

8

DELHI DURING THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

Bhagvatiben went on a tour of North India. She was interested in history and so she noted down information about the rulers of Delhi in her diary. This tour-diary was read out in the classroom. What was read out is as below:

Slave (Gulam) Dynasty

The Delhi Sultanate was founded in the beginning of the 13th century (1206 C.E.). After the death of Ghori, one of his loyal slaves, became the commander and established control over the throne of Delhi. Thus, the Slave Dynasty started ruling over Delhi. Though he faced many difficulties in establishing his power in India, he managed to provide a stable administration. He had started the construction of a minar. His son-in-law, Iltutmish, who succeeded him, completed the construction of that minar. This minar which came to be known as the famous Qutub Minar, is shown in the picture 8.1. The architectural style in which Qutub Minar was constructed is a mixture of both Hindu and Muslim styles. This place was the capital during the Sultanate Age.



8.1 Delhi during Medieval Period



8.2 Raziya Sultan

Iltutmish was also a slave in the beginning. He conquered many territories in India and made them a part of the Delhi Sultanate. So, he is known as the founder of the Slave Dynasty. His daughter Raziya Sultana, ascended the throne after his death in 1236 C.E. Raziya was the first female ruler (Sultana) to rule over Delhi. Raziya was an efficient ruler. She used to dress as a male when she was in the court. According to a historian of that time Minhas-e-Siraj, “Raziya was a more capable and efficient ruler than her brothers. However, being a woman she was not accepted as a ruler.”

Think

- *Position of men and women is equal in society. Then, why was Raziya Sultan not accepted as a ruler?*

Amir Umraos disliked Raziya as a ruler. Raziya's rule came to an end due to the interference of the Amirs. There was complete disorder in the Sultanate for 6 years after her death. At last, the Amirs enthroned Nasir-ud-din, the son of Iltutmish. He ruled for 21 years. After his death, Giayas-ud-din Balban ascended the throne of Delhi. He was a strong ruler who brought an end to the disorder and established peace. Balban had been the wazir of Nasir-ud-din for 20 years. Subsequently, he ruled as Sultan for 22 years. His descendents were weak and the Khilji Dynasty established its rule over Delhi.

Things to know

- ***Raziya Sultana inscribed on stones and coins that she was Iltutmish's daughter. The Kakatiya Dynasty used to rule over Warangal in present Andhra Pradesh. The attitude of Queen Rudrama Devi (1259-1289 C.E.), a ruler of this dynasty, was exactly the opposite to that of Raziya Sultana. In her inscriptions, she engraved her name like a man. Similarly, there was Queen Didda who once ruled over Kashmir. She was affectionately called 'Didi' by her subjects.***

Khilji Dynasty

Within 4 years of Balban's death, the Khilji Dynasty established its rule over Delhi. The Turk community who belonged to Khilji in Afghanistan was known as Khiljis. Jalaluddin Khilji brought an end to the Slave Dynasty and, in its place, founded the Khilji Dynasty. In 1296 C.E., Allauddin Khilji, who was both his nephew and son-in-law, overthrew Jalaluddin and became the ruler of Delhi. He was very ambitious. He controlled the interference of Ulemas and Umraos in the state administration. Allauddin Khilji framed strict laws to control prices. The famous poet, Amir Khusro, whose works are well known, adorned his court. There was complete disorder in the kingdom after his death and the Tughlaq dynasty established its power replacing the Khilji dynasty.



8.3 Allauddin Khilji



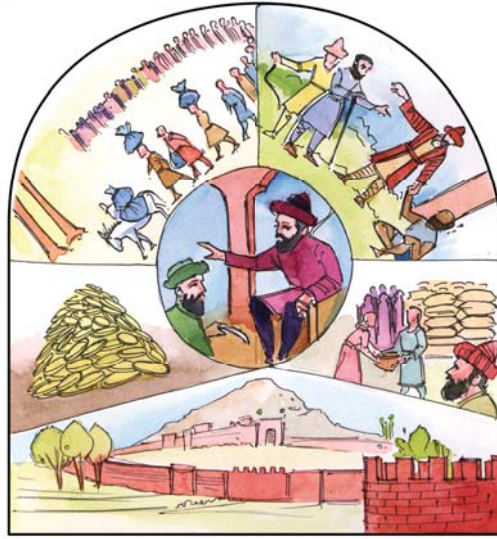
8.4 Amir Khusro

Think

- ***If the prices of essential commodities are not controlled, how will it affect our lives? Do you think it is necessary to control the prices of basic commodities? Why?***

