

New Terms

- ❑ **Ulemas** : Patrons of Islamic religious laws
- ❑ **Iqta** : State
- ❑ **Jaziya** : Tax imposed on the Hindus
- ❑ **Khushkhati** : Decorative writing

Slave Officers of the Sultanate

The empire of Mohammad Ghori extended from Afghanistan in the west to Varanasi in the east. He himself lived in Ghor and his territories in India were administered by his governors, who were his slaves as he had bought them.

When Mohammad Ghori died in 1206 AD, one of his governors in India, Qutubuddin Aibak, broke off his relations with Ghori Empire and strengthened the empire in India. He declared himself as the sultan. This kingdom was called Delhi Sultanate and its capital was Delhi.

Challenges before the Sultanate

The head of Afghan or Turk tribes were called Emirs. They were always struggling to prove their racial superiority and to gain a higher position in the Sultanate. The Sultan came of these rich Emirs only. To become a sultan, one had to have superior soldierly ability, better administrative ability and a superior family background. Only then could he gain the support of the Turk Emirs. The sultan had to have the trust and support of the Emirs, hence he looked at every Emir with suspicion as he was always afraid of a conspiracy being brewed against him. Most of his time was spent in trying to nip any such conspiracy in the bud. He also had to maintain the balance among the Emirs as well. These were also known as the **Assembly of Forty Slaves**.

Sultans were Muslim foreigners so in order to rule over the Indians, they had to keep the ulemas happy.

They were wary of the masses as there was always a chance of rebellion in the sultanate.

The sultans, in order to maintain internal peace, made proper administrative systems and for expansion of the kingdom and to protect themselves from external attacks, developed strong military organisation.

The period from 1206 AD to 1526 AD in Indian history is known as Sultanate period. During this duration of 320 years, five Turk clans ruled over India. They were the Slave, Khilji, Tughlaq, Saiyyid and Lodi.

Slave Dynasty (1206-1290 AD)

Qutb-ud-din Aibak : After the death of Mohammad Ghori in 1206 AD, his Turk slave, Qutb-ud-din Aibak, became the ruler of Delhi as the first Turk ruler of India. Due to his generosity, he was called **lakhbakhsh** as he was a man who donated a lakh as alms. Most of his time was spent in military activities.

Qutb-ud-din Aibak was interested in buildings and so he built Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque in Delhi and Adhai Din Ka Jhompra at Ajmer. He initiated the construction of Qutub Minar but it was finished by Iltutmish.

Though he laid the foundation of a new kingdom,



Qutb-ud-din Aibak



Qutub Minar



Adhai Din Ka Jhompra

he could not consolidate it.

Ilutmish (1210-1236 AD) : After the death of Qutb-ud-din in 1210 AD, the Emirs chose Ilutmish as the new Sultan. He is called the actual founder of the Turk state in north India. After sitting on the throne, he had to contend with internal and external dissensions. He ruled for 26 years.

Administration : Ilutmish started the system of one capital, one independent state, monarchical administration and bureaucratic system. He made Delhi the political, administrative and cultural centre of the Turkish Empire in India. He laid the foundation of joining the centre to provincial and local administration by iqta system.

For this, he divided the sultanate into provinces called iqtas. One of his faithful commanders was appointed in each iqta, who lived in a large city and was called an iqtadar.

The iqtadar had his own army and officers to run the administration, protect the kingdom and collect revenues. The revenue collected from the iqta was used to look after themselves, their officers and soldiers. Whatever was left over after spending was sent to the Sultan.

Ilutmish regulated the currency system and issued the silver tanka and the copper zeetal. He died in 1236 AD but during his lifetime, he had declared his daughter Razia to be his successor.



Silver Tanka

Razia Sultan (1236-1240 AD) : Though Razia was declared the successor by Ilutmish, due to staunch opposition of the ulemas and the Emirs, Ilutmish's son, Ruknuddin Firoz, ascended the throne. But being a weak ruler, he was replaced by Razia in 1236 AD, and who came to be called as Sultan. She ruled for only three years. Razia stopped dressing as a



Razia Sultan

woman and attended the court without a veil. She also led the army during wars. Emirs quickly came to know that despite being a woman, she could not be manipulated by them. Turk Emirs were not ready to work under a woman. They hatched a conspiracy and removed Razia. After Razia, her two brothers ascended the throne, one after the other, but were incapable. Finally, the younger grandson of Ilutmish, Nasir-ud-din Mahmud became the sultan of Delhi.

