

Khilji Dynasty

Dr. K. K. Patel
Head of Department History
Durga Mahavidyalaya Raipur (CG)

Introduction

The Khilji Dynasty (1290–1320 AD) was the second dynasty of the Delhi Sultanate. Founded by Jalal-ud-din Firuz Khilji, it marked the rise of a new ruling class of Turkish-Afghan origin. The dynasty is known for its military conquests, administrative reforms, and attempts to control market prices.

Major Rulers of Khilji Dynasty

1. Jalal-ud-din Firuz Khilji (1290–1296)

- - His real name was Malik Feroz Khilji
- He ruled from 1290 – 1296
- He is remembered as a benevolent ruler. Thus also known as a '*Saint ruler*'
- The most important retaliation during his reign was of Sidi Maula, which was suppressed by him
- He attempted to lay siege to the Ranthambore Fort which was unsuccessful. The fort was well fortified and was believed to be the most powerful fort of the time.
- Hamir Dev was the ruler of Ranthambore during this time.

- Mongols attacked India under the leadership of Abdullah, whom he referred to as his son
- Post this, a group of Mongols in the leadership of Ulgu settled at Delhi
- They were known as ‘New Muslims’
- Jalaluddin appointed Alauddin as the Iqtedar of Haasi and Kada. He was Jalaluddin’s nephew
- Alauddin was an extremely ambitious person
- He sought permission to attack Gujarat and South India from Jalaluddin
- He attacked Milsa (Gujarat) in 1293 and Devgiri (Maharashtra) in 1294
- Alauddin got excessive wealth during this attack
- This wealth should ideally have been submitted in the central treasury of the state, however, he kept it with himself
- On asking by Jalaluddin, Alauddin was called by Jalaluddin to a place called Kada to submit the wealth.
- Jalaluddin was however killed by Alauddin in Kada

2. Alauddin Khilji (1296–1316)

- His reign was from 1296 – 1316
- He became ruler after killing Jalaluddin
- Thus he had to prove his legality of rule among the people
- Due to the benevolent nature of Jalaluddin and his non-expansionist policies, the provincial rulers under the dynasty had freed themselves. Thus it was now important for Alauddin to win those areas back
- By this time, Mongols had a very strong army and a very aggressive expansionist policy
- To face these attacks by the Mongols, Alauddin needed a big army
- Also to prove his legality, he distributed a lot of wealth between the people

- Slowly, he was able to bring the people of Delhi under his influence
- He then started to expand his kingdom

3. Qutb-ud-din Mubarak Shah (1316–1320)

- Son of Alauddin Khilji.
- Removed strict regulations of his father.
- Assassinated by his favorite Khusro Khan, leading to the decline of the Khilji Dynasty.

Administration and Reforms

- Alauddin Khilji introduced several economic and administrative reforms.
- Market Control Policy: Fixed prices of essential commodities and appointed market inspectors.
- Land Revenue: Measurement of land for accurate revenue collection.
- Military Reforms: Maintained a large standing army and introduced branding of horses (Dagh) and descriptive rolls of soldiers (Chehra).

Decline of Khilji Dynasty

After the assassination of Mubarak Shah by Khusro Khan, the dynasty weakened. In 1320, Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq overthrew Khusro Khan and established the Tughlaq Dynasty, marking the end of Khilji rule.

Legacy of Khilji Dynasty

- Significant territorial expansion of the Delhi Sultanate.
- Successful defense against Mongol invasions.
- Economic reforms that influenced later rulers.
- Contribution to Indo-Islamic architecture and cultural development.