

Delhi Sultanate

The Delhi Sultanate was an Islamic empire based in Delhi that stretched over large parts of the Indian subcontinent for 320 years (1206–1526). Five dynasties ruled over the Delhi Sultanate sequentially: the Mamluk dynasty (1206–1290), the Khalji dynasty (1290–1320), the Tughlaq dynasty (1320–1414), the Sayyid dynasty (1414–1451), and the Lodi dynasty (1451–1526). It covered large swathes of territory in modern-day India, Pakistan, Bangladesh as well as some parts of southern Nepal

In this article, find detailed NCERT notes on the Delhi Sultanate. The Delhi Sultanate comprises multiple dynasties that ruled over northern India in the medieval period. It is an important topic for Civil Services Exam preparation.

Delhi Sultanate

The period from 1206 A.D. to 1526 A.D. came to be known as the Delhi Sultanate period. This period witnessed many dynasties and various rulers.

Some of the major dynasties and rulers this period witnessed are listed below.

Sl. No. Dynasty Name

- 1 Slave (Ghulam) or Mamluk Dynasty
- 2 [Khilji Dynasty](#)
- 3 [Tughluq dynasty](#)
- 4 Sayyid Dynasty
- 5 [Lodi dynasty](#)

Slave (Ghulam) or Mamluk Dynasty

Ruler	Period	Events
Qutb-ud-din Aibak	(1206–1210)	Founder of Mamluk Dynast and Slave of Muhammad Ghori
Aram Shah	(1210–1211)	Eldest son of Qutb-ud-din Aibak
Shams-ud-din Iltutmish	(1211–1236)	Son-in-law of Qutb-ud-din Aibak
Ruknuddin Feruz Shah	(1236)	Son of Iltutmish
Razia Sultana	(1236–1240)	Daughter of Iltutmish and Grand Daughter of Qutb-ud-din Aibak.
Muizuddin Bahram	(1240–	Son of Iltutmish

	1242)	
Alauddin Masud	(1242–1246)	Son of Ruknuddin Feruz Shah
Nasiruddin Mahmud	(1246–1266)	Razia's Brother who had died in 1229
Ghiyas-ud-din Balban	(1266–1286)	Father-in-law of Nashiruddin Mahmud and the most powerful ruler of the Slave Dynasty
Muiz ud din Kaiqubad	(1287–1290)	Grandson of Ghiyasuddin Balban
Kaimur	1290	Son of Muiz-ud-din Kaiqubad

The Slave dynasty ruled from c. 1206 - 1290 CE. It was also named the 'Mamluk' dynasty; the word Mamluk is an Arabic word that means "slave/owned". In fact, three dynasties were established during this period. They were -

1. Qutbi dynasty (c. 1206 - 1211 CE) - Its founder was Qutub-ud-din Aibak.
2. First Ilbari dynasty (c. 1211- 1266 CE) - Its founder was Iltumish.
3. Second Ilbari dynasty (c. 1266 - 1290 CE) - Its founder was Balban.

Qutub-ud-din Aibak (c. 1206 - 1210 CE)

- Qutub-ud-din Aibak founded the Slave dynasty. He was a Turkish slave of Muhammad Ghori who played an important part in the expansion of the Turkish Sultanate in India after the [Battle of Tarain](#). Muhammad Ghori made him the governor of his Indian possessions. He raised a standing army and established his hold over north India even during the lifetime of Ghori.
- After the death of Muhammad Ghori (c. 1206 CE), Tajuddin Yalduz, the ruler of Ghazni claimed his rule over Delhi and the governor of Multan and Uchch, Nasiruddin Qabacha wanted independence. He also had to face many revolts from Rajputs and other Indian rulers. However, Aibak, by displaying his mighty power as well as other conciliatory measures, was able to win over his enemies. He defeated Yalduz and severed all connections with Ghazni and thus founded the Slave dynasty as well as the Delhi Sultanate.
- Muslim writers called Aibak "Lakh Baksh" or giver of lakhs because he donated liberally.
- He was titled "Sultan" and he made Lahore his capital.
- He also started the construction of the Qutub Minar (first storey only) after the name of the famous Sufi saint Khwaja Qutubuddin Bakhtiyar. It was later completed by Iltumish.
- Aibak died suddenly while playing Chaugan (horse polo) in c. 1210 CE.

