

Question # 1

Analyze the administrative policies of Aibak. To what extent did his rule lay the ground work for establishment of Delhi Sultanate

Introduction

Aibak was the founder of slave dynasty. He was the slave of Muhammad Ghori. He was in charge of Indian Campaign and was manumitted by his master. In order to strengthen muslim rule in India Aibak separated it from Ghaznavid empire and outlined the institution of Delhi Sultanate. After the death of Muhammad Ghori, Aibak was in charge of Doab, Punjab, and Sind. In order to strengthen his rule he framed certain administrative policies. However, his rule was short lived due to which he was unable to complete most of his tasks.

Administrative policies of Aibak

i) Use of Force and Diplomacy

After the Second battle of Tarain, Aibak was left in-charge of Indian campaigns. He setup his headquarter in Indraprastha and used force and diplomacy, compelling the ruler of Delhi to accept the suzerainty of Muhammad Ghori. He carried out such extensive propaganda that the ruler of Delhi submitted without any fighting.

ii) Made Lahore his Capital

After the death of Muhammad Ghori, Tajuddin Yildiz ascended the throne of Ghazni. He was defeated by Aibak who occupied Ghazni. After the occupation of Ghazni, Aibak indulged in pleasure and merry making for 40 days. During this time Yildiz returned and Aibak fled back to Hindustan. Due to the threat from Yildiz, Aibak made Lahore his capital instead of Delhi.

Cordial ties with sufi saint

During the reign of Aibak, Khawaja Moinuddin Chisti came to India. He spread the message of peace and love. He gained extreme popularity and won a number of converts in India. Aibak believed that it would be easier to establish his dominance in India due to the work of Khawaja Moinuddin Chisti. Therefore he did not intervene in his work. It was also believed that Aibak had cordial ties with the sufi saint.

Subjugation of Bengal

After the death of Muhammad Ghori, a civil war erupted in Bengal. The Khilji chiefs revolted and put Ali Mardan Khan in prison. He later escaped and went to Aibak. He appealed Aibak to intervene in the affairs of Bengal. Aibak appointed his capable officer Rumi Khan on this task. As a result a Khilji chief's accepted Ali Mardan Khan as their ruler. The latter also accepted Aibak's suzerainty and started sending annual tribute to

Aibak.

Formed allies with Turkish nobles

In order to strengthen his rule Aibak formed allies with Turkish nobles in India. He appointed his capable slave Iltutmish as the governor of Badaun. He did not let Khilji occupy any part of his Indian territory.

Outlined the institution of Delhi Sultanate

Aibak was the first ruler who gave India a capital. He was also the first Muslim ruler to rule India from within. He outlined the institution of Delhi Sultanate, but he could not get enough time to raise it to full stature.

Administered even handed justice

The reign of Aibak was marked with peace and tranquility. He administered even handed justice. Rule of law was observed in his state. There were no thieves and the robbery was out of question. Aibak was also very generous.

His generosity won him the title of Lakhabakhsh (giver of lakhs). During that time whenever someone was praised for his generosity, people used to call him "Aibak of the time".

Buildings and public works

Aibak won a name for himself due to his public works. He constructed a number of buildings which include

a) Quwaatul Islam mosque

Aibak constructed this mosque to commemorate the conquest of Delhi. A Hindu temple was torned down and the mosque was erected in its place. The foundations of mosque rests on the plinth of the Hindu temple.

b) Qutb Minar

It was a tower from which the muazin could call the faithful to prayer. It was named after the saint Khawaja Qutb-ud-din. It has a height of 225 ft. It was completed during the reign of Iltutmish.

c) Arahi Din Ka Thompra

It was a mosque in Ajmer. It was believed that Aibak constructed in one and a half day, due to which it got its name. However it seems impracticable. The mosque must have been completed in one and a half year. The verses of Quran are inscribed on the wall of the mosque.

Conclusion

Aibak was not only a brave general but also a wise administrator. He provided India with a capital and an independent government. He saved India from central Asian politics. He used both force and diplomacy in order to assert his dominance. His tenure was short but it was marked with peace, tranquility and justice. His policies laid the foundation of Muslim rule in India.

