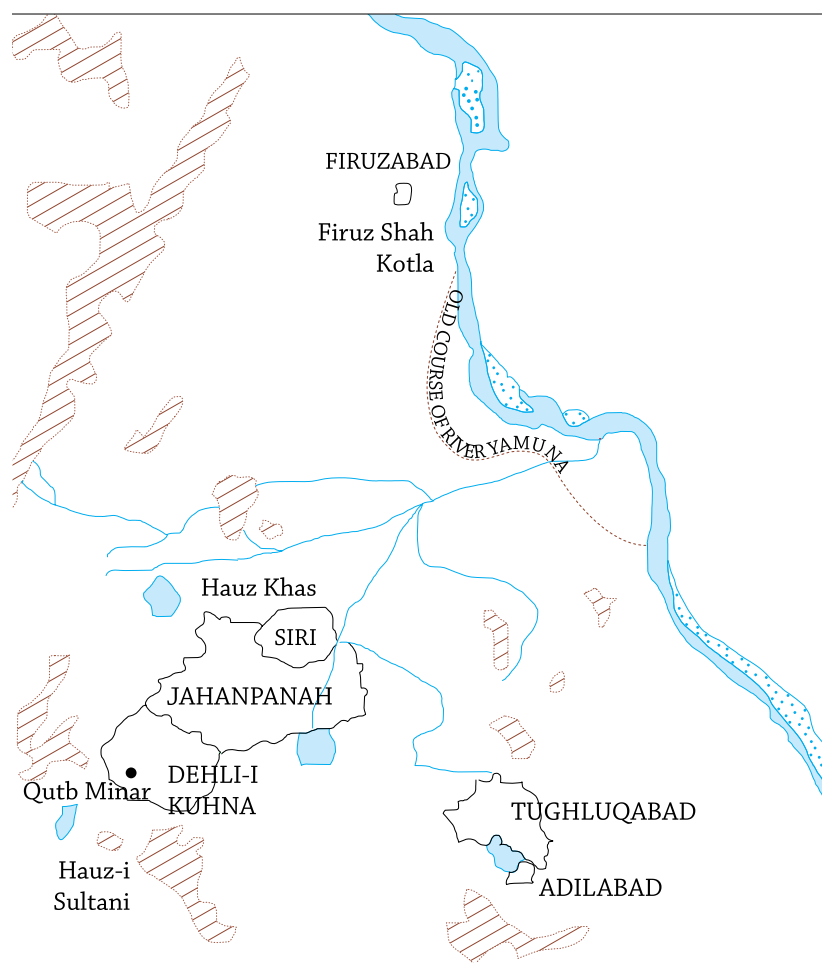




Delhi became an important city only in the twelfth century, though the Tomars are credited with the founding of Delhi in 736 CE as Dhillika. The Tomars ruled in Haryana and Delhi and the region around them under the Pratiharas. They declared independence in early twelfth century. Ananga Pala (1130-1145) was their famous ruler. The Chauhans (975-1192) defeated the Tomars in the middle of the twelfth century. The famous Chauhan ruler was Prithviraj Chauhan (1175-1192). After his defeat by Muhammad Ghori in 1192, Delhi went under the Turkish rule.

Delhi became an important commercial centre under the Tomars and Chauhans. Many rich Jaina merchants lived in the city and constructed several temples. Coins minted here, called Delhiwal, had a wide circulation.

Muhammad Ghori was murdered in 1206 AD. The charge of Delhi and Ajmer went to his general Qutbuddin Aybak. He was a Turkish slave. He proclaimed himself the Sultan and ruled from Delhi. The rulers of the dynasties that followed him also ruled from Delhi. Thus, Delhi Sultanate was founded in the beginning of the thirteenth century. Delhi became a capital that controlled vast areas of the subcontinent. The Delhi Sultans built many cities in the area. They all together are now known as Delhi.



Selected Sultanate cities of Delhi (13th-14th centuries)



Tawarikh of Delhi Sultans

There are many sources of history of Delhi Sultans — inscriptions, coins and architecture. But *tawarikh* (plural) meaning histories (singular *tarikh*) are available a lot. These are written in Persian which was the language of administration under the Delhi Sultans. The writers of *tawarikh* were learned *men* : courtiers, poets, secretaries and administrators. They recounted the events and commented on them to advise the rulers on justice.

