



KHALJI IMPERIALISM (PART-2) खलजी साम्राज्यवाद (भाग-2)

(UG , SEM-4, PAPER MJC-7)

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Jalaluddin Firuz Shah Khalji (जलालुद्दीन फ़रोज़ शाह ख़लजी)

The founder of the Khalji house, Jalaluddin, was an old man of 70 at the time of his accession to the throne. He was a man of mild disposition. He was a very lenient and kind-hearted ruler. On account of his manner of seizing the Delhi throne, he became unpopular. So he had to adopt a policy of appeasement. He offered positions to Turks and non-Turks. He treated his people with prudence and pardoned all the offenders with a warning. One of his nobles, Ahmad Chap, warned him to give up his conciliatory policy, but the Sultan did not pay any heed to the advice.

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Fortunately, there were no foreign invasions during the major part of his reign. Those who were pardoned never rose in rebellion against him, except Kishlu Khan, Balban's nephew and the governor of Kara. Kishlu Khan rebelled against the Sultan, he was defeated and taken captive at Badaun. But he and his followers were later released with a warning.

In 1292, Jalaluddin defeated a Mongol raid under Halaku Khan, but allowed them to go back. Some of the Mongols were permitted to

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settle near Delhi. They became converts to Islam and came to be known as '**Neo-Mussalmans**'.

The Sultan invaded Ranthambhor in 1292 and Malwa in 1293. Another act for which the Sultan has been criticized was his cruel treatment of a Darvesh, Sidi Maula, who was suspected of claiming the throne of Delhi and the Sultan got him trampled by an elephant.

Alauddin Khalji (1296-1316)

(अलाउद्दीन खलजी)

The original name of Alauddin Khalji was **Ali Gurshap**. He was a nephew of Jalaluddin Firuz Shah Khalji. He was born in 1266 and brought up by his uncle because of the untimely death of his father. He did not receive proper education but grew up to be a brilliant warrior who, unlike his uncle, proved to be extremely ambitious, aggressive and selfish by nature. He was married to the daughter of Jalaluddin Khalji.

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Conquests and Expansion

Alauddin Khalji had been entrusted with the governorship of Kara and Allahabad by Jalaluddin Khalji. As the Sultan was aged, he sent his son-in-law, Alauddin, to lead an expedition to Malwa. Alauddin reduced Malwa to submission, but without taking permission of the Sultan, he proceeded against the Devagiri in Deccan which was then under the rule of Ramachandradeva who was encountered in a surprise attack. Alauddin plundered the riches of Devagiri and he sent the message of his victory and returned to Kara.

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He sent a message of his victory and induced the Sultan to greet him at Kara. When the aged Sultan came hurriedly to Kara to receive Alauddin, the latter treacherously murdered the Sultan and seized the crown of Delhi in 1296. Soon he won over the nobles by lavishly distributing gold and presents among them. To make his position secure, he arranged for the murder of the late Sultan's followers and relatives.

Turkish imperialism reached its zenith under Alauddin Khalji who may be called the first Turkish Empire builder in India. Alauddin was one of the most ambitious rulers of India.

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He, emulating the example of Alexander, the Great, wanted to conquer the whole world. Ala-ul-mulk, his honest courtier, advised him to subdue the independent Hindu states outside the borders of the Sultanate first before embarking on a scheme of world conquest. Understanding the soundness of the advice given by Ala-ul-mulk, Alauddin organized a series of expeditions without waiting for any plausible cause or pretext. His conquests may be studied under two heads - Conquest of North India and conquest of South India.

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Conquest of North India

1. **Conquest of Gujarat (1299)** - The first province against which Alauddin took up arms was Gujarat. It was ruled by a Rajput prince named Karnadeva. In 1297, Alauddin sent an expedition under Nusrat Khan and Zafar Khan who captured Anhilwara and looted the country. Karna Deva fled to Devagiri with his daughter, Devala Devi. The Sultan's general captured the queen, Kamaladevi, who subsequently became the Sultan's favorite queen.

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During this expedition a handsome slave named, Malik Kafur was purchased for one thousand dinars. He came to be called as **Hazar Dinari**. Later, Kafur became the Sultan's greatest general.

2. Conquest of Ranthambhor (1301) - In 1299, Alauddin dispatched an expedition to Ranthambhor which was under the rule of Hamir Deva. This king had given refuge to a few discontented New-Muslims. The first expedition against the fortress was a failure. So Alauddin marched in person and captured the famous fortress in 1302 . Hamir Deva lost his life.

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3. Conquest of Chitor (1303) - Alauddin Khalji, next turned his attention against Mewar which was ruled by the Guhilot Rajputs. Mewar had the advantage of being situated in a mountainous region and had resisted all invasions. In 1303, Alauddin led an expedition against Chitor. According to tradition, Alauddin undertook the expedition on account of his glamour towards Padmini, the most beautiful queen of Rana Ratan Singh of Mewar, whose hands he desired to secure. Chitor the "Proud City" and capital of Mewar was besieged.

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But the Rajput soldiers led by leaders like Gora and Badal gave stiff resistance. But Sultan's army won a victory. Padmini and other Rajput women observed the rite of *Jauhar* and saved their honour. Chitor was taken in 1303. The Sultan's eldest son, Khizr Khan was made the Governor of Chitor. However, Alauddin won a deserted city. We get a graphic and woeful account of the siege in Col.Tod's "Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan".

4. Conquest of Malwa (1305) - In 1305, Ain-ul-mulk Multani was asked to proceed to Jalor and Ujjain with a view to capture Malwa.

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Raja Harananda fought valiantly against the forces of Ain-ul-mulk. But he was overpowered and his territories including Ujjain, Mandu, Dhara and Chanderi were occupied by the Sultan's army.

5. Annexation of Siwana (1308) - In about 1308, Alauddin Khalji made preparations for the conquest of Marwar. Siwana was besieged. Sataldeva, the ruler of Siwana, put up a stiff resistance. The siege lasted for a long time. To force the Rajputs to surrender, the Sultan cut off the water supply to the fort.

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Finding their position precarious, the Rajput women performed *Jauhar* and their menfolk came out to fight till they died. Sataldeva fell fighting. Siwana was annexed to the Delhi Sultanate.

6. Conquest of Jalor (1311) - Alauddin sent Ain-ul-mulk to subdue Kanhar Deva, the ruler of Jalor. Ain-ul-mulk, great in diplomacy as in war, persuaded the Jalor chief to acknowledge the Khalji suzerainty and to go with him to the Delhi court. At Delhi he could not tolerate Alauddin's boast and so fled back to Jalor.

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This gave Alauddin a pretext to besiege Jalor. A prolonged war ensued. The Rajputs, as usual, displayed their valor. But owing to the treachery of Bika Dahiya, the Khalji forces gained entry into the fort. Kanhar Deva and his men were killed. The woman performed *Jauhar*. The fort and the Kingdom were occupied by Alauddin in 1311.

Thus, the conquest of North India was completed. Alauddin's empire extended over the whole of north India except Kashmir, Nepal, Assam and a part of North-Western Punjab.

(To be continued)