Question #2

Iltutmish is often considered the real consolidator of Delhi Sultanate. Critically evaluate this statement with reference to

political, military, and institutional contributions.

Introduction

Iluttmish is often considered the real consolidator of Delhi Sultanate. He belonged to Ilbari tribe of Turks. He was sold by his half-brother. Aibak bought him at a price of one lakh jitals. Iluttmish became the son-in-law of his master. He was promoted to Amir-i-Shikar and was also appointed as the governor of Badaun. When Iluttmish ascended the throne, he had to face a number of difficulties. He could not rely on his fellow Turkish nobles due to their . . . The rising power of Khawarizm Shah and the Mongols were a constant threat to the infant Delhi Sultanate. However, Iluttmish faced these odds with bravery. According to K.A. Nizami "He combined the interpridity of Turks with generosity of Persians". His actions contributed to the political, military, and institutional structure of Delhi Sultanate.

Political contributions of Iltutmish

When Iltutmish ascended the throne he made following political contributions

a) Made India an Independent State

When Iltutmish ascended the throne he made India an Independent State. However this process was achieved in two steps

i) Separated India from Ghaznawid Empire

When Iltutmish ascended on the throne of Delhi, Tajuddin Yildiz the ruler of Ghazni send him canopy and durshbad. Iltutmish accepted it as a fact to consolidate his position.

When Yildiz was forced by Khawarizm Shah to leave Ghazni he occupied Punjab. As a result Iltutmish challenged him at a head of larger army. Yildiz was defeated and ultimately killed. It led to the break of India from Ghaznawid empire. However India was still not considered legally independent.

ii) Investiture from Caliph

Iluttmish requested the Caliph to grant him an Investiture. As a result emissaries from Baghdad arrived with the royal investiture. Due to this India became an Independent kingdom and Iluttmish became the first King of India.

b) Provided a ruling class

Iluttmish provided a ruling class for India. He also framed the rules of Hierarchy. As a result his son and daughter both ascended the throne. It was a great achievement by a person who himself had remained a slave.

c) Provided organized nobility

Iluttmish provided an organized nobility for the Delhi sultanate. He appointed various provincial governors. He added considerable strength of nobility which later became the cause of downfall of his son and Daughter.

Military Contributions of Iltutmish

Following were the military contributions of Iltutmish

- a) He saved the infant Delhi Sultanate from the fury of Mongols.

Mongols were the nomadic tribes who ascended from the uplands of Tартary and spread fire and sword in the Islamic world. The ruler of Persia Khawazin Shah had to eat a humble pie at their hand. He was defeated by Chinggis Khan and fled to Caspian Sea while his son Mangbari fled towards India. The latter was followed closely by Chinggis Khan. When ~~he~~ requested Iltutmish for help the latter put his envoy to death and replied that the weather of India would not suit him. Thus with a stroke of diplomacy Iltutmish saved the infant Delhi Sultanate from the fury of Mongols.

- b) Conquered areas of Qanauj and Kalinjar

When Iltutmish ascended the

thence the Rajputs had occupied most of the territory of Ganay and Kalinjar. It was important to check their advance. Thus after the death of Chengiz Khan, Iltutmish launched a campaign and conquered the areas of Ganay and Kalinjar.

c) Defeat of Nassiruddin Qubacha

Iltutmish defeated Nassiruddin Qubacha twice. The first time he defeated Nassiruddin Qubacha, the latter took shelter in Sind. Iltutmish then launched an attack on Sind. Nassiruddin Qubacha while trying to escape plunged into the river and was drowned. The death of Qubacha removed an important rival of Iltutmish.

Institutional contributions of Iltutmish

Following are the institutional contributions of Iltutmish

1) Coinage of Delhi Sultanate

Iltutmish introduced silver Tankas and copper jitals

as currency of Delhi Sultanate. The name of Sultan was inscribed on the coins. According to Nelson "Iltutmish reign is marked by the coinage of Delhi Sultanate". His system of coinage continued throughout the history of India.

ii) Made Delhi his capital

Aibak set up his capital at Lahore. When Iltutmish ascended the throne he set up his capital at Delhi. This status was enjoyed by Delhi till the fall of Mughal empire.

