTES



## NOTES

- **Personal weaknesses of Humayun:** Humayun was too kind for his own good. He had certain weaknesses. Though he was a brave soldier, he was a weak administrator. He was addicted to wine and opium. He spent much time and money seeking life's pleasures. By nature, he was so kind that he could not punish his enemies and opponents severely, when circumstances demanded such action. Famous historian Stanley Lane-Poole writes, 'He lacked character and resolution. He was incapable of sustained efforts after a moment of triumph and would busy himself in his harem and dream away the precious hour in the opium eater's paradise while his enemies were thundering at this gate.'

### Humayun's Character

Humayun was a man of letters and culture. He knew many languages and was well-versed in subjects like mathematics, philosophy and astronomy. He was a brave soldier but lacked the qualities of a great general. He was not farsighted, often lacked judgement and hence was not an efficient administrator.

No doubt there were many difficulties, but according to historians, Humayun was his own worst enemy. He blundered many a time. According to Lane-Poole, 'Humayun's greatest enemy was he himself.' He thought a great deal but acted less. He spent all his time in thinking while his enemies strengthened their position. If ever he took any prompt decision, he was not capable of implementing them. He demonstrated his lack of wisdom by dividing his empire.

Instead of trying to increase the income and treasury, Humayun spent lavishly to celebrate his victory over Mahmood Shah. He followed a wrong policy towards Sher Shah and Bahadur Shah. Before the Battle of Chousa, he believed the word of Sher Shah Suri who pretended to accept Humayun's vassalage. Similarly, he followed a wrong policy towards Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. When Bahadur Shah escaped to Mandu and Dieu for shelter, Humayun should have completely crushed this dangerous enemy. But he did not do so. Bahadur Shah was, therefore, able to regain his lost empire.

In brief, we can say that Humayun inherited many problems from his father, Babur. Up to some extent, Babur was responsible for the early problems of Humayun; for example, the empty treasury and disorderly administration. Humayun, instead of finding solutions to the problems that plagued his empire, made matters worse by neglecting them and adopting wrong policies.

### Restoration and Death

Humayun tried to go to Kashmir but Kamran blocked his way. Ultimately, he decided to go to Sind. He was invited by Maldev of Marwar and he accepted the invitation. On the way, he came to know that Maldev had changed his mind and really wanted to arrest him with a view to please Sher Shah.

Under the circumstances, he had to retreat to Sind. He got shelter at the palace of the Raja of Amarkot. In AD 1542, Akbar was born there. It was here that Bairam Khan, one of his faithful chiefs and the future guardian of Akbar met him and advised him to proceed to Persia. Humayun accepted his advice and with great difficulty he reached Persia. He was accorded a cordial reception by the Persian King Shah Tahmasp, who promised to help him recover his throne on the condition that he should embrace the Shia creed, would read *Khutba* in the name of Shah and would give over Kandahar to the Shah, when successful. The helpless Humayun had no alternative but to yield to these conditions.

Shah Tahmasp of Persia placed an army (1400 soldiers) at his disposal with the help of which he conquered Khandahar from his brother, Askari in AD 1554, and took Kabul from Kamran. He imprisoned his brother Kamran and sent him to Mecca after blinding him. Hindal, another brother was killed in battle and Askari also went away to Mecca.

In AD 1555 the state of affairs in India was most deplorable. Muhammad Adilshah, the last King of the Sur Dynasty, was quite unfit to rule over his large kingdom. There was anarchy and confusion in the country and people were tired. Humayun, who was invited by some of his friends in India, accepted their invitation. He came and defeated Sikandar Sur at Sirhind in AD 1555.

Humayun then occupied Delhi in July 1555. Following this, Agra, Sambhal and the nearby territory were also occupied by the Mughals. Thus, Humayun again ascended the throne of India after an exile of fifteen years. But Humayun did not live long enough to enjoy the fruits of his victory. One day, when he was coming down the stairs of his library in Delhi Fort, he fell down and died.

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## 9.4 AKBAR

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On 19 February 1556, Akbar was declared the Emperor at Kalanaur when he had just turned thirteen. At that time, he was virtually a ruler without a kingdom. Vincent Smith wrote aptly that before Akbar could claim to be an emperor in reality rather than just in name, he had to prove himself more capable than his other rivals for the throne, and at least had to recapture the lost kingdom of his father.

### **The Second Battle of Panipat**

The Second Battle of Panipat was a battle between Hemu and Akbar in which Akbar won to re-establish the Mughal Empire. The Second Battle of Panipat occurred in November 1556. Emperor Akbar, who was crowned in the same year after his father's death defeated Muhammad Adil Shah Suri of Pashtun Suri Dynasty and his Prime Minister Hemu (Hemchandra). This defeat of Adil Shah and Hemu initiated Akbar's reign.

## NOTES

## NOTES

Humayun, the second Mughal Emperor died suddenly on 24 January 1556 as he slipped from the steps of his library. That time his son Akbar was only thirteen years old. Akbar was busy in a campaign in Punjab with the Chief Minister Bairam Khan at the time of his father's death. That time Mughal reign was confined to Kabul, Kandahar and parts of Punjab and Delhi. Akbar was enthroned as the emperor on 14 February 1556 in a garden at Kalanaur in Punjab. Hemu or Hemchandra was the military chief of Afghan Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah. Adil Shah was the ruler of Chunar and was seeking an opportunity to expel the Mughals from India. They got the advantage of Humayun's death. Hemu occupied Agra and Delhi without much difficulty in October and became the ruler under the title 'Raja Vikramaditya'. It was a short-lived victory for Adil Shah and Hemu.

Bairam Khan, the Chief Minister and the guardian of Akbar proceeded towards Delhi with a large army. On 5 November both the armies met at Panipat. Hemu had a large army including 1500 war elephants. He got the initial success but unfortunately a stray arrow struck his eye and he became unconscious. His troops thought that they have lost their leader and panic spread among them and they retreated. The Mughals won the battle. Shah Quli Khan captured the Hawai elephant of Hemu and presented it directly to Akbar. Hemu was brought in unconscious condition to Akbar and Bairam Khan. Akbar then severed the head of unconscious Hemu and took his cavalry sword.

Some historians claim that Akbar did not kill Hemu by himself; he just touched his head with his sword and his followers killed Hemu. Hemu's cut off head was sent to Kabul to the ladies of Humayun's harem in order to celebrate the victory. Hemu's torso was sent to Delhi for a display on a gibbet. Iskandar Khan from Akbar's side chased Hemu's army and captured as many as 1500 elephants and a large portion of the army. Hemu's wife escaped from Delhi with the treasure she could have with her. Pir Mohammad Khan chased her caravan with a troop but his effort was not successful. The Second Battle of Panipat changed the course of Indian History as it initiated the re-establishment of Mughal Dynasty in India.

### **Character and Personality of Akbar**

Akbar was the greatest among the Mughal emperors who ascended the throne at a very early age, after the death of his father Humayun. During his reign, the Mughal Empire was at its peak. Akbar, who took charge of an empire that was besieged with many problems, both internal as well as external at a young age, made the Mughal Empire not only the strongest state in India, but also one of the best administered state of his times. He also implemented innovative policies which proved liberal, farsighted and successful which added a new chapter in Indian medieval history and established the Mughal Empire firmly in India. Therefore, he has been justly described as 'the Great' among the Mughal emperors of India.

## Religious Policy of Akbar

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Akbar's policy towards the non-Muslims was one of toleration. He soon abandoned the rigid, cruel and hostile policy followed by the Delhi Sultans and the early Mughal Emperors towards the Hindus. He was the first national ruler who aspired to lay the foundations of his empire on the goodwill of both the Hindu and the Muslim communities. His religious policy heralded a new era of peace, prosperity and unity in the country. He founded the so called order or religion *Din-i-Ilahi* to give a common platform to the Hindus and the Muslims.

## NOTES

### Factors that led to Akbar's Adoption of Liberal Policy

Many factors inspired Akbar to follow a liberal policy towards the non-Muslims. Chief amongst them were as follows:

- **Personal life and personality:** Akbar was liberal and tolerant by nature. The circumstances of his birth, his upbringing and the teaching of his preceptor Sheikh Abdul Latif played an important role in making him tolerant. The discussions in the *Ibadat Khana* had convinced him that in spite of having different names, Ram or Rahim, God was one. He wanted to be a true national monarch.
- **Political necessity:** Akbar wanted to extend and consolidate his empire. He knew that the Hindus were the majority in India. He also realized that without the cooperation and sympathy of the Hindus, the defence extensions, peace stability and order in Mughal Empire was impossible. He was impressed by the qualities of the Hindus, particularly the Rajputs. There was scarcity of the Mughal soldiers for ruling over the whole of India. Further, to end the feeling among the people that the Mughals were foreign rulers, Akbar thought it essential to follow a liberal policy.
- **Influence of many factors and personalities:** Before Akbar, many rulers in various parts of the country in the 15th century had turned non-communal and got the religious literature translated into Persian, had extended patronage to regional languages, had followed a tolerant religious policy and had accorded high posts to the Hindus in their army and thus had created an atmosphere of mutual understanding between the two communities. This historical background inspired Akbar to adopt a liberal and tolerant religious policy. The Bhakti movement and the followers of Sikh saints also inspired Akbar to adopt a liberal and tolerant policy. Akbar's mother and his tutor, Bairam Khan belonged to the Shia sect. His Rajput wives also helped in making him tolerant. Thus, the atmosphere of the Royal harem and liberal personalities made him liberal minded.

## Consequences and Effects of Akbar's New Religious Policy

### NOTES

1. **Advantage to the empire:** The most important consequence of Akbar's new religious policy was that a majority of the Hindus and the Muslims became the supporters of the Mughal Empire. They gave up the attitude of mutual hostility and gave their services and co-operation to the Mughal Emperor. The co-operation of these people helped Akbar in an extension of his empire achieving conquests and suppressing the revolts.
2. **An atmosphere of goodwill in the country:** Akbar's religious policy encouraged the establishment of peace, co-operation and goodwill in the country which helped the growth of trade and commerce.
3. **Social reforms:** Akbar's religious policy aided in the social reforms. Inhuman practices like *Sati* prevalent amongst the Hindus were discouraged. Widows were given the right to remarry. Akbar tried to restrict the sale of liquor. By giving up meat-eating himself, he tried to encourage a vegetarian society.
4. **Cultural unity:** Akbar's religious policy encouraged the cultural integration in the country by bringing the Hindus and Muslims closer. He established a Translation Bureau so that Sanskrit, Arabic and Greek works could be translated into Persian. He encouraged music, sculpture and Hindu architectural style. The state could become secular because of his religious policy and cultural unity was encouraged.

A new religion *Din-i-Illahi* was born though soon after him, it came to an end.

#### Check Your Progress

3. What were the main weaknesses of Humayun?
4. What was Akbar's religious policy towards the non-Muslims?

## 9.5 CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF BABUR, HUMAYUN AND AKBAR

We will in this section discuss the cultural contributions of Babur, Humayun and Akbar.

### 9.5.1 Babur and Architecture

When Babur came to India, he was not much impressed by Indian buildings. He, therefore, sought to improve the art of building by introducing necessary improvements. In fact, he wanted to call the famous Albanian architect Sinan to work with the Indian craftsmen whose skills he had admired in the palaces of Man Singh and Vikramajet at Gwalior. However, it appears that he gave up that idea.

In spite of this, Babur built many buildings. To quote him, ‘In Agra alone, and of the stone cutters belonging to that place only, I everyday employed on my places 680 persons in Agra, Sikri, Biyana, Dholpur, Gwalior and Koil (Aligarh) there were, everyday, employed on my works 1491 stone citters.’ Only two of his buildings, a mosque in the Kabli Bagh at Panipat and Jama Masjid at Sambhal in Rohikhand, have survived the vicissitudes of time. None of them, however, has any architectural beauty except for their large open spaces.

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### Humayun and Architecture

Humayun’s troubled reign left him little opportunity to indulge in his artistic taste. Even then he constructed the palace of Din-i-Panah in Delhi, which was probably destroyed by Sher Shah. Besides this, Humayun constructed simple mosques at Agra and Hissar. Only one mosque of his time still stands at Fatehabad in Punjab. It is decorated in the Persian style with enameled tiles. After Humayun’s death, his first wife Hamida Banu Begum constructed a tomb in his memory. It is said that she began the construction of his mausoleum in AD 1564—eight years after the death of her husband. This splendid mausoleum, planned by a Persian architect Malik Mirza Ghiyas and executed by Indian craftsmen and masons, is a fine example of the synthesis of the Indian–Persian traditions. This tomb is very beautiful and strong and can be seen even today by the people. It is situated in New Delhi.

### Akbar and Architecture

Just as Akbar built up an extensive empire by incorporating local kingdoms, he evolved a new style of Indian architecture by utilizing the services of local talent drawn from different parts of the country and built a number of palaces, mosques, forts, tombs and other buildings. In fact, Akbar was the first Mughal ruler who had the time and the means to undertake constructions on a large scale. He mainly built the following buildings:

#### (i) *The Red Fort at Agra*

Akbar built a series of forts, the most famous of which is the Agra Fort. Built in red stone, it is a massive fort and has many magnificent gates. This is a very huge building. The fort was constructed under the supervision of Vaslffi Khan, the chief-artisan and head at the construction department. Its construction took fifteen years and fifteen lakh of rupees. In this fort, we find different palaces, houses, civil quarters and apartments for the high officials. The arches of most of the buildings of this fort are decorated with beautiful models and paintings of different animals, birds, flowers and leaves. According to Abul Fazal, 500 buildings were constructed in it many of which were later destroyed by Shah Jahan. These buildings have been done in red sandstone and are based on the architectural style of Gujarat and Bengal. Most of the constructions of this fort are now in ruins due to the use of a somewhat inferior quality of red sandstone. However, some of them still remain such as the two palace buildings known as the Akbari Mahal and the Jahangiri

Mahal. They give us an idea of the Emperor's earlier experiments at fusing the Hindu and Muslim styles of architectures before he took up the construction of Fatehpur Sikri.

## NOTES

### (ii) Fatehpur Sikri

Some of the finest and best buildings of Akbar are at Fatehpur Sikri, the city which was raised by him from AD 1569 to 1584. It is situated 26 miles away from Agra. Here, the emperor raised a good number of buildings. Some of them are as follows:

- (a) **Buland Darwaza:** The most striking and conspicuous is the colossal Buland Darwaza built in AD 1575–1576 to commemorate the conquest of Gujarat. It is 176 feet high and is still the highest gateway in India and one of the loftiest in the world. It is a marvel of architectural skill. The gate is in the style of what is called a half-dome portal, which was done to slice a dome into half. The sliced portion provided the massive outward facade of the gate, while smaller doors could be made in the rear wall where the dome and the Hoar meet. This devise was borrowed from Iran and became a common feature in the Mughal buildings later.
- (b) **Jama Masjid:** Like Buland Darwaza, the Jama Masjid of Fatehpur Sikri is regarded as a romance in stone. The Jama Masjid, which is said to have been built on the pattern of the Bibi Khanam of Samarqand, was perhaps the largest mosque in India at that time.
- (c) **Civil structures:** The most remarkable civil structures at Sikri are Jodhabai's Palace, Birbal's Palace, the Golden Palace of Maryam-uz-Zamani and the Turkish Sultan's Plalace. The decorative elements in these palaces are of a high order and the Golden Palace has obvious Hindu features. The main charm of Salim Chishti's mausoleum is the exclusive use of marble and the delicate patterns carved on the screens. It looks like a gem set against the plain sandstone. After seeing the buildings at Fatehpur Sikri, Smith has written, 'The buildings like Fatephur Sikri were not constructed before and neither can they be constructed again.'
- (d) **Tomb at Sikandra:** Akbar started building his tomb at Sikandra, which was later completed by Jahangir. According to Dr. Ishwari Prasad, 'the most characteristics of Akbar's buildings can be seen in the tomb at Sikandra which is unique among the sculptures of Asia. Its construction was started by Akbar himself, but it was Jahangir who completed it.'

### Other buildings of Akbar

Akbar also constructed the Lahore Fort, which is more vigorous but less restrained than the Agra fort. Apart from the master pieces mentioned above, Akbar's style is also shown in a number of forts, villas, towers, schools, tanks and wells.

Thus, the main features of Akbar's buildings can be listed as follows:

- (a) The buildings of Akbar's time show a synthesis of Hindu and Muslim attractions.
- (b) Red sandstone was used extensively in the reign of Akbar.
- (c) Some of the buildings were constructed for civil purposes.
- (d) Construction of better domes, arches and portals was started first of all in the reign of Akbar.
- (e) He also laid out many formal gardens with running water.
- (f) He got the construction of impregnable forts done at tremendous costs e.g. the Agra fort was built at a cost of 35 lakh rupees.

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### 9.5.2 Painting

#### Babur and Painting

Babur, the founder of Mughal dynasty in India, was a great lover of art. He was well versed in a Bihazad art (an art of Central Asia) which entered India during his reign. Babur refers in his memoirs to Bihzad and pays high tribute to his genius as a painter. He has been called the 'Raphael of the East'. His followers formed a distinctive school of their own and exercised considerable influence over the art of painting in India. Babur's appreciation of the art of Bihzad and the manner of his portrayal of natural scenes suggests that he was gifted with the talent of a painter. However, he could hardly find the time to devote his attention to this art, as he was constantly engaged in the establishment of his Kingdom in India.

#### Humayun and Painting

Humayun was also fond of painting. About him the well-known historian Mr. P. N. Chopra writes, 'It was his son (Babur's son) and successor Humayun who actually introduced the new style of Persian painting in India. Humayun, after his defeat at the hands of the shrewd Afghan, Sher Shah, took refuge with Shah Tahmasp in Persia. Here he came across a number of celebrated artists.' He contacted local talent and induced Mir Sayyad Ali and Khwaja Abdul Samad to enter his service when better times returned. He was still at Kabul when they joined him. He took lesson in painting himself and put Akbar also under their charge. They were asked to illustrate the Dastan-i-Amir Hamyah. But much could not be accomplished due to the early death of Humayun after his restoration. Indeed, these two great painters of Humayun formed the nucleus of the Mughal School of painting, which came into prominence in Akbar's time.

#### Akbar and Painting

Under the leadership of Mir Sayyad Ali and Khwaja Abdus Samad, painting was organized in one of the imperial establishments (*Karkhanas*). A large number of



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painters from different parts of the country were invited with many of them belonging to the low castes. Ali and Samed were two of the famous painters of Akbar's court. Akbar's reign was a combination of the Persian and Indian arts. In his reign, he got paintings done in the Persian textbooks of fables, the Persian version of *Mahabharata* and historical works like *Akbarnama*. In fact, in his reign, the influence of the Indians increased and Persian influence gradually declined. In this regard, a well-known historian, Dr. Satish Chandra, writes, 'Indian themes and Indian scenes and landscapes, thus, came in vogue and helped to free the school from Persian influence. Indian colours such as peacock blue, the Indian red, etc. began to be used. Above all, the somewhat flat effect of the Persian style began to be replaced by the roundedness of the Indian brush, giving the picture a three-dimensional effect.' The painters during Akbar's reign painted natural scenes, animals and men. During his time, Portuguese priests also started European paintings and under their influence a style evolved, which showed clarity of nearness and distance. According to Abul Fazal, there were 100 good painters at the court while there were many others of an inferior merit. Some good painters of the time were Mir Sayyad Ali Abdus Samad, Farrukh Begh, Dashwant, Basawan, Tarachnd, Sanwadlas, Keshava and Jagannath. Abul Fazal tells us that Hindu painters were highly expert in their art the 'few indeed in the whole world are found equal to them'. In the reign of Akbar, some mural painting was also executed particularly at Fatehpur Sikri. But it was the miniature painting and portraiture that received the greatest attention.

### Literary

The Mughal emperors not only patronized various branches of art, but also did a lot for the development and progress of literature. Apart from the Persian literature, Hindi, Sanskrit, Bengali, Punjabi languages also made mighty strides during the Mughal administration. In fact, all the Mughal emperors loved literature. In the realm of letters, they did much to remove the barriers between the Hindus and Muslims and thereby promoted a fusion of cultures. In this regard, Doctor Ishwan Parsad writes, 'The imperial unity, social and religious reforms, the association of Hindus in the administration and the attempt to hold together into a nation the various races of India gave a great impetus to the growth of literature.' A brief description of literary growth under the Mughals is given in the following headings.

#### 9.5.3 Literature during Babur's Reign

Babur himself was a great scholar of Turkish and Persian. He wrote *Tuzuk-i-Baburi* (his autobiography) in Turkish language. He gave patronage to many scholars like Gaysuddin, Khudamir, Shahabuddin and Ibrahim. Babur was also a great poet and in the composition of Turkish poetry, writes Mirza Haider, 'He was second only to Amir Ali Shah.' Babur himself wrote Persian poetry. His cousin Mirza Haider Daughlate was a great Persian scholar of his time.

## Literature during Humayun's Reign

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Humayun was the learned son of a learned father. He was well versed in Arabic, Turkey and Persian languages. Some of his *ghazals* and *rubais* in Persian were popular even in the time of Akbar. He also constructed a big library near his tomb, which can be seen even today. He had great scholars like Khuda Mir, Abdul Latif and Sheikh Hasan in his court. In his time, his sister named as Gulabadan Begum wrote '*Humayannama*'. Another work of his time is Khudamir's '*Haft Aklis*'.

## Literature during Akbar's Reign

During Akbar's time, the literature in different languages progressed. At his court, there were many scholars well versed in Sanskrit. Many of them translated Sanskrit works on philosophy, religion and astronomy. Some Muslim scholars learnt the vernacular languages like Hindi and Bengali and enriched them by their contributions. In this connection, we may mention the name of Malik Muhammad Jayasi, who in his *Padmavati* describes the story of Padmini. Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khana, whose exquisite *dohas* are still read and admired throughout India, and Mirza Hussan Ali, who composed songs in Bengali in honour of Goddess Kali, belong to this period. Among the courtiers of Akbar, Todarmal, Bhagwan Das, Mansingh and Bribal were poets of great reputation. Birbal had earned the title of '*Kavi-Raja*' from the Emperor. Karan, Hari Nath and Narahari were other important poets of the court. Surdas, a blind bard of Agra, was one of the pre-eminent poets of Brij Bhasha. In his work '*Sur Sagar*', he describes the sports of Lord Krishna in his early life. He also composed numerous verses on the beauty and love of Radha-Krishna. Among the other poets who belonged to this period, the names of Nand Das, *Vithal Nath*, Parmanand Raskhan and Humbhaldas are worthy of mention. Tulsidas, a great poet of Avadhi Bhasha, was also a great poet of the period who popularized the cult of Rama. Another notable writer was Nabhaji, the author of '*Bhaktamala*', which gives descriptions of the devotees of saints of Rama and Krishna. Keshavadas was also a great poet of Akbar's times.

Akbar's period is not popular only for Hindi literature, but it is also popular for Persian works. By the time of Akbar, knowledge of Persian had become so wide spread in North India that he desisted with the tradition of keeping revenue records in the local language (Hindavi) in addition to Persian. Persian prose and poetry reached a climax under his reign. Abul Fazal, who was a great scholar and as well as the leading historian of the age, set a style of prose writing, which was emulated for many generations. The leading poet of the age was his brother, Faizi, who also helped in Akbar's translation department. The translation of the *Mahabharata* was carried out under his supervision. Utbi and Naziri were the two other leading Persian poets. Though born in Persia, they were among the many poet and scholars who migrated from Iran to India during the period and made the Mughal court one of the cultural centres of the Islamic world. Abul Fazal

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is famous for his two works known as '*Akbarnama*' and '*Ain-i-Akbari*'. The former, written in the praise of his hero (Akbar, the Great) gives us political and military history; the latter is an administrative and statistical account. Other important historians of the age of Akbar were Badauni, author of '*Muntakhab ul-Tawarikh*' and Nizamuddin, author of '*Tabaqat-i-Akbari*.' Badauni was a hostile critic of Akbar; Nizamuddin is perfunctory. Akbar had a very liberal culture and he showed an active interest in Persian translations of famous Sanskrit works like the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana* and the *Atharva Veda*. Akbar gave patronage to Sanskrit literature as well. In his time, a dictionary of Persian-Sanskrit '*Parsi Parkash*' was written. Punjabi and Bengali literature also made sufficient progress during Akbar's time. *Guru Granth Sahib* was compiled in Akbar's reign itself. Many Bangla works were composed in that time.

### 9.5.4 Music

Music also made great progress during the Mughal period. Both Babur and Humayun were interested in music and poetry. Babur himself composed songs of a high standard. He used to spend hours of his leisure in the company of poets, singers and musicians. He frequently mentions the name of skillful performers on flute, lute and harp. Vocal and instrumental performances were a recognized feature of emperor's wine parties. Lanepoole remarks that the art of improving a quatrain on the spot, quoting Persian classics, writing a good hand and singing a good song were highly appreciated in Babur's world.

#### Humayun

Humayun was also greatly interested in music. His love for music can be understood from the fact that he had set aside two days of the week, Monday and Wednesday, for listening to music. In AD 1535, when Humayun captured Mandu and ordered a general massacre for the prisoners, he learnt that there was one Baiju Bawra, a musician, among the captives. The Emperor asked him to sing a song and he was so much pleased that he not only spared his life, but also enrolled him as a musician in his court. Humayun had a touch of Sufism in him and very much liked his prayers to God to be accompanied by music.

#### Akbar

Akbar took a keen interest in music and his patronage drew to court musicians from all parts of India. According to historian Abul Fazal, there were thirty-six singers at his court. When he heard of the fame of Tansen, a court-musician of Ramchandra, the Raja of Bhata, he sent a request to the latter to send the master musician to his court. When Tansen came to Agra, he became the head of the royal musicians and earned wide fame and popularity. Tansen is credited with composing many new melodies (ragas). It is said that through his music he could

make the clouds rain and the streams stop. According to Abul Fazal, ‘There was no singer like him, for the last thousand years in India.’ The other famous musicians were Babu Ram Das, Baiju Bawra and Sur Das. Babu Ram Das was second only to Tansen and a reward of one lakh Tankas was given to him by Bariam Khan. Musicians were patronized not only by the Emperor, but also by some of the courtiers and nobles. Khan-i-Khana Abdu Rahim, who was himself a poet and a song composer, had six musicians in his service. Raja Bhagwan Dass and Man singh were also greatly interested in music and liberally patronized the musicians.

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### Check Your Progress

5. How did Akbar evolved a new style of architecture under his reign?
6. How can you say that Humayun was greatly interested in music?
7. Name some of the poets of Akbar’s reign.

## 9.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The two most important battles led by Babur were the Battle of Panipat and the Battle of Khanwah.
2. Babur built Kabuli Bagh Mosque after the First Battle of Panipat to commemorate the victory over Sultan Ibrahim Lodi. The mosque is housed inside an enclosure having octagonal towers at its corners.
3. Humayun was too kind for his own good. He had certain weaknesses. Though he was a brave soldier, he was a weak administrator. He was addicted to wine and opium. He spent much time and money seeking life’s pleasures.
4. Akbar’s religious policy towards the non-Muslims was one of toleration. He soon abandoned the rigid, cruel and hostile policy followed by the Delhi Sultans and the early Mughal Emperors towards the Hindus.
5. Akbar evolved a new style of Indian architecture under his reign by utilizing the services of local talent drawn from different parts of the country and built a number of palaces, mosques, forts, tombs and other it.
6. Humayun was greatly interested in music His love for music can be understood from the fact that he had set aside two days of the week, Monday and Wednesday, for listening to music. In AD 1535, when Humayun captured Mandu and ordered a general massacre for the prisoners, he learnt that there was one Baiju Bawra, a musician, among the captives. The Emperor asked him to sing a song and he was so much pleased that he not only

spared his life, but also enrolled him as a musician in his court. Humayun had a touch of Sufism in him and very much liked his prayers to God to be accompanied by music.