Know This

Razia was the only female Muslim ruler of the medieval period.

Nasir-ud-din Mahmud (1246-1265 AD) : The Assembly of Forty Turks had become extremely powerful at this time and replaced Sultans as and whom they liked. In 1246 AD, Nasir-ud-din Mahmud became the Sultan of Delhi.

Mahmud appointed Balban, an Emir, as his commander. Balban slowly strengthened his position and after the death of Mahmud in 1265 AD, ascended to the throne as Sultan.

Balban (1265-1287 AD) : Balban was a capable and experienced ruler who performed many important tasks during his reign. To safeguard Delhi, he cut and cleared away the forests around the city and established military garrisons. This way, he was able to quell the rebellion of the Mewatis. Besides, he crushed other rebels as well.

Balban implemented the law with a strong hand and made the position of the king a respectable one. He believed the king to be a divine representative of

God on earth who drew his power from him. So his works could not be open to public scrutiny and his despotism was safe. That is why, he always sat in a serious pose in his court, never laughing, smiling or joking. There were strict laws for dresses and behaviour in the court and these were strictly implemented. His spies informed him of every news in the state. The best part about Balban was that for him, the first duty of the sultan was fair justice. He also paid attention to the army in maintaining order and peace. To prevent dissatisfaction, the soldiers were paid on time and to keep them active, were made to practice regularly.

To save the state from external attacks and Mongol raiders, many preparations were made. Mongols were raiders from the east who attacked Europe and Asia. They were the hordes who had helped to set up the great empire of Chinggis Khan and by the end of the 13th century, it had taken on a huge form. Their



Mangol Empire



Mongol attack

strength had increased a lot under the leadership of Chingiz Khan.

Balban was well aware of the ferocity of Mongol power. So, to counter them, the old forts on their way were renovated and new ones made. These were staffed with healthy, trusted and faithful soldiers and commanders. Proper supply of weapons and food was also ensured.

After Balban's death, the rule of the slave dynasty could not survive for long, but the efforts of Balban

aided his successor Ala-ud-din Khalji in expanding his empire.

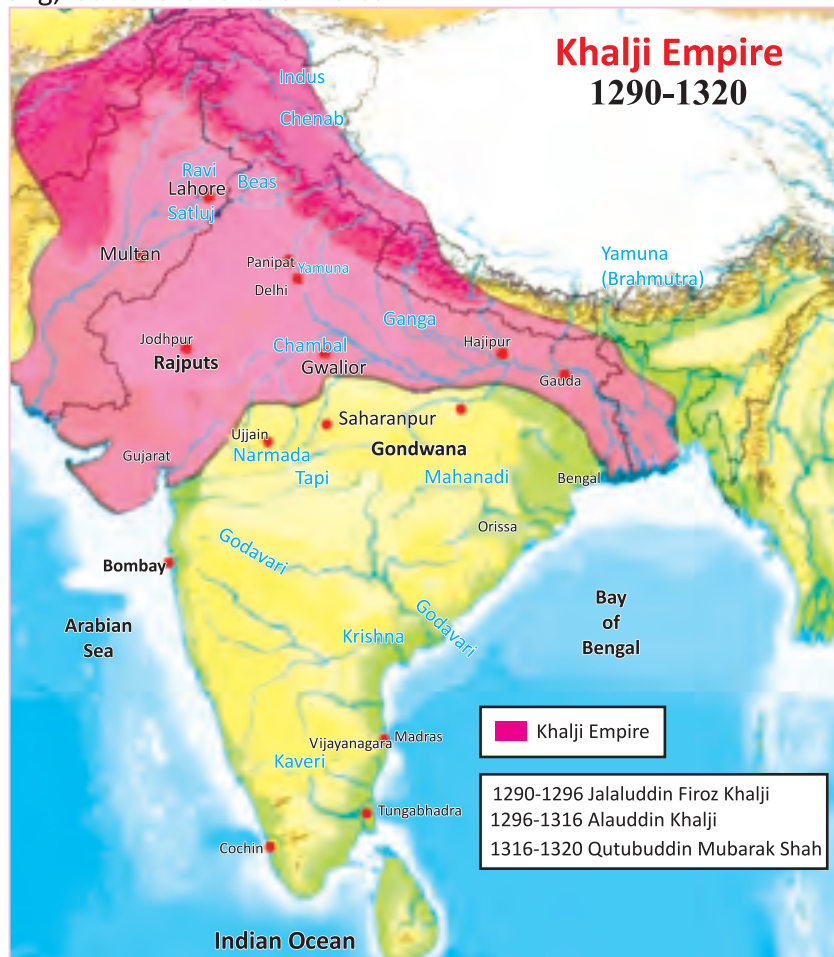
Khalji Dynasty (1290-1320 AD)

Jalal-ud-din Firoze Khalji (1290-1296 AD) : After the death of Balban, chaos reigned in Delhi for some time.