Aram Shah (c. 1210 CE)

- Qutub-ud-din was succeeded by his son Aram Shah who was incapable as a ruler. He was opposed by the Turkish armies and his rule lasted for only eight months.

Iltutmish (c. 1210 - 1236 CE)

- Iltutmish belonged to the Ilbari tribe and therefore, his dynasty was named the Ilbari dynasty. His half brothers sold him as a slave to Aibak who made him his son-in-law by giving his daughter to him. Later Aibak appointed him as Iqtadar of Gwalior. In c.1211 CE, Iltutmish dethroned Aram Shah and became the Sultan with the name of Shamsuddin. He is regarded as the real consolidator of Turkish rule in India.
- During the first ten years of his reign, he mostly concentrated on securing his throne from his rivals. The commanders of Muhammad Ghori like Yalduz, Qabacha of Multan and Ali Mardan of Bengal and Bihar rose against him. Iltutmish defeated Yalduz in the battle of Tarain (c. 1215 CE) and also drove away Qabacha from Punjab.
- In c. 1220 CE, the leader of the Mongols, Temujin, popularly known as Chengiz Khan, started his march towards Central Asia. He defeated Jalal-ud-din Mangabarni, the ruler of Khwarizm. Mangabarni escaped from the Mongols and sought asylum from Iltutmish. Iltutmish refused to provide him shelter in order to save his empire from the onslaught of the Mongols. This diplomatic policy of Iltutmish helped him to save his empire from the wrath of Chengiz Khan.
- Iltutmish brought Bengal and Bihar back into the Delhi Sultanate. He also suppressed the Rajput revolts and recovered Ranthambore in c. 1226 CE and by c. 1231 CE, Iltutmish established his control over Bayana, Mandor, Jalore and Gwalior. He led an expedition against the Chalukyas of Gujarat but that remained unsuccessful.
- Iltutmish was a great statesman. In c. 1229 CE, he received 'mansur', the letter of recognition from the Abbasid Caliph by which he became the legal sovereign ruler of India.
- He completed the construction of Qutub Minar at Delhi, the tallest stone tower in India (238 ft).
- He also introduced the Arabic coinage in India and the silver tanka weighing 175 grams became a standard coin in medieval India. The silver tanka remained the basis of the modern rupee.
- Iltutmish organised Turkan-i-Chahalgani, a new class of the ruling elite of forty powerful military leaders, the Forty.
- He patronised many scholars and a number of Sufi saints came to India during his reign. Minhaj-us-Siraj (author of Tahaqqat-i-Nasuri), Taj-ud-din, Muhammad Junaidi, Fakhru'l-Mulk-Isami, Malik Qutub-ud-din Hasan were his contemporary scholars who added grandeur to his court.
- He nominated his daughter as his successor.

Ruknuddin Feruz Shah (c. 1236 CE)

- He was the eldest son of Iltutmish who ascended the throne with the help of nobles. When the governor of Multan revolted, Ruknuddin Feroz Shah marched to suppress the revolt. Using this opportunity, Iltutmish's daughter Raziya with the help of the Amirs of Delhi seized the throne of the Delhi Sultanate.

Raziya Sultan (c. 1236 - 1239 CE)

- Raziya Sultan was the first and only female ruler of medieval India's Sultanate period.

- Raziya appointed an Abyssinian slave, Malik Jamal-ud-din Yaqut as master of the Royal horses (Amir-i-akhur). The recruitment of a few other non-Turks to important positions aroused resentment among the Turkish nobles. Raziya Sultan discarded the female apparel and held the court with her face uncovered which further created resentment. She even went hunting and led the army.
- In c. 1240 CE, Altunia, the governor of Bhatinda (Sirhind) revolted against her. Raziya alongside Yaqut marched against Altunia, but on the way, Turkish followers of Altunia murdered Yaqut and took Raziya prisoner. In the meantime, the Turkish nobles put Bahram, another son of Iltutmish on the throne. However, Raziya won over her captor, Altunia and after marrying him, proceeded to Delhi. But she was defeated and killed on the way by Bahram Shah.