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7. Some of the poets of Akbar's reign were Todarmal, Bhagwan Das, Mansingh and Bribal. Karan, Hari Nath and Narahari were other important poets of the court.

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## 9.7 SUMMARY

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- Babur, who laid the foundation of the Mughal Empire in India in AD 1526, belonged to the family of Chaghatai Turks.
- Babur led two important and decisive battles—the Battle of Panipat and the Battle of Khanwah—that speak volumes about his personality.
- Humayun ascended a throne which was then unstable and insecure. Babur had bequeathed an empty treasury and an ill-organized kingdom to him.
- Babur had counselled Humayun to deal kindly with his brothers, but had not favoured the partitioning of the infant Mughal Empire, which would have been disastrous.
- Humayun was a man of letters and culture. He knew many languages and was well-versed in subjects like mathematics, philosophy and astronomy.
- The Second Battle of Panipat was a battle between Hemu and Akbar in which Akbar won to re-establish the Mughal Empire.
- Akbar was the greatest among the Mughal emperors who ascended the throne at a very early age, after the death of his father Humayun.
- Akbar's policy towards the non-Muslims was one of toleration. He soon abandoned the rigid, cruel and hostile policy followed by the Delhi Sultans and the early Mughal Emperors towards the Hindus.
- When Babur came to India, he was not much impressed by Indian buildings. He, therefore, sought to improve the art of building by introducing necessary improvements.
- Just as Akbar built up an extensive empire by incorporating local kingdoms, he evolved a new style of Indian architecture by utilizing the services of local talent drawn from different parts of the country and built a number of palaces, mosques, forts, tombs and other buildings.
- Babur, the founder of Mughal dynasty in India, was a great lover of art. He was well versed in a Bihazad art (an art of Central Asia) which entered India during his reign.
- Under the leadership of Mir Sayyad Ali and Khwaja Abdus Samad, painting was organized in one of the imperial establishments (*Karkhanas*).

- The Mughal emperors not only patronized various branches of art, but also did a lot for the development and progress of literature. *The Mughal Dynasty and their Cultural Contributions - I*
- During Akbar's time, the literature in different languages progressed. At his court, there were many scholars well versed in Sanskrit.
- Music also made great progress during the Mughal period. Both Babur and Humayun were interested in music and poetry. Babur himself composed songs of a high standard.
- Akbar took a keen interest in music and his patronage drew to court musicians from all parts of India.

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### 9.8 KEY WORDS

- **Ibadatkhana:** It refers to the meeting house built in 1575 CE by the Mughal Emperor Akbar at Fatehpur Sikri and spiritual leaders of different religious grounds were gathered here, to conduct a discussion on the teachings of the respective religious leaders.
- **Mughal Architecture:** It refers to the type of Indo-Islamic architecture which was developed by the Mughals in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries.
- **Pishtaq:** It refers to the formal gateway to the *iwan*, from the facade of a building and was decorated with calligraphy bands, glazed tilework, and geometric designs.

### 9.9 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

#### Short-Answer Questions

1. How did Babur invaded India?
2. What kind of structures was built by Babur?
3. Write a short note on the life of Babur and his achievements.
4. Write a shot note on the Battle of Panipat.

#### Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the achievements of Babur.
2. Explain the problems faced by Humayun after Babur's death.
3. Discuss the structure of the buildings built under Akbar's reign.
4. Discuss the development of Art and Literature under Humayun.

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## 9.10 FURTHER READINGS

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### NOTES

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# UNIT 10 THE MUGHAL DYNASTY AND THEIR CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS - II

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*The Mughal Dynasty  
and their Cultural  
Contributions - II*

## NOTES

### Structure

- 10.0 Introduction
- 10.1 Objectives
- 10.2 Jahangir
- 10.3 Shah Jahan
- 10.4 Aurangzeb
- 10.5 Cultural Contributions of Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb
  - 10.5.1 Architecture
  - 10.5.2 Painting
  - 10.5.3 Literary
  - 10.5.4 Music
- 10.6 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 10.7 Summary
- 10.8 Key Words
- 10.9 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 10.10 Further Readings

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## 10.0 INTRODUCTION

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We have in the previous unit, discussed the establishment of the Mughal Dynasty and the achievements of the renowned rulers. In this unit, we will have an elaborate look on the achievements, methods, revolts and policies adopted by other renowned rulers.

In this unit, the reign of Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb have been explained. The unit will also highlight the cultural contributions made by each one of them.

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## 10.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the life and achievements of Jahangir
- Analyse the religious policy of Jahangir
- Discuss the achievements of Shah Jahan
- Identify the policies adopted by Shah Jahan during his reign



- Discuss the establishment of Aurangzeb's reign
- Explain the cultural contributions made by Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb

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### 10.2 JAHANGIR

Jahangir, the Mughal Emperor ascended the throne after the death of his father Akbar and he assumed the title of Nur-ud-din Muhammad Jahangir. Jahangir was born on 20 September 1569 and was named Muhammed Sultan Salim. The coronation of Salim took place on 3 November 1605 and he assumed the title of Nur-ud-din Muhammad Jahangir. Like Akbar, Jahangir managed diplomatic relations on the Indian subcontinent dexterously, was tolerant of non-Muslims, and was a great patron of the art. He was greatly assisted by his wife Nur Jahan in administrative affairs. Jahangir began his reign with the declaration of many liberal laws which benefited his subjects. Jahangir was a just and kind ruler. He was a fairly obedient son, a lovable father, a good relative and an affectionate friend. He certainly revolted against his father, but it was more due to his intention to behave as an independent individual rather than the desire to capture the throne of his father. Jahangir also possessed some weaknesses. He was easily influenced by his close relatives. His revolt against his father was also more due to their evil influences than his personal ambitions. This same weakness was responsible for his handing over the reigns of the government to his beloved queen, Nur Jahan.

#### Expansion of the Empire by Jahangir

Jahangir pursued the policy of the extension of the empire like his father. The conquest of north India was nearly complete during the reign of Akbar. Only a few petty states and Mewar in Rajasthan could maintain their independence. Jahangir tried to subdue Mewar and the states in south India. Jahangir desired the submission of Mewar from the beginning of his reign and dispatched prince Parwez to conquer Mewar soon after his accession to the throne in AD 1605.

Ultimately, the Rana accepted the suzerainty of the Mughal Emperor and a peace treaty was signed between the Mughals and the Rana in AD 1615. Thus, the long-drawn war between Mewar and the Mughals ended. Jahangir tried to complete the conquest of south India. Khandesh and a part of Ahmednagar were conquered during Jahangir's reign. But the conquest of Ahmednagar could not be completed while Golkonda and Bijapur were left untouched so far. Jahangir attempted to conquer them. The campaigns of the Mughals in the Deccan during the reign of Jahangir, in fact brought not much territorial gain though of course, pressure on the states of south India were increased. No rulers of the South were prepared to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Mughals.

## **Conquests of Jahangir**

Jahangir was well trained in arms and was an expert rider. But he was not prepared to undergo the hardships of battlefield. He did not participate in any major battles during the reign of his father and, during his own reign all important battles were fought either under the command of his son Shah Jahan or under other talented officers. Jahangir neither tried to improve the military system which he inherited from his father nor increased the fighting strength of his army in any way. As regards religious beliefs and policy, Jahangir stands midway between his father, Akbar and his son, Shah Jahan. He believed in God and normally pursued the basic principles of Islam.

## **Death of Jahangir**

Jahangir's health was adversely affected due to excessive drinking of alcohol. Jahangir died in AD 1627, while returning from Kashmir, the region of Sarai Saadabad. His deceased body was buried in Shahdara Bagh, in Lahore. He was succeeded by his son Prince Khurram, also known as Shah Jahan.

## **Religious Policy of Jahangir**

Jahangir had faith in God and observed the principles of Islam in a normal way. He was not a religious man. He did not practice the principles of Islam strictly. He came in contact with people of all faiths which liberalized his views. He believed in the unity of God. He mostly pursued the religious policy of Akbar and gave equal facilities to all his subjects without discriminating between them on grounds of religion. The Hindus were not burdened by additional taxation and received services in the state according to merit. However, there are certain instances which prove that, at times, Jahangir favoured Islam.

Jahangir punished the Hindus in the state of Kashmir because they used to marry Muslim girls and convert them to Hinduism. In the same way, he threw away the idol of Varaha at Ajmer into a pond and destroyed Christian churches when he was at war with the Portuguese. One reason of punishing Guru Arjan Dev, the Sikh religious leader, was certainly the religious views of the Guru which he disliked. He also ordered expulsion of all Jains from Gujarat when he felt dissatisfied with them. But, these instances are examples of his occasional frenzy. Jahangir did not pursue a policy of religious persecution against any sect. He punished Guru Arjun because of the financial help which he gave to the rebel prince Khusrav. He even punished Muslim preachers like Shaikh Rahim, Qazi Nurulla and Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi, when he felt unhappy with them. So there remains no reason to charge him for fanaticism against the Sikhs, the Hindus, the Jains or the Christians. Mostly, Jahangir maintained the spirit of religious toleration with all his subjects and no change was brought about by him in the policy of Akbar.

## **NOTES**

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### Conquests of Jahangir

Conquests of Jahangir were mainly directed to those places which were left unconquered by Akbar such as Mewar and south India.

Jahangir pursued the policy of extending the empire like his father. The conquest of north India was nearly complete during the reign of Akbar. Only a few petty states and Mewar in Rajasthan could maintain their independence. But the conquest of the South was incomplete. Jahangir tried to subdue Mewar and the states in south India. Jahangir desired the submission of Mewar from the beginning of his reign and dispatched prince Parwez to conquer Mewar after his accession to the throne in AD1605. However, the

Imperial forces were recalled after some time due the emergency caused by the revolt of prince Khusrav. Later, Jahangir dispatched prince Khurram to subdue Mewar. The Rajputs were hard pressed, their lands were destroyed and their supplies were stopped and the Rana was forced to make peace with the Mughals. The Rana agreed and sent an ambassador to Khurram for settling the terms of peace. Jahangir gladly accepted the offer of the Rana and a peace treaty was signed between the Mughals and the Rana in AD 1615.

Jahangir tried to complete the conquest of south India. Akbar had made a beginning towards it. Khandesh and a part of Ahmednagar were conquered during his time. But the conquest of Ahmednagar could not be completed while Golconda and Bijapur were left untouched so far. Jahangir attempted to conquer them. But Malik Ambar, the capable *wazir* of Ahmednagar succeeded in checking the Mughal expansion towards further south. The primary aim of Malik Ambar was to check further aggression of the Mughals on the territory of Ahmednagar and he succeeded in his attempts. His success saved the rest of the south India from the onslaughts of the Mughals during the reign of Jahangir. The attack of the Mughals under Abdur Rahim in AD 1608 failed. In AD1610, Jahangir dispatched a large force under the command of prince Parwez and Asaf Khan to invade Ahmednagar, but before its arrival Malik Ambar forced Abdur Rahim to retreat to Burhanpur and sign a peace treaty.

In AD1615, the Mughals defeated the combined army of Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golconda near Rosangaon, but failed to gain any useful results because of the differences between prince Parwez and Khan-i-Khana. Jahangir dispatched Prince Khurram to the Deccan with a large force and himself reached Mandu in AD1617. The ruler of Bijapur acted as a mediator and efforts were made for a treaty between the Mughals and Ahmednagar. In AD1617, the treaty was signed. The territory of Balaghat and a few forts including that of Ahmednagar were surrendered to the Mughals by Ahmednagar and the ruler of Bijapur gave costly presents to prince Khurram. Khurram was given the title of Shah Jahan by Jahangir at this occasion. But the success of the Mughals was in name only. In fact, there

was no gain of territory or increase of influence of the Mughals in the Deccan. Malik Ambar did not fulfil the terms of the treaty. He entered into an agreement with the states of Bijapur and Golconda and besieged the fort of Ahmednagar in AD1620. He also conquered Berar and its neighbouring territory. Jahangir again deputed Shah Jahan to the campaign of the Deccan. Malik Ambar agreed for peace and a treaty was signed in AD1621. Ahmednagar surrendered not only all that territory which it had captured from the Mughals after the settlement in AD1617, but further territory of its own yielding rupees forty lakhs a year of revenue. Bijapur also paid rupees twelve lakhs and Golconda rupees twenty lakhs to the Mughals. Thus, the Deccan campaign ended in AD 1621.

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### 10.3 SHAH JAHAN

Shah Jahan ruled the Mughal Empire from AD 1628–1658. The son of the royal leader Jahangir and his Rajput Queen, popularly called Jodhabai, Shah Jahan was born on 5 January 1592. Subsequent to the death of his father, he proclaimed himself the Emperor of the Mughal Dynasty. He extended the political supremacy which was established in India by Akbar. The kingdom enjoyed peace and opulence during his reign. His reign was said to be the golden age of Mughal Empire in India.

#### Reign of Shah Jahan

The reign of Shah Jahan was marked as the golden age of the Mughal dynasty. Shah Jahan was well educated and cultured, and was known to have provided protection to scholars. Persian and Sanskrit literature flourished during his reign. He also patronized fine arts, appreciated music, painting and structural design. He had several wives; nonetheless, he was devoted to them. He constructed the Taj Mahal to commemorate his love for Mumtaz Mahal. He loved his children and gave them all necessary training and comforts. He was a hard fighter and an accomplished commander. He participated in all important campaigns not only during his life time, but also had led most of the conquests for his father Jahangir. Soon after he occupied the throne, he started his military campaigns and busied himself with extending the boundaries of the Mughal Empire. During his reign, Ahmednagar was completely annexed to the Mughal dominion, and Bijapur and Golconda were enforced to accept the suzerainty of the royal leader. He even attempted to conquer Central Asia and recover Kandahar.

Shah Jahan was a just sovereign and solemnly desired the welfare of his subjects. Trade, industry and agriculture flourished and the state as well as the subjects enjoyed prosperity during the entire period of his reign. He worked hard and personally supervised the administration of the Empire. He brought about enhancement in the *mansabdari* system. He helped his subjects generously in

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times of famines and natural calamities. With regard to religious affairs, he was unquestionably orthodox when compared with Jahangir and Akbar; yet he did not get in the way of the daily life of the Hindus and the Christians. He participated in fairs and festivals of the Hindus and he continued the practices of *Jharokha Darshan* and *Tula Dan* as before. He continued the policy of his father and grandfather towards the Rajputs and commanded their respect and loyalty. Trade activities flourished between Delhi, Agra, Lahore, and Ahmedabad during the reign of Shah Jahan as a result of improved network of roads and waterways.

The greatest achievement of this great good judge of art was the architectural structures and gravestones erected by him during his life time. A major revolution that occurred during his period was the replacement of red sandstone with the more expensive marble as the construction material as seen in the *Diwan-i-am* (hall of public audience) or the black marble exhibition area of the Shalimar Gardens in Srinagar. The Jama Masjid, the Moti Masjid and the tomb of Jahangir in Lahore unquestionably deserves mention here. The most famous of all his works is the legendary Taj Mahal at Agra built as a tomb for his wife, Empress Mumtaz Mahal.

### **Achievements of Shah Jahan**

Shah Jahan pursued the same guiding principles of his ancestors Akbar and Jahangir regarding the extension of the Empire's boundaries towards south India. Moreover, the fact that the states of south India sheltered the rebels in opposition to the Mughals did not sit well with Shah Jahan and hence, he desired to get the better of these states. In AD 1633 Ahmednagar was annexed to the Mughal Empire. The ruling family of Golconda was *Shia* and its rule had refused to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Mughals. Shah Jahan desired to conquer Golconda. He was able to manage this when Abdullah Qutub Shah ascended the throne, and he agreed to the terms and conditions of the Mughal Emperor. In AD 1636, Shah Jahan attacked Daulatabad. Bijapur was weak at that time due to rebellious attempts of its nobles. Consequently, Muhammad Adil Shah voluntarily agreed for peace and an agreement was signed between the two parties. The Deccan guiding principle of the Mughals proved fairly triumphant for the duration of the period of influence of Shah Jahan. Since the annexation of Ahmednagar, both Bijapur and Golconda also accepted the suzerainty of the royal leader. The rulers of these kingdoms were obligatory to pay the annual acknowledgment from time to time and parts of their territories for the Mughals to establish their forts and watch stations. Some other minor invasions also occurred during Shah Jahan's rule. These conquests include the following:

- The Bhils of Malwa and Gonda
- Raja Pratap of Palam
- The Raja of Little Tibet

Raja Pratap of Palam and the Raja of Little Tibet were pardoned after they accepted the suzerainty of the Mughals. Moreover, Assam was forced to establish trade relations with the Mughal kingdom after constant fighting for over a decade spanning from AD 1628 – 1639.

### War of Succession

Chaos and bloodshed related to wars of succession for the throne had become the order of Mughal Era. All the four sons of Shah Jahan – Dara Shikoh, Shah Shuja, Aurangzeb and Murad, started fighting among themselves during the last years of Shah Jahan’s rule. Shah Jahan personally chose Dara as the would-be-heir. But the Muslim nobles disliked the popular Dara for his liberal mindset. Ultimately, Aurangzeb cleansed all obstructions through coercion and bloodshed. He imprisoned Shah Jahan, and murdered Murad and Dara, while the helpless Shah Shuja ran away from India. Shah Jahan died on 22 January 1666, in Agra.

#### Check Your Progress

1. What was the religious policy of Jahangir?
2. What was the greatest achievement of Shah Jahan?

## 10.4 AURANGZEB

Aurangzeb was the son of Shah Jahan and he ascended the throne as the sixth Mughal Emperor in AD 1658. Even though he was an extremely able administrator, it was his religious intolerance and fanaticism which created unrest among his subjects and led to the gradual undoing of the Mughal Empire. Aurangzeb was the third son of Shah Jahan and among the last Mughal Emperors to rule over India. He was born in AD 1618 at Dohad near Ujjain.

Aurangzeb was a hardworking and thorough man who had proved himself as an able administrator in the years that he spent in the Deccan as well as other regions of the Empire. He learnt all the tactics of diplomacy due to his expertise as a skilled soldier and general. All this came handy when he waged the war of succession with his father and his brothers. The end of the conflict was marked by Aurangzeb succeeding his father to the throne. On taking authority as the supreme ruler of the mighty dynasty, he assumed the title of Alamgir (conqueror of the world); followed by Badshah (Emperor) and then Ghazi (Holy Warrior) to propound the essence of the roles he would play. During the reign of Aurangzeb, the Mughal Dynasty was at its pinnacle with more regions of India becoming part of the Empire. From the time he was young, Aurangzeb had occupied various important positions during his father’s reign. Thus, when he usurped the power of his father and ascended the throne, he had the rich experience as the governor of

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Gujarat, Multan and Sind to aid him in his day-to-day affairs. Aurangzeb was a staunch Sunni Muslim and followed the principles of Islam. He led a disciplined life and abstained from drinking alcohol. He led a very simple life and spent little on his attire and food.

### **Administration of Aurangzeb**

Having succeeded Shah Jahan to the throne, Aurangzeb had the dominion over the largest area under him as a Mughal Emperor, compared to both his predecessors and successors. He proved himself as a capable ruler and ruled with an iron fist and keen intellect. His empire extended from Ghazni in the west to Bengal in the east and from Kashmir in the north to the Deccan in the south. In fact, one of the reasons cited by prominent historians for the downfall of the Empire was the over-extended empire that Aurangzeb ruled. Since his youth, Aurangzeb, being a staunch Sunni Muslim, was deeply devoted to Islam. Soon after occupying the throne, he felt the need to rule the country as much as was possible along Islamic injunctions. Aurangzeb felt that he had become superior not only to administer the empire in a better way, but also to protect and strengthen Islam, particularly its Sunni faith.

Aurangzeb believed that all Mughal rulers who ruled prior to him committed one blunder—they did not try to establish the supremacy of Islam in India. He therefore, tried to reverse this trend during his reign because he believed that it was the foremost duty of a Muslim king. This duty of Aurangzeb limited his vision, narrowed his concept of kingship and made him intolerant towards the majority of his subjects. As the first step towards establishing the Muslim supremacy in his empire, he introduced various policies, most of which were a simple reverse of the policies that were introduced by his forefathers. Thus, his administration saw the birth of a new class of people whose responsibility was to cleanse the society of various non-Islamic practices such as gambling, alcohol consumption and prostitution. Besides banning the cultivation and production of narcotic substances, he did away with many of the taxes which found no mention in the Islamic law. Besides all this, he also banned *Sati*, a Hindu practice which was common in his time. Most of these steps when implemented found favour among his people. But with the passing of time, and in his attempt to realize his bigger objective of fulfilling his religious vows, he adopted more puritanistic ways. Some of these factors that made him unpopular among his subjects included banning music at the court which led to a number of state musicians losing their jobs, festivities on the Emperor's birthday and giving of gifts to the emperor.

His religious intolerance was reflected in a number of ways. He stopped celebrating the Hindu festivals like Holi and Diwali at the court. He also framed certain laws to be observed by the Muslims as their religious duty. That is why even liberal *Shias* and *Sufis* were punished during the reign of Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb became quite intolerant towards the Hindus and ordered the provincial governors to demolish the schools and temples of the Hindus. In April AD1679,

*Jaziya* was imposed on the Hindus. Pilgrimage tax on the Hindus was also revived and while the Muslim traders remained free from tax, their Hindu counterparts were asked to pay one part of the value of their commodities as tax.

While he went about with the demolition of schools and temples of Hindus, much resource were spent from the treasury for the construction of many masjids and the upkeep of the existing mosques and other Mughal buildings. Some popular and exquisite buildings that were erected during his time include the Moti Masjid in the Red Fort, which is a jewel in white marble, and the magnificent Badshahi Mosque in Lahore, with its imposing domes towering over the red sandstone walls.

### **Military Campaigns of Aurangzeb**

As a statesman his achievements have been quite immense. For one, the strong kingdoms of Bijapur and Golconda were captured in less than a year. It is a tribute to Aurangzeb's control over the affairs of the Empire that no major upheaval occurred in the north during his prolonged absence in the Deccan, but there are clear indications of many minor disturbances and a general slackening of administration.

### **Achievements of Aurangzeb**

Aurangzeb had made some remarkable achievements, both before and during his reign. His constant aim during the entire duration of his reign was to expand the boundaries of the Mughal Empire. One of his greatest achievements was the annexation of Bijapur and Golconda, which were Maratha strongholds, to the Mughal Empire.

Since the beginning of his reign right up till his death he was engaged in almost constant warfare in order to try and increase the boundary of the Mughal Empire. He had managed to build up a huge army and started a programme of military expansion along all the boundaries of his empire. In keeping with this policy of expansion, he pushed northwest into Punjab and what is now Afghanistan and in the south towards Bijapur and Golconda.

#### **Check Your Progress**

3. What was the greatest achievement of Aurangzeb during his reign?

## **10.5 CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF JAHANGIR, SHAHJAHAN AND AURANGZEB**

We will in this section discuss the cultural contribution of Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb.

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### 10.5.1 Architecture

#### Jahangir and Architecture

Jahangir had fine artistic sense. However, he was more interested in painting rather than in architecture. Nevertheless two buildings were raised by Nur Jahan Begum. One of them is the celebrated tomb of Itmad-ud-Dula, her father. This building is wholly made of marble and stands on the left bank of the Jamuna in Agra. It is unique in its architectural composition. It is one of the earliest buildings to be decorated with *Pietra dura* (*Pietra dura* is the method of construction and decoration of buildings). The tomb of Itmad-ud-Daula at Agra possesses a rare beauty and grace and marks the transition from the sandstone edifices of Akbar's time to the white marble structure of Shah Jahan. It is a two-storeyed building with an octagonal tower surmounted by an open pavilion at each corner.

#### Shah Jahan and Architecture

Under Shah Jahan, architecture reached its highest development. He was fond of erecting buildings and had given evidence of his refined taste while he was still a prince. In fact, from the point of view of architecture, Shah Jahan's period can be said to be the golden period of the Mughal architecture. In his time, architecture reached its high water mark. He constructed many buildings of marble on whose walls stone engraving was done. He also used golden colour in his buildings. His reign is specially remembered for his buildings for two reasons. First, they have a beautiful synthesis of Indian and foreign architectural styles. Second, while constructing the buildings, the artist kept beautiful balance among their different parts. Shah Jahan constructed many buildings, such as palaces, forts and mosques, at various places, such as Agra, Delhi, Lahore, Kabul, Kashmir, Qandahar, Ajmer, Ahmadabad, Mukhlispur and others.

#### Aurangzeb and Architecture

Although not many buildings were put up by Aurangzeb (who was economical and money-minded) the Mughal architectural traditions based on a combination of Hindu and Turko-Iranian forms and decorative designs continued without a break into the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Aurangzeb got constructed some mosques like Badshahi mosque of Lahore and mosque of Banaras, which was raised on the ruins of the Vishwanath temple. It is one of the largest mosques of the subcontinent, though it is a poor imitation of the Jama Masjid of Delhi. Its marble domes have been finely executed. Aurangzeb also built another big mosque at Mathura on the site of the great temple of Lord Krishana, which he demolished. Aurangzeb's son, Azam Shah, built a mausoleum at Aurangabad in the memory of his mother, Rabia Daurani, the Emperor's favourite wife.

The Mughal traditions influenced the palaces and forts of many provincial and local kingdoms. Even the golden temple of the Sikhs at Amritsar, which was rebuilt several times during the period, was built on the arch and dome principle and incorporated many features of the Mughal traditions.

### **10.5.2 Painting**

#### **Jahangir and Painting**

Jahangir was an all-round patron and art critic. There are ample evidences in his memories of his gift of thinking pictorially.

No doubt, Mughal painting reached a climax under Jahangir, who had a very discriminating eye. It was a fashion in the Mughal school for the faces, bodies and feet of the people in the single picture to be painted by different artists. Jahangir claims that he could distinguish the work of each artist in a picture.

Under Jahangir apart from painting, hunting, battle and court scenes, special progress was made in portrait painting and paintings of animals. During his reign, some of the master painters of Akbar's reign continued to work while some new talent was imported. The most distinguished painters of his reign were Abul Hassan, Aqa Rija Mansur, Muhammad Nadir, Bishandas, Manohar and Govardhan. He used to encourage his painters to take a part in other styles also. When Thomas Roe showed him some paintings of European style, then Jahangir became inquisitive to understand that art.

#### **Shah Jahan and Painting**

Shah Jahan continued the tradition of his father and there is hardly any distinction between the paintings of the reign of the two Emperors. In fact, Shah Jahan was not so much interested in the art of painting as in that of architecture, and consequently, the progress in the field of painting stopped. Even then, some of the famous painters of Jahangir's reign continued to work during the period of Shah Jahan. Govardhan, Bal Chand, Anup Chature, Bichitra, Muhammad Nadir Hunhar and Chitarman were the famous painters of Shah Jahan's reign. Among the court paintings of Shah Jahan, there is more use of best quality colours and gold. This is the specialty of the time of Shah Jahan. Bernier tells us that there was a lack of opportunities for the painters to attain distinction and they had to suffer because of poor remuneration.