To use the information in the *tawarikh*, we must know their **limitations**. The writers of *tawarikh* were not in touch with the common people. They often wrote it in hope of rich rewards from the Sultans. More over their ideas or ideals were based on **birth right** and **gender distinctions**, i.e., they believed that persons born in noble families inherited the rights to govern by birth and men were superior than women. For example, the chronicler of the Sultan period, Minhaj-i Siraj, recognised that Raziyya Sultan was more able and qualified than his brothers but he was not comfortable at having a queen as ruler. He thought that the queen's rule went against the ideal social order created by God, in which women were supposed to be subordinate to men. He wrote, "In the register of God's creation, since her account did not fall under the column of men, how did she gain from the all of her excellent qualities."

FAMOUS DELHI SULTANS

Mamluk or Slave Dynasty (1206-1290)

Qutbuddin Aybak	1206-1210
Shamsuddin Iltutmish	1210-1236
Raziyya	1236-1240
Ghiyasuddin Balban	1266-1287

Khalji Dynasty (1290-1320)

Jalaluddin Khalji	1290-1296
Alauddin Khalji	1296-1316

Tughluq Dynasty (1320-1414)

Ghiyasuddin Tughluq	1320-1324
Muhammad Tughluq	1324-1351
Firuz Shah Tughluq	1351-1388

Sayyid Dynasty (1414-1451)

Khizr Khan	1414-1421
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Lodi Dynasty (1451-1526)

Bahlul Lodhi	1451-1489
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The Mamluk or Slave Dynasty(1206-1290) or Early Turkish Rulers

Qutbuddin Aybak (1206-1210) founded the slave dynasty. He was a slave and general of Muhammad Ghori. He ruled over the territories conquered by Ghori in India. After the death of Muhammad Ghori he declared his freedom from the ruler of Ghazni. Thus, a slave came to be a Sultan. He suppressed all internal revolts and also checked external invaders, such as the Mongols from the north-west successfully. He started the construction of Qutb Minar in Delhi. Qutbuddin Aybak's son-in-law, **Iltutmish** (1210-1236) succeeded him. The Caliph of Baghdad bestowed upon him the title of 'Sultan'. He consolidated the empire in India. He fought against the Turk nobles and the Rajputs in north, and gradually increased the control up to Bengal in the east and Sind in the west. He also fought against the Mongols led by Genghis Khan. He initiated a land revenue system in which the empire was divided into small and large tracts called *iqtas*. The nobles and officers were given *iqtas* instead of cash salaries for their services. Iltutmish completed the construction of the Qutb Minar.

Iltutmish chose his daughter **Raziyya** (1236-1240) as his successor instead of any of his sons. They were incapable to rule. She was a brave, intelligent and just ruler. She rode horses and led her army in the battles. She even dressed like a man. However, the nobles could not accept her as Sultan and killed her. After Raziyya's death few unimportant rulers ascended the throne before **Ghiyasuddin Balban** (1265-1286), a Turkish noble, took over. He took over the control of the army and administration into his hands. He appointed special officers to collect revenue from peasants. Thus, he reduced the power of the nobles. He strengthened his army and curbed the Mongol attacks on the northern frontiers. After his death, his grandson was murdered and Jalaluddin Khalji seized the throne.

The Khalji Dynasty

Jalaluddin Khalji (1290-1296) established the Khalji dynasty. He was 70 years old. His nephew **Alauddin Khalji** (1296-1316) murdered him and became Sultan. He built a new city Siri in Delhi. He strengthened the forts along the route of Mongol attacks and placed frontier provinces under able generals. He conquered Gujarat, Malwa, Rajasthan, the Yadavas of Devagiri, the Kakatiyas of Warangal and the Hoyasalas of Dwarasamudra. He did not annex Deccan territories to his empire mainly on account of distances involved. But the rulers paid tribute. A war of succession broke out after Alauddin's death in 1316. In 1320, the Tughluqs came to power.

The Tughluq Dynasty

Ghiyasuddin Tughluq (1320-1324) founded the Tughluq dynasty. He built Tughluqabad, a new city in Delhi, 8 km from Qutb Minar. His