Bahram Shah (c. 1240 - 1242 CE)

- The fall of Raziya Sultan paved the way for the ascendancy of 'the Forty'. During the reign of Bahram Shah, there continued the struggle for supremacy between Sultan and the nobles. The Turkish nobles supported Bahram Shah in the beginning but later became disordered and during this unrest, Bahram Shah was killed by his own army.

Alauddin Masud Shah (c. 1242 - 1246 CE)

- He was the son of Ruknuddin Feroz Shah and nephew of Raziya Sultan. After the death of Bahram Shah, he was chosen as the next ruler. However, he was incompetent and incapable of handling the affairs in the government and was replaced by Nasiruddin Mahmud.

Nasiruddin Mahmud (c. 1246 - 1265 CE)

- He was the grandson of Iltutmish who was young and inexperienced. He had ascended the throne with the help of Balban/Ulugh Khan, a member of Chahalgani (the Forty) who himself assumed the position of regent. He married his daughter to Nasiruddin and therefore, the real power lay in the hands of Balban. Balban was powerful in the administration but he had to face the intrigues of his rivals in the royal court. He overcame all the difficulties. In c. 1265 CE, Nasiruddin Mahmud died and according to some historians like Ibn Batuta and Isami, Balban poisoned him and ascended the throne.

Balban (c. 1266 - 1286 CE)

- Balban's experience as a regent made him understand the problems of the Delhi Sultanate. He knew that the real threat to the monarchy was from the nobles called "The Forty". He, therefore, was sure that by enhancing the power and authority of the monarchy, he could solve the problem.
- According to Balban, the Sultan was God's shadow on earth, Zil-e-Ilahi and the recipient of divine grace, Nibyat-e- Khudai.
- Balban enhanced the power of the monarchy. He introduced rigorous court discipline and new customs like prostration (sajida) and kissing the Sultan's feet (paibos) to prove his superiority

over the nobles. He introduced the Persian festival of Nauroz to impress the nobles and people with his wealth and power.

- He stood forth as the champion of Turkish nobility. He excluded non-Turks from administration and Indian Muslims were not given important positions in the government. To monitor the activities of the nobles he appointed spies and developed an efficient spy system.
- Balban was determined to break the power of 'The Forty'. He spared only the loyal nobles and eliminated all others by fair or foul means. Malik Baqbaq, the governor of Bedaun, was publicly flogged for his cruelty towards his servants. Haybat Khan, the governor of Oudh was punished for killing a man who was drunk. The governor of Bhatinda, Sher Khan was poisoned.
- Balban had to deal with internal as well as external problems. The Mongols were looking for an opportunity to attack the Sultanate, the Indian rulers were ready to revolt at the smallest opportunity, distant provincial governors wanted to gain independence and the outskirts of Delhi were often plundered by the Mewatis. To handle all these problems, he adopted a stern policy and organised a strong central army to deal with internal issues and also to repel the Mongols.
- He established a separate military department, Diwan-e-arz and reorganised the army. He deployed the army in different parts of his country to suppress the rebellious elements. Balban paid more attention to restore law and order instead of expanding his kingdom. Balban took stern action against the Mewatis and prevented such robberies. Robbers were mercilessly pursued and sentenced to death, as a result of which the roads became safe for travel.
- In c. 1279 CE, Tughril Khan, the governor of Bengal revolted against Balban. Balban sent his forces to Bengal and Tughril Khan was beheaded. Balban appointed his son Bughra Khan as the governor of Bengal.
- In the northwest, the Mongols reappeared and Balban sent his son Prince Mahmud against them. But the prince was killed in the battle and it was a moral blow to Balban. Balban died in c. 1287 CE. He was one of the main architects of the Delhi Sultanate. However, he could not fully safeguard India from the Mongol invasion.

Kaiqubad (c. 1287 - 1290 CE)

- Kaiqubad was the grandson of Balban and was made the Sultan of Delhi by the nobles. He was soon replaced by his son, Kaimur. In c. 1290 CE, Feroz, the Ariz-e-Mumalik (the minister of war) murdered Kaimur and captured the throne. He took the title of Jalal-ud-din Khalji and established the Khalji dynasty.