#### **Aurangzeb and Painting**

When Aurangzeb ascended the throne, he opposed the art of painting. His lack of interest in painting led to a dispersal of the artists to different places in the country. This helped in the development of painting in the states of Rajasthan and the Punjab Hills.

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### 10.5.3 Literary

#### Jahangir and Literature

Jahangir himself had a good literary taste. He wrote his autobiography '*Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*'. It is a work of great literary merit and historical importance. In the words of Ishwari Prasad, it ranked second to that of Babaur's Memoir in frankness, sincerity and charm of style. The great scholars in Jahangir's court were Mirza Gyas Begh, Naquib Khan, Mutmad Shah and Nizamullah Abdul Haq Dehlavi. Some of the greatest works written during his reign were '*Iqbalnama-i-Jahangir*', '*Masir-i-Jahangir*' and '*Zubd-ut-Tarik*'. In his time, commentaries were written on Holy Quran, but the translation work was stopped.

#### Literature during Shah Jahan's Reign

Shah Jahan also patronized the scholars. His courtier Abdul Hamid Laori wrote '*Padshanama*'. Some other important historical work which was compiled during his period was '*Shah Jahannama*' by Inayan Khan, '*Padshahnama*' by Qajwini and '*Amal Salah*' by Muhammad Saleh. They are very useful from historical point of view. Shah Jahan's son Dara Shikoh was a good scholar of Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit. Under this influence and inspiration the *Upnishadas*, the *Bhagwat Gita*, the *Yoga Vashishta* and the *Ramayana* were translated in the Persian. Shah Jahan would encourage scholars by rewards and stipends. He also founded a college at Delhi near the Jama Masjid and repaired several other colleges.

#### Literature during Aurangzeb's Reign

Aurangzeb was a learned man but he had more interest in Muslim theology and jurisprudence than poetry and history. In fact, he was a critical scholar of Muslim theology and jurisprudence. It was under his direction that the '*Fatwa-i-Alainngiri*', a digest of Muslim law, was prepared. The most famous history of his reign, the *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* of Khalif Khan, was prepared in secret. The other well-known historical works of his time are the '*Nuskhai-Dilkusha*' of Bhim Sen, and the '*Khulsat-ul-Twarikh*'. From the time of Aurangzeb, however, the Hindi literature began to decline. With the withdrawal of the imperial patronage, the era of great poets was brought to a close.

### 10.5.4 Music

#### Jahangir and Music

Emperor Jahangir inherited a great love of music from his father. He was himself a good musician and composed many Hindi songs. *Iqbalnama-Jahangiri* makes mention of the musicians who were patronized by the Emperor and indicates that Akbar's practice of allowing a separate day of the week for each band of singers was observed by Jahangir also. The chief new musicians under Jahangir were Jahangirdad, Chatar Khan, Parovidas, Khuram Dad, Makhu and Hamza.

### **Shah Jahan and Music**

It is said that Shah Jahan was fond of both music—vocal as well as the instrumental music. The two great Hindu musicians of his time were Jagannath and Janardan Bhatta of Bikaner. According to the author of '*Mirtatul-Alam*', 'Shah Jahan was himself a good singer' His songs were often thrilling. There were a number of excellent dancing girls in the court of Shah Jahan. Shah Jahan was particularly fond of Dhrupad. The best singer of this tune in his court was Lal Khan, a son-in-law of Tansen or according to Blochmann, Tansen's son Bilas. The Emperor conferred on him the title of 'Gunsamundar'.

### **Aurangzeb and Music**

There are many apocryphal stories about the burial of music by the orthodox Aurangzeb. Recent research shows that Aurangzeb banished singing from his court, but not the performance of musical instruments. In fact, Aurangzeb himself was an accomplished *Veena* player. Music, in all forms continued to be patronized by Aurangzeb's queens in the Harem and by the nobles. That is why the largest number of books on classical Indian music in Persian were written during Aurangzeb's reign. After his death, his grandson Jahandar Shah revived the royal patronage to the art of music. He raised Lal Kumari from the status of a prostitute to royal consort. But some of the most important developments in the field of music took place later on the eighteenth century during the reign of Muhammad Shah (AD 1720–1748).

#### **Check Your Progress**

4. Why was Shah Jahan's period considered as the golden period of the Mughal architecture?
5. Name some of the chief new musicians under Jahangir.

## **10.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS**

1. Jahangir had faith in God and observed the principles of Islam in a normal way. He was not a religious man. He did not practice the principles of Islam strictly. He came in contact with people of all faiths which liberalized his views. He believed in the unity of God.
2. The greatest achievement of Shah Jahan was the architectural structures and gravestones erected by him during his life time. The Jama Masjid, the Moti Masjid and the tomb of Jahangir in Lahore unquestionably deserves mention here. The most famous of all his works is the legendary Taj Mahal at Agra built as a tomb for his wife, Empress Mumtaz Mahal.

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3. One of the greatest achievements of Aurangzeb was the annexation of Bijapur and Golconda, which were Maratha strongholds, to the Mughal Empire.
4. Under Aurangzeb's anti-Shia policy removed the Shias from the government posts and annexed two Shia states of the Deccan—Bijapur and Golkunda to the Mughal Empire.
5. Shah Jahan's period is considered as the golden period of the Mughal architecture as architecture reached its high water mark. He constructed many buildings of marble on whose walls stone engraving was done. He also used golden colour in his buildings. Shah Jahan constructed many buildings, such as palaces, forts and mosques, at various places, such as Agra, Delhi, Lahore, Kabul, Kashmir, Qandahar, Ajmer, Ahmadabad, Mukhlispur and others.
6. The chief new musicians under Jahangir were Jahangirdad, Chatar Khan, Parovidas, Khuram Dad, Makhu and Hamza.

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## 10.7 SUMMARY

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- Jahangir, the Mughal Emperor ascended the throne after the death of his father Akbar and he assumed the title of Nur-ud-din Muhammad Jahangir.
- Jahangir also possessed some weaknesses. He was easily influenced by his close relatives. His revolt against his father was also more due to their evil influences than his personal ambitions.
- Jahangir pursued the policy of the extension of the empire like his father. The conquest of north India was nearly complete during the reign of Akbar.
- The reign of Shah Jahan was marked as the golden age of the Mughal dynasty. Shah Jahan was well educated and cultured, and was known to have provided protection to scholars.
- Shah Jahan was a just sovereign and solemnly desired the welfare of his subjects. Trade, industry and agriculture flourished and the state as well as the subjects enjoyed prosperity during the entire period of his reign.
- Aurangzeb was the son of Shah Jahan and he ascended the throne as the sixth Mughal Emperor in AD 1658.
- Having succeeded Shah Jahan to the throne, Aurangzeb had the dominion over the largest area under him as a Mughal Emperor, compared to both his predecessors and successors.
- Aurangzeb believed that all Mughal rulers who ruled prior to him committed one blunder—they did not try to establish the supremacy of Islam in India.
- Akbar had consolidated the Mughal Empire by his policy of religious tolerance. Jahangir had also followed the same religious policy. Though

Shah Jahan was not liberal like his two predecessors, still he kept politics away from religion.

- In AD 1679, Aurangzeb revived *Jaziya*, the trade tax imposed on the Hindus. According to contemporary historians, he imposed it to oppress the Hindus.
- Jahangir had fine artistic sense. However, he was more interested in painting rather than in architecture.
- Under Shah Jahan, architecture reached its highest development. He was fond of erecting buildings and had given evidence of his refined taste while he was still a prince.
- Aurangzeb got constructed some mosques like Badshahi mosque of Lahore and mosque of Banaras, which was raised on the ruins of the Vishwanath temple.
- Under Jahangir apart from painting, hunting, battle and court scenes, special progress was made in portrait painting and paintings of animals.
- Shah Jahan continued the tradition of his father and there is hardly any distinction between the paintings of the reign of the two Emperors.
- When Aurangzeb ascended the throne, he opposed the art of painting. His lack of interest in painting led to a dispersal of the artists to different places in the country.
- Jahangir himself had a good literary taste. He wrote his autobiography '*Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*'. It is a work of great literary merit and historical importance.
- Shah Jahan also patronized the scholars. His courtier Abdul Hamid Laori wrote '*Padshanama*'.
- Aurangzeb was a learned man but he had more interest in Muslim theology and jurisprudence than poetry and history.
- Emperor Jahangir inherited a great love of music from his father. He was himself a good musician and composed many Hindi songs.
- It is said that Shah Jahan was fond of both music—vocal as well as the instrumental music. The two great Hindu musicians of his time were Jagannath and Janardan Bhatta of Bikaner.
- Recent research shows that Aurangzeb banished singing from his court, but not the performance of musical instruments.

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### 10.8 KEY WORDS

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- **Coronation:** It refers to the ceremony of crowning a sovereign or a sovereign's consort.

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- **Diwan-i-Aam:** It refers to a place in which the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan and his successors received members of the general public and heard their grievances.
- **Jaziya:** It refers to the trade tax that was imposed on the Hindus.
- **Mansabdars:** It refers to a position of rank and a grading system which decides the rank, salary and military responsibilities of government officials.
- **Shariah:** It refers to the Islamic law which is derived from the teachings of the Quran and of Muhammad.

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## 10.9 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short-Answer Questions

1. Why did Jahangir revolt against his father?
2. Why was Jahangir not prepared to undergo the hardships of battle?
3. What were the ways in which Aurangzeb's religious intolerance was observed?
4. Why was art not popular during Aurangzeb's reign?
5. Name the great musicians of Shah Jahan's time.

### Long-Answer Questions

1. How did Jahangir expand his empire? Explain in detail.
2. Discuss the development of art and architecture under Jahangir and Shah Jahan.

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## 10.10 FURTHER READINGS

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# UNIT 11 MUGHAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, ADMINISTRATION, ART AND ARCHITECTURE

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*Mughal Socio-Economic  
Conditions, Administration,  
Art and Architecture*

## NOTES

### Structure

- 11.0 Introduction
- 11.1 Objectives
- 11.2 Administration
  - 11.2.1 The Structure of the Central Government under the Mughal
  - 11.2.2 Agrarian System
  - 11.2.3 Mansabdari System
- 11.3 Socio-Economic Conditions
  - 11.3.1 Classes
  - 11.3.2 Caste System
  - 11.3.3 Commerce
- 11.4 Art and Architecture
- 11.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 11.6 Summary
- 11.7 Key Words
- 11.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 11.9 Further Readings

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## 11.0 INTRODUCTION

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Under the administration of the Mughals, the economy as well as the society also developed throughout the rule. The Mughals also built numerous monuments and structures. They were great patrons of art and architecture. In this unit, the administration of the Mughal Empire and the role of each officer has been discussed. The socio-economic conditions which developed under the Mughal rule has also been analysed.

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## 11.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the structure of the Central Government under the Mughal
- Analyse the Agrarian system under the Mughals
- Discuss the evolution and features of the Mansabdari System
- Interpret the role of the society and commerce under the Mughal rule
- Explain the development of art and architecture under the Mughal rulers

*Self-Instructional  
Material*



## 11.2 ADMINISTRATION

### NOTES

Administration of the Mughal dynasty was carried out by incorporating certain elementary changes in the central administration structure in India. A major change brought about in the matters of administration by the Mughal rulers like Babur, Akbar and Aurangzeb was the principle of religious tolerance. It was Akbar who raised the structure of the Mughal administration. It continued till the reign of Aurangzeb with minor changes. The weak successors of Aurangzeb, however, could not maintain it.

Some of the important characteristics of the Mughal administration are as follows:

1. **Import of the foreign element in the administration:** The Mughals imported certain foreign elements into their administrative system. The Mughal administration presented a combination of Indian and the extra-Indian elements. More correctly, it was a Perso-Arabic system in the Indian setting.
2. **Administration based upon the military system:** In its formal configuration, the Mughal government was based upon the military system.
3. **Despotic:** Being militaristic in nature, the Mughal administrative system was a centralized despotism. The king had unlimited powers and his word was the law.
4. **Mixture of the religion and politics:** A strong blend of religion and politics existed in the system. The king was expected to rule according to the Islamic traditions and obey the commands of the Ulemas. For the Muslims, he undertook socialistic functions but towards his non-Muslim subjects, he followed the policy of minimum interference and, thus, confined himself to discharging the police and the revenue functions.
5. **Paper government:** The Mughal government, except, in the actual conduct of campaigns, was a kagazi raj, i.e., a paper government. Because of the large territory, slow means of transport and communications, political initiative was left to the people and there was a multiplication of the official correspondence and the growth of massive records.
6. **Police duties and revenue collection as the major functions:** As regarding the aims of the state, it contented itself with police duties and revenue collection. The state did not take any initiative in the social progress or the economic welfare of the common man.
7. **State as an entrepreneur:** The concepts of the state as an entrepreneur and the system of the public corporations were firmly entrenched. The

state maintained many karkhanas (factories) of its own in the principal cities of the empire and produced several commodities.

8. **Administration of justice and the maintenance of peace:** A striking feature characterized the Mughal administration's attitude towards law and order, while the administration of the justice and the maintenance of peace are considered as essential functions of a modern state, during the Mughal era; however, it was left to initiative of the local administration. Policing in the vast rural areas was done by the local chaukidars who were maintained by the villagers themselves. No doubt, the faujdar acted as the agent of the government, but the area under him was so large that he could not supervise all the villages.
9. **'Parochial' self-government:** Though the administration was decentralized into provincial and local administrations, it would be more correct to say that the villages and small towns of the Mughal Empire enjoyed 'parochial' self-government rather than the local autonomy. They had no political freedom as such and were mere payers of taxes.

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### Provincial Administration

It was Akbar who organized the provincial administration of the country and put it on a sound footing. He divided the empire into twelve divisions, later on increased to fifteen, and calling each a subahs. The administrative system in the provinces of the Mughal Empire was an exact miniature replica of the Central government.

The officer-in-charge of the subah was the subedar, also known as the nazim, in certain provinces. There was no regulation for fixing the tenure of this office. The subedar was responsible for the general supervision, economic prosperity, law and order, and the defence of the province. Besides being responsible for the general administration, he also supervised the administration of justice, helped the Diwan in collecting revenue, maintained the provincial forts, and recommended appointments and promotions for the important positions in the province. The provincial Diwan was second in line, but interestingly, not subordinate to the subedar. Rather, he was the latter's rival in the province. He too was directly appointed by the Emperor on the recommendation of the high Diwan. He acted directly on the orders of the high Diwan, and was in a constant correspondence with him. We see here a violation of the principle of unity of command. By placing the Diwan on an equal footing with the subedar, the Mughals created two parallel and mutually independent organizations in the province. They jealously watched each other's activities and reported to the Emperor. Though they were supposed to work in close collaboration, the records prove that the two quarrelled violently, leading to frequent transfers of the one or the other.

### Local administration

During the Mughal administration, each subah was divided into a number of units called the sarkars. Each sarkar was sub-divided into parganas or mahal. At this

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level, people came in direct touch with the officials. Below the parganas, there were villages called mawdah or dihi. In the Mughal terminology, a village included the land surrounding it and, therefore, the boundary of each mawdah was clearly demarcated. In a mawdah, there were smaller hamlets called naglah. Under Shah Jahan, his Wazir created another unit called the chakla between the sarkar and the pargana, which included a number of parganas. The sarkar, however, continued to exist.

### **Pargana administration**

As noted above, each sarkar was divided into parganas. The Shigdar was the executive head of a pargana, and responsible for the maintenance of law and order as well as the criminal justice. He conducted census operations and helped the Amir in the collection of the land revenue. Below him was the Quanungo, who dealt primarily with the survey, assessment and collection of revenue. The Quanungo was the head of the patwaris of a pargana.

### **Village administration**

Village administration, during the Mughal period, was in the hand of the village panchayat. The organization of the village life and the observation of the accepted codes of conduct were maintained through the village panchayat, which acted as a social development agency, catering to the welfare of the people. It was also a judicial agency for disposing off the cases involving disputes among the villagers. However, an appeal against the decision of the panchayats could be taken to the higher authorities of the government.

### **Administration of law and order**

The king and his Vakil or the Prime Minister were primarily responsible for this task. At the provincial level, there was the faujdar whose duties have been described above. Below him was the kotwal who appointed a headman for each mohalla (ward) to look after the reports about the law and order situation. However, Sarkar points out that the state almost neglected the law and order situation in the villages except when there was a violent crime. The policing of the vast rural areas was left to the locality. It was done by the local chaukidars who were servants of the village community and were maintained by the villagers themselves out of the village land or through a share of the crops. They were not considered as officers paid or supervised by the state. It is noteworthy that, instead of the Mughal government undertaking the responsibility for rural peace and security, it made the villagers responsible for the safety of their own property and that of the travellers in the neighbouring roads.

### **Revenue Administration**

The revenue administration under the Mughal rule was under the Wazir. The nomenclature Diwan and Wazir were used interchangeably by the various Mughal Emperors. For instance, Akbar preferred the designation Diwan while Jahangir

reversed it to Wazir. All the Diwans were however, not Wazirs and we read of no Hindu Diwan being given the high title of Wazir. In both the cases, in administration, the Diwan or Wazir was the alter ego of the Emperor. However, Akbar did not like the idea of the Diwan becoming all powerful and he kept rotating this office amongst his ministers. When the king was incompetent, a pleasure-seeker or a minor, the Wazir assumed the charge of the army also. During Akbar's time, he had Diwan-i-Tan (Diwan of salaries) and the Diwana-i-Khalsa (Diwan of crownlands) to assist him. By the end of Jahangir's era, the number of such assistants of the Emperor went up to four. Thus, besides the earlier two, there were Mushriff (chief accountant) and Mustanfi (chief auditor) who collectively acted as the controllers of the financial affairs.

### **The Ryatwari system**

The Ryatwari system of the land revenue was launched in AD 1582 by Raja Todar Mal (a Hindu), who was appointed by Akbar as the *Diwan-i-Ashraf*. Land was surveyed and measured carefully, and was classified into four categories based on the frequency of cultivation and productivity, each with an annual fixed rate of revenue. Only the area that was cultivated was assessed, and the state took a third of the actual produce.

### **Islamic tradition and its predominance**

According to the Holy Quran, the real master of the whole world is its real ruler, i.e., Allah. It is everybody's sacred duty to obey the command of the Allah. To propagate his message, the Allah has sent into the world his messengers and Muhammad was his last Prophet. To obey the Prophet is to obey the command of the Allah. For the Muslims, next to Prophet is the Caliph. Following this theory of the Islamic sovereignty, the Turkish Sultans in India, though practically independent, continued to consider themselves as a part of the Islamic world and a representative of the Caliph, and from time to time received investiture from him. In fact, the nature of the relationship between the Delhi Sultans and the Caliph was a more formal one. The Mughal rule ended even this formality. They never declared themselves the representative of Caliph.

#### **11.2.1 The Structure of the Central Government under the Mughal**

The Emperor was the pivot of the Mughal administrative power, and the supreme dispenser of justice. He was the despot and the source of all the authority. He was the head of the state, supreme commander of the military and the chief executive of the civil administration. Even the religious and the political authorities were not beyond his reach. In spite of this, he never had his way, was not uncontrollable and did not misuse his authority. He was always anxious about the welfare of the people. He enjoyed some privileges as well which nobody in the empire could enjoy without the permission of the Emperor. Mughal Emperor was also the protector of Islam and a spiritual leader of his Muslim subjects, and used that money to construct mosques and helping Muslim saints and poor men. Mughal

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Emperors transacted the business of the state according to the importance of the problem. (i) If the problem was in public interest, the Emperor held the court in Diwan-i-Aam or *Diwan-i-Khas*. In *Diwan-i-Khas*, only nobles, Amirs and other important persons could find their entrances, while the general public was allowed in Diwan-i-Aam. (ii) If the problem to be discussed was confidential, the Emperor held discussions either in Ghul-Khana or his private apartments.

According to Sarkar, 'The Mughal Emperor had no regular council of ministers. The Wazir and the Diwan were the richest persons below the Emperor, but the other officers were in no sense his colleagues. They were admittedly inferior to him and deserved rather to be called secretaries than ministers. The Mughal government was a one-man rule and Aurangzeb was his own Prime Minister.

According to S.R. Sharma, 'Though the Mughals came to India as conquerors and foreigners, they setup traditions and conventions which were calculated to endear them to their India subjects. The Emperor's appearance at the jharokha for the popular darshan daily, the opportunities they offered to the people to approach them with their petitions, their personal attention to the minute details of administration, and their regular inspection tours and pageants throughout the Empire, even apart from their generally enlightened and benevolent policy in all the matters, served to impart to their autocratic rule the appearance of government by consent.

### The Chief Departments and their Head

- (i) The exchequer and revenue (under the high Diwan)
- (ii) The imperial household (under the Khan-i-Saman or high Steward)
- (iii) The military pay and accounts office (under the imperial Bakhshi)
- (iv) Canon law, both civil and criminal (under the chief Qazi)
- (v) Religious Endowments and charity (under the chief Qadar)
- (vi) Censorship of public morals (under the Muhtasib)

Inferior to these, but ranking almost like departments, were:

- (vii) The artillery (under the Mir Atish or Daroga-i-Topkhana)
- (viii) Intelligence and posts (under the Daroga of Dak Chauki)

The innumerable karkhanahs (i.e., factories and stores), each under a daroga or superintendent were not departments. Most of them were under the Khan-i-Saman.

### 11.2.2 Agrarian System

During the Mughal period, the main occupation of the Indian people was agriculture. The system of the agricultural production in Mughal India had the appearance of vast geographical zones, cultivated by a myriad of peasants, each with his own separate field. In essential, the agricultural practices of the Indian peasants seem to be similar to those pursued by their counterparts in Europe, given the difference

in crops and climate. The wooden ploughs were used which were similar to the 'foot ploughs' used at the time in England. On the peasants' knowledge and use of fertilizer, we have unluckily very little information. On the coast, fish was used as manure. The usefulness of certain crops in preparing the land for cultivation was known at least to the theorists. The tradition lore about the rotation of crops also gave the peasants an important mean to preserve the productivity of the soil. Another feature of the Indian agriculture was the use of the artificial irrigation to supplement rain and flood. Wells and tanks were the main sources of irrigation. Different devices were used for lifting water from wells into the field channels. The chief among them were the wooden scoop or dhenkly, charas (a leather bucket) and the Persian wheer (or saqiya), etc. In the northern plains, the wells themselves were usually of the non-masonry type, dug for the seasons and then abandoned. The tanks or reservoirs played an important role as the sources of irrigation in the Central India, the Deccan and the southern India. In some areas, lakes were also used for the irrigation purpose. For example, the Madage lake of Vijay Nagar, the Dheber lake of Mewar, Udaisagar lake of Marwar and Raj Sagar of Mewar are some good examples of the lakes of the period. In the northern plains, particularly the upper Gangetic and the Indus Basins, numerous canals were cut from the rivers to furnish the irrigation.

The third main feature of the Indian agriculture of the Mughal period was the large number of food and non-food crops raised by the Indian peasants. The Ain-e-Akbari gives revenue rates for sixteen crops of the Rabi (spring) harvest cultivated in some; and twenty-five crops of Kharif (autumn), cultivated in all circles. Thus, in each locality as many as forty-one crops were being cultivated within a year, a similar multiplicity of the assessed crops appears in the Ain-e-Akbari's rates for other provinces, e.g., seventeen Rabi crops as twenty-six Kharif in Subh Delhi and so no. Not only did the Indian peasant grow a multiplicity of crops, but he was also prepared to accept new crops. The 17th century saw the introduction and expansion of two major crops, tobacco and maize. Both were immigrants from the new world.

An interesting feature of the agriculture during the Mughal time was the mobility of the peasantry. If the people of a large town, who have lived there for years, flee from it, they do it in such a way that not a sign or trace of them remains in a day or a day and a half'.

The information given on the yield of the crops is very limited. The only direct estimate of the yield are contained in Abul Fazal's detailed list of crops with their yields stated for good, bad and middling lands as worked out by Sher Shah's administration. These figures give us the important result that between AD 1540 to 1545 and 1874, there was practically no change in the yield per unit per area in the case of the food grains. But for crops other than food grains on the evidence of other sources, we can say that the yield of sugarcane, cotton and indigo declined during this period. It is possible, however, that productivity per head was higher in AD 1595 than around AD 1870.

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Another feature of the agriculture was the most of the Mughal Emperors took a keen interest in the development of agriculture for the welfare of the peasantry. Akbar paid special attention towards irrigation. He instructed his Subedars to construct wells, lakes and dams, etc. Jahangir had written in his autobiography, Tuzuki-i-Jahangiri that he had issued instructions that the government official should not forcibly take away the land of peasants and get it ploughed in their names. Shah Jahan got repaired a few canals made during the time of Firoz Shah Tughlaq and got some new ones constructed. Actually, in the Mughal period, the condition of the peasants was satisfactory though they had a simple and hardworking life. Though they did not have enough to eat and lead a good standard life, even then they were happy. Probably it was due to many reasons. Firstly, they were fatalists and this satisfaction had become a sort of a part of their lives. Secondly, the price of goods was low; therefore, living was not very difficult. Thirdly, their necessities were also very few; therefore, they did not have any problem in their livelihood. Fourthly, land problems did not exist then, and because of the pressure of population not being high, they could get sufficient income even by comparatively less hard work. There was no shortage of the food grains in the country. The view is supported by Edward terry, 'There was an abundance of the food products in the country and people earned their livelihood without much difficulty'. The last unique feature of the agriculture of this period was that though the majority of the population was engaged in agriculture, there used to be many famines in the country. The first famine in the reign of Akbar took place in AD 1556-1556. Delhi became a desolate tract and thousands of people lost their lives. Badauni says that he himself had witnessed scenes of cannibalism and it was a great torment to see people dying for want of food in most distressing circumstances. During Aurangzeb's time, there were four famines (AD 1659-1670, 1671 and 1682), but not so devastating. But we must remember that most of the Mughal Emperors tried to elevate the suffering of the famine striking people.

Com was rapidly rushed in from other provinces. The state arranged for the distribution of food and granted remissions in taxes. In 1679, Aurangzeb even abolished the Rahadari and Pandari and cesses to induce the grain-dealers to bring large stocks to the affected area from the other regions.

### 11.2.3 Mansabdari System

The Mansabdari system during the Mughal administration is discussed under the following heads.

#### Akbar and the Mansabdari System

Akbar could not have been able to expand his empire and maintain his hold over it without a strong army. For this purpose, it was necessary for him to organize the nobility as well as his army. To realize both these objectives, Akbar organized his army on the basis of the Mansabdari system in place of the Jagirdari system.

Mansab is a Persian word. It means an office or a status or an Ohada. The person whom the Emperor gave a mansab was known as the Mansabdar. Akbar

gave some mansab or the ohada (status) to each of his military and civil official. The lowest rank was ten, and the highest was 5000 for the nobles; towards the end of the reign, it was raised to 7000. According to Badayuni, we can say that towards the end of his reign, Akbar increased the highest rank to 12,000. Princes of the blood received higher mansab. During the period of Akbar, Raja Man Singh, Mirza Aziz Koka and one or two other top ranking officials were promoted to the rank of 7000. Thereafter, the mansab of 8000 and above were meant for the royal family.