The Turks and Khalji emirs started plotting for power. In these efforts, Jalal-ud-din Firoze Khalji succeeded in becoming the sultan and laid the foundation of the Khalji dynasty. He was the first ruler of Delhi Sultanate who stressed on the need to make laws for tolerance and punishment. But people took his policy to be a sign of weakness and rebellions became the order of the day.

Sultan's nephew, Ala-ud-din, who was Awadh's subedar and the defence minister, went himself to attack Devgiri. Apart from the victory, he got a lot of wealth as well. Sultan went to meet Ala-ud-din at Karha (Allahabad) where he was murdered. After his death, Ala-ud-din dropped his generous policy and became the new sultan in 1296 AD.

Ala-ud-din Khalji (1296-1316 AD) : Ala-ud-din Khalji ascended the throne in 1296 AD. He was a great



warrior, able administrator and expert politician. He did not like the interference of ulemas in administrative matters and did not listen to their advice.

Military Reforms : The credit of Ala-ud-din's victories goes to his well organised army. He organised a huge permanent army. This large and permanent army had 4,75,000 soldiers who were selected on their ability to ride horses and wield arms. Every detail of a soldier's physical appearance was recorded.

The soldiers were paid in cash and the process of marking (dagh) the horses was begun. For protecting the large empire, many new forts were made and old ones renovated. Proper supply of materials to these forts were also assured.

In a wish to expand his empire, Ala-ud-din attacked and conquered Gujarat, Ranthambhore, Chittor, Mandu, Ujjain, Dhar and Chanderi. His commander, Malik Kafur defeated the south Indian kingdoms of Devagiri, Telengana, Hoysalas and Pandyas and compelled them to accept the suzerainty of the sultan. They were allowed to rule their kingdoms on the condition that they pay regular tax.

Control over the Emirs : Ala-ud-din believed that parties and meetings on social occasions increased the intimacy between the emirs which gave them chances to hatch conspiracies against the Sultan. So to control the empire, severe restrictions were placed on them. Their jagirs were taken over by the state. The parties and the social occasions were severely constrained. No emir could organize any social function without the permission of the sultan. Spies also kept an eye on them. All these restrictions made the emirs fearful of the sultan and could not raise their heads against him.

The Attacks of Mongols : Mongols kept up their raids on the north-west frontiers of India and they did so during Ala-ud-din's time too. But the soldiers and the commanders whom he had stationed in the many forts on their way kept the Sultanate safe.

Agricultural Policy : Ala-ud-din was the first ruler who contacted the farmers directly in order to calculate correct rate of land tax. The tax was collected in kind rather than in cash so as to ensure the foodgrain supply to the city.

Market control : Ala-ud-din needed to keep a large army to expand the empire and to save it from external aggression. Hence, to reduce the cost on the army, he adopted the measure of market control. He fixed the rates of things of daily usage, so that soldiers with low salaries could take care of themselves.

To ensure the success of market control, expert and honest workers were appointed whose head was called the superintendent, who controlled the traders with the help of the workers. The traders had to follow the law and if anyone stepped out of the line, he was punished severely. To keep an eye on all this, the spy-system was strengthened. The sultan got day to day report of the market and sometimes, he too came on surprise raids for a better market control. Official godowns were also set up, which were used to supply foodgrains in case of drought or a calamity.

Tughlaq Dynasty (1320-1412 AD)

Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq (1320-1325 AD) : After the Khaljis, the Tughlaqs come to the throne and the founder of the dynasty was Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq. Before becoming the sultan, he was the governor of Dipalpur. He was an experienced warrior, politician and able administrator. He did away with the strict laws of Ala-ud-din and took up many works of public welfare such as construction of gardens, canals and forts. He built the town of Tughlaqabad near Delhi.

Mohammad-bin Tughlaq (1325-1351 AD) : After the death of Ghiyas-ud-din, his son Jauna Khan ascended the throne with the adopted name of Mohammad-bin Tughlaq. He was an intelligent man but of weird nature. Some historians call him a 'mixture of opposite qualities', 'most intelligent fool' and some even, 'mad'. He reduced the political rights of fanatic ulemas and as a result, they became his enemies.