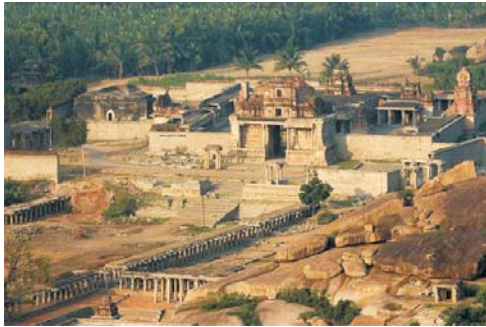
The Tughlaq Dynasty

Giyasuddin Tughlaq founded the Tughlaq Dynasty within four years after the death of Alauddin Khilji. 'Daakchowki' the postal services, was started in his time. The letters were carried by horse riders. Postmen were referred to as 'Halkaro' at that time. (Refer to Saurashtra ni Rasdhar' to know more about 'Halkaro'). Mohammad Tughlaq became the Sultan after Giyasuddin. Many of the decisions that he took were criticized. Among these, the two main plans were, the transfer of capital from Delhi to Daulatabad and introducing the use of copper currency. During Mohammad Tughlaq's reign, Ibn Batuta, an African traveller from Tangier belonging to the Habsi tribe, visited India. Criticizing the Sultan's administration, he has written that Mohammad Shah's rule was an amalgamation of both good and bad administrative policies.



8.5 Whimsical Ideas of Mohammad

The Hindu kingdom of Vijaynagar



8.6 Vijaynagar

During the Sultanate periods, there were attempts to establish authority over south India. Allauddin Khilji was the first ruler to launch an attack. He carried away enormous wealth from Devgiri. Subsequently, Malik Kafur destroyed the kingdom of Warangal. The condition of South India worsened during the time of Mohammad Tughlaq. Simultaneously, the Hindu empire of Vijaynagar and the Bahamani Sultanate were

also established in South India. After the defeat of the ruler of Warangal, the two brothers of the Jadav clan, Harihara and Bukka, established the Vijaynagar kingdom under the inspiration of Swami Vidyaranya. The Vijaynagar kingdom was established in the south of the Tungabhadra river in 1336 C.E. Within a short period of 8 years, the kingdom was extended from the River Tungabhadra to Kanyakumari. Bukka ascended the throne after the death of Harihara. His descendents being weak, a new dynasty came to power. Krishnadevaraya was a powerful ruler of this dynasty. Krishnadevaraya's rule flourished in South India. He had good relations with the Europeans and was a lover of art and literature. He constructed canals in South India with the help of an engineer called Yomke. Foreign travellers who visited Vijaynagar have appreciated its grandeur. There were grand temples and forts in the kingdom. This glorious state was destroyed in the Battle of Talikota.



8.7 Krishnadevaraya

The Bahamani Sultanate

The Amirs in the Deccan rebelled. Hasan, one of the efficient Amirs became the Sultan and founded the Bahamani Sultanate there. Mahmud Gawan was a capable minister and an efficient administrator of the Bahamani Sultanate. He won many territories and extended the boundaries of the Bahamani kingdom. The power of Bahamani Sultanate weakened after his death. There were frequent conflicts between the Vijaynagar and Bahamani kingdoms. After the downfall of the Bahamani Sultanate many of his provinces became independent. Among these, the 5 provinces of Bijapur, Ahmadnagar, Golkonda, Berar and Bidar became established independent kingdoms.

Think

- *Why is Vijaynagar considered as an Empire?*

End of Delhi Sultanate

Firozshah Tughlaq ascended the throne after Mohammad Tughlaq. However, from that time onwards, the Delhi Sultanate began to weaken. The reign of the Tughlaq Dynasty also witnessed the invasion and plunder of Delhi by Timur. The governor of Lahore Khijrakhan took advantage of the chaos and established the Saiyyad Dynasty in Delhi. The authority of these Sultans was limited to the region around Delhi. In 1451 C.E., an Afghan leader (sardar), Bahlol, established the rule of the Lodi Dynasty in Delhi. His son Sikander Lodi ascended the throne after this. Though Sikander Lodi had the qualities of a good ruler, he lacked religious tolerance. A struggle for the throne began after his death in which Ibrahim Lodi defeated his elder brother and became the ruler of Delhi. The Amirs were not happy because of his arrogant attitude. There was rebellion in the kingdom against his rule. Babur, the Emperor of Kabul, invaded Delhi at this time. He defeated Ibrahim Lodi in the battle of Panipat in 1526 C.E. and founded the Mughal Empire which lasted for approximately 200 years.

EXERCISE

1. Who established the Slave Dynasty?
2. 'Raziya - a powerful female ruler.' Write your views on this topic.
3. Describe the reforms of Alauddin Khilji.
4. Fill in the blanks given below
 1. completed the construction of Qutub Minar.
 2. The Vijaynagar kingdom was situated on the banks of river
 3. was a capable minister of the Bahamani state.
 4. Amir Khusro was a famous poet in the court of
 5. was enthroned after Raziya Sultan.
5. Collect information of Delhi Sultanate and organise a discussion.

Project

- *Collect information about the Medieval Age in India.*