### **Meaning of Zat and Sawar**

The ranks of Mansabdars were divided into two groups – Zat and Sawar. The word Zat means personal. It fixed the personal status of a person, and also the salary due to him. The Sawar rank indicated the number of cavalymen (sawars) a person was required to maintain.

Regarding the actual horsemen maintained by the Mansabdar, there was no definite view. This matter had been further complicated by the Zat and Sawar distinction introduced by Akbar in AD 1603-1604 on which the historians hold divergent views. According to Blachmann, Zat indicated the number of troops which a Mansabdar was expected to maintain, while the Sawar meant the actual number of horsemen that he maintained. On the other hand, Irvin holds that the Zat indicated the actual number of a cavalry, while the Sawar was an honour, and represented like the Zat, the actual number indicated by it. This is impossible to believe. Dr R.P. Tripathi holds still another view. He says that Sawar was simply an additional honour and it entitled the Mansabdars to some extra allowance. For the Sawar rank, he had not to maintain any additional troops at all. Mr C.S.K. Rao says that the Zat rank indicated infantry while Sawar indicated cavalry to be maintained by the Mansabdar. But Abdul Aziz says that it is impossible to believe that the Mughals could have such a large number of infantry. He is of the opinion that Zat rank imposed an obligation to maintain a fixed number of elephants, horses, beasts of burden and carts but no horsement of cavalry, whereas Sawar represented the actual number of cavalry under a Mansabdar. Both Abdul Aziz and Prof. S.R. Sharma hold that the Sawar distinction determined whether a particular Mansabdar of the Zat rank belonged to the class first or the class second or class third in that particular mansab.

### **Main Characteristics of Mansabdari System**

The main characteristics of the system were:

#### **Mansab was granted to the military as well as the civil officials**

It should be remembered that mansab was not granted to the military officials alone. All the Mughal officers in the revenue and judicial services, and even the scholars of the court were the holders of mansab. It is, therefore, that Irvin says, Mansabdari meant nothing 'beyond the fact that the holder of mansab was the employee of the state'. Mr R.P. Khosla in a way reiterates the same when he

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remarks, 'In the Mughal state the army, the peerage and the civil administration were all rolled into one'.

### Categories or grades of Mansabdars

In AD 1573-1574, the Mansabdars were classified into thirty-three grades ranking from commanders of ten to those of 12,000. Those who held command of ten to 400 were called Mansabdars. Higher up, those who held command of 500 to 2500 were styled as Amirs, while the holders rank of 3000 and upward known as Amir-i-Azam or Umra. The highest grades commanders from 8000 to 12,000 were reserved for the princes of the royal blood. A common official could not get beyond the mansab of 7000.

### Appointment of the Mansabdars

The Emperor used to appoint the Mansabdars personally and they could retain the mansab so long as he desired. Generally, a mansab of 8000 was given to the members of royal family.

### Pay and allowances of the Mansabdars

The Mansabdars during Mughal period were very highly paid. They were generally given cash salary. Sometimes the revenue of a particular Jagir was assigned to them as a salary. They had to manage their own horsemen and horses expenditures from their own salary. Prof. Satish Chandra says regarding the pay of the Mughal Mansabdars, 'The Mughal Mansabdars were paid very handsomely; in fact, their salaries were probably the highest in the world, at that time'. A Mansabdar of 5000 got from ₹ 28,000 to ₹ 30,000/-, out of which he would spend ₹ 16,000/- to maintain the soldiers and the other obligations. A Mansabdar of 1000 got nearly ₹ 8000/- of which ₹ 3000/- were spent to meet his obligations.

### Duty of the Mansabdars

Mansabdars could be sent to the battlefield on military campaigns as the military commanders or under some commander, who himself was a Mansabdar. They could be called upon to quell a revolt, conquer new area or perform non-military and administrative duties. Sometimes they were allowed to recruit their own troops and to purchase their equipment.

### Restrictions on Mansabdars

Great care was taken to ensure that the Sawars recruited by the Mansabdars were experienced and well mounted. Akbar started the practice of keeping a record of the description (huliya) of each horseman under a Mansabdar and of branding their horses (dag) to prevent the Mansabdars from going as they pleased. Each horse bore two marks, the government mark on the right thigh and the Mansabdar's mark on the left thigh. Every Mansabdar had to bring his contingent for a periodic inspection before persons appointed by the Emperor for the purpose. The horses were carefully inspected and only good quality horses of Arabic and Iraqi breed were employed. For every ten cavalrymen, the Mansabdar had to

maintain twenty horses. This was so because the horses had to be rested while on march, and replacements were necessarily in the times of war.

### **Pure and mixed troops of Mansabdar**

Generally, a provision was made that the contingents of the nobles should be mixed ones, and drawn from all the groups, Mughal, Pathan, Hindustani, Muslims, Rajputs, etc.

### **Recruitment, promotion and dismissal**

During the Mughal period, the recruitment, promotions and dismissals of Mansabdars were in the hands of the Emperor. A person desirous of joining the Mughal service may contact the Emperor through a Mansabdar or through Mir Bakshi to the Emperor. It was up to the mood and satisfaction of the Emperor to accept the recommendation of Mir Bakshi to assign a mansab to the concerned person. If he was granted a mansab, his whole record, known as 'hakikat' was prepared. Promotions of the Mansabdars were also in the hands of the Emperor and were made generally on such occasions as (i) before and after an expedition, (ii) at the time of vacancy and (iii) on some auspicious occasions or festivals. A Mansabdar could be dismissed at any time by the Emperor if the latter felt that the former was disloyal or dishonest to him or had lost his utility for the empire.

#### **Check Your Progress**

1. Who introduced the Ryatwari System?
2. What was the name of the place in the fort where the emperor held court?

## **11.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

The social condition of the people during the Mughal administration is discussed under the following heads.

### **11.3.1 Classes**

During the Mughal period, majority of the society belonged to the class of the commoners. Among the common men in Mughal times could be included the peasants, labourers, artisans, etc. The people of this class led a comparatively hard life. The food of the people of this class was very ordinary. The normal food of the commoners was boiled rice, chapatti, pulses, sag and some other vegetables with the salt, although the most universal and popular was Khichari, which was prepared in an ordinary way, and was taken without ghee and butter. The diet of an ordinary Muslim was simple like that of Hindu. Generally, he preferred to take fried bread and kababs. This normal meal consisted of wheat bread, fried bread and chicken. The people of this class could not afford good and costly clothes.

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Their clothing were generally insufficient, and they could not afford to use woollen garments. Babur was struck by the scanty clothes worn by the common people. He observed that 'peasants and people of the low standing go about naked'. He described the langota or decency cloth worn by men and the Sari worn by women. His impression has been corroborated by later travellers. Ralph Fitch, who came to India towards the end of the 16th century, says that 'at Banaras, the people go naked save a little cloth bound about their middle'. Writing about the people of the common class between Lahore and Agra, SDalbacke says, 'The plebeian is so poor that a great part of them go naked'. Abul Fazal, the court historian of Akbar, writes that men and women of Bengal for the most part go naked wearing only a cloth about their loins, and this appears to have been true for a bulk of India's teeming millions. De Laet wrote that 'the labourers had insufficient clothing to keep themselves warm and cosy during winter'. However, Fitch observed, 'In the winter which is our May, the men wear quilted gowns of cotton, and quilted caps'. But their accounts do not appear to be completely true. Because the accounts of many contemporary historians prove that the Indians used clothes in an abundant quantity. In fact, the remarks of the foreign travellers need to be treated with some quantity. Coming from a colder climate and not familiar with the climate and traditions of India, the impression of nakedness which they gained was natural. The overall impression remains one of an insufficiently of clothing rather than nakedness. According to Padshahanama of Lahauri, the people used lungis (lion cloth in private). When and where the climate was cold, the people covered themselves more fully. Generally, the Hindu of this class wore dhoti and kurta, and the women wore sari, blouse along with some inner garments. The usual dress of an average Muslim appears to have been a payjapah (ijar), an ordinary shirt, and a cap on his shaven head. The women of this community used to wear salwar, shirt or long kurta along with burkha. As far as the housing and furniture was concerned, little needs to be said. Most of the people of this class used to live in houses made of mud. They had hardly any furniture except cots and bamboo mats, and earthen utensils, which were made by the local potter. Copper and bell, metal plates, and utensils were expensive, and were generally not used by commoners. The poor people of the village often came to cities in search of jobs and worked there as porters, domestic servants and artisans. This was partly due to the natural growth of the population, and partly due to an air abandoning cultivation due to the famine or other unfavourable circumstances, such as over-assessment. As far as the cities and the towns were concerned, the largest class consisted of the poor artisans, the servants and slaves, the soldiers, petty shopkeepers, etc. The salary of the lowest grade of servant, according to European travellers, was less than ₹ 2 per month. The bulk of the means and foot soldiers began at less than ₹ 2 per month. But because the costs of the things were less, these people did not have to suffer much, in spite of the fact that their pay was less.

## The middle classes

According to historians like Mooreland, in this age, middle class or the intelligentsia was almost non-existent. This is partly true because even at that time there were Vakils, Hakims, Vaidyas, and scholarly Pandits and Ulemas throughout the country, though their number was very low as compared to the population of the country. According to the well-known historian Dr Satish Chandra, 'The middle class in medieval India consisted mainly of merchants, professional classes, such as Vaidyas and Hakims, and officials'. The people of this class lived a frugal life, free from abstention. The merchants lived simple and temperate lives. As Bernier observed, they would always try to conceal their wealth and deliberately lived in a state of studied indigence because they were afraid lest they should be robbed of their wealth by the provincial governors who were at once covetous and corrupt. In fact, there was a high degree of professionalism among the Indian merchants. Some specialized in wholesale trade and others in retail trade, the former being called Seth or Bohra and the latter Beoparis or Banik. In south India, the Chettis formed the trading community. There was a special class, banjaras, who specialized in carrying trade. The banjaras used to move from place to place sometimes with thousands over laden with salt, ghee, food grains, haldi, etc. The majority of the Pandits and the Ulemas were dependent on charity and were servants of the states. Therefore, this class could not undertake the intellectual leadership of the society and used to think of augmenting comforts by making the upper classes happy. In religious matters, the Pandits and the Ulemas had great effect on ordinary people but they did not have the capacity to provide moral leadership to the country and free them from any social evils. The middle class people were often depressed because they wanted to live like the people of high class in a luxurious manner, but because of their lesser income, they could not do so. There was a lot of use of wine in this class. They also gave great attention towards cosmetics, etc.; their standard was not as high as that of nobility but their financial condition was better. The middle classes managed to have their meals thrice daily. On the occasions of marriage and festivity, they indulged in extravagances beyond their means.

## Higher classes

In this division came the people of three categories. Firstly, in this class came the Emperor, very high officials, Mansabdars and Zamindars. Secondly, the provincial rulers – Mansabdars and other nobles. Thirdly, the Gazirdars or the land-owners, etc., were also the part of the high class. The ruling class used to enjoy the highest standard in the society, both socially and economically; the Mughal nobility formed a privileged class. Theoretically, the door of the Mughal nobility was open to everyone. In practice, persons belonging to the aristocratic families, whatever they were Indian or foreigners, had a decided advantage. To begin with, the bulk of the Mughal nobles were drawn from the homeland of the Mughal, Turan, and from its neighbouring areas, Tajakistan, Khursana, Iran, etc. The Mughal rulers

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never followed a narrow racialist policy, recruiting their nobles. Along with the Mughal, highest nobles were appointed from the Afghans, the Hindustani Muslims, the Rajputs and other Hindus also. The nobles tried to live up to the standard of the Emperor, and had the same vices and virtues. Mughal court habits were carried to the Rajputana by the Rajput Rajas. The nobles of this period lived in a great style and most of the European travellers testify that their standard of living was much higher than that of the European monarchs. The Mughal nobles received extremely high salaries but their expenses were also very high. Each noble maintained a large train of servants and attendants and a large stable of horses, elephants and transport of all types. Many of them maintained a large harem of women, which was considered normal for a man of a status during Mughal period. They used to spend lavishly on clothes, food and ornaments. Their life was luxurious. Because of their spend thrift nature and not saving enough many, many nobles used to be in debt at the time of their death. Some nobles used to invest in trade. Some purchased land, bought gardens and got markets constructed, and some people from this class made fruits of new kinds popular. Many nobles extended patronage to musicians, poets, scholars and painters. They also encouraged many artisans.

From the writing of Abul Fazal and other contemporary scholars, it is clear that the personal ownership of land was very old in India. The right of the ownership in land depended mainly upon succession. But new rights of ownership were being created all the time. The tradition was that anyone who first brought land under cultivation was considered its owner. In addition to owning the lands they cultivated, a considerable section of Zamindars had the hereditary right of collecting the land revenue from a number of villages. They used to get a share of the land revenue. The Zamindars had their own armed forces and they generally lived in forts or garhis, which was both a place of refuge and a status symbol. In the whole of India, Zamindars were called by different names like Sri Deshmukh, Patil, Naik, etc. In addition to the Zamindars, there was a large class of religious leaders and scholars also whom the Emperor granted land due to their qualities and services to the Mughal empire. Such grants were given for their maintenance and were called milk or Madad-i-Massh. Although these grants were to be renewed by every ruler, they often became hereditary in practice. We have little idea of the living standard of this particular section of high class. But this can be said definitely that their living standard was far better than the people of middle and lower classes.

### **Family Life during the Mughal Period**

Majority of the people lived in joint family. There was no place for the private property within the joint family but all members had a right to spend from the joint income of the family. This family system on the one hand kept the people under the feeling of mutual cooperation, while on the other, it hindered the development of the feeling of self-dependence and the cultivation of individual personality traits

### 11.3.2 Caste System

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Even during the Mughal period, the caste system and the feeling of inequality in the Hindu society remained rooted. The Hindu society was divided into many castes and sub-castes. The feeling of untouchability and inequality was more prevalent among the Hindu people of the rural India than the urban one. The descriptions of some historians testify the existence of the caste system. As Mooreland points out in his book 'India at the death of Akbar' that the Hindu caste system existed in full vigour, as it does today, though the English documents of the period do not as a rule differentiate between of the various types castes and classes. Just as they refer to all the Hindus under the generic title of 'Gentus', i.e., Gentities, so they apply the term 'Moor' to all classes of the Mohammadans. The Mohammadans of India at this date were roughly divided into those of the north-western region and those of the coast. Though the Hindus did not like to mix up with the Muslims in the beginning and hesitated to take their foods, later on both the communities started participating in each other's festivals. As a result of the integration of the two cultures, a new culture had arisen, which later on came to be known as the Indo-Muslim culture. Many Hindus and Sufi saints raised their voice against the caste system and discrimination among the human beings on the basis of caste. There is no doubt that they could not eliminate altogether this evil from Indian society but it cannot be said their efforts were altogether useless. To quite an extent, there was a feeling of unity among the Mughals, Pathans, Turks, Rajputs, Jats and other Hindu sects. Now Akbar's secular state has taken place of the Sultanate period's religion predominating state. The concept of sulahkul of Akbar consolidated the feeling of co-operation, mutual understanding and goodwill between the people of different caste and communities.

#### Position of Women

The best way to understand the spirit of a civilization, and to appreciate and realize its excellence and limitations is to study the history of its womenfolk, the development and change in their status, and their position from time to time. The position of the Indian women during the Mughal period resisted a further decline. Child marriage, polygamy, Sati and Pardha continued, and personal respect for the sex went down. Even a liberal emperor like Akbar had to issue strict order that if a young woman was found running about the streets and markets of the town, and while doing so did not veil herself or allowed herself to be unveiled, she was to go to the quarters of the prostitutes and take up the profession. Barbosa, an early 16th century traveller, has referred to the strict observation of the Pardha by the women of Bengal. Eunuchs were freely employed as a means of communications between the male and female members of a royal family. Hindu ladies could move out of the doors with little or no restrictions. Unlike Muslim women, they did not cover themselves from head to foot. The birth of daughter was considered inauspicious. A Rajput was often heard to say 'accursed be the day, when a women child is

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born to me'. A wife who unfortunately happened to give birth to girls in succession was despised and even sometimes divorced. Generally, polygamy was prevalent among the Muslims whereas Hindus practiced monogamy. Among the Hindus, the daughters were married at a very early age. Akbar tried to stop the evil of early marriage but he could not get success. According to the Abul Fazl, Akbar issued instructions that a boy of less than 21 years and a girl of less than 16 years could not be married. Among the Hindus, widow remarriage was prohibited, except among the lower caste people. The custom of Sati was prevalent. Even betrothed girls had to commit Sati on the funeral pyres of their would-be husbands. Those widows who would not burn themselves with the dead body of their husbands were harshly treated by the society. They were not allowed to wear ornaments or to braid their long hair. But the position of Muslim women was better in this aspect. Muslim women could remarry. So far as right over property was concerned, the position of Muslim women was much better as compared to their Hindu counterparts. They had equal share in their father's property. Generally, no attention was paid towards the education of the women in the lower and middle classes. Only the women of a high class got education; that is why many ladies of a high class did remarkable works in the field of literature, politics, etc. For example, Humayun's sister Gulbadan Begum wrote, *Humayunama* and translated *Tuzk-i-Bauri* in Persian. Nur Jahan played a very active role in the Mughal court. Meera Bai became a popular poetess of that time. Similarly, Chand Bibi of Ahmednagar and Tara Bai of Maratha state played very active roles in politics. About Tara Bai, the well known historian J.N. Sarkar rightly observed, 'Her administrative genius and strength of character saved the nation in that awful crisis'. Thus, we reach the conclusion that women were not given equal opportunities in all fields; they could have played an important role in the society.

### **Dress, Ornaments and Cosmetics**

According to M.A. Ansari, 'Dress is the mirror of the civilization'. Indian dress, throughout the ages had been determined mainly by the climate conditions as well as by the changing requirements of the socio-religious customs and the manners of our country. There is no doubt that the foreign influence also played an important part in its evolution. The Mughal emperors were very much interested in new fashions and variety in dresses. Humayun invented several new brands of dresses, particularly the one called *ulbagcha*. It was a vast waist coat open in front and hanging down of the waist over the *Qabaor Coat*. Akbar employed skilled tailors to improve the style of costumes in his ward-robe. The *Ain-i-Akbari* describes eleven types of coats. The most important of them was the *Takan Chiyah peshwai* coat with a round skirt tied on the right side, open in front and tied in front, and *Shah Ajidah*, the royal fur coat. Shah Jahan was fond of fashionable dresses which were profusely adorned with costly pearls, diamonds and rubies. Aurangzeb was, however, a man of modern taste and habits, and he, undoubtedly, made an attempt in simplicity in matters of dressing. The people of the upper class spent lavishly on

their dresses, and the wealthy Muslims wore both salwar and breeches or tight trousers. Over their shirts they wore narrow waist coats. The rich also carried coloured woollen shawls over their shoulders. The dress of the common people differed almost radically from that of the aristocracy. The common people generally went quite naked except piece of cloth round their waist reaching their knees. Babur writes in his memoirs, 'The Hindus wore one thing called langota, decent cloth which hangs to span below the novel'.

During the Mughal period women were very anxious to adorn themselves with a variety of bulky ornaments. Abul Fazal enumerates thirty-seven types of ornaments in his list given in Ain-i-Akbari. According to him, chaulk, mang, kot-bildzr, sekra and binduli were used for adorning the head and the forehead. Ears were adorned with bali, more-bhanwar, peepal patti, karan phool, etc. Natch and besar were used to adorn the nose. Necklaces of gold, pearl and other costly stones were used to adorn the neck. Rings were worn in toes and fingers, Bichua, ghungru and payal were also used by the women. As for men, the Muslims were usually against ornaments. Some of them, however, wore amulets. The Hindus on the other hand, adorned themselves with either ear and finger rings. All the Mughal emperors except Aurangzeb adorned themselves with all the possible jewelleryes in important festivals and occasions.

### **Social Customs and Faiths**

Among the Hindus, many important family and social customs began with the birth of a child and continued throughout life among them. These six were birth celebration, naming ceremony, Sagai or engagement, marriage ceremony, sacred thread wearing, and and Mundan ceremony. Some Hindus used to celebrate the first day of school going of child by distributing sweets and gifts. The Muslims also celebrated the birth of a child which is called Aquiqah. Naming ceremony was also celebrated among them, which is called Bismillah. Other important customs among the Muslims were circumcision and the school going ceremony.

### **11.3.3 Commerce**

Like trade, commerce also expanded in India during the Mughal period. The use of Hundis did not make it easier to move goods from one part of the country to another but also from India to the other countries, especially West Asia as there were Indian banking houses. English and Dutch traders who came to Gujarat during the 17th century, found the India financial system to be highly developed, and the Indian merchants to be active and alert. Not only roads, but the major rivers of the country were used for the exchange of goods in the Mughal period.

The Mughal emperors could well built one of the finest coin currencies in the contemporary world, a tri-metallic currency of great uniformity and purity with the silver rupee as the basic coin. The basic coin, the rupaya (rupee) weighed 178 grains troy in which the alloy was never allowed to rise above 4 per cent. The Mughals issued their coin from a large number of mints throughout their empire.

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The mints worked on the basis of free coinage. Theoretically, the value of a coin should have equalled its weight in bullion plus the minting charges and seignior age. In large transactions, coinage was supplemented to a considerable extent by credit money.

In brief, we can say that the trade and commerce expanded in India during the Mughal period. The historians and scholars have given the following reasons or factors for the progress of the trade and commerce during the period:

- (i) **The political integration of the country:** Dr Satish Chandra says, 'Perhaps the most important factor was the political integration of the country under the Mughal rule' and the establishment of conditions of law and order over extensive areas." From Akbar onwards and up to Aurangzeb, all the Mughal emperors tried to give India a political unity. They issued the same coins and weight, and equal tax system was levied throughout the country. Definitely, this led to an increase to the internal trade of the country.
- (ii) **Cash revenue system:** The Mughal emperors gave to the peasants a freedom to pay the land revenue in cash or kind. But most of the emperors preferred the mode of cash payment. No doubt, the payment of land revenue in cash helped a lot in the growth of trade and commerce.
- (iii) **Goods administration:** Most of the Mughal emperors were efficient administrator. They made their best efforts to give law and order to their public. The Mughals paid attention to the roads and sarais, which made communication and movement easier. The Mughal minted silver rupees of high purity, which became a standard coin in the country and abroad, and thus helped the Indian trade.
- (iv) **Cash salaries to officials and employees:** During Mughal period, nobles, Mansabdars, soldiers, officials and other officials used to spend lavishly. This also increased the internal as well as the external trade.
- (v) **Growth of new cities:** During the Mughal period, some new towns and cities were developed. Not only this, but some of the old cities also rapidly extended. Prominent towns and cities of the Mughal period were Delhi, Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Patna, Dhaka, Lahore, Multan, Peshawar, Surat, Goa, etc. According to Dr Satish Chandra, 'The demand for all types of luxury goods by nobles led to the expansion of handicrafts production and to the growth of towns'. A study of Agra shows that it doubled in area during the 17th century. According to Ralph Fitch who came to India during Akbar's reign, Agra and Fatehpur Sikri were each larger than London. Monserrate says that Lahore was second to none of the cities in Europe or Asia. Similarly, Burnier says that Delhi was not much less than Paris.

- (vi) **Advent of Europeans:** Another factor which helped Indian's trade and commerce was the arrival of the Europeans. No doubt, the Portuguese came before the Mughals but during the Mughal period their trade activities increased considerably. The Dutch and the English traders arrived in India towards the beginning of the 17th century. The Indian traders welcomed these foreign traders to break the Portuguese monopoly of the sea trade, and in due course of time, helped to establish a direct link between the Indian and the European markets. Indian textiles became a large import of England by the last quarter of the 17th century.

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### 11.4 ART AND ARCHITECTURE

We have already discussed Mughal Art and Architecture previously. Let us briefly recapitulate.

Mughal art and structural design refers to the Indo-Islamic-Persian approach that flourished during the reign of the Mughals who ruled India between AD 1526 and 1857. The characteristic feature of the Mughal architecture is the symmetry and designs in their building/monuments and tombs. Prior to the Mughal dynasty which started with Babur, the Delhi Sultanate (AD 1192–1398) laid down the foundation of Mughal art in India. The Qutub Minar which was erected by Qutub-ud-din-Aibak in AD 1193 remains a prominent characteristic of Delhi's skyline.

The Mughal architecture was introduced in Bengal too. The Sultans who were predecessors to the Mughals had constructed several mosques in the regions of the old capitals of Pandua and Gaur during the period between the 14th and 15th centuries. The Adina Mosque of Pandua and the Eklahi mosque were also built on the vandalized remains of Hindu temples, apparent from the intricate carvings on their structures. The art work on the Adina Mosque shares a striking resemblance with the Kakatiya ruins of Warangal in Andhra Pradesh.

In the central Gangetic Plain, the Sharqis who ruled from Jaunpur during the 14th and 15th century patronized the construction of mosques with fine *jaali* work which influenced the monuments built by Sher Shah Suri.

It was Akbar who initiated the erection of monuments on Indian soil, with a burial chamber in honour of his father Humayun in AD 1560. Built under the supervision of Persian originator Mirak Mirza Ghiyas, this wonderful structure with an elaborate arrangement of octagonal chambers flanked by cupolas, kiosks and minarets amidst rectangular shaped lawns remains a landmark gravestone in Delhi.

After Akbar consolidated his kingdom, he established his capital at Agra. This led to the construction of many imposing buildings that used red sandstone as

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the principal building material and white sandstone was used for the inlay work on the exteriors. The interiors were lavishly adorned with paintings.

In AD1573, Akbar moved his capital to Fatehpur Sikri to commemorate the birth of his son, Jahangir and to honour Sheikh Salim of the Chisti order, where he built a new capital city which showcased typical Mughal Architecture.

The reign of Jahangir saw the transition from sandstone to marble in the construction of the few monuments that he had built. Later, his son Shah Jahan used white marble extensively in his monuments, especially the Taj Mahal.

### **Development of Architecture Under the Mughals**

Babur is credited with not only establishing the Mughal Empire in India, but also heralding in an era that saw the introduction and development of a plethora of architectural styles in India. Though much of the time during his short period of reign (five years) in India was spent in annexing kingdoms, Babur left behind him some of the most marvelous Mughal structures in India. These include the Babri Masjid at Ayodhya, Kabuli Bagh at Panipat and Jami Masjid at Sambhal, near Delhi. Even though most of them were destroyed over the centuries, some of them such as the Babri Masjid have withstood the vagaries of nature and time.

The history of Mughal architecture actually begins with Akbar. It is a blend of Persian and Hindu styles. Most of Akbar's buildings are made in red sandstone and one of the earliest buildings built by him was the tomb of Humayun in Delhi. In AD 1565 Akbar started the construction of the massive Agra Fort, but his most magnificent construction was the new capital at Fatehpur Sikri. Built in AD1571, it took fifteen years to complete a ceremonial capital including elaborate palaces, formal courtyards, reflecting pools, tombs and a mosque. Unfortunately, this massive city had to be abandoned because besides other reasons, it lacked adequate water supply. It consisted of a number of fine buildings like the Jami Mosque, the Tomb of Salim Chisti (its chambers are surrounded by a corridor with a lace-work marble screen) and the Buland Darwaza, constructed to commemorate his Gujarat conquest. Jodha Bai's Palace and the Panch Mahal are also unique. The construction of Akbar's tomb at Sikandra, near Agra, was started by Akbar but completed by his son Jahangir.