Schemes of Mohammad Tughlaq : Sultan made many schemes for economic reforms, the progress of the empire and better administration but all of these failed due to lack of proper implementation. These schemes were as follows :

1. Tax increase in the doab : To increase the revenue collection of the empire, the Sultan increased the tax in the doab between the Ganga and the Yamuna. The doab was a prosperous region of the empire. Here, the land tax was increased and some more new taxes were imposed. But when the taxes were imposed, a severe drought hit the area and this was not informed to the sultan and the tax collection went on as usual. The people refused to pay the tax and rebelled. As the Sultan came to know of the drought, he arranged for seeds and loans but the time had passed and Sultan's ambitious scheme failed.

2. Transfer of Capital : At that time, the regions like the Doab, Punjab, Lahore and areas from Sindh to the Gujarat coast in the north were included in the empire. Bengal in the east, Malwa, Mahoba, Ujjain and Dhar in the middle and Deccan were part of the empire. Delhi laid on the northern edge and was in constant danger of Mongol attacks, and it was also difficult to keep an eye on the southern parts of the empire. Devagiri was located in the middle of the empire. Besides, the distance of major cities from here was nearly equal. Hence, he decided to shift his capital from Delhi to Devagiri.

Devagiri was renamed as Daulatabad. The people

were given facilities by the state to lessen the pains of shifting from Delhi to Daulatabad. But the travel and the climate did not suit the people and they wished to return back. So, after two years, the Sultan decided to abandon Daulatabad and return back and this scheme too failed.

3. Copper Currency : At the time when Sultan planned to issue copper currency, there was a slump in the production of silver in the world. At that time, silver currency was in circulation. The Sultan ordered to issue copper coins in place of silver coins. Though the actual costs of the two metals was not the same,



they were considered equal in value. Such a currency is also called as symbolic currency value.

As soon as copper coins were issued, people started minting counterfeit copper coins and the market was flooded with them. Foreign traders stopped accepting these coins. Thus, India's silver started going out in large quantities. The Sultan stopped copper coins and people were given silver coins from his treasury in exchange for silver coins.



Copper coin

This situation wouldn't have come about if there would have some official seal on the symbolic currency or there would have been some control on the royal mint. This scheme hit the royal treasury very hard.

Thus, every scheme of Mohammad-bin Tughlaq failed and during the last days of his rule, he was embroiled in internal dissensions. Rebellions began in both the northern and the southern parts of the empire. The sultan could not control the situation and could not suppress the rebellions in the south where two new kingdoms, Vijayanagara and Bahamani, arose. In the north, Bengal became independent. During the last 16 years of his reign, the Sultan kept on running from one end of the empire to the other, trying to quell rebellions. During the time of Sindh rebellion, Sultan became ill and died in 1351 AD.

Firoze Shah Tuglaq (1351-1388 AD) : After Mohammad-bin Tuglaq's death, his cousin Firoz Shah Tughlaq became the new sultan. The first problem which he faced was how to quell the rebellions which had dogged his predecessor during his last years. For this, he tried to cajole and satisfy the emirs, army and the ulemas and tried to run the administration as per Islamic laws. He did not undertake any military expedition to expand the empire but only to safeguarded it. He tried to keep only those provinces which could be directly controlled by the centre. His

period was one of peace and progress.

Works of Public welfare : He made many canals for irrigation which led to the progress in irrigation. One such canal is Yamuna Canal which survives even today. Income from fallow land was used for educational and religious works. He also built new cities such as Jaunpur, Firozpur and Firozabad. He made resthouses, ponds, hospitals, bridges and gardens for the public and renovated the old ones. He established the department of Diwan-i-Khairat, which provided financial assistance to widows, orphans and marriages of poor girls. An employment bureau was set up to provide employment to masses and dispensaries to distribute free medicines were set up.

He also stopped the tortures ordered by earlier sultans. He is remembered for his public welfare works.

After Firoz Shah's death, Khizr Khan, who was appointed the governor of Punjab by Taimur, captured Delhi and established the Saiyid dynasty in 1414 AD.

Saiyid Dynasty (1414-1451 AD)

Khizr Khan founded the Saiyid dynasty in 1414 AD. The rule of this dynasty lasted for only 38 years over Delhi and its nearby areas. After ascending the throne, Khizr Khan crushed the rebellions, tried to increase his power and influence and reorganized many departments. His son, Mubarak Shah, too faced many rebellions but he was not a capable ruler. He did not trust anyone and this became the cause of his death. After his death in 1444 AD, Alam Shah became the new Sultan who abdicated in favour of Bahlol Lodi, the governor of Lahore and Diyalpur.