Khilji Dynasty (c. 1290 - 1320 CE)

Rulers	Period	Events
Jalal-ud-din Firoz Khilji	1290–1296	Founder of the Khilji/Khalji Dynasty and son of Qaim Khan
Alauddin Khilji	1296–1316	Jalal-ud-din Firoz Khilji's nephew and the most powerful ruler of the Khilji period
Qutb-ud-din Mubarak	1316–	Son of Alauddin Khilji

Jalal-ud-din Khalji (c. 1290 - 1296 CE)

- Jalal-ud-din Khalji was the founder of the Khalji dynasty. He was 70 years old when he assumed power. He had been the warden of the marches in the northwest and had fought many successful battles against the Mongols during Balban's reign. The Khaljis were of mixed Turkish-Afghan descent, they did not exclude the Turks from high offices but the rise of the Khaljis to power ended the Turkish monopoly of high offices.
- He tried to mitigate some of the harsh aspects of Balban's rule. He was the first ruler of the Delhi Sultanate who clearly put forth his view that the state should be based on the willing support of the governed and that since the large majority of the population in India were Hindus, the state in India could not be an Islamic state.
- He adopted the policy of tolerance and avoided harsh punishments. For instance, Malik Chhajju, nephew of Balban was allowed to remain the governor of Kara. When Chhajju revolted, it was suppressed but he was pardoned. When the thugs (robbers) looted the country, they were allowed to go after a severe warning. In c. 1292 CE, when Malik Chhajju revolted again, he was replaced by his nephew and son-in-law, Alauddin Khalji.
- During the reign of Jalal-ud-din Khalji, Alauddin invaded Devagiri and accumulated enormous wealth. During the reception in c. 1296 CE, he treacherously murdered his father-in-law near Kara and usurped the throne of Delhi. He made generous gifts to the nobles and soldiers to win over them.

Alauddin Khalji (c. 1296 - 1316 CE)

- Alauddin Khalji was the nephew and son-in-law of Jalal-ud-din Khalji. He was appointed as the Amir-i-Tuzuk (Master of ceremonies) and also Arizi-i-Mumalik (minister of war) during the reign of Jalaluddin Khalji.
- He followed Balban's policy of governance that was quite contrary to Jalaluddin's policy of tolerance. He was convinced that the general prosperity of the nobles, intermarriage between noble families, inefficient spy system and drinking liquor were the basic reasons for rebellions. Therefore, he passed four laws:
 - The public sale of liquor and drugs was totally banned.
 - The intelligence system was reorganised and all the secret activities of the nobles were immediately reported to the Sultan.
 - He confiscated the property of the nobles.
 - Social gatherings and festivities without the permission of the Sultan were not allowed.By such stringent rules, his reign was free from rebellions.

Military Campaigns of Alauddin Khalji

- Alauddin maintained a huge permanent standing army. He sent his army six times against the Mongols. The first two were successful but the third Mongol invader, Khwaja came up to Delhi

but was stopped from entering the capital city. The next three Mongol invasions were also dealt with severely and thousands of Mongols were killed. The northwestern frontier was fortified and Ghazi Malik (Ghayasuddin Tughlaq) was appointed as the Warden of Marches to protect the frontier.