Jahangir constructed the tomb of Itmadud- Daulah (father of Nur Jahan) in white marble. He was fond of gardens and laid two beautiful gardens in Kashmir—the Nishat and the Shalimar Bagh.

The reign of Shah Jahan is known in history as the Golden Era of Mughal architecture. As peace and prosperity prevailed throughout the Empire, he devoted himself to architecture.

Mughal art reached its nadir during the reign of Shah Jahan, who is known for his passion for architecture. He almost re-built the Agra Fort, adding marble to the existing sandstone structure, and went on to build his new capital in

Shahjahanabad or the Red Fort, the Pearl Mosque and the Taj Mahal among numerous other monuments. Lapidary and fine *pietra dura* were new trends set by Shah Jahan.

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He built the Taj Mahal at Agra as a mausoleum for his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal. Shah Jahan also constructed the Moti Masjid in Agra Fort and the Jama Masjid in Delhi. After the death of his beloved wife Mumtaz, Shah Jahan shifted the capital to Delhi and started the construction of a new city called Shahjahanabad. He built the Jami Masjid at Agra in honour of his daughter Jahanara. He also built the Red Fort, which has many beautiful buildings like the *Diwan-i-Khas*, *Diwan-i-Aam*, and the celebrated Peacock Throne, which was made of gold and studded with precious stones. This throne was carried away by Nadir Shah, a Persian invader, in AD 1739. Shah Jahan also gave liberal aid to artists. He also built a number of palaces and gardens in places like Lahore, Kashmir and Kabul.

Jahanara, daughter of Shah Jahan, was also a generous patron of structural design and showed an eclectic taste in building spacious gardens, mosques, *madrasas* and *serais*. At Delhi, she built the prominent Begum Ka Bagh and Begum Serai. She also built her own tomb near the shrine of the *dargah* of Hazrat Nizauddin.

Aurangzeb's contributions to architecture are few in comparison to his predecessors. He constructed the Moti Masjid in the Red Fort at Delhi and a tomb for his queen at Aurangabad.

The Mughal Empire reached the zenith of its glory during this period. It has often been described as the Age of Magnificence. There was peace and prosperity throughout the Empire. Rulers devoted themselves to the construction of majestic buildings, using marble and red sandstone. There was great pomp and show and the splendour of the court dazzled European travellers like Francis Bernier.

Aurangzeb's daughters Zeb-un-nissa and Zinat-unnisa Begum also contributed in a small way in carrying forward the Mughal legacy of patronizing art and architecture. Zinat-unnisa Begum built the Zinat-ul-Masjid at Daryaganj in Old Delhi in AD 1711, while Zeb-un-nissa built her own garden and tomb at Nawankot near Lahore. Qudsiya Begum, the wife of a later Mughal ruler, Ahmad Shah, built the Sunheri Masjid in AD 1751 opposite the west gate of the Red Fort. The last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar's favourite wife Zinat Mahal built the *Zinat Mahal* in the Lal Kuan bazaar in Delhi. The only monument worth mentioning built in the post-Aurangzeb time in Delhi was the *Safdar Jung's Tomb* built by Mirza Mansoor Khan in AD 1753.

### **Mughal Architecture Under Aurangzeb**

Mughal architecture during Aurangzeb stood apart from that of both his predecessors and successors in that the Empire had the largest area under the Mughal reign, which extended to even parts of south India. During the second part of his reign,

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he adopted the policy of Islamization, which saw the transformation of many of the Hindu and Jain structures of his period.

Contemplating on his contribution in the field of architecture, one becomes aware that except a few monuments, especially tombs, there was hardly any buildings that were constructed by Aurangzeb. But, he went about his Islamization policy, whereby he partially or completely destructed the Hindu and Jain temples and built mosques over the ruins.

Historians mention elaborately about the repair works undertaken by Aurangzeb; some even credit him with repairing the most number of mosques of not only the Mughal Period, but also those mosques built by the Tughluq, Lodi and Deccani sultans as well.

Aurangzeb projected a weak mirror image of his predecessors. Early during Aurangzeb's reign, the harmonious balance of Shah Jahan-period architecture is thoroughly rejected in favour of an increased sense of spatial tension with an emphasis on height. Stucco and other less-expensive materials emulating the marble and inlaid stone of earlier periods cover built surfaces. Immediately after Aurangzeb's accession, the use of forms and motifs such as the baluster column and the bangala canopy, earlier reserved for the ruler alone, are found on non-imperially patronaged monuments.

Shortly after his accession, Aurangzeb is known to have ordered a small marble chapel, today acknowledged as the Moti or Pearl Masjid, to be constructed inside the Shahjahanabad fort (the present-day Red Fort). Shah Jahan had built no mosque inside this fort, using instead the large Jami masjid nearby for congregational prayers.

Aurangzeb, however, wanted a mosque close to his private quarters. Five years under construction, his exquisite mosque was completed in 1662-63, at considerable personal expense. It is enclosed by red sandstone walls, which vary in thickness to compensate for the mosque's angle, necessary to orient the building toward Mecca, and at the same time to align it with the other palace buildings. Entered on the east, the compound of the Moti Masjid consists of a courtyard with a deep-set pool and the mosque building itself.

### **Development of Painting Under the Mughals**

The Mughal Period also saw development in the field of painting. The art of miniature painting continued. As the use of paper became common, painters started illustrating books with pictures. Portrait painting became popular as painters started making portraits of kings and members of the royal family and the nobility.

The Mughal rulers were great patrons of painting. One of Akbar's most significant contributions was the creation of the Mughal school of painting. He set up a group of about 100 artists, mostly Hindu, who worked under the guidance of

the two Persian masters brought to India by Humayun. At the time of Akbar's death in AD 1605, his library contained some 24,000 illustrated manuscripts. Two of the greatest Persian painters, Mir Sayyid Ali and Abdus Samad, flourished during the rule of Humayun. When Humayun was forced to exile in Persia at the court of Shah Tahmasp Sajavi, he was impressed by the art of miniature painting and resolved to take Persian artists back to India. This is how the two Persian masters Mir Sayyid Ali and Abdus Samad were brought to India and became founders of the new school of Mughal miniature painting. Another renowned painter was Daswant. Some of the finest paintings are found in the *Akbarnama*. Portraits, buildings, birds and animals, landscapes are vivid and life-like. Mansur was a painter of renown at his court. Jahangir was himself a good painter and a connoisseur of painting who could recognize the work of different artists at a glance. Under him painting received great impetus. However, under Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb painting began to decline.

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### Check Your Progress

3. How was the social life of people during the Mughal period?
4. In which year Akbar moved his capital to Fatehpur Sikri?
5. Name few monuments constructed under Shah Jahan's reign.

## 11.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The Ryatwari system of the land revenue was launched in AD 1582 by Raja Todar Mal (a Hindu), who was appointed by Akbar as the *Diwan-i-Ashraf*. Land was surveyed and measured carefully and was classified into four categories based on the frequency of cultivation and productivity, each with an annual fixed rate of revenue.
2. If the problem was in public interest, the Emperor held the court in *Diwan-i-Aam* or *Diwan-i-Khas*. In *Diwan-i-Khas*, only nobles, Amirs and other important persons could find their entrances, while the general public was allowed in *Diwan-i-Aam*.
3. Majority of the people lived in joint family. There was no place for the private property within the joint family, but all members had a right to spend from the joint income of the family. This family system on the one hand kept the people under the feeling of cooperation, while on the other, it hindered the development of the feeling of self-dependence and the cultivation of individual personality traits

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4. In AD1573, Akbar moved his capital to Fatehpur Sikri to commemorate the birth of his son, Jahangir and to honour Sheikh Salim of the Chisti order, where he built a new capital city which showcased typical Mughal Architecture.
5. The reign of Shah Jahan is known in history as the Golden Era of Mughal architecture. The Red Fort, the Pearl Mosque and the Taj Mahal are among few of the monuments built by him.

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## 11.6 SUMMARY

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- Administration of the Mughal dynasty was carried out by incorporating certain elementary changes in the central administration structure in India.
- A major change brought about in the matters of administration by the Mughal rulers like Babur, Akbar and Aurangzeb was the principle of religious tolerance. It was Akbar who raised the structure of the Mughal administration.
- In the administration, the Emperor was the pivot of the Mughal administrative power, and the supreme dispenser of justice. He was the despot and the source of all the authority.
- During the Mughal period, majority of the society belonged to the class of the commoners. Among the common men in Mughal times could be included the peasants, labourers, artisans, etc.
- The middle class or the intelligentsia was almost non-existent. This is partly true because even at that time there were Vakils, Hakims, Vaidyas, and scholarly Pandits and Ulemas throughout the country, though their number was very low as compared to the population of the country.
- In Higher class, came the Emperor, very high officials, Mansabdars and Zamindars. Secondly, the provincial rulers – Mansabdars and other nobles.
- The position of the Indian women during the Mughal period resisted a further decline. Child marriage, polygamy, Sati and Pardha continued, and personal respect for the sex went down.
- Even a liberal emperor like Akbar had to issue strict order that if a young woman was found running about the streets and markets of the town, and while doing so did not veil herself or allowed herself to be unveiled, she was to go to the quarters of the prostitutes and take up the profession.
- Like trade, commerce also expanded in India during the Mughal period. The Mughal emperors built one of the finest coin currencies in the contemporary world, a tri-metallic currency of great uniformity and purity with the silver rupee as the basic coin. The basic coin, the rupaya (rupee)

weighed 178 grains troy in which the alloy was never allowed to rise above 4 per cent.

- **Mughal art and structural design** refer to the Indo-Islamic-Persian approach that flourished during the reign of the Mughals who ruled India between AD 1526 and 1857. The characteristic feature of the Mughal architecture is the symmetry and designs in their building/monuments and tombs.

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### 11.7 KEY WORDS

- **Diwan-i-Khas:** It refers to the place where the Mughal emperor Akbar received courtiers and state guests.
- **Karkhanas:** It refers to a manufacturing centre under state supervision during the Sultanate and Mughal periods.
- **Mansabdars:** It refers to a military unit within the administrative system of the Mughal Empire introduced by Akbar.

### 11.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

#### Short-Answer Questions

1. State any two features of the Mughal administration.
2. What does *subah* mean in Mughal administration?
3. What were the three divisions in the higher class of the society?
4. Write a short note on the contribution of Babar to Mughal architecture.

#### Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss in detail the Mansabdari system.
2. What was the position of women in Mughal society? Explain.
3. Discuss the development of Mughal architecture under Akbar and Shah Jahan.
4. Analyse the position of a peasant in the Mughal society.

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# UNIT 12 RELIGIOUS POLICY AND DECLINE OF MUGHAL EMPIRE

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Religious Policy and Decline  
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### Structure

- 12.0 Introduction
- 12.1 Objectives
- 12.2 Din-i-Ilahi and its Significance
- 12.3 Religious Policy of Mughal Rulers and its Impact in India
  - 12.3.1 Religious or Hindu Policy of Aurangzeb
  - 12.3.2 Consequences of the Religious Policy of Aurangzeb
- 12.4 The Decline of the Mughal Empire
  - 12.4.1 Political, Administrative and Financial Factors Responsible for the Downfall the Mughal Empire
- 12.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 12.6 Summary
- 12.7 Key Words
- 12.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
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## 12.0 INTRODUCTION

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Babur and Humayun during their own respective reigns did not had much time to develop a clear cut religious policy. However, Akbar changed the religious policies of the Mughal Empire by introducing a liberal religion system which came to be known as *Din-i-Ilahi*. It comprised elements of all the religions. He attempted the cultural unity of India. He was the most liberal ruler of his times and was a favourite among the masses. He further strengthened the rule of the Mughal Empire.

Jahangir and Shah Jahan followed the same religious policy in principle; however, minor changes were adopted by them during their own time. Aurangzeb tried to establish his own religious policy and his religious policies was the main reason which led to the end of the golden period of the Mughal era. In this unit, the development of Din-i-Ilahi in the Mughal Empire and its importance has been highlighted. The religious policies followed by the rulers of the Mughal era, especially Aurangzeb have been discussed in detail. The unit will also help one to analyse the causes which led to the decline of the Mughal Empire.

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## 12.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Analyse the importance of *Din-i-Ilahi* in the Mughal Empire
- Discuss the principles of *Din-i-Ilahi*

- Explain the religious policy of the Mughal Empire
- Discuss the fanaticism religion policy of Aurangzeb
- Analyse the consequences which led to the downfall of the Mughal Empire

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### 12.2 *DIN-I-ILAH* AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Contacts with the leaders of various religions, reading of their learned works, meeting with the Sufi saints and yogis gradually convinced Akbar that while there were differences of sect and creed, all religions had a number of good points which were obscured in the heat of controversy. He felt that if the good points of various religions were emphasized, an atmosphere of harmony and amenity would prevail which would be for the good of country.

Further, he felt that behind all the multiplicity of names and forms, there was but one God. As Badauni observed, as a result of all the influences which were brought to bear on His Majesty, 'There grew gradually as the outline of stone, the conviction in his heart that there were some sensible men in all religions. If some true knowledge was thus everywhere to be found, why should truth be confined to one religion.' Hence, he brought a solution of the problem, i.e., of having a religion that has the excellent points of the existing creeds and the defects of none. So, he consulted the foremost leaders of the various religious communities and unfolded to them his scheme of having a religion which should be the combination of the merits of all the faiths and the defects of none.

He said, 'We ought, therefore to bring them all into one but in such fashion that there should be both one, and all, with the great advantage of not losing what is good in any one religion, while gaining whatever is better in another. In that way honour would be rendered to God, peace would be given to the people and security to the empire.' So, having put together the general principles of all religions, he established a synthesis of various creeds and called them *Din-i-Ilahi*.

#### **Main Principles of *Din-i-Ilahi***

Mohsin Fani, the author of *Debistani-i-Mazahib*, described some of the leading principles of *Din-i-Ilahi*:

- Liberality and beneficence
- Abstinence from the worldly desires
- Forgiveness to the evil doer
- Soft voice, gentle words, pleasure speeches for everybody
- Good treatment to all those who come in contact
- Dedication of the soul in the love of God

The whole philosophy of Akbar was ‘the pure weapon (shastra) and the pure sight never err.’ He found that the narrow minded religiously zealous was a menace to the society. Accordingly, he made an attempt to bring about a synthesis of all the important religions and styled it *Din-i-Ilahi* or *Tauhid-i-Ilahi* (Divine Monotheism). It was a socio-religious order—a brotherhood designed to cement diverse communities in the land. The followers of this religion believed in the following principles:

- God is one and Akbar is his Caliph or representative. In this way, its basis was the Unity of God, the cornerstone of Islam.
- The followers of this religion used to greet each other by one saying ‘Alla-ho-Akbar’ and the other replying ‘Jall-a-Jolalohu’ when they met.
- As far as possible, the followers of his religion abstained from meat eating.
- The followers used to worship Sun God and considered the fire sacred.
- The followers of this religion were opposed to child marriage and marriage of old women.
- The neophyte in the religion used to bow before the Emperor on Sunday and the Emperor used to instruct him and the neophyte used to repeat the instruction again and again.
- Every member used to host a party on his birthday and used to give charity.
- Apart from their own instructions the followers were not to honour any other ritual, place of worship or sacred book.
- Every follower vowed to keep his character high and do good to others.
- The followers of this religion used to respect all religions equally.

### **Propagation of *Din-i-Ilahi***

Although there were a number of adherents of the so-called Divine Faith, it did not live for long after Akbar. Blochman has collected from Abul Fazlal and Badayuni the names of eighteen prominent members, Raja Birbal being the only Hindu in the list. The herd of the unnamed and the unrecorded followers probably never numbered. In order to complete the subject, it may be noted that in September, 1595, Sadr Jahan, the Mufti of the empire, with his two sons, took the Shasi joined the Faith, and was rewarded with a command of 1,000.’ At the same time sundry other persons conformed and received commands’ ranging from 100 - 500. Father Pinheiro, writing from Lahore on 3 September, AD 1595, mentions that in that city the royal sect had many adherents, but all for the sake of the money paid to them. No later contemporary account of the *Din-i-Ilahi* has been found.

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*Din-i-Ilahi* perished with Akbar's death though Jahangir continued to make disciples after Akbar's fashion. Both Smith and Woolsey Haig have condemned Akbar for promulgating what they have termed a religion of his own. The Divine Faith says Dr Smith, was a monument of Akbar's folly and not of his wisdom. Elsewhere, he calls it 'a silly invention'.

### Check Your Progress

1. What were the main principles of Din-i-Ilahi?
2. Why did Akbar started Tauhid-i-Ilahi?

## 12.3 RELIGIOUS POLICY OF MUGHAL RULERS AND ITS IMPACT IN INDIA

Religious life of the people in later medieval India was more or less the same as in the early medieval times. But there were a few important changes in certain spheres. The Mughal emperors started the period of secularism in medieval India. Though an orthodox Sunni, Babur was not bigoted or led by the religious divines. At a time, when there was a bitter sectarian feud between the Shias and Sunns in Iran and Turan, his court was free from the theological and sectarian conflicts. Though he declared the battle against Rana Sanga and Medini Rao, a Jihad and assumed the title of Ghazi after the victories, the reasons were clearly political. Though, it was period of war, only a few instances can be found of the destruction of temples.

His son and successor Humayun was in many aspects like his father. But he was more strongly drawn towards the mystical aspects of religion. He followed in the footsteps of his father.

Akbar could prove himself as the most secular ruler. In the beginning, he had a strong faith in Islam and in the divine existence. He did not even hesitate to pick up the shoes of the Chief of Islamic religion, Qazi Abdul Nabi Khan. Gradually, Akbar got diverted from his traditional views. He stopped following the guidance of rigid Sunnis. He gave evidence of his tolerant religious policy after AD 1562. He abolished the pilgrimage tax levied on the Hindus, and the very next year he abolished the *jaziya* as well. He gave high posts to the Hindus and placed restrictions on the forcible conversion of the war prisoners. After AD 1575, Akbar constructed Ibadatkhana in Fatehpur Sikri and listened to the view with keen interest up to AD 1582. Akbar tried his best to establish unity between the people of different religions. Unfortunately, he could not achieve much success in this field. Actually, the religious discussions of Ibadatkhana only added to mutual bitterness and hatred. Therefore, in AD 1582 he brought these gatherings of the Ibadatkhana to an end.

But Akbar's attitude towards his Hindu subjects remained very liberal from AD 1582 to 1605, the last years of his rule. According to Abul Fazal, 'The office of a true ruler was a very responsible one which depended on divine illumination (Farr-i-izadi). Hence, no one could stand between God and a true ruler. A true ruler was distinguished by a paternal love towards his subjects without distinctions of sect or creed, a large heart so that the wishes of great and small are attended to prayer and devotion and daily increasing trust in God, who is considered as the real ruler.' According to orthodox Sunni Muslim historian Badayuni, Akbar gradually turned away from Islam and set-up a new religion which was compounded of many existed religious like Hinduism, Christianity and Zoroastrianism. However, modern historians are not inclined to accept this and think that Badayuni has exaggerated. There is little evidence to prove for Fazal and Badayuni that the so-called new path was *Tauhid-i-Ilahi*, which literary means Divine Monotheism. Akbar did not use force or money for making disciples. In fact, Akbar tried to emphasize the concept of Sulahkul or peace and harmony among the religions in different ways. He revised educational syllabus and laid more emphasis on the secular subjects. Thus, under Akbar the state became essentially secular, liberal and enlightened in social matters and a promoter of cultural integration.

Jahangir was born of a Rajput mother and had grown up in the atmosphere of Ibadatkhanas's debates. His teacher Abdul Rahim Khan-i-Khana was under the influence of Vaishnav described doctrines, and it was widely believed that though he (Jahangir) described him a Sunni, he was at heart a Shia. He had opportunities of coming in close contact with the scholars of different religions. The result was that Jahangir imbibed liberal tendencies and his religious views became liberal and enlightened. He did not seek to revive the *jaziya* or the pilgrimage tax and the Hindus still occupied high office and enjoyed the freedom to erect new temples.

During the period of Shah Jahan, the Mughal Court was not as liberal as it was during the time of Akbar and Jahangir. In fact, during his reign the Mughal Court was divided into two main groups on the question of religious thoughts—some were traditionalists and some were of a liberal attitude. Among the liberal Muslims, the most famous and influential personality was the eldest son of Shah Jahan named Dara Shikoh. The conservative group was those of traditionalists Muslims among whom Shekh Ahmed Sirhindi and Prince Aurangzeb were main.

Dara Shikoh was a Sufi scholar and started writing on such deep subjects as religion as philosophy even at the age of nineteen. Periodically, he used to have debate with different religions leaders. He translated some main religious books of the Hindus into Persian. He compiled the Vedas and considered them as divine revelations. He said that the Vedas were equal with Quran. According to some

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modern historians, Dara Shikoh's thoughts had an influence on Shah Jahan as well as and he gradually gave up the narrow views of the earlier years of his administration. Dara tried to show through his literary works that there is no basic difference between Hinduism and Islam. But even under Shah Jahan, there was no permanent adoption of the religious persecution as an integral element of the state policy. He too did not revive the *jaziya*. He intended reviving the pilgrimage tax but abandoned it on a representation by Kavindracharya of Banaras. He made Dara his successor. Though Dara could not get success in the war of succession and Aurangzeb described Dara as a Kafir (non-Islamic) to serve his own purpose.

The last Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb was a staunch Sunni ruler. He observed the Roza and the Namaz, abstained from wine, led a life without blemish and spent a large part of his time in meditation and prayer. He issued such regulations which also provoked opposition from the Hindus and led to serious disturbances and revolts.

### Traditional Muslims Groups

The traditional Muslim group was led by Shekh Ahmed Sirhindi. He was a greatest religious bigot of his time. He lived during the reign of Akbar and Jahangir. He bitterly opposed those who were proclaiming the oneness of *Tauhid* and Ishwar and said that such a view was against Islam. He opposed all beliefs on which the influence of Hinduism could be seen. He opposed music and offering of prayer at the shrines. He emphasized the re-imposition of *jaziya*. Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi was as impressive and an intelligent religious propagator, therefore, he exercised influence on some people in the Mughal court during his life time and even after his death through his philosophy. Jahangir imprisoned this bigoted Sheikh for the reason that he declared himself even greater than the Prophet. Aurangzeb, who is generally famous in history as a bigoted emperor, did not pay much attention towards the successors of Shekh Sirhindi.

### 12.3.1 Religious or Hindu Policy of Aurangzeb

Akbar had consolidated the Mughal Empire by his policy of religious tolerance. Jahangir had also followed the same religious policy. Though, Shah Jahan was not liberal like his two predecessors but still he kept politics away from religion. Therefore, his reign Mughal Empire got the cooperation from the Hindus. But Aurangzeb was a staunch Sunni and a fanatic. He wanted to win the sympathy of the fanatic Sunni Muslims by means of his fanatic religious policy. Therefore, to convert Hindustan from *Dar-ul-Harb* to *Dar-ul-Islam* he adopted two types of measures – first, which were in accordance with the Islam and second, those which were against the non-Muslims and non-Sunnis.

## Measures of Aurangzeb in Accordance with Islam

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of Mughal Empire*

First of all he brought to an end the musical gatherings, dances painting, poetry reading etc. Though, inspite of his restrictions on music, it continued among the ladies of the Harem and in the household of the Chiefs. It is important that it was during his time that most books were written in Persian on music. He ended the Jharokha Darshan describing it an individual worship, which was against Islam. Thinking Tuladan (Weighing of the Emperor with coins) as a Hindu custom and a sort of superstition, he banned it. In fact weighing the Emperor caused an economic loss to the treasury. He also placed restrictions on the astrology and making of 'panchang'. But he was not very much successful in this effort of his because many members of the royal household and many chiefs continued to act against this order of his. He also got closed the brothels and gambling dens because Islam did not permit them. This act was morally and socially right. He decorated the royal court in an ordinary manner and the clerks were given mud-inkpots instead of silver ones. He gave up wearing silken clothes and in the *Diwan-i-Aam* golden railing was replaced by that of Lapis Lazuli, which was inland with gold. These measures of Aurangzeb were commendable from an economic point of view. To decrease the state expenditure, he closed the government department responsible for writing history. He ended the inscribing of 'Kalma' on the coins so that it does not get dirty in exchange or it does not get trampled underfoot. He placed restrictions on Nauroz because it was a festival of the Parsis and it had the support of the Shias of Iran. He appointed Muhatasibs in all the provinces, whose main job was to see whether people lived according to the Shariat or not. They had also to check the people from indulging in intoxicating and liquor in the public places. The Emperor had issued clear instruction these that official were not to interfere in the personal life of the people but to fully aid the Government in raising the moral standards of the people. This encouraged the trading profession among the Muslims and Aurangzeb made it tax-free but when Muslim traders started indulging in dishonesty and started carrying the goods of the Hindu traders as their own, then this tax was reimposed on them. But still they had to pay only half the tax as compared to the Hindu traders. We can call it a discriminatory decision which proved to be dangerous for the empire and he had to revise this decision very soon because of the opposition of the Chiefs and the lack of able Muslims for the post. He also issued instructions for stopping the practice of Sati. In fact, Aurangzeb took a commendable step in stopping this inhuman practice.

In view of the above-mentioned activities and measures of Aurangzeb, we cannot call him fanatic because these measures were inspired by different motives. He enforced certain measures which were good for the Hindus like stopping of the practice of Sati, prostitution and restricting the sale of intoxication and liquors.

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Many of these measures were undertaken by Aurangzeb to fulfill his political and economic motives. Aurangzeb knew that in the Mughal Court there were a large number of members influenced deeply by Islam. Yadunath Sarkar has pointed out towards the fact that Aurangzeb wanted to present himself as a strict Sunni and thus wanted to diminish the marks of his cruel treatment towards Shah Jahan. But whatever may have been his motives, it would have to be conceded that many of his measures were not in accordance with the liberal religious policy started by Akbar which were more advantageous than as they are today.

### Anti-Hindu Steps and Activities

The measures which Aurangzeb took against non-Muslims for which he is described by many historians as intolerant and fanatic. It is said that he destroyed many of the temples of the Hindus, did not give permission for repairing the old temples and placed restrictions on the building of the new temples. Some modern historians defend Aurangzeb against the charge of fanaticism and hold that the Firkas issued by Aurangzeb to the Brahmins of Banaras and Brindabana clearly show that he neither desecrated the old temples nor prohibited the repair of old temples. But even these historians agree that he did not give permission for the construction of the new temples. According to them, Aurangzeb caused old temples to be destroyed to give warning and punishment to the elements which were against him. He considered the religious places of the Hindus to be a centre for propaganda against himself. Infact, Aurangzeb did not issue any specific instructions for breaking the temples; he did it only in the time of war. Aurangzeb caused many temples to be broken in Thatta, Multan and Banaras in AD 1669 and in Udaipur and Jodhpur in AD 1679–1680. Though we have very few instances of Aurangzeb giving grant to the Hindu temples, but many a time he adopted a hostile attitude and stepped towards the temples of Hindus. Undoubtedly, even by his policy of his, there was not a flouting of the Islamic injunctions but the liberal policies adopted by his predecessors received a blow. This policy continued till AD 1679 when seeing the various popular revolts against himself, Aurangzeb stopped the breaking up of temples.