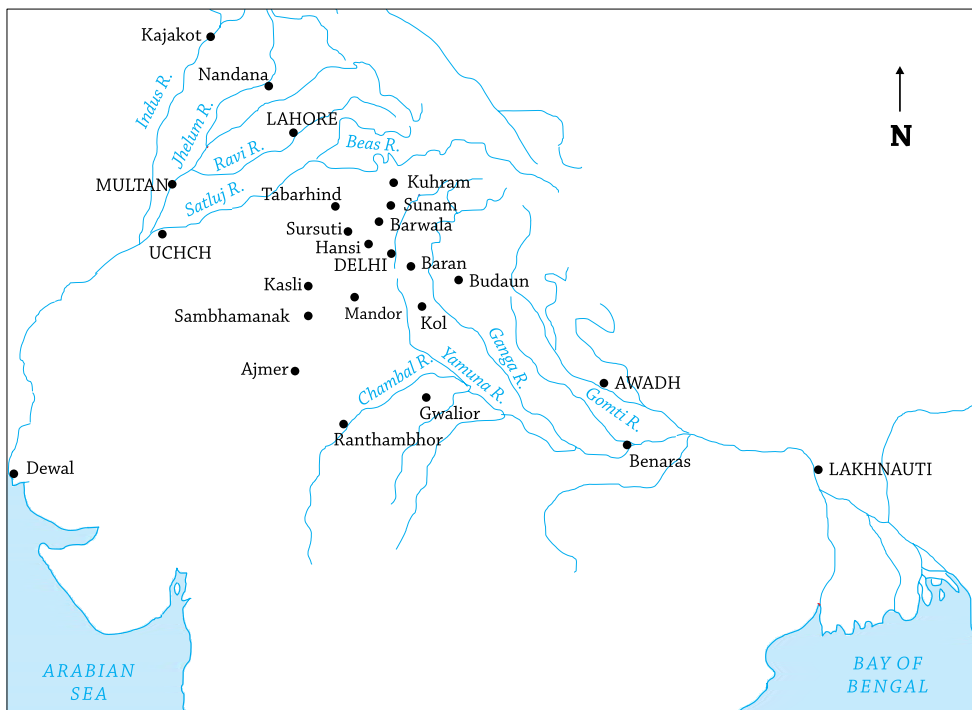
son and successor Muhammad-bin-Tughluq (1324-1351) is famous in history for his ideas though he could not implement them properly. One such experiment was the transfer of the capital from Delhi to Devagiri (Daultabad) in the Deccan in 1327 and back to Delhi. Introduction of token currency in 1329 was another idea which he had to take back with a great loss for the treasury. The third experiment was the order to increase taxation in the Ganga-Yamuna Doab during famine.

After Muhammad Tughluq's death his cousin **Firuz Shah Tughluq** (1351-1388) ascended the throne. He was nominated by the ulemas and nobles. He imposed a tax on non-Muslims called *Zaziyah*. He failed to equip the army properly. He founded a new city Firuzabad in Delhi. After his death the Tughluq empire declined.

The Sayyids and the Lodis

Timur, the Mongol ruler of Samarkand (Central Asia) invaded India in 1398. He plundered many towns and cities and left in 1399. His deputy, **Khizr Khan** (1414-1421) captured the throne and established the **Sayyid** dynasty (1414-1451). In 1451, **Bahlul Lodi**, an Afghan who was the governor of Punjab, occupied the throne of Delhi. He was succeeded by his son **Sikander Lodi** in 1489. He annexed Jaunpur and Bihar and brought the entire region of Gangetic plain under his control. He was succeeded by his son **Ibrahim Lodi** in 1517. His uncle Alam Khan and Daulat Khan Lodi, the governor of Punjab invited Babur, the ruler of Kabul to invade India. In the First Battle of Panipat fought in 1526, Babur defeated Ibrahim Lodi and killed him.

