

CC-7: HISTORY OF INDIA (c.1206-1526)

II. SULTANATE POLITICAL STRUCTURE

(C). EMERGENCE OF PROVINCIAL DYNASTIES: BAHAMANIS, VIJAYANAGAR, GUJRAT, MALWA, JAUNPUR AND BENGAL.

PART- II

GUJARAT

Gujrat was one of the richest province under the Delhi Sultanate on accounts of its handicrafts, fertile lands, and flourishing seaports. Allaudin Khilji was the first sultan to annex it to the Delhi Sultanate. And since then it remained under the Turkish government under the Delhi Sultanate. The rich province of Gujarat occupied a prominent place among the provincial kingdoms that arose on the ruins of the Delhi Sultanate. Zafar Khan was appointed the Governor of Gujarat by Firoz Shah Tughlaq in 1391 CE. And from the beginning exercised independent power. After Timur's invasion, in 1407 CE Zafar Khan proclaimed himself an independent ruler and took the title Muzaffar Shah. He founded the Muzaffarid dynasty. Muzaffar Shah started a long drawn struggle with Malwa. He defeated and captured Hushang Shah of Malwa and occupies his kingdom temporarily.

Muzaffar Shah was succeeded by his grandson Ahmad Shah in 1411 CE. He is considered as the real founder of the kingdom of Gujarat, who control the nobility, settled the administration and also consolidated and expanded the kingdom. He fought against the sultans of Malwa and Khandesh. He for the first time imposed jizyah in Gujarat. He appointed Hindu ministers to important administrative positions, for example, his two ministers Manik Chand and Motichand both were Hindus. Ahmad Shah founded the city of Ahmedabad and made it his capital in 1413 CE. Influenced by the Jaina architectural tradition of Gujarat he built beautiful buildings like the Jami Masjid and Teen Darwaza. Ahmad was also noted for imparting justice for he publicly executed his son-in-

law for killing an innocent man. He fought equally fiercely against both the Hindu and Muslim rulers. Ahmad died in 1441 CE.

Ahmad Shah was succeeded by his son Mohammad Shah who was also known as Zar-Baksh and was killed by conspirators in 1451 CE. Following whom there came to power two king successively and both of them were weak and incapable rulers.

The greatest and ablest ruler of Gujarat was however Mahmud Shah, who came to power in 1459 CE, and is popularly known as Begarha because he conquered the strong Rajput forts of Girnar and Champaner. His real name was Fateh Khan and was a grandson of Ahmad Shah and was raised to the throne by the nobles. Mahmud Shah founded the new town of Mustafabad at the foot of the hill at Girnar which had many beautiful monuments and later became the second capital of Gujarat. He fought against many Hindu and Muslim rulers, including Mahmud Khilji of Malwa. Under him the kingdom reached his highest extent, having as his boundaries Arabian Sea on the west, Khandesh on the south, Malwa on the east and Jalor and Nagaur in the north. During his reign trade and commerce prospered. He was also a great patron of art and literature.

The next ruler was Muzaffar Shah II who ruled from 1511-1526 CE. He was a mild but capable ruler. He succeeded in foiling the Portuguese attempts of seizing Diu and fought against Rana Sangha of Mewar as an ally of Mahmud Khilji II of Malwa. He was followed by two incompetent rulers who ruled for a short time.

The last able ruler of Gujarat was Bahadur Shah who ascended the throne in 1526 CE. He conquered and captured Malwa and also seized Chittor after the death of Rana Sangha. During the last part of his reign Humayun the Mughal emperor captured part of Gujarat province which was again recovered by the Sultan of Gujarat. With the death of Bahadur Shah the glory of independent Gujarat also vanished for his successors were all incapable rulers. Gujarat was annexed by the Mughal emperor Akbar in 1573 CE.

MALWA

Malwa was the south-western province of the Delhi Sultanate, which was conquered by Allaudin Khalji in c. 1310 CE and remained the part of the Delhi

Sultanate till the death of Firoz Shah Tughlaq. It had a very strategic position as it was situated on the high plateau between the rivers Narmada and Tapti and hence commanded the trunk routes between Gujarat and northern India, as also between north and south India. So if any of the powerful states of the region could extend its control over Malwa, it could dominate north India. After the invasion of Timur, in c.1401 CE, Dilawar Khan Ghorī who belonged to the court of Firoz Shah Tughlaq, threw off his allegiance to Delhi, though he did not take the royal title of 'Sultan'. Dilawar shifted the capital from Dhar to Mandu, renaming it Shadiabad, the city of joy, which was highly defensible and which had a great deal of natural beauty. After the death of Dilawar Khan in c. 1405CE, his son Alp Khan ascended the throne in 1406 CE and acquired title of Hoshang Shah.