### Jaziya

In AD 1679, Aurangzeb reposed the Jaiya on the Hindus. According to contemporary historians, he imposed it to oppress the Hindus. Some modern historians are of the opinion that Aurangzeb thought many times before imposing this tax but ultimately imposed it after twenty-two years of reign because of staunch Muslim Chiefs: Italian traveler Manuchi wrote that ‘Aurangzeb wanted to improve his economic condition by means of the imposition of *jaziya*’. In fact, Manuchi’s view does not appear to be correct. Some scholars hold that he imposed this tax

to attract the Hindus towards Islam. But like that of Manuchi, even this view does not appear to have been effective because the economic burden of this tax was very light. And moreover, it was not imposed on the children, women and handicapped and even on the extra-ordinary poor and the government servants. The truth is that Aurangzeb imposed *jaziya* due to both – political as well as principle reasons. According to Satish Chandra, 'It's real motive was to organize the Muslims against the Marathas and the Rajput, who were bent upon start a war.' The money collected by *jaziya* was given to Ulemas out of a majority was unemployed. But whatever might have been the reason for the imposition of *Jaizya*, it was more harmful than beneficial. This tax was responsible for spreading discontent among a majority of Hindus because they considered it a discriminatory practice by the government, against themselves. Besides, the Hindus who came to pay the tax had to suffer humiliations at the hands of Ulemas.

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### Removing the Hindus from the government posts

The charge is also levied against Aurangzeb that he removed the Hindus from Government posts. But the recent researches prove that this charge was false because during the later part of Aurangzeb's reign the number of the Hindus enjoying government posts was more than in the time of Shah Jahan. It is said that whereas the Hindus enjoyed 25 per cent of posts under Shah Jahan the number had increased to 33 per cent by the time of Aurangzeb.

### Restriction on the festivals of the Hindus

Some scholars hold that Aurangzeb imposed a restriction on the celebration of the Hindu festivals like Holi, Diwali, and Dussehra in the cities. This charge appears to be true to a certain extent but it will have to be conceded that Aurangzeb could not enforce this restriction on all the cities and towns of the empire and it was restricted to the areas in the neighbourhood of the royal palace.

### Anti-Shia measures

The charge is levied on Aurangzeb that he adopted not only an anti-Hindu religious policy but also an anti-Shia policy as well. In this context, two charges are levied on Aurangzeb that he removed the Shias from the government posts and annexed two Shia states of the Deccan-Bijapur and Golkunda to the Mughal Empire. But recent studies disprove both the charges. The historians who refuse the charges hold that many important Shia officials like Zulfikar Khan, Asad Khan and Mir Jumla were special favourites with Aurangzeb. He followed only the traditional expansionist policy against Bijapur and Golkunda. He wanted their amalgamation in the Mughal Empire so that they could not be able to contribute towards the rise of the new Maratha power in the Deccan.

### 12.3.2 Consequences of the Religious Policy of Aurangzeb

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Some scholars hold that Aurangzeb tried to bring about a transformation in the nature of state through his religious policy but could not do so because he knew that in India, majority was Hindus and they were loyal to their religion. Though, Aurangzeb did emphasis in Islam for his political motives. He himself was a staunch Muslim. He wanted to enforce Sharitat but his main aim was the extension and consolidation of his empire. In our opinion, this policy of his neither aided in the extension nor in the consolidation of the empire because it led to many revolts against him which led to the spread of disorder in the empire. Behind the revolts against him like that of the Jats, Sikhs, Santanmies and Marathas his fanatic religious policy served as one of the causes to some extent.

After the death of Jaswant Singh he adopted a policy of hostility towards the leader of the Hindus viz. the Rajputs. Some scholars hold that behind this anti-Rajput policy was basically his fanatic religious policy. Though, modern historians do not accept the fact completely but they do accept that the struggle started by Rajputs under Raj Singh and Durgadas against him did weaken the Mughal Empire.

Because of the fanatic religious policy of Aurangzeb many of the Hindus were removed from the posts of the Peshkars and Karories which led to a weakening of the administration.

The relief given by him to the Muslims led to the spread of corruption and the government had to suffer financial losses.

The steps taken by Aurangzeb in his religious policy increased the bitterness amongst the Hindus and Muslims which led to the nature of nation state envisaged by Akbar being disturbed.

Some scholars hold that the fanatic policy of Aurangzeb accelerated the process of decline and disintegration of the Mughal Empire. Because of this policy, very often, he had to adopt mutually contradictory steps which ultimately proved injurious to the empire.

#### Check Your Progress

3. What were the measures adopted by Aurangzeb to convert Hindustan from Dar-ul-Harb to Dar-ul-Islam?
4. Why did Aurangzeb impos restrictions on Nauroz?
5. What was the main consequence of the religious policy of Aurangzeb?

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## 12.4 THE DECLINE OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

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Religious Policy and Decline  
of Mughal Empire

The great Mughal Empire was so much extensive and strong as compared to other empires of its time that they could easily be jealous of it. It was founded by Babur, consolidated by Akbar, prospered under Jahangir and Shah Jahan and attained its zenith at the time of Aurangzeb. But immediately after Aurangzeb's death, began that process of disintegration and decline which led to its being limited to areas in the vicinity of Delhi by AD 1750. In 1803, the English army occupied Delhi and the great Mughal Empire became a mere pensioner of the English East India Company. The factors responsible for its disintegration and decline were as follows:

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#### Aurangzeb and Decline of Mughal Empire

The process of the disintegration of the Mughal Empire had begun in the time of Aurangzeb himself. His many mistakes and wrong policies resulted in the decline of this powerful and prestigious empire. Main among his mistaken policies were the following:

- (i) **Religious fanaticism:** Mostly historians hold that a great blow was given to the stability of the Mughal Empire by religious orthodoxy and opposition to the non-Muslims followed by Aurangzeb. During the time of Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan Mughal Empire was basically a secular state. All those great emperors had opened the doors of the highest military and civil offices for the Muslims and the non-Muslims equally. During their reign *jaziya* was not imposed. Within a few years of his accession, however, Aurangzeb ended that secular nature of the empire by imposing *jaziya*, desecrating temples and statues and imposing pilgrimage tax upon the Hindus. Because of this fanatic religious policy, the Hindus drifted away from the Mughal. Mughal Indian Empire started being divided and the people of higher classes and high officials drifted away from each other on the basis of religion. Though Aurangzeb's successors tried to consolidate the Mughal Empire by abandoning his orthodox policy but they did not succeed in reviving it.
- (ii) **Despotism:** Aurangzeb was very despotic and harsh because of his suspicious nature. The stability and unity of the Mughal Empire suffered a blow because of his rigid and despotic rule. In the words of famous historian Irwin, it was imperative for the Mughal Empire, which was based on military strength, to disintegrate ultimately. Aurangzeb wanted to keep more and more power in his hands. Because he had ill-treated his father and killed all

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his brothers so he was always suspicious that his sons might behave with him in the same manner. He never trusted any of his state officials. Not even his sons. His suspicious nature always kept his sons away from the administrative and the military experience. His suspicion increased with the advance of his age. None of his sons could become a capable administrator during his lifetime, so they could not arrest the disintegration set in empire.

- (iii) **Sikh policy of Aurangzeb:** Aurangzeb committed serious blunder in not extending a hand of friendship towards the Sikhs. He imprisoned and forced the ninth Guru of the Sikhs to embrace Islam. On the refusing to comply, he got him murdered. After the assassination of their Guru, the attitude of the Sikhs became all the more hostile towards the Mughals. Guru Teghabadur's son and the tenth Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh organized the Sikhs into a military power. He got two of Guru Gobind Singh's sons buried alive and killed two more. Guru Gobind Singh kept the Khalsa engaged in a fight against the Mughal Empire throughout his life. Because of this struggle the Mughal Empire had to suffer tremendous military and financial loss and advanced towards disintegration.
- (iv) **Deccan policy of Aurangzeb:** Inspired by his ant-Shia attitude, Aurangzeb tried to annex the two Shia states of the Deccan-Golkunda and Bijapur completely to the Mughal Empire. He might have satisfied his imperialistic ambition by annexing the two states but later on it was definitely proved that it was his terrible mistake. Both these states gave financial and military aid to the Marathas against the Mughals. By weakening these two states, he indirectly helped the rise of the Marathas because now there was nobody in the Deccan to impose a check on their activities. Aurangzeb spent about 26 years of his reign in the Deccan to suppress the three big powers of the Deccan. This gave an opportunity to the Rajputs, Sikhs, and Jats to flourish in the North and administrative machinery became inefficient in his absence. The constant wars in the Deccan led to Mughal Empire suffering tremendous financial and military losses which affected adversely the trade industries as well as the agriculture. The Mughal administrative machinery started breaking up by extension of empire to Golkunda, Bijapur and Karnataka. Now, Mughal Empire was subjected to direct attacks by the Marathas which made it difficult for the Mughal officials to raise revenue also.
- (v) **Maratha policy of Aurangzeb:** Aurangzeb could not understand the real nature of Maratha Empire and he disregarded Jai Singh's advice to make friendship with Shivaji. He could have strengthened the Mughal Empire by cultivating friendship with the rising Maratha power under Shivaji's leadership but he gave a proof of his lack of farsightedness by insulting Shivaji at his Agra Court. One of his other serious mistakes was to assassinate Sambhaji.

This left no effective Maratha Leader on the scene with whom Aurangzeb could enter into an agreement. He thought that after the annexation of Golkunda and Bijapur by him, Marathas would beg for mercy and they would be left with no other alternative but to accept the terms and conditions imposed by him. But those very Marathas whom he used to say as hill rats and dacoits proved an important factor in the disintegration of the Mughal Empire. Though by AD 1703 Aurangzeb had virtually entered into an agreement with the Marathas but till the end of his life he remained suspicious towards Sahuji and other Maratha leaders. Therefore, he could not save the Mughal Empire from their terrible attacks. He accorded Mansabs also to the Marathas but he never relegated to them any post of responsibility or trust. It was because of the Maratha policy of Aurangzeb that Marathas could never become an integral part of Mughal political system.

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- (vi) **Rajput policy of Aurangzeb:** The policy adopted by Aurangzeb towards Marwar after Jaswant Singh's death also proved to be responsible towards the disintegration and decline of the Mughal Empire. Because of his folly, he incurred the hostility of both the rivals in Marwar between whom he divided the Mughal Empire. Besides this step of Aurangzeb annoyed the ruler of Mewar also because he disliked Mughal interference in the internal matters of Rajputs. Because of his mistaken Rajput policy the Mughal Empire was engaged in a prolonged struggle with Marwar and Mewar which gave a financial and military blow to the Mughal Empire besides giving a blow to its prestige as well. Many historians hold that if Aurangzeb had adopted a friendly attitude towards the Rajputs as followed by Akbar, he could have appointed Rajputs in big numbers in the Deccan and a more successful struggle could have been waged against the Marathas. Immediately, after Aurangzeb's death, when his successors gave up Aurangzeb's policy of hostility towards the Rajputs to save the Mughal Empire, the problem of Rajputs came to an end.

### 12.4.1 Political, Administrative and Financial Factors Responsible for the Downfall the Mughal Empire

We will in this section discuss the political, administrative and financial factors responsible for the downfall of Mughal Empire:

- (i) **Lack of a definite law of succession:** The Mughal Emperors never made any attempt to fix any definite law of succession. Therefore, generally the Mughal Emperor had to deal with the revolt of the rebel princes even during their own lifetime. Humayun had to witness the hostility of his brothers, Akbar the revolt of Salim, Jahangir had to face the revolts of his sons. Similarly, after Aurangzeb's death his sons fought the battle for succession.

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Struggle like this encouraged indiscipline among the Mughal Empire and its prestige suffered.

- (ii) **Incapable successors of Aurangzeb:** After Aurangzeb's death, a sixty five years old Bahadur Shah ascended the throne initially and had to face a stiff opposition because of his Rajput policy but he realized the mistake of following an anti-Rajput policy and entered into an agreement with them. But this agreement was not a liberal one. He did not give any high Mansab to the Rajputs. Towards the Maratha Chief also he adopted a policy of superficial friendship only. He gave them the right of *sardeshmukhi* in the Deccan but did not give them the right of *chauth*. Therefore, he could not satisfy them completely. He did not recognize Sahu as the rightful leader. The civil war in the Maratha continued and disorder continued in the Deccan. He committed another serious mistake by adopting a harsh policy towards the Sikhs leader, Banda Bahadur, after the death of Guru Gobind Singh. The Sikhs continued their struggle against the Mughals which led to Mughal Empire suffering a heavy loss. Bahadur Shah further deteriorated the financial condition of the empire by blindly distributing Jagirs in order to make the Amirs happy and by giving the officials promotion without thinking. In the war of succession that followed, Bahadur Shah's death and the incapable Jahandar Shah emerged victorious. He became a puppet in the hands of his minister, Zulficar Ali Khan. He adopted a policy of friendship towards other sects but continued the old policy of repression towards Banda Bahadur and the Sikhs. He encouraged the persecution of the peasants by reviving the *Izaredari* policy of farming and revenue. To free himself from the clutches of his powerful minister, he adopted a policy of indulging in intrigues against him instead of dismissing him directly. This policy of his was just like digging the grave of the Mughal Empire. After his death, his successor Farukhsiyah remained a mere puppet in the hands of the Sayyid brothers, Abdulla Khan and Hussain Ali Khan. Because of growing influence the powerful clique of the Amirs started intriguing against them and court became a ground of parties and politics. After him Muhammad Shah became the Emperor. Though, he could have given a new direction to the Mughal Empire in the long thirty years of his reign but he spent most of his time in mere luxury. It was during his time that the ruler of Bengal, Hyderabad, Oudh, and Punjab became independent and the disintegration of the Mughal Empire got accelerated.
- (iii) **Moral decline of the amirs, cliques and selfishness:** Selfish and degraded nobles also contributed towards the decline of the Mughal Empire.

After Aurangzeb the character of the nobles continued to decline. They became pleasure loving, luxury loving and spend-thrift. Their selfishness and their lack of loyalty towards the empire led to corruption in the administration and mutual dissensions. In order to increase their income, influence and prestige they made cliques against each other and even against the Emperor. Their mutual quarrels made the empire powerless and therefore it fell an easy prey to the foreign invaders.

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- (iv) **Crisis of jagirs:** One of the causes of the decline of Mughal Empire was the increasing number of Amirs. Increases in their expenditure lead to a scarcity of the Jagirs and a fall in the income from the Jagirs. The nobles started making efforts to earn maximum income from their Jagirs, which increased the burden over the peasants. This affected the popularity of the Mughal Empire. They started reclaiming the Khalsa land in order to get over the crisis of Jagirdary system. This aggravated the financial crisis of the central government. Because of the paucity of Jagirs, the nobles decreased their army (so that they could lessen their economic burden), which led to a further weakness in the military power of Mughal Empire.
- (v) **A bad financial situation in the royal treasury:** One of the causes of the downfall of Mughal Empire was its worsening financial position. It worsened as a result of many factors. Bahadur Shah distributed Jagirs blindly, promoted officials without any reasoning, abolished the *jaziya*, pilgrimage taxes, gave right of *sardeshmukhi* to the Marathas, Jahandarshah and his successors gave costly gifts and Jagir to please the Mansabdars and Amirs and gave to the Marathas the right of extracting the *chauth*. This was further worsened because of the invasions of Nadir Shah and loose administrative control. The worsening of the financial condition made it impossible for the Mughal Emperor to fulfill the minimum requirements of his people. The conditions of the peasants worsened from day to day. Government gave no attention to the growth of agriculture, trade and industries.
- (vi) **Military weakness:** After Aurangzeb, there was a continuous indiscipline in the Mughal army and a fall in their fighting morale. Because of the paucity of money, it became impossible to keep a big standing army. The Mughal emperors were unable to give salaries to their army and army officials for months on end. Majority in the army was that of the mercenaries who were always dissatisfied and it was very easy for them to rise in revolt. In the time of Aurangzeb and even after him no attention was given to the importance of the navy. The Mughals first gave no attention to the scientific, technical and new military inventions. Later on, the weak Mughal army could not face the foreign invaders and the European Navy.



## Foreign Invaders

### NOTES

The final blow to the Mughal Empire was given by the continuous foreign invasions. In AD 1730, the Persian Emperor, Nadir Shah severely defeated the Mughal army in Kerala. Massacre went on in Delhi, wealth was plundered and women were molested. The Mughal emperor and his army could not stop him. After him in AD 1761 Ahmad Shah Abadali defeated the guardian of the Mughal Empire viz., the Marathas badly in the third battle of Panipat. Because of these foreign invasions Mughal Empire was made destitute. Trade and industries also came to a standstill in the northern India. The Mughal Empire which was already breathing its last was dealt another blow in AD 1764 by the battle of Buxur in the time of Shah Alam. Gradually, the sphere of the Mughal Empire shrank and that of the East India Company increased. In 1803, Delhi came under the English occupation and the Mughal emperor was rendered a mere prisoner and they continued to be like that till 1857. The last of the Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar had to die as a mere prisoner in Rangoon in 1862 as a British prisoner and the story of even that formal Mughal Empire came to a final end.

#### Check Your Progress

6. State any one cause which led to the decline of the Mughal Empire.
7. How did Aurangzeb end the secular nature of the Mughal Empire?

## 12.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The main principles of *Din-i-Ilahi* were as follows:
  - (a) Liberality and beneficence
  - (b) Abstinence from the worldly desires
  - (c) Forgiveness to the evil doer
  - (d) Soft voice, gentle words, pleasure speeches for everybody
  - (e) Good treatment to all those who come in contact
  - (f) Dedication of the soul in the love of God
2. Akbar started *Tauhid-i-Ilahi* only with the purpose to bring about harmony and peace amongst the various sects. He was the most liberal exponent of the principles of universal toleration.

3. To convert Hindustan from *Dar-ul-Harb* to *Dar-ul-Islam*, Aurangzeb adopted two types of measures – first, which were in accordance with the Islam and second, those which were against the non-Muslims and non-Sunnis.
4. Aurangzeb placed restrictions on Nauroz because it was a festival of the Parsis and it had the support of the Shias of Iran.
5. The main consequence of Aurangzeb's religious policy was that it increased the bitterness amongst the Hindus and Muslims which led to the nature of nation state envisaged by Akbar being disturbed.
6. One of the causes of the decline of Mughal Empire was the increasing number of Amirs. Increases in their expenditure lead to a scarcity of the Jagirs and a fall in the income from the Jagirs.
7. Aurangzeb ended that secular nature of the Mughal Empire by imposing *jaziya*, desecrating temples and statues and imposing pilgrimage tax upon the Hindus. Because of this fanatic religious policy, the Hindus drifted away from the Mughal.

## NOTES

### 12.6 SUMMARY

- Contacts with the leaders of various religions, reading of their learned works, meeting with the Sufi saints and yogis gradually convinced Akbar that while there were differences of sect and creed, all religions had a number of good points which were obscured in the heat of controversy.
- Accordingly, Akbar made an attempt to bring about a synthesis of all the important religions and styled it *Din-i-Ilahi* or *Tauhid-i-Ilahi* (Divine Monotheism).
- According to a renowned historian S M Zaffar, 'The Divine Faith had far-reaching consequences. It completely changed the character of the Muslim rule in India'.
- Akbar started *Tauhid-i-Ilahi* only with the purpose to bring about harmony and peace amongst the various sects. He was the most liberal exponent of the principles of universal toleration.
- Religious life of the people in later medieval India was more or less the same as in the early medieval times.
- Akbar could prove himself as the most secular ruler. In the beginning, he had a strong faith in Islam and in the divine existence.

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- After AD 1575, Akbar constructed Ibadatkhana in Fatehpur Sikri and listened to the view with keen interest up to AD 1582.
- Akbar gradually turned away from Islam and set-up a new religion which was compounded of many existed religious like Hinduism, Christianity and Zoroastrianism.
- During the period of Shah Jahan, the Mughal Court was not as liberal as it was during the time of Akbar and Jahangir.
- The last Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb was a staunch Sunni ruler. He observed the Roza and the Namaz, abstained from wine, led a life without blemish and spent a large part of his time in meditation and prayer.
- The great Mughal Empire was so much extensive and strong as compared to other empires of its time that they could easily be jealous of it.
- The process of the disintegration of the Mughal Empire had begun in the time of Aurangzeb himself. His many mistakes and wrong policies resulted in the decline of this powerful and prestigious empire.
- Aurangzeb was very despotic and harsh because of his suspicious nature. The stability and unity of the Mughal Empire suffered a blow because of his rigid and despotic rule.
- One of the causes of the decline of Mughal Empire was the increasing number of Amirs. Increases in their expenditure lead to a scarcity of the Jagirs and a fall in the income from the Jagirs.
- After Aurangzeb, there was a continuous indiscipline in the Mughal army and a fall in their fighting morale.
- The final blow to the Mughal Empire was given by the continuous foreign invasions. In AD 1730, the Persian Emperor, Nadir Shah severely defeated the Mughal army in Kerala.

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## 12.7 KEY WORDS

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- **Monotheism:** It refers to the belief in the existence of only one god that created the world, is all-powerful and intervenes in the world.
- **Nipakh:** It refers to a path of living in which an individual does not follow any particular religious group.
- **Zoroastrianism:** It refers to a type of religion which is centered in a dualistic cosmology of good and evil and an eschatology predicting the ultimate destruction of evil.

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## 12.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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Religious Policy and Decline  
of Mughal Empire

### Short-Answer Questions

1. Why was the Mughal court not liberal during Shah Jahan's time?
2. What were the main principles of *Din-i-Ilahi*?
3. Why is Akbar considered as the liberal ruler of the Mughal Dynasty?
4. What were the measures adopted by Aurangzeb for non-Muslims?

### Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the importance of *Din-i-Ilahi* during the Mughal Empire.
2. Explain the liberal religious policy of Akbar in detail.
3. Why is Aurangzeb considered as the staunch Sunni ruler? Discuss in detail.
4. Analyse the consequences of Aurangzeb's religious policy.
5. Discuss the reasons which led to the downfall of the Mughal Empire.

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## 12.9 FURTHER READINGS

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### NOTES

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# UNIT 13 REVIVAL OF HINDU RULE UNDER SHIVAJI

## Structure

- 13.0 Introduction
- 13.1 Objectives
- 13.2 The Rule of Marathas Under Shivaji
- 13.3 Contact with the Mughals and its Impact
  - 13.3.1 Accession of Shivaji (AD 1674)
- 13.4 Administration, and Socio-Economic Condition During Maratha Rule
- 13.5 Successors of Shivaji
- 13.6 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 13.7 Summary
- 13.8 Key Words
- 13.9 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 13.10 Further Readings

## 13.0 INTRODUCTION

The Maratha Empire dominated the major parts of the Indian subcontinent during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Shivaji with his skills strengthened the base of the Empire and it ruled till 1818 until the death of Peshwa Bajirao II. The Marathas were acknowledged for their bravery and were accountable for the end of the Mughal rule in India.

The Maratha Empire gained momentum after Shivaji revolted against the Adil Shahi dynasty, and carved out a kingdom with Raigad as his capital. Known for their mobility, the Marathas were able to strengthen their territory during the Mughal–Maratha Wars and thus, controlled a large part of the Indian subcontinent.

In this unit, the strategies adopted by Shivaji to strengthen the role of the Marathas, his relations and treaties with Mughals and other prominent rulers have been discussed. Shivaji's administrative and socio-economic structures have been highlighted. The unit will also discuss the strategies adopted by the successors of Shivaji and will provide a look at their failures too.

## 13.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the achievements of Shivaji under the Maratha Empire
- Analyse the relations of the Marathas with the Mughals

- Explain the administrative structure under Shivaji's reign
- Identify the successors of Shivaji and their achievements

## 13.2 THE RULE OF MARATHAS UNDER SHIVAJI

## NOTES

Shivaji was born to Shahji Bhonsle's wife Jijabi on 20 April, AD 1627 in the hilly fort in Shivneri. Shivaji's father was a high military official at the court of the Sultan of Bijapur and a powerful Maratha leader. His mother Jijabai was an intelligent and a religious lady of high ideals. She was related to the ancient Kshatriya family of Devgiri. Shivaji's father Shahji used to live in Karnataka with Shivaji's step-mother and Shivaji lived with his mother at his father's Jagir in Poona. Shivaji was brought up by his grandfather Dadaji Kondev. Kondev was holding a high post in Ahmednagar. Shivaji was impressed greatly by his mother and guardian Preceptor Dadaji Kondev. Jijabai used to recite to Shivaji tales from the Ramayana and the Mahabharat. Naturally, the legends of those brave people had a healthy effect on the character and personality of Shivaji. Dadaji Kondev made Shivaji well versed in the use of weapon, horse riding, wrestling, hunting, swimming along with the regular studies. He also kept Shivaji with him while doing his administrative duties which gave Shivaji a good experience in maintaining peace and order in the administration. In AD 1640, Shivaji was married to Saibai. Same year, his father appointed him the Manager of his Jagir at Poona. From this very year, Shivaji embarked on his military achievements.

Shivaji first of all toured his Jagir and mixed with its people. He made friends with Mawal Youngman and toured and hunted with them. He brought to an end the practice of forcible occupation of other's land in his Jagir. He encouraged agriculture and gave justice to common people by suppressing the anti-social elements. He earned the commendation of his subjects by his impartial dispensable of justice. He started conquering the neighbouring forts. He gave an evidence of his bravery by conquering the forts of Rajgarh near Poona, Konkan and Toran between AD 1645–1647. At that time, he was just 18 years of age. In AD 1647, Dadaji Kondev died and Shivaji became the independent ruler of his Jagir. Since, all the forts conquered by Shivaji fell in Bijapur territory, the Sultan of Bijapur imprisoned his father Shahji so that he could exert pressure on Shivaji. Shivaji entered into negotiations with the Mughal governor of the Deccan, Aurangzeb, to free his father from the Sultan of Bijapur and by requesting the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan, he effected the release of his father. Shivaji continued his victorious military campaigns and conquered the fort of Purandar in AD 1648. The conquest of this fort greatly enhanced Shivaji's prestige. After some time, Shivaji occupied Supa. About the victories achieved by Shivaji by this time, historian Sirdesai writes that Shivaji established his authority over the regions of Meera, Neera, Poona and shikhal protected by the famous forts

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of Chakan, Purandar, Supa and Varmani which had been conquered without any bloodshed and without paying any heavy price.

### **Conquest of Jawali**

Shivaji began his real military campaigns in AD 1655 when he seized Jawali from Maratha Chief Chandra Rao More. The kingdom of Jawali and the treasure of More in it were very important for Shivaji and he occupied it by intrigue. About the conquest of Jawali, Jadunath Sirkar wrote that this conquest was a consequence of deliberate assassination and treachery. At that time, Shivaji's power was not great and he could not take recourse to more clever means to augment his power. Whatever be the means, Jawali's conquest was important for him. By it, he became the ruler of Mawal region and the way of conquest of Satara and Konkan became clear for him. Mawal people were very brave and daring. They were made the mainstay of his infantry by Shivaji. With their help Shivaji conquered many hilly forts near Poona and consolidated his position.