The Expansion of the Delhi Sultanate

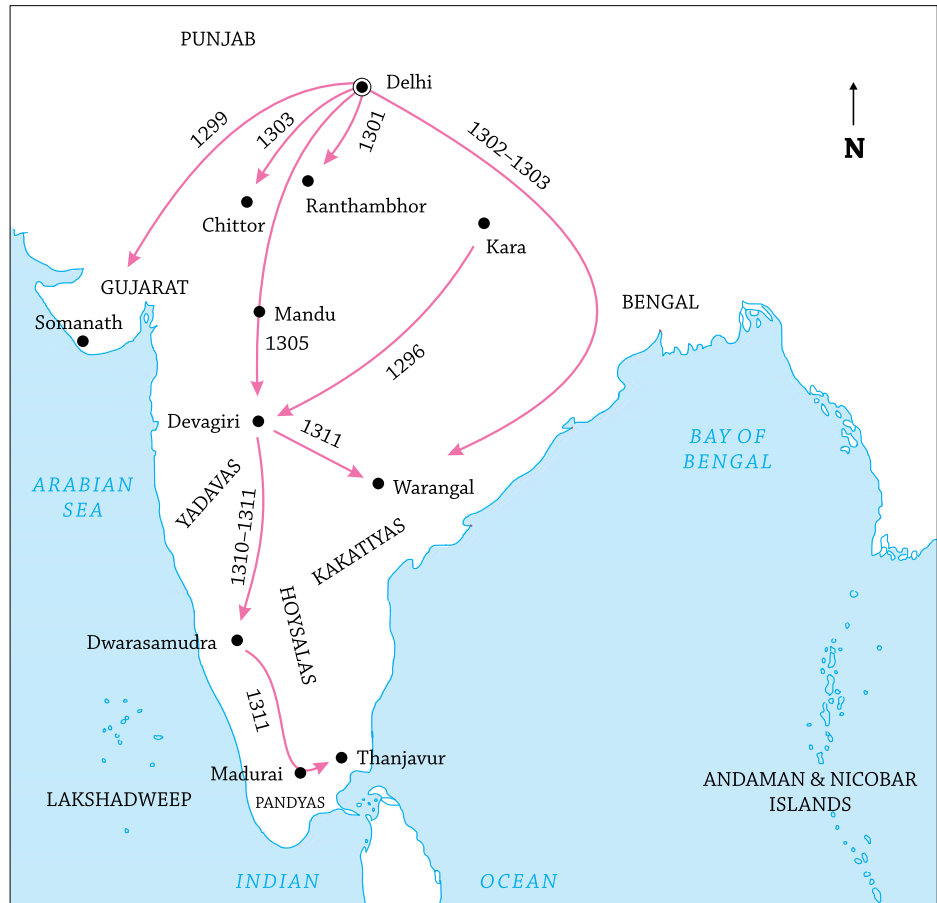


Major cities captured by Shamsuddin Iltutmish

The Sultans used to live in heavily fortified towns called garrison towns. A **garrison town** was a fortified settlement with soldiers. But the Sultans seldom controlled the hinterland of the garrison towns in the early thirteenth century. The lands adjacent to a city or port that supply it with goods and services is called **hinterland**. Therefore, the supplies to the garrison towns were not regular. And the garrison towns depended upon trade, tribute or plunder for supplies. In the

later period, the Sultans ordered to clear the forests of the hinterland in the Ganga-Yamuna Doab (belt). In this campaign the hunter-gatherers and pastoralists (herders) were expelled from their habitat. This land was used for the expansion of agriculture and establishment of new towns and construction of new fortresses. This was done to promote regional trade and protect trade routes. These campaigns were termed as **expansion along the so called 'internal frontier.'**

The **second expansion** occurred **along the 'external frontier'** of the Sultanate. Delhi's authority was challenged by Mongol invasions from Afghanistan and by governors who rebelled at any sign of the Sultan's weakness. The expansion of the Sultanate occurred during the reigns of Ghiyasuddin Balban, Alauddin Khalji and Muhammad Tughluq. Military expeditions into southern India started during the reign of Alauddin Khalji and culminated with Muhammad Tughluq. After 150 years of the beginning of the Delhi Sultanate, its armies marched and turned it into a vast empire across a large part of the subcontinent. Besides Sultanate armies captured elephants, horses and slaves and carried away gold and silver.



Alauddin Khalji's campaigns into the Deccan

Case Study : Administration and Consolidation under the Khaljis and Tughluqs

To control the vast territory conquered by the armies of the Delhi Sultanate was a great challenge. Was it complete and effective ?

To consolidate means to strengthen the position of power and success that you have, so that it becomes more effective or continues for longer. The consolidation of a kingdom as vast as Delhi Sultanate needed reliable governors and administrators. The Sultan could not rely on the local nobles or elites and landed chieftains. Iltutmish particularly favoured their special slaves, purchased for military service, called bandagan in Persian language. The Sultan could trust and rely upon them because they were totally dependent upon their master, the Sultan. They were trained and appointed on the most important posts. The Sultans believed that a worthy and experienced slave was better than a son.

The Khaljis and Tughluqs also appointed persons from low social class who were their **clients** (dependent upon them) as generals and governors. The elites and chroniclers thought these clients did not have good moral principles. Besides, the slaves and clients were loyal to their masters and patrons but not to their heirs. New Sultans had their own servants. This often led to a conflict between the old and new nobles.