- **Conquest of Gujarat** - Alauddin Khalji sent an army under two of his generals, Nusrat Khan and Ulugh Khan to capture Gujarat in c. 1299 CE. The ruler Rai Karan and his daughter escaped while the queen was caught and sent to Delhi. Malik Kafur, a eunuch was also taken to Delhi and later he was made the military commander.
- **Conquest of Rajputana** - After capturing Gujarat, Alauddin's attention turned towards Rajputana.
 - Ranthambore - It was considered to be the strongest fort of Rajasthan. Initially, the Khalji army suffered losses and Nusrat Khan even lost his life. In c.1301 CE, the fort fell to Alauddin. The Rajput women committed Jauhar or self-immolation.
 - Chittor - Alauddin next turned against Chittor. It was another powerful state of Rajputana. In c. 1303 CE, Alauddin stormed the Chittor fort. According to some scholars, Alauddin attacked Chittor because he coveted Padmini, the beautiful queen of Raja Ratan Singh. Raja Ratan Singh and his army fought bravely but were defeated. The Rajput women including Rani Padmini performed Jauhar. This Padmini episode was graphically mentioned in the book Padmavat written by Jayasi.
 - Malwa and others - In c. 1305 CE, under the able leadership of Ain-ul-Mulk, the Khalji army captured Malwa. Ujjain, Mandu, Chanderi and Dhar were also annexed. After this, Alauddin Khalji sent Malik Kafur to the south and himself attacked Siwana. Raja Shital Deva, the ruler of Siwana fought valiantly but was defeated. In c. 1311 CE, Jalore - another Rajput kingdom was annexed. Thus, by c.1311 CE, Alauddin Khalji became the master of north India and captured large parts of Rajputana.
- **Conquest of Deccan and the far South** - Alauddin's greatest achievement was the conquest of Deccan and the far south. This region was ruled by four important dynasties - Yadavas of Devagiri, Kakatiyas of Warangal, Hoysalas of Dwarasamudra and the Pandyas of Madurai. Alauddin sent Malik Kafur to lead the Khalji dynasty invasions to south India. In c. 1306 - 1307 CE, Malik Kafur attacked Devagiri. The ruler of Devagiri, Rai Ramachandra surrendered and was treated honourably. He was given a district of Gujarat and one of his daughters was married to Alauddin. In c. 1309 CE, Malik Kafur launched his campaign against Warangal. Its ruler Prataparudra Deva was defeated and an enormous booty was collected from him. Malik Kafur's next target was the Hoysala ruler Vira Ballala III. He was defeated and a huge booty was seized and sent to Delhi. Kafur then marched against the Pandyas. Vira Pandya fled the capital Madurai and Kafur seized enormous wealth from the Pandya kingdom. According to Amir Khusrau, Malik Kafur reached as far as Rameshwaram, built a mosque there and returned to Delhi with huge wealth. Alauddin honoured Malik Kafur by appointing him Naib Malik of the empire.
- Alauddin Khalji died in c. 1316 CE. Although the Sultan was illiterate, he patronized poets like Amir Hasan and Amir Khusrau. He built a famous gateway known as Alai Darwaza and constructed a new capital at Siri. Alauddin assumed the title of Sikander-i-Azam and gave the title of Tuti-i-Hind to Amir Khusrau.

Administration of Alauddin Khalji

- **Military Reforms** - Alauddin Khalji maintained a large permanent standing army and paid them in cash from the royal treasury. According to historian Ferishta, he recruited 4,75,000 cavalymen. He introduced the system of dagh (branding of horses) and prepared huliya (descriptive list of soldiers). In order to have maximum efficiency, a strict review of the army from time to time was carried out.
- **Market Reforms** - Alauddin established four separate markets in Delhi, one for grain (mandi); another for cloth, sugar, dried fruits, oil and butter; third for horses, cattle and slaves and the fourth market for miscellaneous commodities. Each market was under the control of a high officer called Shahna-i-Mandi. The supply of grain was ensured by holding stocks in government storehouses. There were regulations in place to fix the price of all commodities. A separate department called Diwan-i-Riyasat was created under an officer called Naib-i-Riyasat. Every merchant was registered under the market department. There were secret agents called munhiyans who sent reports to the Sultan regarding the functioning of these markets. The Sultan also sent slave boys to buy various commodities to check prices. Any violation of the Sultan's orders resulted in severe punishment. No hoarding was permissible and even during famines, the same price was maintained.
- **Land Revenue Administration** - Alauddin took important steps in the land revenue administration. He was the first sultan of Delhi who ordered measurement of land. Land revenue was collected in cash which enabled the Sultan to pay the soldiers in cash. His land revenue reforms provided a basis for the future reforms of Sher Shah and Akbar. The state officer measured the land and fixed land revenue accordingly.

Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah (c. 1316 - 1320 CE)

- After the death of Alauddin Khalji, Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah (one of the sons of Alauddin) ascended the throne. He abolished all the harsh regulations of his father. He was not able to run the administration efficiently and was murdered.