Lodi Dynasty (1451-1526 AD)

Bahlol Lodi founded Lodi dynasty, which was the last dynasty to rule Delhi Sultanate. It ruled for 75 years. Bahlol Lodi (1451-1489 AD) tried to regain the lost glory of the Sultanate and to develop friendly relations with the emirs. He did not get time for domestic affairs as most of his time was spent in fighting wars. After his death, his son Sikandar Lodi (1489-1517 AD) sat on the throne and immediately crushed the rebellions. He founded Agra city in 1504 AD and shifted the capital here from Delhi. But he was a religious fanatic who destroyed many temples and made mosques in their place.

After his death in 1517 AD, his son Ibrahim Lodi sat on the throne. Rana Sanga of Mewar defeated Ibrahim Lodi. In the First Battle of Panipat in 1526 AD, Ibrahim

Lodi was killed by Babar and along with his death, ended the Delhi Sultanate.

Causes for the Decline of Delhi Sultanate

The Turks ruled north India for over 300 years. The causes for the decline of their empire are as follows:

1. The Delhi sultans won India due to the power of the sword but they did not try to win trust of the masses.
2. Most sultans were intolerant towards the Hindus, who were treated badly and compelled to become Muslims. Their temples were destroyed and they were compelled to pay jaziya.
3. The biggest barrier in the successful administration of the large empire were lack of modes of transport and communication.
4. Most sultans were weak, debauch and incapable. Their emirs were also not faithful to them.
5. Feudal system strengthened the emirs at the cost of the central authority.
6. Lack of proper succession laws led to conspiracies, wars and clashes for the throne.
7. The Mongol attacks too weakened the empire. Taimur's attack destabilised it and Babar's attack finished it.

Administrative, Social and Cultural Condition of the Sultanate

Ibn Batuta, Zia-ud-din Baruni and Alberuni provide us full detail about the history of the Sultanate.

Administration : Delhi Sultanate was a religious state. Its head was called sultan who was the supreme officer of the justice and the supreme commander of the army but ulemas were more powerful than him and he could not ignore them. The emirs too had an undue influence over the sultan and sometimes, became more powerful than sultan himself. Most of the time, the emirs were foreign Turks or non-Turks.

There were many ministers to assist the Sultan such as Wazir (prime minister), Ariz-i-Mumaliq (war minister), Diwan-i-Risalat (religious matters), Diwan-i-Insha (royal correspondence), Sadr-us-Sadr and Diwan-i-Kazi (law minister), Barid-i-Mumalik (information minister), Wali and Mufti (head of provinces), etc.

Land Revenue : The main source of revenue was the land. The land was divided into iqta, khalisa, the

Hindu jagirs and the land to be given to scholars and Muslim sufi-saints. Iqta (province) was divided into shiqs which were further divided into parganas. A pargana comprised of many villages. The head of village was called Muqaddam and the head of the Pargana was called Amil.

Economy : The main occupation of the people was agriculture. Crafts, arts and industries were also in vogue. The government opened workshops. Both domestic and foreign trade was carried on and the main centre of trade was Delhi.

Society : Majority of the public was Hindu while the rulers were Muslims who were divided into Shias and Sunnis. Hindus were not given any official post and they had to pay jaziya also. Hindu society was divided into castes and sub-castes. With the contacts with Muslims, the status of women registered a steep drop and the causes were purdah (veil) system, child marriage and polygamy. There was a moral degradation among Muslims. Many emirs and sultans too were of low moral standards.

Religion : There were two main sects of Hindus: Shaivas and Vaishnavas. Muslims treated Hindus as kafirs. There was enmity between the Shias and the Sunnis also. The beginning of Bhakti movement was a pleasant change.

Language and literature: The official work was done in the Persian language. The language of educated Hindus was Sanskrit but many regional languages were also in use. Many Sanskrit works were translated into regional languages. At that time, Urdu was developing which was a mixture of Hindi and Persian. Later, it became the language of the masses.

The Turk-Afghan rulers were patrons of Islamic knowledge. Many Sanskrit works were translated into Arabic and Persian but Islamic books were not translated into Hindi or Sanskrit. Alberuni was a Sanskrit scholar while Amir Khusro wrote in Hindi.