The Sultans appointed military commanders as governors of *iqtas*. They were called *iqtadars* or *muqtis*. These *muqtis* collected the revenues as the salary and expenses. They also paid their soldiers from these revenues. To control the *muqtis* accountants were appointed by

Alauddin Khalji and Muhammad Tughluq. It was checked that the *muqti* kept the required number of soldiers and collected only the taxes allowed to him. Under Alauddin Khalji the rights of the local chieftains to levy taxes were cancelled and they were also forced to pay taxes. The state brought the assessment and collection of land revenue under its own control. There were three types of taxes : (i) on cultivation (50 per cent of the peasant's produce) (ii) on cattle and (iii) on houses.

Alauddin Khalji	Muhammad Tughluq
1. Alauddin Khalji raised a large standing army as a defensive measure	1. Muhammad Tughluq raised large standing army as a military offensive against the Mongols, i.e. he planned a campaign to capture Mongol territory of Transoxiana in north-east Iran.
2. Alauddin constructed a new garrison town named Siri for his soldiers (Figure 3.1)	2. Muhammad emptied the oldest of the cities of Delhi (Dehli-i-Kuhna) of the residents. The soldiers occupied it to live. The residents of the old city were sent to the new capital Daultabad in the Deccan 1500 km away.
3. To feed the soldiers, the tax was fixed at 50 per cent of the peasant's yield in the Ganga-Yamuna belt.	3. Besides this tax, the Sultan levied additional taxes. But this coincided with famine in the area.
4. The soldiers of this army were paid in cash and the prices of the goods taken by the merchants in Delhi were controlled.	4. Muhammad Tughluq also paid his soldiers cash salaries. But instead of controlling prices, he introduced a token currency made of cheap metals but higher in value like present-day paper currency. People did not trust it. They saved their gold and silver coins and paid all their taxes in the token currency.

It was difficult to control distant provinces and forested areas in the Gangetic plain. Sultans sometimes forced their control over these areas but only for a short duration. Another problem was Mongol attacks which increased during the reign of Alauddin Khalji (1299 and 1302) and the early years of Muhammad Tughluq's rule. This forced the two rulers to prefer to fight a war. So, they raised a large standing army in Delhi. It was a huge administrative challenge. The two Sultans dealt with this differently.

Alauddin was successful in his administrative measures for the large

standing army but Muhammad Tughluq a failure. His campaign into Kashmir was a disaster. So he gave up plans to go further and invade Transoxiana and disbanded his large army. The capital was again shifted to Delhi. The raising of taxes in famine in the Ganga-Yamuna belt led to rebellion. The token currency had to be recalled with a heavy loss to the state.

Construction of Mosques

A mosque is called a *masjid* in Arabic, a prayer place for the Muslims. The Delhi Sultans built several mosques in cities all over the subcontinent. These demonstrated their claims to be protectors of Islam and Muslims. Muslims read their prayers (*namaz*) together. Thus, mosques also helped to create the sense of a community of believers who shared a belief system and a code of conduct. It was necessary to reinforce this idea of a community because Muslims came from variety of backgrounds.

Quwwat al-Islam mosque and minaret was built during the decade 1190 to 1200. This was built for group prayer. It was for the first city built by the Delhi Sultans, called *Dehli-i Kuhna* (the old city) by the chroniclers. This mosque was enlarged by Iltutmish and Alauddin Khalji. The minar was built by two Sultans : Qutbuddin Aybak and Iltutmish.



Quwwat al-Islam Mosque in Delhi

In Other Parts of the World

In the early eleventh century, the society in France was also divided into three classes or orders : those who prayed, those who fought and those who tilled the land. The fighters or warriors were directed away from conflict amongst themselves and sent them instead on a campaign against the Muslims who had captured the city of Jerusalem. This led to a series of campaigns called the **crusades** (wars fought for religion). The church called these warriors as **knights**. These campaigns in the service of God and the church completely altered the status of the knights. Originally these knights did not belong to the class of nobles. But, by the twelfth century, nobles also wanted to be known as knights.



Key Words

- » Mint : to make money (coins) of a metal.
- » Mamluk : a slave or son of a slave.
- » Iqtas : land grants to the nobles and military commanders instead of cash salaries for their services.
- » Mukti : an iqta holder.
- » Jaziyah : a tax imposed upon only non-Muslims in lieu of state protection.
- » Doab : the belt of land between two rivers, Ganga and Yamuna.
- » Token currency : a round piece of cheap metal for higher equal value of gold.
- » Ulema : Islamic scholar.
- » Nobles or Elites : the people of the highest social class or the members of the royal court.
- » Chronicles : a written account of historical events in the order in which they took place.
- » Client : dependent on Sultan.

