

Module -3

The attack of the Mongols.

The Mongols under Genghis Khan invaded Transoxiana in north-east Iran in 1219 and the Delhi Sultanate faced their onslaught soon after. Mongols attacks on the Delhi Sultanate increased during the reign of Alauddin Khalji and in the early years of Muhammad Tughluq's rule-forced the two rulers to mobilise a large standing army in Delhi which posed a huge administrative challenge.

See, below how both the sultans dealt with these administrative challenges:

Alauddin Khalji	Muhammad Tughluq
Delhi was attacked twice in 1299/1300 and 1302-1303. As a defensive measure, Alauddin Khalji raised a large standing army.	The Sultanate was attacked in the early years of Muhammad Tughluq's reign. The Mongol army was defeated. Muhammad Tughluq was confident about the strength of his army and his resources to plan an attack on Transoxiana. He therefore raised a large standing army.
Alauddin constructed a new garrison town named Siri for his soldiers.	Rather than constructing a new garrison town, the oldest of the four cities of Delhi was emptied of its residents and the soldiers garrisoned there. The residents were sent to the new capital of Daulatabad in the south.
The soldiers had to be fed. This was done through the produce collected as tax from lands between the Ganga and Yamuna. Tax was fixed at 50 percent of the peasant's yield.	Produce from the same area was collected as tax to feed the army. But to meet the expense of maintaining such a large number of soldiers the sultan levied additional taxes. This coincided with famine in the area.
The soldiers had to be paid. Alauddin chose to pay his soldiers salaries in cash rather than iqtas. The soldiers would buy their supplies from merchants in Delhi and it was thus feared that merchants would raise their prices. To stop this, Alauddin controlled the prices of	Muhammad Tughluq also paid his soldiers cash salaries. But instead of controlling prices he used a token currency made out of cheap metals not gold and silver. People in the fourteenth century did not trust these coins.. They were very smart, they saved their gold and silver coins and paid all their

<p>goods in Delhi. Prices were carefully surveyed by officers and merchants who did not sell at the prescribed rates were punished.</p>	<p>taxes to the state with this token currency. This cheap currency could also be counterfeited easily.</p>
<p>Alauddin's administrative measures were quite successful and chroniclers praised his reign for its cheap prices and efficient supplies of goods in the market. He successfully withstood the threat of Mongol invasions.</p>	<p>Muhammad Tughluq's administrative measures were a failure. His campaigns into Kashmir was a disaster. He then gave up his plans to invade Transoxiana and disbanded his large army . Meanwhile his administrative measures created complications. The shifting of people to Daulatabad was resented. The raising of taxes and famine in the Ganga-Yamuna belt led to widespread rebellion.</p>

Unlike Alauddin's defensive measures, Muhammad Tughluq's measures were conceived as a military offensive against the Mongols.

The Sultanate in the 15th and 16th Centuries

The Tughluqs, the Sayyid and Lodi dynasties ruled from Delhi and Agra until 1526. Jaunpur, Bengal, Malwa, Gujarat, Rajasthan and entire south India had independent rulers in this time They established flourishing states and prosperous capitals . This was also the period which saw the emergence of new ruling groups like the Afghans and the Rajputs. Some of the states established in this period were small but powerful and extremely well administered. Sher Shah Sur (1540-1545) started his career as the manager of a small territory for his uncle in Bihar and eventually challenged and defeated the Mughal emperor Humayun (1530-1540, 1555-1556). He captured Delhi and established his own dynasty. Sur dynasty ruled for fifteen years (1540-1555). It introduced an administration that borrowed elements from Alauddin Khalji and made them more efficient. Sher Shah's administration became the model for great emperor Akbar (1556-1605) when he consolidated the Mughal Empire.