

The Delhi Sultans

Some Important Terms

1. **Dehliwal:** It was kind of coin.
2. **Sultan:** The Sultan was a supreme authority.
3. **Birthright:** Privileges claimed on account of birth.
4. **Gender distinction:** Social and biological differences between women and men.
5. **Hinterland:** The land adjacent to a city or port that supply it with goods and services.
6. **Garrison town:** A fortified settlement with soldiers.
7. **Bandagan:** Special slaves purchased by Delhi Sultans especially Iltutmish for military service.
8. **Client:** Someone who is under protection of another.
9. **Iqta:** The land governed by military commanders. It was granted to them by Sultans in the place of cash salary for their services.
10. **Iqtadar or Muqti:** The holder of Iqta.
11. **Kharaj:** It was a type of tax imposed on cultivation.

Textbook Exercises

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LET'S RECALL

1. **Which rulers first established their capital at Delhi?**
Ans. The Tomara Rajputs were the first rulers who first established their capital at Delhi.
2. **What was the language of administration under the Delhi Sultans?**
Ans. The language of administration under the Delhi Sultans was Persian.
3. **In whose reign did the Sultanate reach its farthest extent?**
Ans. The Sultanate reached its farthest extent in the reigns of Alauddin Khajji and Muhammad Tughluq.
4. **From which country did Ibn Battuta travel to India?**
Ans. Ibn Battuta travelled to India from Morocco, Africa.

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LET'S UNDERSTAND

5. **According to the 'circle justice', why was it important for military commanders to keep the interests of the peasantry in mind?**
Ans. The military commanders got salary from the revenue collected from the peasants. Hence it was important for them to keep the interest of the peasantry in mind because the peasants could pay revenue only when they were prosperous and happy.
6. **What is meant by the 'internal' and 'external' frontiers of the Sultanate?**

Ans. By the 'internal' frontier we mean the hinterlands and the garrison towns. These places were often located in the neighbourhood of the capital city of Delhi. The area of internal frontier extended upto the forests of Ganga- Yamuna doab.

By the 'external' frontier we mean the areas that occurred in South India, far away from Delhi.

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

Ans. The steps taken to ensure that muqtis performed, their duties were following:

(i) Their office was not inheritable.

(ii) They were assigned iqta for a short period of time before being shifted.

(iii) Accountants were appointed by the state to check the amount of revenue collected by the muqtis.

(iv) Care was taken that the muqti collected only the taxes prescribed by the state and that he kept the required number of soldiers.

I think the muqtis may have wanted to defy the orders of the Sultans in order to exercise their control over money and military resources.

8. What was the impact of the Mongol invasions on the Delhi Sultanate?

Ans. Mongol attacks on the Delhi Sultanate increased during the reign of Alauddin Khilji and in the early years of Muhammad Tughluq's rule. Hence, a vast standing army was established under these two rulers to confront Mongol invasions. Alauddin constructed a new garrison town named Siri for his soldiers. He also started paying them salaries in cash rather than iqta. He controlled the prices of goods in Delhi. Muhammad Tughluq also paid his soldiers cash salaries. But instead of controlling prices, he used a 'token' currency, made out of cheap metals. He did so in order to mobilise resources to fight Mongol army. Alauddin also made his administrative system very effective. Hence, he successfully withstood the threat of Mongol invasions. But Muhammad's administrative measures were a failure. He planned to attack the Mongol capital named Transoxiana. But soon he gave up it. His administrative measures created complications. The shifting of people to Daulatabad was resented.

LET'S DISCUSS

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

Ans. No, I don't think the authors of tawarikh would provide information about the lives of ordinary people. Actually, these authors were appointed by the Sultans to write about their political careers.

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

Ans. Yes. Today women leaders are accepted more readily because they possess unique qualities. We can give examples of Sarojini Naidu, Indira Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi. They have proved themselves as successful leaders.

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

Ans. The Delhi Sultans were interested in cutting down forests because they wanted to extend cultivation. Cultivation was the only means by which they could collect more land revenue. But today forests are cut down for the establishment of industrial units and accommodation of the ever-growing population.

LET'S DO

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

Ans. Qutb Minar, Haus Khas, Fort of Firoz Shah Kotla, etc. are some of the buildings that are built by the Sultans of Delhi in my area (Delhi). Students are suggested to collect the photographs of these buildings and describe them in their own language.