- » Bandagan : a special slave purchased for military service.
- » Hinterland : the land adjacent to a city or port that supply it with goods and services.
- » Garrison town : a fortified settlement with soldiers.

SUMMARY

- ▶ Delhi became an important commercial centre under the Tomars and Chauhans.
- ▶ A number of Sultans belonging to the Mamluk, Khalji, Tughluq, Sayyid and Lodi dynasty ruled over Delhi Sultanate.
- ▶ Iltutmish, Ghiyasuddin Balban, Alauddin Khalji, Muhammad Tughluq and Firuz Shah Tughluq were famous Sultans of Delhi.
- ▶ The hinterland of the garrison towns was cleared and given for agriculture and establishment of new towns and construction of new fortresses.
- ▶ The armies of Alauddin Khalji and Muhammad Tughluq marched across a large part of the subcontinent to win it over.

Exercise Time

A. Tick (✓) the only correct choice amongst the following :

1. The Sultan who transferred his capital from Delhi to Devagiri
a. Alauddin Khalji b. Firuz Shah Tughluq c. Muhammad Tughluq d. Iltutmish
2. The Sayyid dynasty was founded by
a. Khizr Khan b. Bahlul Lodi c. Timur d. Genghis Khan
3. He built a new city Siri in Delhi
a. Kutbuddin Aybak b. Jalaluddin Khalji c. Alauddin Khalji d. Iltutmish
4. In the First Battle of Panipat _____ defeated Ibrahim Lodi.
a. Muhammad Tughluq b. Timur
c. Babur d. None of these
5. A fortified settlement with soldiers was called a
a. hinterland b. garrison town c. iqta d. None of these

B. Fill in the blanks :

1. _____ was the first Muslim woman ruler.
2. Qutbuddin Aybak was a general of _____.
3. The _____ is the area between the rivers Ganga and Yamuna.
4. _____ was a tax only on non-Muslims for state protection.
5. Muhammad Tughluq renamed Devagiri as _____.

C. Match the Following :

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 1. Bandagan | a. fortified settlement with soldiers |
| 2. Iqta | b. land adjacent to a city that supply it with goods and services |
| 3. Garrison | c. special slave purchased for military service |
| 4. Hinterland | d. dependent on Sultan |
| 5. Client | e. land given to commanders for their service in place of cash salaries |



D. Write true (T) or False (F) against the following statements in given brackets :

1. Iqtas were tax-free land grants given to the religious persons.
2. Qutbuddin Aybak was the son of Muhammad Ghori.
3. The token currency of Muhammad Tughluq failed.
4. Iltutmish appointed special slaves as generals and governors.
5. Khizr Khan was the Mongol ruler of Samarkand (central Asia).

E. Define the following terms :

- | | | | |
|------------------|---------------|------------|-------------------|
| 1. Iqta | 2. Bandagan | 3. Jaziyas | 4. Mint |
| 5. Garrison town | 6. Hinterland | 7. Doab | 8. Token currency |

F. Identify (Give terms for) the following :

1. A slave or a son of a slave
2. The land between two rivers
3. To make money (coins) of a metal
4. A written account of historical events in the order in which they took place
5. A special slave purchased for military service

G. Answer in one word or one phrase :

1. What was the language of administration under the Delhi Sultans ?
2. In whose reign did the Sultanate reach its farthest extent ?
3. Who was the founder and last ruler of the Delhi Sultanate ?
4. Mention the major source of information of the Delhi Sultanate rule.
5. How much land revenue was charged under Alauddin Khalji ?

H. Answer these questions briefly :

1. What is meant by the 'internal' and 'external' frontiers of the Sultanate ?
2. What were the steps taken to ensure that mukhtis performed their duties ?
3. What was the impact of the Mongol invasions on the Delhi Sultanate ?
4. Would the authors of tawarikh provide correct information ?
5. How did Balban control the nobles ?

I. Answer these questions in detail :

1. Discuss the expansion of the Delhi Sultanate.
2. Discuss the system of administration under the Delhi Sultans.
3. How did Alauddin Khalji maintain a large standing army in Delhi ?
4. How did the ideas of Muhammad Tughluq fail to deliver results ?

PROJECT WORK

1. Find out whether there are any buildings built by the Delhi Sultans in your area.
2. Find out if there are any ruins of an old fort or fortress in your town. Write about it.