

TURKISH RULE IN INDIA :QUTUBUDDIN AIBAK

भारत में तुर्की शासन :कुतुबुद्दीन ऐबक

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INTRODUCTION(परिचय)

The rulers who ruled over the destinies of Delhi Sultanate from 1206 to 1290 are popularly known as rulers of one dynasty called the **Mamluk Dynasty** or **Slave Dynasty**. It produced nine rulers. But neither had they belonged to one dynasty nor was any one of them a slave when he or she occupied the throne of Delhi. In fact, three dynasties ruled over Delhi during this period. Qutubuddin founded the **Qutbi dynasty**, Iltutmish founded the **First Ilbari** or **Shamsi Dynasty** and Balban founded the **Second Ilbari Dynasty**.

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Each of them had ceased to be a slave before they became Sultans and, except Qutubuddin all others had obtained their formal manumission (freedom from slavery) long before their accession. Therefore, it is more appropriate to call them early Turk sultans or the *Mamluk* sultans of Delhi.

Qutubuddin Aibak (1206-1210)

Qutubuddin Aibak was a brave, energetic and capable commander. He rendered a yeoman's service to his master in the conquest of Northern India and founded the first independent Turkish dynasty.

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• Early Life and Career

Born of Turkish parents, sold as slave while still a boy, Qutubuddin had a chequered career. Muhammad Ghori was his second master. Aibak was first sold to the Qazi of Nishapur, and then he was purchased by Mohammad Ghori who was impressed by him. Aibak's rise was unusually rapid. His first important promotion was the *amir-i-akhur*. After the second battle of Tarain in 1192, Qutubuddin Aibak was entrusted with the charge of his master's Indian dominion. Much of the credit of the Ghorid conquests in India should go to Aibak.

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He saved Ajmer from two uprisings. He played an important role in the defeat of Jayachandra of Kannauj. Besides, Qutubuddin Aibak captured Koil (Aligarh), Ranthambhor (1195), Badaun (1197-98) and Kanauj (1198-99), and Kalinjar, Mahoba and Khajuraho (1202-03). He also occupied Delhi and made it the capital of the newly established Turkish Empire. Another lieutenant of Mohammad Ghori was Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khalji who brought Bihar and Bengal within the Turkish dominion in a short span of time. But as the services rendered by Aibak were rated higher, it was he who was formally invested with viceregal powers and promoted to the rank of a *malik* in 1206.

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The death of Muhammad Ghorī marked only a change of status for Aibak who lost no time in exploiting the situation in his favor. He marched to Lahore and formally assumed power as a sovereign of the Ghorid Empire on June 25, 1206.

• **Qutubuddin Aibak as Sultan**

The death of Muhammad Ghorī removed the support of a powerful protector and involved Qutubuddin Aibak in the intricate web of Central Asian politics. The Ghorid Empire broke up into warring fragments.

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Ghiyasuddin Mahmud succeeded in establishing his rule in Ghur. Tajuddin Yalduz, another slave of Muhammad Ghori, laid claims to his master's Indian possessions. The internal situation in Northern India was also disturbing. Pre-occupied with these affairs, Aibak could not deal effectively with the Rajputs who lately were quite active in recovering their lost political authority. Kalinjar had been recovered by the Chandelas, the Gahadwalas under Harishchandra reoccupied Farrukhabad and Badaun, while Gwalior seems to have been lost to the Pratiharas.

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In 1210 when Aibak died of injuries sustained from a fall from his horse while playing *chaugan*, the Delhi sultanate lacked political stability and had no effective administration. Aibak had never bothered to take up concrete steps in this direction. He was mainly interested just to keep things going.

- **Estimate of Qutubuddin Aibak**

Aibak was a brave soldier and a competent military general, whose contribution in extending the Turkish Empire was unique. Besides it is to be noted that his early training

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in Nishapur equipped him with refined literary tastes as is evident from his patronage of scholars like Hasan Nizami and Fakhre Mudabbir. His generosity was proverbial and earned him the title "*lakh baksh*" (giver of lakhs). As his reign was too short and the difficulties he faced were too many, he does not seem to have made a significant contribution in evolving a solid administrative structure of the Delhi Sultanate. But there is no doubt that he managed the show.