Know This

Zia-ud-din Barani (1285-1357 AD) was the first Muslim writer of Indian history. He spent 17 years as Nadeem (co-habitant) of Mohammad-bin Tughlaq. He wrote Tarikh-i-Firozshahi, which is based on his personal experiences and heresies. His another work, Fatwa-i-Jahangiri is influenced by Sufi mysticism and it presents the religious philosophy of history. According to Barani, right from Balban to Firoz Shah, who followed his directions succeeded while who did not, failed.

Art and Architecture : Turks were experts in art and architecture. A new style of architecture developed with designs made by Indian craftsmen which is called Indo-Islamic architecture. Most of the buildings built in Delhi were made in this style only. Qutub Minar is one such grand building. Ala-ud-din Khalji made its entrance door and made his capital, Siri, close to it.

Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq built Tughlaqabad while Firozeshah Tuglaq built Firozeshah Kotla. The tomb of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq is octagonal in shape. The tombs of Lodi sultans are placed in gardens.

Correct dimensions were not followed in making building of this period. Mehrab and domes were their specialities. The buildings were adorned with khushkhati which are carvings of Quranic verses on the walls.



Barha Gumbad, Lodi Garden



Qutub Minar



Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq's Mausoleum

To Recapitulate

- The period from 1206 to 1526 AD in Indian history is known as Delhi Sultanate period.
- Five dynasties—Slaves, Khaljis, Tughlaqs, Sayyids and Lodis ruled Delhi during this period.
- Iltutmish is the actual founder of Muslim rule in India.
- Iltutmish's daughter Raziya, was the only woman Muslim ruler of the medieval period.
- Jalal-ud-din Khalji founded the Khalji dynasty.
- Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq founded the Tughlaq dynasty.
- Khizr Khan founded the Sayyid dynasty.
- Bahlol Lodi was the founder of Lodi dynasty.
- In the sultanate period, Hindus were divided into Shaivas and Vaishnavas while the Muslims were divided into Shias and Sunnis.
- During the Saltanate period, the buildings were constructed in Indo-Islamic Style.



Exercise

A. Tick the correct option:

1. Which dynasty ruled India the longest?

(a) Slave

(b) Khalji

(c) Tughlaq

(d) Sayyid

2. Slave dynasty was founded by:

(a) Iltutmish <input type="checkbox"/>	(b) Raziya <input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Balban <input type="checkbox"/>	(d) Qutb-ud-din Aibak <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Khalji dynasty was founded by:

(a) Bakhtiyar Khalji <input type="checkbox"/>	(b) Ala-ud-din Khalji <input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Jalal-ud-din Khalji <input type="checkbox"/>	(d) None of these <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Ibrahim Lodi was defeated by:

(a) Changez Khan <input type="checkbox"/>	(b) Taimur <input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Babar <input type="checkbox"/>	(d) None of these <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Ala-ud-din implemented market control for:

(a) expansion of empire <input type="checkbox"/>	(b) protection of empire <input type="checkbox"/>
(c) welfare of masses <input type="checkbox"/>	(d) welfare of army <input type="checkbox"/>

B. Fill in the blanks :

1. The last ruler of Lodi dynasty was _____.
2. _____ established the Sayyid dynasty.
3. The first ruler of Tughlaq dynasty was _____.
4. The copper coins of Mohammad Tughlaq were called _____.
5. Actual name of Mohammad-bin Tughlaq was _____.

C. Write whether true or false :

1. Qutb-ud-din Aibak was called Lakshbakhsh. _____
2. Iltutmish implemented market control. _____
3. Razia was the successor of Ala-ud-din. _____
4. Ibrahim Lodi was killed by Babar. _____
5. Amir Khusro wrote in Persian language. _____

D. Short Answer Questions :

1. Which dynasties ruled during Sultanate Period?
2. Who founded Khalji dynasty?
3. Which cities were founded by Firoz Shah Tughlaq?
4. Why were the slave rulers called so?
5. How did Ala-ud-din control the market?

E. Long Answer Questions :

1. Detailing the schemes of Mohammad-bin Tughlaq, explain why they failed.
2. What were the causes of the downfall of the Delhi Sultanate?
3. Mention the efforts made by Ala-ud-din Khalji to improve the administration.
4. Detail the administrative, social and cultural conditions during Sultanate Period.
5. Comment on the following :

(a) Razia Sultan	(b) Balban	(c) Jalal-ud-di Firoz Khalji	(d) Khizr Khan
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Project & Activity

1. Collect pictures of buildings made during Sultanate Period and paste them in your scrapbook.
2. On an outline map of India, show the empire of Ala-ud-din Khalji .