### **First battle with the Mughals**

The first struggle between Shivaji and the Mughals took place in AD 1657 at the time when Aurangzeb launched an attack on Bijapur. Since, many forts in the Bijapur territory had by that time come under Shivaji's occupation, Aurangzeb demanded these forts from Shivaji. At first, Shivaji tried to settle the matter through negotiations with Aurangzeb because he knew that by that time the Marathas had not become so powerful as to engage in a direct conflict with the Mughal, but when Shivaji could not bring Aurangzeb to compromise by negotiations, he changed his attitude and attacked Mughal's territory and plundered a vast amount of money. Meanwhile, Bijapur accepted the Mughal sovereignty and Shivaji also stopped his activities. Though, Aurangzeb very much wanted to suppress Shivaji but he was not getting enough information about the Mughal Court after the news of Shah Jahan's serious illness and he wanted to proceed to the north as soon as possible. Since, Aurangzeb was not sure that Shivaji would not indulge in anti-Mughal activities after his departure from the Deccan, he advised the Sultan of Bijapur to keep Shivaji out of those areas of Bijapur which had been occupied by him.

### **Occupation of the Forts of Kalyan and Bhiwandi**

Shivaji renewed his military activities as soon as Aurangzeb went back. He attacked the coastal region between Konkan hill and sea and conquered its northern part. He also occupied the forts of Kalyan and Bhiwandi. As a result of this conquest, entire Konkan came under Shivaji's sway.

### **War with Bijapur and murder of Afzal Khan**

The ruler of Bijapur decided to launch a big military campaign against Shivaji. Under the leadership of his general Afzal Khan, he started the campaign at the

head of about 10,000 soldiers. Afzal Khan was ordered to imprison Shivaji anyhow. It is said that before embarking on the campaign against Shivaji, Afzal Khan exclaimed proudly that he would imprison Shivaji without even alighting from his horse and would bring him to the court. Intrigue and cheating was common in those days and both Afzal Khan and Shivaji had adopted these means on many occasions. Shivaji's army was not accustomed to an open fight and he did not want to fight openly with this powerful army of Bijapur. Shivaji was just thinking about it when Afzal Khan ordered to besiege Shivaji in the fort of Pratapgarh. Afzal Khan however could not succeed in conquering the fort. Therefore, he sent a message to Shivaji to come for a personal meeting with him and he promised Shivaji that he would ask the Sultan of Bijapur to pardon him. Shivaji knew that it was just a fraud but he could not hope to achieve victory without suffering very heavy losses in the war against that powerful opponent for whose help more army could serve and who had terrible artillery as well. So, after thinking deeply, he decided to accept Afzal Khan's proposal. He went fully prepared for the fight. Afzal Khan was planning to kill Shivaji fraudulently but he himself fell a victim to the sharp tiger's claw worn by Shivaji. Immediately, after the murder of Afzal Khan, Shivaji managed to scatter the headless army and occupied all the weapons and artillery. It is said that besides the weapons and artillery, Shivaji got 10 lack rupees, 1200 camels, 4000 horses and 65 elephants. As a result of this conquest, Shivaji's enthusiasm increased tremendously. He occupied the strong fort of Panhala and led many attacks on the regions of Konkan and Sholapur. S.R. Sharma writes about this success of Shivaji: 'This conquest made it very clear the father of Deccan had passed into the Shivaji's hand instead of that of Adilshah.' Muslim historians like Khafi Khan and Zafar and an official of English East India Company Grant duff had charged Shivaji with making recourse to fraud but as Sir Desai said if Shivaji had not killed Afzal Khan the latter would have definitely killed him. Sir J N Sirkar also holds that this step was very essential for self-defence for Shivaji and he cannot be blamed for it. It is said that the Sultan of Bijapur sent one more army against Shivaji but that too was unsuccessful. So, he was forced to accept against Bijapur. Shivaji's name became famous in every house of Maharashtra and people talked about his magical powers. Satish Chandra writes in this connection that people from Maharashtra regions started coming in large numbers to be recruited in his army so much so that even the professional Afghan soldiers, serving in Bijapur army before, got recruited in his army.

## NOTES

### Check Your Progress

1. Why was Jawali's conquest important for Shivaji?
2. How did Shivaji gave evidence for his bravery during his reign?



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### 13.3 CONTACT WITH THE MUGHALS AND ITS IMPACT

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#### NOTES

Shivaji's relations with the Mughals may be discussed under the following heads:

#### 1. Struggle against Shaista Khan

Mughal emperor Aurangzeb became very much worried upon seeing the growing Maratha power in the Deccan. He ordered his maternal uncle Shaista Khan (who was a newly appointed Mughal Subedar of Deccan) to invade Shivaji's territory and the Sultan of Bijapur was asked to cooperate with him. It is said that in accordance with the instructions of Aurangzeb, the Sultan of Bijapur at first sent his General Siddi Jauhar who besieged Shivaji in Panhala but Shivaji managed to escape from there and the fort of Panhala was occupied by Bijapur army. After this, the ruler of Bijapur thought that he could use the Marathas as a shield in the struggle between the Mughals and Bijapur and he showed no interest in taking further any action against Shivaji. It is said that he entered into a secret understanding with Shivaji. On the other hand, the Mughal governor of the Deccan, Shasita Khan occupied Poona in AD 1600 and made it his headquarter. Shivaji was on the lookout for a suitable attack. His head quarter at Poona was disguised as a marriage procession. Shivaji's army managed to kill one of Shaista Khan's sons and one of his generals and Shaist Khan himself was wounded badly. There was commotion in the Mughal court and there was terrible scare there as well. Aurangzeb was so annoyed that he transferred Shaista Khan from the deccan to the Bengal and did not even see Shaista Khan at the time of proceeding of the transfer as was the usual custom.

#### 2. Plunder of Surat

The success in Poona against Shaista Khan greatly increased the morale of Shivaji and the Maratha army. Immediately, he resorted to one more and launched a terrible attack on the Mughal port of Surat. From 16 – 20 January, 1664 he plundered the rich city to his heart's content. Shivaji got enormous wealth from this first plunder of Surat City.

#### 3. The campaigns of Muazzam and Jai Singh against Shivaji and the treaty of Purandar

These activities of Shivaji made the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb very worried. He sent a vast army against Shivaji under the leadership of his principal advisor. Jai Singh of Amer and his own son, Prince Muazzam Rai, Jai Singh gave all the necessary military and administrative rights so that he did not have to depend upon the Mughal Governor of Deccan. He was also ordered to keep in direct contact with the emperor himself. Jai Singh was an able and brave general and a farsighted politician. He did not commit a mistake like his predecessors in assessing the military strength of Shivaji. He tried first to win over all the opponents of Marathas

to his side and won over the Sultan of Bijapur to his side and then with full military preparations attacked the main centre of Shivaji, viz. the fort of Purandar. Shivaji's treasury was there and he lived there, with his family. He besieged the fort of Purandar and appointed an army to plunder and terrorize the Maratha regions. Not seeing any help coming from anywhere, Shivaji thought it was necessary to start negotiations for peace because in the fort of Purandar families of the Amirs also lived and Shivaji considered it his duty to protect their lives and honour. Shivaji met Jai Singh and settled peace terms. This treaty is famous in history as the treaty of Purandar (June 1665). The terms of this treaty were as follows:

- Shivaji had to surrender to the Mughals 23 of his 35 forts yielding an annual land revenue of 4 lakh Huns. Shivaji was left with just 12 forts of one lakh Hun of the annual land revenue.
- Shivaji promised to remain loyal to the Mughal emperor.
- Shivaji's hold over the Konkan region yielding 4 lakh Hun annually was allowed to remain as before.
- Besides some regions in Balaghat yielding 5 lakh Huns annually which Shivaji had yet to conquer from Bijapur were allowed by Mughal to remain with him. In return Shivaji had to give to the Mughal 40 lakh Huns in installments.
- Shivaji was granted the permission not to go personally to the Mughal court but his son Sambhaji was granted a mansab of 5000.
- Shivaji promised to help the Mughals against Bijapur.

As far as a critical assessment of the treaty of Purandar is concerned, it would have to be conceded that the treaty represented a great political and diplomatic success of Jai Singh against Shivaji. Within a short period of three months, Jai Singh forced a rapidly rising Maratha leader and the rising power of Marathas, to accept Mughal sovereignty. With great cleverness he sowed the seeds of a conflict between Bijapur and Shivaji. But the success of the treaty settlement depended on the extent to which the Mughals helped Shivaji to conquer the regions of Bijapur to enable him to pay the installment of the war indemnity. This plan could not come through. Aurangzeb was yet not assured about Shivaji and viewed suspiciously any prospect of a combined attack by the Mughal and Shivaji on Bijapur. Jai Singh wanted to take Shivaji to Agra so that he could enter into a permanent treaty with him. According to Jai Singh for the conquest of Deccan, friendship with Shivaji was essential for the Mughals. Shivaji was suspicious of Aurangzeb and he did not agree to go to Agra till Jai Singh assured him completely by putting the responsibility of his protection on his son Ram Singh. Probably, Shivaji also wanted to go to the north to view the situation there and prepared a group of his supporters in the Mughal court. He also expected that by negotiating with Aurangzeb he would get Mughal help to conquer Janzira island from the Side

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is and thus, safeguard his western-frontier. Jai Singh started on his first campaign against Bijapur in alliance with the Marathas. But it was not successful. Shiva was given the task of conquering the fort of Panhala but even he did not succeed. Seeing his plans failing like this, Jai Singh persuaded Shivaji to come to Agra and meet the emperor and Shivaji reached Agra in AD 1666.

### 4. Shivaji in Mughal court and his successful escape from prison

Shivaji came to the Mughal Court on 12<sup>th</sup> May, AD 1666 along with his son Sambhaji and 350 soldiers. Aurangzeb made him stand among 'Panch Hazaris' and did not even talk to him. Shivaji was very annoyed. Aurangzeb made him and his son prisoners, but after sometime both effected their escape from the prison through a clever device and in the guise of Sadhus reached Raigarh on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, AD 1666. Aurangzeb held his own carelessness responsible for this successful escape of Shivaji. After reaching the Deccan, Shivaji was quiet for about 2 years. Actually, Aurangzeb did not give much importance to the friendship with Shivaji because for him Shivaji was no more than a petty Zamindar. But subsequent events showed that this disregard of Shivaji and the Maratha power by Aurangzeb proved very dangerous for the Mughals.

### 5. Second plunder of Surat, conquest of other Mughal territories

Shivaji started his second campaign against the Mughals in AD 1666-1670. Though he had started his campaign against Bijapur a short while ago but he did not gain anything from Bijapur side so he started his campaign against the Mughals again. He reconquered gradually all the 23 forts he had surrendered to the Mughals by the treaty of Purnadar. Shivaji plundered Surat the second time on 6<sup>th</sup> October, AD 1670. In a plunder of three days he got about 66 Lac rupees. According to J N Sarkar, 'This plunder of Surat affected trade quiet adversely and the merchants of Surat stopped getting goods from the internal parts of the country.' After this Shivaji attacked Barar, Badlana and Khandesh and conquered the forts of Salher and Muler. So much was the terror of Marathas in the Deccan and they even exacted *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* from Mughal regions there. *Chauth* was 1/4 of the revenue of a province affected as tribute by Marathas as a tax of their protection against the Mughals and *sardeshmukhi* was an additional surcharge of 1/10 of the land revenue. In return, the Marathas protected these regions from the external attacks. Mughals were fighting the Afghans in the North-West at this time, therefore, they could not pay much attention towards Shivaji, and Shivaji renewed his struggle against Bijapur also. Through bribery, he occupied Panhala, and Satara and also attacked the region of Canara.

#### 13.3.1 Accession of Shivaji (AD 1674)

Though, Shivaji had conquered a big land tract and started behaving like an independent ruler yet the Sultan of Bijapur considered him no more than a rebel

Jagirdar and Mughal Emperor considered him as just a petty Zamindar. Many Maratha families looked upon him only as a Nayab Amir or Zamindar whose ancestors were just ordinary peasants. To prove his superiority among other Maratha families also Shivaji thought it advantageous to get his coronation done. On 15<sup>th</sup> June, AD 1674, Shivaji got his coronation performed with great pomp and show. In the auspicious occasion, Pandit Gang Bhatt who was presiding over the function proclaimed Shivaji to be a high ranking Kshatriya. To improve his social standing, Shivaji entered into matrimonial relations with traditional Maratha families like Mohite and Shirke. The coronation greatly enhanced Shivaji's political position. Now he could enter into the independent treaty relationship with the Sultans of the Deccan or the Mughal emperor unlike previously like a powerful dacoit or a rebel Jagirdar.

### **Conquests after Coronation and Death of Shivaji**

In AD 1675, Shivaji again started encounters with the Mughals and acquired a lot of booty by defeating the Mughal commander Bahadue Khan. In AD 1676, he took an important step. With the help of the two brothers Madanna and Akhanna in Hyderabad he decided to attack Bijapuri Karnataka. Seeing the growing power and influence of Shivaji, Abul Hassan Qutubshah of Golkunda accorded a grand welcome to Shivaji in his Capital and a peace treaty was signed between the two. Abul Hassan Qutubshah promised to pay Shivaji one lakh Huns annually and permitted him to reside at his court. Shivaji took upon himself the responsibility of defending Golkunda from the foreign invasions. Shivaji and the Golkunda ruler also decided to divide among themselves the wealth of Karnataka and its conquered areas. Abu Hassan Qutubshah gave to Shivaji, his artillery and adequate money for the military expenditure. This treaty proved to be very advantageous for Shivaji. He seized Vellore and Zinji from the Bijapuri commanders and got enough money from the region of Karnataka. When Shivaji returned after the conquest, the ruler of Golkunda asked for his share. But Shivaji gave him neither territory nor money. This made Abul Hassan Qutubshah angry and he entered into an agreement with Bijapur to lessen Shivaji's power but at that very time Mughal army under Diler Khan attacked Bijapur and the ruler of Bijapur instead of fighting against Shivaji requested his help against the Mughals. Shivaji rendered him help immediately. Shivaji made Bijapur agree to many favourable terms in favour of Velari. It is said that Adil Shah not only gave him the areas of Kopal and Belldibut also abandoned his claim over Tanjore and the Gagir of Shahaji Bhaonsle. Shivaji also established his hold over many areas of his step-brother Ekoji. Karnataka expedition was the last of Shivaji's important campaigns.

After establishing administrative arrangements in Karnataka, Shivaji came back to Maharashtra. In AD 1678, he and his step-brother Ekoji entered into an agreement with each other and Shivaji returned him all his areas which he had conquered. But that very year his eldest son Sambhaji started behaving like an

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independent youngman and he first went over to Mughals and later to Bijapur. Though he came back to Shivaji after remaining rebellious for a year, yet Shivaji was very unhappy with his conduct and behavior. Probably, he fell ill. With this very worry and after an illness of just twelve days he died on 12 April AD 1680, after completing the age of 53.

Shivaji had begun his life as a manger of his father's jagir at Poona and succeeded in establishing an independent kingdom due to his military ability and qualities of character. Maharashtra, Konkan and a large part of Karnataka were included in his empire. His kingdom had about 240 forts. He laid the foundation of a strong administrative system in his kingdom. He proved himself to be an able military commander and a capable politician. He kept check over the power of the Deshmukhs and laid the foundation of a powerful empire which lasted for a long time, even after his death.

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### 13.4 ADMINISTRATION, AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION DURING MARATHA RULE

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Shivaji is famous in Indian history not only as a brave daring person, a successful general and the founder of an empire but also as a great administrator and a ruler having the well wishes of his subjects at heart. He laid the foundation of a strong administrative system. To some extent his administration was based on those of the Deccan administration system but it had some original features of its own. A study of the various levels of his administration and administration of its various departments can be made under the following heads –

#### Central Administration

- (i) **The King:** Shivaji was a despotic and an autocratic ruler possessing all sovereignty. All the powers of the state were vested in him. He was the supreme judge, administrative head, law giver and General. In spite of being autocratic, he never used his power for his selfish ends. He used to run his administration with the help of a Council of ministers called the Ashtapradhan. It consisted of eight Ministers who were responsible to Shivaji. Their continuation in office depended upon the wishes of Shivaji.
- (ii) **Ashtapradhan:** To help Shivaji with the work of administration, there was a Council of eight Ministers called the Ashtapradhan. The ministers were as follows:
  - (a) **Peshwa or Mukhya pradhan:** The Prime Minister was known as the Peshwa or Mukhya pradhan. His main task was to look after the efficiency of administration. For the fulfillment of this duty, he kept a control over all officials of the government. He acted on behalf of the king in his absence. In

all governmental documents there was his stamp and signatures below those of the Chhatrapati. He had to follow the instructions of the Chhatrapati.

- (b) **Sare-Naubat or Senapati:** He was responsible for the organization and supervision of the army, he used to command the army in the battlefield. He used to give an accurate account of the booty to the Chhatrapati. It was he who informed the Chhatrapati about the requests and requirements of the soldiers. His main duties were recruitment of soldiers, organization of army and maintenance of discipline.
- (c) **Amatya or Finance Minister:** He was incharge of the income and expenditure of the state. He was not only the finance minister but also had to perform active military service at the time of war. He had to acknowledge the orders of the 'Chhatrapati' in all the acts performed by him.
- (d) **Sumant or Foreign Minister:** He used to perform all the functions connected with the foreign affairs. He used to look after the foreign ambassadors and deputies and acquired knowledge about the political activities of the other states through the spies. The king took his advice at the time of entering into peace treaties with the enemy rulers.
- (e) **Sachiv or Shurunvish:** He was a sort of superintendent in the Central ministry. His main duties were the arrangement for the official posts and to set the language and style of royal letters right.
- (f) **Wakianavis or Mantri:** He kept an account of the daily activities of the king and the important events at the court. He also prepared a list of the people desirous of visiting the king and kept a strict watch over the food etc. prepared for the king.
- (g) **Panditrao or Danadhyaksha:** Panditrao or Danadhyaksha was the incharge of religious activities. His main function was the hospitality of the Brahmins on behalf of the king, to give them donation and prizes and to fix dates for religious activities, to arrange for the punishments for anti religious or other perverse activities, to make the regulations for religious ceremonies etc. and to give his decisions on the religious questions. It was his responsibility to reform the conduct of the people.
- (h) **Nyayadhisha:** He was the highest official of judicial department. He heard both the civil and the criminal cases. He also decided about the land-right and chef ship. It was also his duty to implement the decisions of the Gram Panchayat. He also interpreted the law.

Out of the above mentioned eight ministers, everybody had to perform military service at the time of necessity except Panditrao and Nyayadhisha. With the exception of Senapati and Wakianavis, very often all the members of the Ashtapradhan were Brahmins. No office was hereditary. On all official documents, firmans and peace documents, on the top there were the signatures of the king,

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then the Peshwa and at the bottom were those of Amatya, Wakianavis, Sachiv and Sumant.

### Provincial and Local Administration

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Shivaji had divided his whole empire into four provinces:

- (i) **Northern provinces:** In this part were included Balaghat, Kori region, Southern Surat, Northern Konkan, Northern Bombay and Poona. It was under Peshwa Maro Trimbak Pingle.
- (ii) **Southern provinces:** In this were included Southern Bombay, Southern Konkan, Coastal regions, Samantvari regions etc. This province was under Annaji Pant Datto.
- (iii) **South eastern provinces:** This province included the regions of Satara, Koljpur, Belgaon and Dharwal and Kopal. Its Sar-Karkun was Dattaju Trimbak.
- (iv) **Four southern provinces:** These provinces included districts from Kopal to Vellure like Zinzi, Velari, Chennai, Chittore, and Arcot. This province was under the military officials.

These provinces were known as *Swarajya*. Every provincial ruler respected the wish of the king. Like the centre there was a committee of eight ministers in every province. In order to maintain central hold over the Sar-i-Karkun or the Prantpati and the provincial ministers, Shivaji did not make their offices hereditary and to some extent kept central hold on their appointments under the Prantpati or the Sar-i-Karkun and the Subedars. Perhaps Karkun was responsible for the maintenance of the empire and Subedars was incharge of the land yielding about rupees One Lac annual revenue. According to one estimate, Shivaji got the income of 3.5 crores annually barring the income from the *chauth*. On the basis of this account it can be maintained that there were about 350 subedars in his empire. The office of Subedar was generally given to the Brahmins. In the local administration of Shivaji, forts played an important part. The responsibility for the defense of the neighbouring area of the fort was of the Havaladar. He made arrangements for all administration of the fort. Shivaji's empire included about 240 forts. Thus, he had appointed about 240 Havalgars. The post of the Havalgar was generally given to a Maratha. He managed the entire administration of the fort. In every fort, besides the havalgar, there were two other officials of equal rank – first Sar-i-Naubat (who was generally a Maratha), who led and supervised the army stationed in the fort and the other equal ranking officer was Sabnis. He was generally a Brahmin. The financial arrangements of the fort and the neighbouring area, the correspondence and the management of the official stores were his responsibilities. Karakhanis (who was generally a Kayastha) helped him. Shiva paid all his provincial or local officials either in cash or ordered their salaries to be given out of the revenues of a particular area.

## Army Organization

The organization and discipline of Shivaji's army was worth emulating. He paid cash salaries to his soldiers. He adopted the practice of branding the horses and writing the descriptive rolls of the soldiers. Soldiers of his army did not carry their wives with them. Shivaji ordered his soldiers to carry a minimum burden or luggage so that the mobility of the army should be efficiently maintained. His army had the four branches of cavalry, infantry, artillery and navy. Cavalry consisted of two parts. The horsemen who were provided horses and weapons on the behalf of the state were called the Bargirs and the horsemen who arranged for their own horses and weapons were called Siledars. All cavalry was under Sar-i-Naubat. Infantrymen were good archers. Shivaji recruited the Mawalis in big numbers in his army. His army had 700 Pathan soldiers as well. Shivaji's artillery consisted of only the mortar guns. It was managed by the Portuguese. Shivaji got gunpowder etc. from the French of Bombay. The main purpose behind organizing the navy was to arrest the plunder of the Abyssinians.

## Land Revenue Administration

Shivaji organized his land revenue administration most probably after the pattern of that of Malik Amber, the minister of Ahmednagar. Four main sources of revenue in his Kingdom were the land revenue, custom, *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi*. He brought the jagir system under control to some extent to make his land revenue system effective and successful. In AD 1679, Annaji Datta made a revenue survey of the cultivable land and fixed the land revenue according to the productivity of the soil. Initially, he fixed it 30 per cent of the produce but later on it was increased to 40 per cent. To protect the peasants, Shivaji exempted the revenue demands at the time of natural calamities and gave them Takvi loans to purchase seeds etc. Takavi loans were taken back in easy installments. According to some historians, Shivaji completely ended the Zamindari or Deshmukhi system but it does not appear to be correct from our point of view because he gave salary to many officials in the form of Jagir though they were kept under control. During his time there was strict supervision over the officials who acquired a hereditary right over land. Shivaji did not permit them to keep soldiers or build forts in their Jagirs and took from every Jagir a fixed amount as the State's share. Besides revenue, a fixed percentage of the custom duty was charged on the import and export of the goods of businessmen. Shivaji augmented his income by exacting revenue from the neighbouring regions of the Mughals. This was 1/4 of the revenue imposed on the land and was called the *chauth*. Probably, it was a sort of military tax. It was levied on those regions where Marathas promised not to have any military raid. A similar type of tax was *sardeshmukhi* which was 1/10 of the state income. It was levied on those Maratha Deshmukhs who acknowledged Shivaji as their Sardeshmukh. By levying this tax, Shivaji proved that he was very farsighted and

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the builder of a strong empire. By means of the *sardeshmukhi* tax he achieved success in bringing the various Maratha Chiefs under one sovereign power and established a Maratha empire. Recent researches have proved that the financial system of Shivaji was beneficial to the people.

### Judicial System

Shivaji did not establish organized courts like the modern courts nor did he establish any Law Code. His judicial administration was based on the traditional ways only. At the centre, the eight minister of the Ashtapradhan viz. Nyayadhish decided both the civil and the criminal cases according to the Hindu Scriptures only. In the provinces same function was performed by the provincial judges only. In the villages judicial work was performed by the Panchayats. Justice was impartial and the Penal code was strict.

In brief, Shivaji was an able administrator and he laid foundations of a powerful empire. Undoubtedly his kingdom was a regional kingdom but it was based on popular will. Shivaji adopted a secular policy in his empire. In the words of Dr. Ishwari Prasad, he organized an administrative system which in many respects was better than even, that of the Mughals.

### Check Your Progress

3. What was the main task of Mukhya pradhan?
4. Name the four branches of Shivaji's army.
5. What were the sources of revenue in Shivaji's reign?

## 13.5 SUCCESSORS OF SHIVAJI

### Balaji Viswanath (AD1713 –1720)-Rise of Peshwas

Balaji Viswanath began his career as a small revenue official and was given the title of '*Sena Karte*' (maker of the army) by Shahu in AD1708. He became *Peshwa* in AD 1713 and made the post the most important and powerful as well as hereditary. He played a crucial role the final victory of Shahu by winning over almost all the Maratha sardars to the side of Shahu.

He concluded an agreement with the Sayyid brothers (AD1719) by which the Mughal Emperor (Farukhsiyar) recognized Shahu as the king of the Swarajya. Balaji's character and capacity and the peculiar circumstances of the country favoured the rise of the Peshwas to power and renown. One of the first things Balaji was called upon to do was to secure the restoration of Sahu's mother to him from the custody of the Mughals who had detained her at Delhi as hostage for the

good behaviour of her son Sahu. Balaji opened direct negotiations with the Saiyyid brothers and in February 1719 all his demands were accepted.

Accordingly, Sahu's mother and family was released, he was recognized as the ruler of Shivaji's home dominions and was allowed to collect *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* from the six *subahs* of the Deccan, as also in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. In return for all this, the Marathas were expected to keep a contingent on 15,000 horses in the service of the Mughals and to maintain order in the Deccan. Balaji's success in Delhi greatly increased his power and prestige.

Balaji Vishwanath has been rightly called the 'second founder of the Maratha state'. He perceived that the revival of Maratha power in its old monarchical form was no longer possible and it would be difficult to harness the nation's military resources to the common cause unless concessions were made to the great warlords who had won an important place for themselves. He made them subordinate allies or confederates of the sovereign, granting them a free hand in administering their conquests and called from them no greater sacrifice than uniting on matters of common policy. This arrangement, however, left too much authority in the hands of these chiefs, without providing for checks to call them to account, which was responsible for the speedy expansion of the Maratha power and its rapid dissolution. The term of Balaji's Peshwaship marks the transition from the royal period to the age of the Peshwas.

Balaji was credited with 'a mastery of finance'. Though constantly engaged in war and diplomacy, he took firm measures to put a stop to anarchy in the kingdom. He suppressed freebooters and restored civil government. Solid foundations were laid for a well-organized revenue system in the Swaraj territory, which was under direct royal administration.

### **Baji Rao I (AD 1720–1740)**

Baji Rao, the eldest son of Balaji Viswanath, succeeded him as *Peshwa* at the young age of twenty. He was considered the greatest exponent of guerrilla tactics after Shivaji and Maratha power reached its zenith under him.

Under him, several Maratha families became prominent and got themselves entrenched in different parts of India. Some of these places were as follows:

- Gaekwad at Baroda
- Bhonsles at Nagpur
- Holkars at Indore
- Scindias at Gwalior
- Peshwas at Poona

After defeating and expelling the Siddhis of Janjira from the mainland (AD1722), he conquered Bassein and Salsette from the Portuguese (AD1733).

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He also defeated the Nizam-ul-Mulk near Bhopal and concluded the Treaty of Durai Sarai by which he got Malwa and Bundelkhand from the latter (AD1737). He led innumerable successful expeditions into north India to weaken the Mughal Empire and to make the Marathas the supreme power in India. He said 'Let us strike at the trunk of the withering tree and the branches will fall of themselves.'