Nasiruddin Khusrau Shah (c. 1320 CE)

- He killed Mubarak Shah. His reign did not last long. The governor of Dipalpur, Ghazi Malik killed Khusrau Shah and ascended the throne of Delhi under the title of Ghiyasuddin Tughluq in c. 1320 CE.
- He was the only Hindu convert to sit on the throne of Delhi.

Tughluq Dynasty (c. 1320 - 1414 CE)

Rulers	Period	Events
Ghiyath al-Din (Ghiyasuddin) Tughluq	1320–1325	
Muhammad bin Tughluq	1325–1351	Also called Muhammad Shah II

Mahmud Ibn Muhammad	1351 (March)	
Firoz Shah Tughlaq	1351–1388	Cousin of Muhammad bin Tughlaq
Ghiyas-ud-Din Tughluq II	1388–1389	
Abu Bakr Shah	1389–1390	
Nasir ud din Muhammad Shah III	1390–1393	
Ala ud-din Sikandar Shah I	1393	
Mahmud Nasir ud din	1393–1394	Also called as Sultan Mahmud II
Nasir-ud-din Nusrat Shah Tughluq	1394–1399	Grandson of Firuz Shah Tughlaq
Nasir ud din Mahmud	1399–1412	Son of Mahmud Nasir-ud- din

This dynasty is also called Qaraunah Turks, as the father of Ghazi Malik was a Qaraunah Turk in origin.

Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq/Ghazi Malik (c. 1320 - 1325 CE)

- Founder of the Tughlaq dynasty.
- Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq laid the foundation for Tughlaqabad (a strong fort) near Delhi.
- Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq sent his son Jauna Khan/Muhammad bin Tughlaq against Warangal (Kakatiyas) and Madurai (Pandyas).
- His relationship with the Sufi saint Sheikh Nizam ud din Aulia was not cordial.
- It is believed that Jauna Khan treacherously killed his father and ascended the throne with the title Muhammad bin Tughlaq in c. 1325 CE.

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq/Jauna Khan (c. 1325 - 1351 CE)

- He was a very attractive character in the history of medieval times because of his ambitious schemes and novel experiments. However, his novel experiments and enterprises failed miserably as they were far ahead of their time.
- He introduced many reforms:
 - **Transfer of Capital** - Muhammad bin Tughlaq wanted to shift his capital from Delhi to Devagiri so that he might be able to control south India better. He forcibly moved the entire population to the new capital, Devagiri which was renamed as Daulatabad. After two years, the Sultan abandoned Daulatabad and shifted back to Delhi due to the scarcity of water supply in Daulatabad. The distance between the two places was more than 1500 kilometres and many people died during the rigorous journey in summer.
 - **Token Currency** - In c. 1329 CE, Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq introduced a token currency, made of copper to replace gold and silver coins. It was modelled based on the Chinese example (Kublai Khan issued paper money in China). Very few people exchanged gold/silver for copper and the tokens were easy to forge which led to heavy losses. Later on, Muhammad bin Tughlaq repealed his verdict and all coins were redeemed in gold/silver, making the treasury empty.

- **Taxation in Doab** - The failure of the above two experiments resulted in a huge loss of money. In order to improve the financial condition, Muhammad bin Tughlaq increased the land revenue on the farmers of the doab land between the Ganga and Yamuna rivers. It was an excessive and arbitrary step on the farmers. A severe famine struck the region at that time which made the farmers revolt. However, the harsh steps taken by Muhammad bin Tughlaq crushed the revolt.
- **Agricultural Reforms** - He launched a scheme by which takkavi loans (loans for cultivation) were given to the farmers to buy seeds and to extend cultivation. He set up a separate department for agriculture, Diwan-i-amir-Kohi. A model farm under the state was created in an area of 64 square miles for which the government spent around seventy lakh tankas. This experiment was further continued by Firoz Tughlaq.
- Muhammad bin Tughlaq was the only Delhi Sultan who had received a comprehensive literary, religious and philosophical education.
- He was very tolerant in religious matters. He maintained diplomatic relations with far off countries like Iran, Egypt and China. The famous traveller Ibn Batuta (author of Safarnama Rehla) visited India during this period (c. 1334 CE) and was appointed Qazi at Delhi for a period of eight years.
- During the latter part of Muhammad bin Tughlaq's reign, the kingdom witnessed a spate of rebellions by the nobles and provincial governors. The Sultanate of Madurai was established due to the rebellion of Hassan Shah. In c. 1336 CE, the Vijaynagara kingdom was founded. In c. 1347 CE, the Bahmani kingdom was established. The governors of Sindh, Multan and Oudh rose in revolt against the authority of Muhammad bin Tughlaq. In Gujarat, Taghi revolted against the Sultan who spent nearly three years chasing him.
- Muhammad bin Tughlaq died in c.1351 CE due to the worsening of his health condition. According to Baduani, the Sultan was freed from his people and the people from the Sultan. According to Barani, Muhammad bin Tughlaq was a mixture of opposites. His reign marked the beginning of the process of its decline.