Almost immediately Sultan Muzaffar Shah of Gujarat invaded Malwa, defeating Hoshang and taking him captive. Nusrat, Muzaffar's brother, who was appointed the governor of Malwa, was unable to control it and returned to Gujarat. Muzaffar intended to crush the popular uprising in Malwa by force but good sense prevailed and he restored the throne to Hoshang. Back in his kingdom, Hoshang transferred his capital to Mandu. He then invaded Rai Narsingh Kherla's kingdom in the southern part of Gondwana in order to obtain military assistance and a supply of elephants. Profiting from Hushang's absence, Ahmad I of Gujarat besieged Mandu, but Hushang, eluding the invading army, returned to the city, forcing Ahmad to retreat. Hushang then seized Gagraun. His subsequent invasion of Gwalior, however, failed because Mubarak Shah of Delhi relieved the besieged fort. Hoshang ensured his popularity with the majority Hindu population by introducing a policy of religious toleration, although he also encouraged the ulama and Sufis to settle in Mandu. Many Rajputs settled in his kingdom and served his army loyally. The Jains also supported him and proved an asset to the promotion of trade and commerce in Malwa. Although constant wars against the rulers of Gujarat, Jaunpur, Delhi and the Bahmanis brought no material gains to his kingdom, they frustrated his neighbours' expansionist designs. Before his death in 1435 CE, Hoshang also founded a new town, Hoshangabad, on the river Narmada.

Mahmud Khalji crowned himself Sultan after assassinating Mohammad, the son of the Hoshang Shah and ruled from 1436 to 1469 CE. It was under his reign that the Malwa Sultanate reached its greatest height. He was a restless and ambitious ruler who fought with almost all his neighbours-the ruler of Gujarat,

the rajas of the Gondwana, and Orissa, the Bahmani Sultans, and even an unsuccessful campaign against the Delhi Sultanate. However, his prime targets were the Rajputana states, specially Mewar. Mahmud Khalji fought with Rana Kumbha of Mewar, and both sides claimed victory. Rana Kumbha erected a tower of victory in Chittor, and the Sultan erected a seven storied column at Mandu.

The next ruler was Ghiyas-ud-Din(1469-1500 CE), the eldest son of Mahmud Khalji.His reign saw a period of peace and prosperity.He was succeeded by his son Nasir-ud-din who ruled for till 1510 CE. The next Sultan was Mahmud Shah II who became the last ruler of the Khalji dynasty of Malwa. He surrendered to Bahadur Shah the Sultan of Gujarat in 1531 C.E

During c.1531-1537 CE, the kingdom was under the control of Bahadur Shah though the Mughal emperor Humayun captured it for a short period during c.1535-36 CE. In c.1537 CE, Qadir Shah, an ex officer of the previous Khalji dynasty, regained control over a part off the erstwhile kingdom. But in c.1542 CE, Sher Shah Suri conquered the kingdom defeating him and appointed Shujaat Khan as the governor, His son, Baz Bahadur, declared himself independent in c.1555 CE.

Baz Bahadur(1555-1561 CE) was the last sultan of Malwa, who was noted for his gift of music and poetry and is known for his romantic liaison with queen Roopmati, In c.1561 CE, Akbar's army led by Adham Khan and Pir Muhammad Khan attacked Malwa and defeated Baz Bahadur in the battle off Sarangpur.

JAUNPUR

The city of Jaunpur was founded by Firoz Shah Tughlag to perpetuate the memory of his cousin and patron, Mohammad Tughlaq, also known as prince Jauna Khan. After the death of Firoz Shah Tughlaq, Jaunpur became one of the earliest provinces to become independent. Malik Sarwar was appointed the Governor of Jaunpur by Mahmud Tughlaq and was given the title of Sultan-us-Sharaq. Following the chaos and turmoil that followed the invasion of India by Taimur, Malik Sarwar (1394-1399 CE) declared Jaunpur to be an independent province and laid the foundation of the Sharqi dynasty. His authority extended

over Awadh as well as part of the Doab region and Bihar and Tirhut also came under his control.

Malik Sarwar was succeeded by his adopted son Malik Qaranfal who took the title Mubarak Shah and ruled in between 1399 and 1402 CE and was the first king of the Sarqi dynasty to assume the title of king and strike coins.

Mubarak Shah was succeeded by his younger brother, Shams-ud-din Ibrahim Shah(1402-1440 CE).He proved to be the greatest ruler of the Sharqi dynasty under whom Jaunpur became an important centre of learning. His kingdom extended up to Bihar in the east and to Kanauj in the West. During his reign the relations between Delhi and Jaunpur became worse. He was a patron of Islamic learning and it was during his reign the famous Atala Masjid was constructed at Jaunpur.

The son and Successor of Ibrahim Shah, Mahmud Shah(1436-57 CE) captured the fort of Chunar but failed to conquer Kalpi. He also attacked Delhi but was defeated by Bahlul Lodhi.

The next ruler was Mohammad Shah (1457-1458 CE), son of Mahmud Shah also fought against Bahlul Lodhi but with no useful result. He was murdered by his own brother Hussain Shah.

Hussain Shah (1458-1500 CE) was the last ruler of Sharqi dynasty who entered into a prolong conflict with Bahlul Lodhi. Jaunpur was annexed to the Delhi Sultanate by Sikandar Lodhi the successor of Bahlul Lodhi and thus came to an end the Sharqi dynasty.