### **Balaji Baji Rao (AD 1740 – 1761)**

Balaji Baji Rao was popularly known as 'Nana Saheb'. He succeeded his father at the age of twenty. After the death of his father, the management of all state affairs was left in his hands. In an agreement with the Mughal Emperor (Ahmad Shah), the Peshwa (AD1752) was to protect the Mughal Empire from the internal and the external (Ahmad Shah Abdali) enemies in return for the *Chauth*. He remained dependent on the advice and guidance of his cousin Sadashiva Rao Bhau.

With regard to the future policy of his government, he asked Sadashiva Rao Bhau to continue the policies of his father and said 'The elder Bajirao achieved great deeds in the devoted service of the king. But his life was cut short. You are his son, and you ought to consummate his policy of conquering the whole of Hindustan and establish an Empire and lead your horses beyond Attock.'

One of the earliest achievements of Nana Saheb was better financial management of the Empire by exercising careful supervision over all financial transactions. He later discussed the affairs of northern India with Holkar and Scindia and in April 1742 marched northwards to consolidate the Maratha authority in Bundelkhand. In AD 174, he undertook the second expedition to the north to help Ali Vardi Khan (in Bengal) whose territories had been ravaged Raghuji Bhonsle. The Peshwa reached Murshidabad and met Ali Vardi Khan who agreed to pay him the *chauth* for Bengal and Rs. 22 lakh to the Peshwa for the expenses of his expedition. By this arrangement the Peshwa freed Ali Vardi Khan's territories from the ravages of Raghuji's troops. During the first half of his Peshwaship he established Maratha supremacy in Karnataka and sent expeditions to Rajputana.

Shahu died childless on 15 December 1749. He had nominated Ramraja, a grandson of Tarabai, as his successor before his death. Ramaraja was crowned as Chhatrapati in January 1750. Since, he was weak and incompetent, Tarabai tried to make him a puppet in her own hands, which caused utter confusion and crisis in the Maratha kingdom; it deepened further when the Peshwa learnt that Ramaraja was not the grandson of Tarabai but an impostor. When this fact came to knowledge, the Chhatrapati was virtually confined in the fort at Satara and lost all contacts with political developments. Hence forth, Pune became the real capital of the Maratha Confederacy, and the Peshwa its virtual ruler. During the second period of Balaji's regime (AD1751–1761), four campaigns were organized in the north. The Punjab politics was at the time in a confused state and as a result the first two

invasions of Ahmad Shah Abdali, the subahs of Lahore, Multan and Kashmir were annexed by Abdali to his dominions. After the third invasion, the Mughal wazir, Safdarjung, persuaded the Emperor to enter into an agreement with the Marathas in May 1752 for undertaking defence of the Empire against its internal and external foes. In return the Marathas were to get the *Chauth* of the north-western provinces usurped and occupied by the Afghans. However, that *Chauth* could only be secured by the actual conquest. The Marathas were also given the subahs of Agra and Ajmer. As a result of this agreement the Maratha military force was posted at Delhi and they repeatedly interfered in the politics of North India and established their supremacy at Delhi.

This arrangement would have marked the fulfilment of Balaji Baji Rao's dream of 'a Mughal-Maratha alliance for the governance of India as a whole'. But Safdarjung lost his wazirship and retired to Awadh in AD1753, and power in the imperial court passed to Imad-ul-Mulk, grandson of Nizam ul-Mulk. He terrorized the helpless Emperor with Maratha help and secured the office of *wazir*, dethroned Ahmad Shah and placed Alamgir II, grandson of Bahadur Shah, on the imperial throne in AD1754.

There was never a wazir of Delhi whose rule was so barren of good result and so full of misery to himself and to the Empire, to his friends and foes alike, as Imad-ul-Mulk's. At first he 'clung like a helpless infant to the breast of the Marathas'; but being unable to pay 'the cash nexus on which alone Maratha friendship depended', he agreed to Ahmad Shah Abdali's project of ousting the Marathas from the Doab and Shuja-ud-daula of Awadh, son and successor of Safdarjung, from provincial governorship (AD1757). This drew Shuja-ud-daula, Surajmal Jat and the Marathas together and left Imad-ul-Mulk utterly friendless during the absence of Abdali from India. As per the above arrangements early in AD1758, Raghunath Rao, accompanied by Malhar Rao Holkar, entered the Punjab. He was joined by Adina Beg Khan and the Sikhs.

Sirhind fell, Lahore was occupied and the Afghans were expelled (April 1758). Timur Shah fled, pursued by the Marathas up to the river Chenab. They did not cross the river because it was too deep for fording and the districts beyond it were inhabited mostly by the Afghans.

Raghunath Rao returned from the Punjab after leaving the province in charge of Adina Beg Khan. Confusion followed the latter's death a few months later (October 1758). The Peshwa sent a large army under Dattaji Scindia who reached the eastern bank of the Sutlej (April 1759), and sent Sabaji Scindia to Lahore to take over the governorship of the province.

Within a few months, a strong army sent by Abdali crossed the river Indus. Sabaji fell back precipitately, abandoning the entire province of the Punjab to the Afghans. Abdali established his government at Lahore, resumed his march and entered Sirhind (November 1759).

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The Maratha adventure in the Punjab has been acclaimed by some historians as ‘carrying the Hindu paramount up to Attock’. It is doubtful if the Maratha army actually advanced as far as Attock and the collection of revenue in the trans-Chenab district was a purely temporary affair. The Peshwa did not realize that the Punjab could not be retained without keeping a large well-equipped force constantly on the spot. This was not possible because the necessary funds were not available and no Maratha soldier could stand the winter of Lahore. No first-rate Maratha general was posted in the Punjab as warden of the North-west frontier. The Peshwa sanctioned ‘a provocatively advanced frontier’, which made war with Abdali inevitable, but he made no adequate arrangement for its defence.

### Check Your Progress

6. Why was Balaji credited with the title, ‘a master of finances’?
7. What was one of the earliest achievements of Nana Saheb?

## 13.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Jawali’s conquest was important for Shivaji because by it, he became the ruler of Mawal region and the way of conquest of Satara and Konkan became clear for him.
2. Shivaji gave evidence of his bravery by conquering the forts of Rajgarh near Poona, Konkan and Toran between AD 1645–1647.
3. Mukhya pradhan’s main task was to look after the efficiency of administration. For the fulfillment of this duty, he kept a control over all officials of the government. He acted on behalf of the king in his absence.
4. The four main branches of Shivaji’s army was cavalry, infantry, artillery and navy.
5. The main sources of revenue in Shivaji’s reign were the land revenue, custom, *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi*.
6. Balaji was credited with ‘a mastery of finance’ because though he constantly engaged in war and diplomacy, he took firm measures to put a stop to anarchy in the kingdom. He suppressed freebooters and restored civil government. Solid foundations were laid for a well-organized revenue system in the Swaraj territory, which was under direct royal administration.
7. One of the earliest achievements of Nana Saheb was better financial management of the Empire by exercising careful supervision over all financial transactions.

## 13.7 SUMMARY

- Shivaji was born to Shahji Bhonsle's wife Jijabi on 20 April, AD 1627 in the hilly fort in Shivneri.
- Shivaji first of all toured his Jagir and mixed with its people. He made friends with Mawal Youngman and toured and hunted with them.
- Shivaji began his real military campaigns in AD 1655 when he seized Javali from Maratha Chief Chandra Rao More.
- The first struggle between Shivaji and the Mughals took place in AD 1657 at the time when Aurangzeb launched an attack on Bijapur.
- Shivaji renewed his military activities as soon as Aurangzeb went back. He attacked the coastal region between Konkan hill and sea and conquered its northern part.
- Shivaji's army was not accustomed to an open fight and he did not want to fight openly with this powerful army of Bijapur.
- Mughal emperor Aurangzeb became very much worried upon seeing the growing Maratha power in the Deccan.
- The success in Poona against Shaista Khan greatly increased the morale of Shivaji and the Maratha army. Immediately, he resorted to one more and launched a terrible attack on the Mughal port of Surat.
- Shivaji came to the Mughal Court on 12<sup>th</sup> May, AD 1666 along with his son Sambhaji and 350 soldiers. Aurangzeb made him stand among 'Panch Hazaris' and did not even talk to him.
- Shivaji was a despotic and an autocratic ruler possessing all sovereignty. All the powers of the state were vested in him.
- The organization and discipline of Shivaji's army was worth emulating. He paid cash salaries to his soldiers. He adopted the practice of branding the horses and writing the descriptive rolls of the soldiers.
- Balaji Viswanath began his career as a small revenue official and was given the title of '*Sena Karte*' (maker of the army) by Shahu in AD 1708.
- Balaji Baji Rao was popularly known as 'Nana Saheb'. He succeeded his father at the age of twenty. After the death of his father, the management of all state affairs was left in his hands.

## NOTES

## 13.8 KEY WORDS

- **Amatya:** It refers to the position of the finance minister who looked after the income and expenditure of the state.

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- **Ashtapradhan:** It refers to the council of eight ministers which looked after the work of administration.
- **Nyayadhisha:** It refers to the post of the highest official of judicial department. He heard both the civil and the criminal cases.
- **Sachiv:** It refers to the post of the superintendent who looked after the arrangement of the official posts and set the style of the royal letters.

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## 13.9 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short-Answer Questions

1. How did Shivaji conquer Jawali?
2. Write a short note on the first battle between the Marathas and the Mughals.
3. Why did Aurangzeb not give much importance to Shivaji?
4. What was the main task of Wakianavis?
5. How did Shivaji divide his provinces?

### Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss in detail the achievements of Shivaji in strengthening the Maratha Empire.
2. Explain the consequences of the treaty of Purandar.
3. How did Shivaji improve his social status? Discuss in detail.
4. Analyse the administrative structure of Shivaji's reign.
5. 'Balaji Vishwanath has been rightly called the 'second founder of the Maratha state'. Explain the statement.

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## 13.10 FURTHER READINGS

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# UNIT 14 RELIGION, ART AND ARCHITECTURE UNDER THE MARATHAS

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*Religion, Art and  
Architecture Under the  
Marathas*

## NOTES

### Structure

- 14.0 Introduction
- 14.1 Objectives
- 14.2 Religious Condition
- 14.3 Art and Architecture Under The Marathas
  - 14.3.1 Construction of Maratha Forts and Contributions of Shivaji and his Successors
- 14.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 14.5 Summary
- 14.6 Key Words
- 14.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 14.8 Further Readings

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## 14.0 INTRODUCTION

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As you learnt in the previous unit, after the Mughal dominance in India, Marathas were the group of people who rose to power. The Marathas were a warrior peasant group who belong to Western Deccan area. The Marathas, held jagirs under Adil Shahi rulers. Shahji Bhonsle was one of the prominent clan members. One of his sons, Shivaji Bhonsle rose to prominence and was one of the powerful Maratha rulers. Later, his grandson, Shahu became one of the most powerful peshwas, the Maratha equivalent of a prime minister. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the leading Maratha families—Sindhia, Holkar, Bhonsle, and Gaekwar—increased their conquests in northern and central India.

In this unit, the religious conditions and the art and architecture under the rule of Marathas have been discussed. The Marathas were considered eager builders and brilliant architects. They constructed many buildings in their original homeland in Maharashtra as well as in South India when they ruled there. The unit will explain the art and architectural styles during the Maratha era.

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## 14.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the religious conditions during the reign of Marathas
- Explain the development of art and architecture during the Maratha Empire



- Analyse the development of the Maratha Forts
- Discuss the contribution of Shivaji and his successors in developing art and architecture during their reigns

## NOTES

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### 14.2 RELIGIOUS CONDITION

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The Marathas were a predominately a Hindu state. Many historians see the rise of Marathas were a result of the discontentment with the Muslim state. The Hindu ideology of the Maratha kingdom is seen in the architecture and eagerness to build temples.

According to Irfan Habib, the rise of the Maratha power and the rebellious mood of the peasantry which was oppressed by the state. The social motive of the Maratha Dharma can be seen when Shivaji got prepared a Suryavamsa Kshyatriya lineage of his family with the willing support of Gangabhat, a Brahmin of Benaras.

Along with Shivaji, people belonging to the agriculturalist profession might have succeeded in enhancing their social status. Under this scene, the Bhakti movement spear-headed by Tukaram, Samarth Ramdas and Eknath gave scope for mobility in the Varna scale by individuals and groups which further crystalized into Maratha Dharma based on egalitarianism. M.G. Ranade and V.K. Rajwade formulated the idea that it was Maratha Dharma that led to the political independence of the Marathas based on aggressive Hinduism.

Samartha Ramdas, the spiritual guru of Shivaji who was very critical about the Turko-Afghan-Mughal rule gave impetus to Maratha nationalism. Shivaji made use of this saint-poet's idea to mobilize protest against the rule of the Mughals and the Deccan kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkonda.

A big debating point is – can we identify Maratha Dharma with Hindu Swarajya. While some subscribe to the view that Hindu Swarajya and Maratha Dharma are identical, there are some who disagree with this view and regard that it was not primarily religion-oriented but opposed to the centralizing tendencies of the Mughals.

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### 14.3 ART AND ARCHITECTURE UNDER THE MARATHAS

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Serfoji II (1798–2832 AD) was one of the Maratha rulers who took an active interest in the construction of new buildings in his kingdom. He had a keen understanding of architecture. Serfoji II even added a lot of books on architecture and town planning in the collection of the Sarasvati Mahal Library, which was built by another Maratha ruler. He built a lot many buildings in his dynasty.

## NOTES

The Maratha buildings were usually triangular in shape and they covered a huge area from the city of Tanjavur to the Bay of Bengal. Most of the buildings that were built by the Marathas were in and around the Tanjavur, as it was the capital of the Marathas before Shivaji constructed a separate Maratha kingdom in Maharashtra. The architecture style of the Marathas was a fusion of various styles.

The Maratha buildings and their architectural style used bricks for the construction of palaces, forts and common residential houses and even for public utilities like road-side wells, canals, tanks, bridges and religious buildings like temples. It was a huge change from the earlier prepared buildings that were basically made of stones. One more distinguishing feature of the Maratha architecture was the use of vault roofs in all buildings they constructed. The tiled roofs were also used in some of the constructions, but major priority was given to the vault roofs in the construction of palaces and big libraries.

The Marathas pursued the Islamic tradition while raising rows of pillars inside the buildings. They mainly opted for the cylindrical pillars but at times square or octagonal pillars were also erected. These were then attached by pointed or rounded arches of both plain and the trefoil types.

The Marathas also got influenced by the British or Colonial architecture as during that time English domination was in Tanjavur as well as in remaining parts of India. Moreover, the British helped Serfoji II, who was a Maradia ruler to get his throne back and he became friendly with British and called their architects to design the royal buildings of Tanjavur.

The Marathas used the Colonial-style buildings in Tanjavur. These buildings had a large entrance in the front surrounded by gardens. The front side of the Maratha architecture buildings consisted of gabled-top supported on smooth long iron pillars, that followed the typical Colonial style. The government offices or educational institutions were basically housed in these buildings and at times it was used as residences of senior officials like district collectors. A lot of these buildings were erected in the centre of the town and not in the by lanes. Some of the significant monuments that were built in Tanjavur in the Maratha architectural style were the following:

- Palaces at Tanjavur and Tiruvaiyaru
- The *chattrams* at Tiruvaiyaru and Orathanad
- The fort at Manora between Pattukottai and Rameswaram

### Temples

The temple tradition of the Marathas thrived between the 17th and 19th century. It evolved in three phases and it corresponded with major political developments. The Maratha architectural vocabulary developed two types of temples.

The indigenous type temple was an original contribution of the Marathas towards the mainstream of temple traditions in India. Another type of temple

## NOTES

construction was the revivalist type. These temples resulted out of the patron's desire for grand stone temples that were built by their ancestors and were comparable to those in other parts of India.

The ancient architecture patterns were used in the construction of Hindu temples in this period. The Indo-sarasonian type of architecture was also followed. The Tanjore Marathas constructed many temples. Among those the Ganesha Temple built in the Brihadeswara temple complex at Tanjore and Vaidyanatha Swamy temple in Nagapattinam were the classical examples. They built many choultries. Among them the choultry that was built in Orthanadu was a magnificent one.

### Sculptures and Paintings

Maratha sculptures are beautiful and ornamental. They are usually engraved on single stone and placed on walls and pillars. They mostly contain messages of value. One of the masterpieces of Maratha sculpture is the bronze image of Ammani Amma, the wife of Pratap Singh. It is a portrait figure situated in the temple of Tiruvudaimarudur. She is in a standing posture holding a lamp to her hand with a parrot seated on her right shoulder. Another famous sculpture of the Marathas was the silver-plated *Bull Vahana* in Tanjore temple. This statue is now in the Saraswathi Mahal Library in Tanjore.

### Paintings

The mural paintings in the front *mandapa* of the Subramaniya shrine in the Brihadeswara temple at Tanjore are some of the classical examples of Maratha painting. The valuable portrait paintings of the Maratha rulers adorn the inner walls of Tanjore palace and Saraswathi Mahal library.

#### 14.3.1 Construction of Maratha Forts and Contributions of Shivaji and his Successors

The Maratha Empire during the 16–18th century under the guidance of young Shivaji implemented the guerilla strategy of hit and scoot, which took a heavy toll on the Mughals. This strategy called for permanent secure bases from where the guerilla forces could operate and so for this reason numerous forts were built in the Deccan region. The forts were basically atop hills for all round defense as well as for providing an all-round view to stop any and all attacks. The high wide walls and observation towers gave the Marathas an opportunity to attack the oncoming enemy and offered a panoramic view of the scenic Deccan. Let us study about some of the popular Maratha forts:

- **Fort of Shivneri:** It is the appropriate fort to begin the Maratha history with as Shivaji was born here in the year 1630. The fort is situated 75 miles from Pune on a hilltop in a place known as Junner. The way to climb the fort is steep and arduous which has loose rocks and boulders strewn around. Shivaji's father Shahaji who was serving in the Army of Mughul

Chief Adil Shah, chose this fort with the basic concern of safety for his wife and the unborn child. Shivaji learnt the importance of freedom and arts of war in this fort. Another small fort named Jivdhan famous for trekking is also located nearby. There is a ghat as well in the close vicinity of the fort. The ghat is named as Nane Ghat and it offers a great view.

- **Lohagad and Visapur fort:** The twin forts of Lohagad and Visapur are an hour away from Pune in the scenic settings of Lonavala. Both these forts are located at a height of around 3,500 feet and are separated by a kilometer-long ridge. These forts were originally built by the Mughals but were later captured by Shivaji.
- **Raigad fort:** The birth of Shivaji was announced to the world from the Raigad fort. The coronation ceremony of Shivaji was held in this fort in 1674 as it was the capital of the Kingdom of the Marathas. This fort is located atop a diamond shaped hill.

The climb towards the fort is tough and has thousand steps. Some of the interesting spots to see in the fort are The Rani Vasa, Palkhi Darwaja, Raj Bhawan and samadhi of Chhatrapati Shivaji.

- **Pratapgad fort:** This fort was constructed during the reign of Shivaji in 1656. It was built near the hill station of Mahabaleshwar atop a hill that offers a spectacular view of the Raigad valley and the surrounding hills. The forts in this region are generally inter-visible, which was a major security measure during those times.
- **Sinhagad fort:** This fort is just an hour's drive from the city of Pune and if literally translated it means Lion's fort. The fort commemorated the feats of Tanaji Malusare, who was a valiant *senapati* in the army of Shivaji. He captured the fort with a dare-devil climb on the steep cliff with a rope's help that was tied to the tail of an iguana. Tanaji died in the resulting battle and Shivaji in the memory of the brave hearted general renamed the Kondhana fort to Sinhgad. A memorial was also been built in the memory of Tanaji which is now connected by road.
- **Daulatabad Fort:** This fort has a long and interesting history. It was built for the Hindu city with the name of Devigiri in the 12th Century AD. This place was later captured by the Mughals and was named Daulatabad. It even became the Mughal capital for a short while.

The Daulatabad fort is a wonderful creation of Maratha architecture. It consists of the following:

- Thick stone walls
- Steep slopes
- Spiked entrances
- Deep encircling ravine

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## NOTES

The triple walls of the fort created a maze, the trenches with crocodiles and ingenious booby traps made the fort impregnable to any human effort. The fort was later captured by the Mughals deceitfully.

This fort has well-preserved structures. Some of them are as follows:

- The 30 meter high Chand Minar tower
- The Chini Mahal with blue tiles
- The Jami Masjid now transformed to Bharat Mata temple
- The Elephant water tank
- The famous Kila Shikan cannon
- **Panhala fort:** This fort lies 15 miles from Kolhapur. It was built by the tribal ruler of the Naag dynasty in the tenth century. The fort is triangular in shape and has a five mile circumference. It is probably the largest fort of the Deccan and had many historical relics. Some of them have been destroyed over time but others still exist. Some of the relics that still exist are as follows:
  - Tabak Udyan
  - Teen Darwaja
  - The temple of Sambhaji
  - The abode of Sajjaji
  - The Baji Prabhu statue
- **Sindhudurg:** Shivaji was a great warrior, thinker and military genius. These qualities of him are revealed in the design and construction of Sindhudurg. It is said that about 6,000 artisans were employed for the 30 feet high, 12 feet wide and two-mile-long fortification walls around the fort. This fort even has the imprint of Shivaji's palm and footprint beneath two small domes on the slabs of limestone.

The fort was located on a hilly island spanning the Malvan coast. Its major purpose was to keep foreign raiders at bay and also limit the growth opportunities for the Siddis of Murud –Janjira.
- **The fort of Murud-Janjira:** The Siddis and the Marathas were always threats to each other. The cold war scenario among these two warrior clans in western India led to the building of Sindhudurg and Janjira. The fort at Murud–Janjira is a perfect example of their war craft. The impressive 40 feet high stone walls that had a lot of observation posts and gun positions all along the island were a feat of engineering when no machines were available for construction. It is probably the only fort on the 500 mile coastline of Maharashtra that was never conquered by the enemy army.

## NOTES

The original idea of the fort was taken from local fishermen who used to make wooden walls to ward off the high tide or stop the pirates from gaining direct entry. The stone-walled fort was made by Malik Ambar in the fifteenth century. It had stately mansions, palaces for the royals and manicured gardens. Many of the big guns of the fort have been either stolen or destroyed, but three of these royal weapons are still in display.

- **Bassein fort:** It is the only fort that was constructed based on the European architecture. During the time when this fort was built, the Portuguese conquerors made Bassein as a town based on the European cities. The Portuguese already inhabited the territories of Goa, Daman and Diu and the north of Mumbai was an extension for them. The fort was later seized by the Marathas, but they did not destroy the remains of the European construction such as the Cathedral of St. Joseph, the spiral stairway of the watch tower and the Porte De Merare. They exist even today.

### Saraswathi Mahal library

The Saraswathi Mahal library was established by King Serfoji II at Thanjavur. It was a unique example of art and architecture of the Tanjore Marathas. Robinson, who visited the Saraswathi Mahal library in 1824, said that, it was a full-fledged centre of learning, where research facilities were conducted based on the western model. In the library, ancient architecture patterns were followed for the creation of Hindu temples. The Indo-sarasonic type of architecture was also followed.

#### Check Your Progress

1. How did the Marathas pursue the Islamic traditions in their architectural styles?
2. State any distinguishing feature of Maratha architecture.
3. Who built the Pratapgad fort?
4. How is the Panhala fort designed?

## 14.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. The Marathas pursued the Islamic tradition in their architectural styles by raising rows of pillars inside the buildings. They mainly opted for the cylindrical pillars but at times square or octagonal pillars were also erected. These were then attached by pointed or rounded arches of both plain and the trefoil types.

## NOTES

2. One distinguishing feature of the Maratha architecture was the use of vault roofs in all buildings they constructed. The tiled roofs were also used in some of the constructions, but major priority was given to the vault roofs in the construction of palaces and big libraries
3. The Pratapgad fort was constructed during the reign of Shivaji in 1656. It was built near the hill station of Mahabaleshwar atop a hill that offers a spectacular view of the Raigad valley and the surrounding hills.
4. The Panhala fort is triangular in shape and has a five-mile circumference. It is probably the largest fort of the Deccan and had many historical relics. Some of them have been destroyed over time but others still exist.

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## 14.5 SUMMARY

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- The Marathas were a predominately a Hindu state. Many historians see the rise of Marathas were a result of the discontentment with the Muslim state. The Hindu ideology of the Maratha kingdom is seen in the architecture and eagerness to build temples.
- Along with Shivaji, people belonging to the agriculturalist profession might have succeeded in enhancing their social status.
- Samarth Ramdas, the spiritual guru of Shivaji who was very critical about the Turko-Afghan-Mughal rule gave impetus to Maratha nationalism.
- The social motive of the Maratha Dharma can be seen when Shivaji got prepared a Suryavamsa Kshyatriya lineage of his family with the willing support of Gangabhat, a Brahmin of Benaras.
- Serfoji II (1798–2832 AD) was one of the Maratha rulers who took an active interest in the construction of new buildings in his kingdom.
- The Maratha buildings and their architectural style used bricks for the construction of palaces, forts and common residential houses and even for public utilities like road-side wells, canals, tanks, bridges and religious buildings like temples.
- Maratha sculptures are beautiful and ornamental. They are usually engraved on single stone and placed on walls and pillars. They mostly contain messages of value. One of the masterpieces of Maratha sculpture is the bronze image of Ammani Amma, the wife of Pratap Singh.
- The mural paintings in the front *mandapa* of the Subramaniya shrine in the Brihadeswara temple at Tanjore are some of the classical examples of Maratha painting.

- The Maratha Empire during the 16–18th century under the guidance of young Shivaji implemented the guerilla strategy of hit and scoot, which took a heavy toll on the Mughals.
- The Bassein fort was later seized by the Marathas, but they did not destroy the remains of the European construction such as the Cathedral of St. Joseph, the spiral stairway of the watch tower and the Porte De Merare. They exist even today.
- The Saraswathi Mahal library was established by King Serfoji II at Thanjavur. It was a unique example of art and architecture of the Tanjore Marathas.

## NOTES

### 14.6 KEY WORDS

- **Hindu Swarajya:** It refers to a term used for socio-political movements seeking to remove foreign military and political influences from India.
- **Mandapa:** It refers to an Indian architectural style which is a pillared outdoor hall or pavilion for public rituals.
- **Senapati:** It refers to the rank of military commander or general of the army. It was a hereditary title of nobility used in the Maratha Empire

### 14.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

#### Short-Answer Questions

1. What are the features of the Daulatabad fort?
2. How did religious causes led to the rise of the Marathas?
3. Who was Ammani Amma? Why is her figure important?
4. Name two styles that influence Marathi architecture?
5. Write a short note on Fort Shivneri.

#### Long-Answer Questions

1. Describe any three Maratha forts in detail.
2. What were the features of Maratha art and architecture? Discuss in detail.
3. Analyse the religious condition during the rise of the Marathas.
4. Discuss in detail about the architectural developments during the Maratha rule.
5. How were the forts constructed during the Maratha era? Discuss.



## NOTES

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## 14.8 FURTHER READINGS

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## INDIAN CIVILIZATION AND CULTURE FROM 1206 TO 1707 A.D.

### II - Semester



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