Firoz Shah Tughlaq (c. 1351 - 1388 CE)

- After the death of Muhammad bin Tughlaq in c.1351 CE, Firoz Shah Tughlaq was chosen as the Sultan by the nobles.
- He appointed Khan-i-Jahan Maqbal, a Telugu Brahmin convert as wazir (Prime Minister). He helped the Sultan in his administration and maintained the prestige of the Sultanate during this period.

Military Campaigns

- After ascending the throne, he focussed on strengthening his position over north India instead of claiming his authority over south India and Deccan. He led two expeditions to Bengal which were unsuccessful and as a result, Bengal became free from the control of the Delhi Sultanate.
- Firoz Shah Tughlaq also attacked Jainagar (modern Orissa) and collected large booty from the temples (such as the Puri Jagannath temple). He also marched against Nagarkot and made its ruler pay tributes. During this campaign, Firoz Shah collected 1300 Sanskrit manuscripts from

the Jwalamukhi temple library and Arizuddin Khan translated these into the Persian language. Firoz Shah then marched against Thatta (Sindh region) and crushed a rebellion there.

Administrative Reforms

- He ran his administration in accordance with the advice of the ulemas. He pleased the nobles and assured hereditary succession to their properties. Thus, the iqta system was revived and was also made hereditary.
- He levied taxes as per the teachings of Islam. Jiziya was imposed on non-Muslims. The special tax on 28 items was discarded by him since they were against the laws of Islam. He showed intolerance towards Shia Muslims and Sufis. He regarded Hindus as second-grade citizens and in this respect, he was the precursor of Sikander Lodi and Aurangzeb.
- He was the first sultan to impose an irrigation tax. But at the same time, he also built a number of irrigation canals and wells. The longest canal was about 200 km in length from Sutlej to Hansi. Another canal was between Yamuna and Hissar.
- During his reign, there were around 1200 fruit gardens in and around Delhi generating more revenue.
- He developed royal factories called karkhanas in which thousands of slaves were employed. He also increased the number of slaves by capturing the defeated soldiers and young persons. There were around one lakh eighty thousand slaves during his reign.
- New towns (around 300) were built during his reign. The famous one being Firozabad near Red Fort (now called Firoz Shah Kotla). Monuments like Qutb Minar and Jama Masjid were repaired and Ashokan pillars from Meerut and Topara were brought to Delhi during his reign.
- Diwan-i-Khairat, a new department was established to support orphans and widows. Free hospitals like Dar-ul-Shifa and marriage bureaus for poor Muslims were also established.
- Firoz patronised scholars like Barani who wrote Tarikh-i-Firoz Shah, and Fatawa-i-Jahandari and Khwaja Abdul Malik Islami who wrote Futah-us- Sulatin. He himself authored the book, Futuhat-e-Firozshahi.
- Firoz Shah Tughlaq died in c. 1388 CE and after that, the struggle for power between the Sultan and nobles started again. His successors (like Muhammad Khan, Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq Shah II, Abu Bakr Shah, Nasiruddin Muhammad) had to face the rebellions of the slaves created by Firoz.

In the following years, the Delhi Sultanate disintegrated and many provinces like Gujarat and Malwa declared independence. The invasion of Timur in c. 1398 CE, further aggravated the situation. Timur was a Mongol leader of Central Asia, head of Chagatai Turks. His kingdom stretched from lower Volga to river Indus, included modern Turkey, Afghanistan, Transoxiana, Iran, and portions of Punjab. When Timur entered Delhi there was barely any opposition. He sacked Delhi for three days killing thousands of people and gathering huge wealth. He withdrew from India in c. 1399 CE and his invasion gave a death blow to the Tughlaq dynasty.

