

The Delhi Sultans

Introduction

The **Delhi Sultanate** was one of the most important periods in Indian history. It lasted from **1206 CE to 1526 CE** and was ruled by five different dynasties. During this period, the Sultans expanded their kingdoms, introduced new administrative systems, encouraged trade, and promoted art and architecture.

Establishment of the Delhi Sultanate

Beginning of the Sultanate

The Delhi Sultanate was founded in **1206 CE** by **Qutb-ud-din Aibak**, who established the **Mamluk (Slave) Dynasty** after the death of Muhammad Ghori.

The Sultanate ruled large parts of northern and central India for over 300 years.

The Five Dynasties

Major Ruling Dynasties

The Delhi Sultanate was ruled by the following five dynasties:

- **Mamluk (Slave) Dynasty** (1206–1290)
- **Khalji Dynasty** (1290–1320)
- **Tughlaq Dynasty** (1320–1414)
- **Sayyid Dynasty** (1414–1451)
- **Lodi Dynasty** (1451–1526)

Each dynasty contributed to the growth and administration of the Sultanate.

Administration

System of Government

The Sultan was the supreme ruler and was assisted by ministers and officials.

Important features of administration included:

- Division of the empire into provinces called **Iqtas**.
- Appointment of governors and military officers.
- Efficient tax collection.
- Maintenance of a strong army for security and expansion.

Important Rulers

Major Sultans

Some important rulers of the Delhi Sultanate were:

- **Qutb-ud-din Aibak** – Founder of the Delhi Sultanate.
- **Iltutmish** – Strengthened the Sultanate and introduced the **silver tanka** and **copper jital** coins.
- **Razia Sultan** – The first and only woman ruler of the Delhi Sultanate.
- **Alauddin Khalji** – Expanded the empire and introduced market control reforms.
- **Muhammad bin Tughlaq** – Known for ambitious but unsuccessful experiments.
- **Firoz Shah Tughlaq** – Built canals, gardens, and public buildings.
- **Sikandar Lodi** – Encouraged agriculture and administration.

Economy and Society

Trade and Agriculture

Agriculture was the main occupation of the people.

Other important activities included:

- Trade within India and with foreign countries.
- Growth of towns and markets.
- Development of handicrafts and textiles.
- Collection of land revenue by the government.

Art and Architecture

Architectural Achievements

The Delhi Sultans built many beautiful monuments.

Some famous examples are:

- **Qutub Minar**
- **Alai Darwaza**
- **Tughlaqabad Fort**
- **Lodhi Gardens Tombs**

These monuments show a blend of **Indian and Islamic architectural styles**.

Decline of the Delhi Sultanate

End of the Sultanate

The Delhi Sultanate gradually weakened because of:

- Weak rulers.
- Frequent rebellions.
- Internal conflicts.
- Foreign invasions.

In **1526 CE**, **Ibrahim Lodi** was defeated by **Babur** in the **First Battle of Panipat**, leading to the establishment of the Mughal Empire.

Key Points

- The Delhi Sultanate lasted from **1206 CE to 1526 CE**.
 - It was ruled by **five dynasties**.
 - Qutb-ud-din Aibak founded the Sultanate.
 - Razia Sultan was the first woman ruler.
 - Alauddin Khalji introduced important economic reforms.
 - The Sultanate contributed greatly to administration, trade, and architecture.
 - It ended after Babur defeated Ibrahim Lodi in 1526.
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Chapter Summary

The Delhi Sultanate was a significant period in Indian history that lasted for more than three centuries. It was ruled by five dynasties that strengthened administration, expanded trade, and promoted art and architecture. The period witnessed the rule of famous rulers like Iltutmish, Razia Sultan, Alauddin Khalji, and Muhammad bin Tughlaq. The Sultanate came to an end in **1526 CE** after Babur's victory in the First Battle of Panipat, marking the beginning of the Mughal Empire.