Sayyid Dynasty (c. 1414 - 1451 CE)

Rulers	Period
Khizr Khan	1414–1421
Mubarak Shah	1421–1433
Muhammad Shah	1434–1445
Alam Shah	1445–1451

Khizr Khan (c. 1414 - 1421 CE)

- Before Timur left India, he appointed Khizr Khan as governor of Multan. He captured Delhi and founded the Sayyid dynasty in c. 1414 CE. He did not adopt the title of Sultan and was content with Rayat-i-Ala.
- He is considered to be an important ruler of the Sayyid dynasty. He tried to consolidate the Delhi Sultanate but in vain. He died in c. 1421 CE.

Mubarak Shah (c. 1421 - 1433 CE)

- Khizr Khan was succeeded by his son Mubarak Shah.

Muhammad Shah (c. 1434 - 1443 CE)

- Muhammad Shah who succeeded Mubarak Shah was always busy acting against conspirators and gradually lost control over his nobles.
- Muhammad Shah died in c. 1445 CE and was succeeded by his son Alam Shah.

Alam Shah (c. 1445 - 1451 CE)

- He was the weakest amongst all Sayyid princes and proved to be incompetent.
- His wazir, Hamid Khan invited Bahlul Lodhi to take charge of the army. Alam Shah realised that it would be difficult to continue as a ruler, so he retired to Badaun.

Lodi Dynasty (c. 1451 - 1526 CE)

Rulers	Period	Important points
Bahlul/Bahlol Lodi	1451–1489	Founder of the Lodi Dynasty
Sikander Lodi	1489–1517	The most prominent ruler of the Lodi Dynasty, founded Agra city
Ibrahim Lodi	1517–1526	Defeated by Babur in the First Battle of Panipat (in 1526) and thus ended the Delhi Sultanate

The Lodhis/Lodis were the last ruling dynasty of the Sultanate period and the first to be headed by the Afghans, who ruled over Sirhind when the Sayyids ruled in India.

Bahlol Lodhi (c. 1451 - 1489 CE)

- He founded the Lodhi dynasty.
- In c. 1476 CE, he defeated the sultan of Jaunpur and annexed it to Delhi Sultanate. He also brought the ruler of Kalpi and Dholpur under the suzerainty of Delhi. He annexed the Sharqui dynasty and introduced Bahlol copper coins.
- He died in c. 1489 CE and was succeeded by his son, Sikander Lodhi.

Sikander Lodhi (c. 1489 - 1517 CE)

- He was the greatest of the three Lodhi sovereigns. He brought the whole of Bihar under his control and many Rajput chiefs were defeated. He attacked Bengal and forced its ruler to conclude a treaty with him and extended his kingdom from Punjab to Bihar.
- He was a good administrator, he built roads and many irrigation facilities were provided for the benefit of the peasantry.
- He introduced the Gazz-i-Sikandari, a new measurement yardstick and a system of auditing of accounts.
- Despite having applaudable qualities, he was a bigot and was intolerant towards non-Muslims. Many temples were destroyed and he re-imposed Jiziya on non-Muslims.
- In c. 1504 CE, he founded Agra and wrote Persian verses under the name Gulrakhi.

Ibrahim Lodhi (c. 1517 - 1526 CE)

- Sikander Lodhi was succeeded by his eldest son, Ibrahim Lodhi who was an arrogant and repressive ruler. He insulted his nobles in the court and the ones who revolted were put to death. Daulat Khan Lodhi, the governor of Punjab was humiliated and disaffection between king and courtier became very common during his reign. Greatly displeased by the attitude of Ibrahim Lodhi, Daulat Khan Lodhi invited Babur to invade India. Babur marched against Delhi, defeated and killed Ibrahim Lodhi in the [First Battle of Panipat](#) in c. 1526 CE. The Afghan kingdom thus lasted for only seventy-five years.

Thus, the Sultanate of Delhi which had its birth on the battlefield of Tarain (c. 1192 CE), ended just a few miles away on the battlefield of Panipat (c. 1526 CE).