Conclusion

Iltutmish is often regarded as the real founder of Muslim empire in India. It is true that Aibak was the first ruler of India but he could not spare enough time to consolidate his kingdom. The work of consolidation was done by Iltutmish. He not only saved the infant Muslim state from the fury of Mongol but he also ~~carved~~ independent status of India. He contributed efficiently to the political, military, and constitutional structure of India.

Question # 3

Ghiyas-ud-din Balban is credited with the introduction of "new kingship ideals" in Delhi Sultanate. Critically evaluate his policies of centralization, militarization, and suppression of nobility in shaping the Sultanate future

Introduction

Balban was one of the most important ruler of Delhi Sultanate. He was an Ilbari Turk. He was sold as a slave by Mongols. After passing from many hands, he was purchased by Iltutmish. Due to his intelligence and hardwork he got rapid promotions. He enjoyed all the powers of the state while he was the naib of Nassiruddin. When Balban himself ascended the throne the Delhi Sultanate was on the brink of collapse. Nobles were constantly plotting against each other for power. The prestige of Sultan was lost. There were frequent robberies even in Delhi which was the capital. Under the prevailing situation Balban

devised strict policy of centralization, militarization and suppressed the nobility to shape the future of Delhi Sultanate.

Balban's Centralization Policy

Following were the important steps of Balban's centralization policy

1) Restoring the prestige of Crown

During the weak rule of successors of Iltutmish the prestige of crown was lost. The provincial governors would compete against one another for placing their own candidate on the throne. When Balban was promoted to naib of Nasiruddin, he enjoyed all the powers of state while the latter was only a de facto ruler.

When Balban himself ascended the throne, he realized the importance of restoring the prestige of crown. For this purpose he focused on breaking the powers of provincial governors, appointed non-turks to high offices and enforced strict discipline.

2) Focused on Consolidation

Balban did not resort to new conquests, instead he focused on consolidation. When one of his courtiers said that previous ruler Aibak and Ilutmish had resorted to new conquests, Balban replied "Those were different times." He further added "We should focus on consolidating our territories instead of occupying foreign territories". Balban was aware of the fact that occupying new territories would require an army and an increase in administration, which the weak Sultanate of Delhi cannot afford at that time.

3) Imposition of Taxes

Balban imposed heavy taxes on the nobility to prevent them against rebellion. Moreover, one of the important postulates of his theory of kingship was that taxes should neither be too light due to which people might rebel nor should they be heavy to reduce people to poverty.

4) Production of grain

Another

important postulate of his theory of kingship was that the government should supervise the production of grain. It should also be distributed properly. If people do not have enough to eat they might rebel against the sovereign.

Harsh punishments

In order to uphold the writ of state, Balban would inflict harsh punishment which would strike terror and awe in the hearts of people. When people of Katchah rebelled, he slaughtered all the male population. He had given strict order to kill thieves and rebels. He also impaled the adherents of Tugril on either side of principle Bazar on iron rods.

Balban's Militarization policy

Following were the important steps of Balban's militarization policy

a) Reorganization of army

Balban reorganized the

Crushed Rebels with Iron hand

While dealing with rebels Balban showed no mercy. He crushed the rebels with Iron hand. When the people of Katchah revolted he killed entire male population while the women and children were sold as slaves. Similarly when Tugril Khan revolted in Bengal, he was killed. Balban also impaled the adherents of Targ on stakes on either side of principle bazar.

Suppression of Nobility

In order to suppress nobility Balban adopted the following measure

a) Blood and Iron policy

Balban took strict measures to deal with the nobility. A cup of poison and an assassin's dagger were equal to him. Harbat Khan the governor of Awadh was flogged with 500 stripes publicly for beating his slave to death when he was drunk. Another noble and cousin of Balban

was poisoned because Balban became suspicious of his ambition.

Promoted non-Turks to high offices

In order to break the power of the Folly, Balban appointed non-Turkish individuals to high offices. He killed the talent among the turks due to which they were completely outmaneuvered by the Khiljis.

Maintained strict discipline

Balban maintained strict discipline in his court. He introduced the practice of Paibos and Zamminbos i.e. prostration and kissing the feet of monarch. He also prohibited laughter in his court. By combining harsh punishments with strict discipline, Balban was able to suppress the nobility.

Conclusion

Lane poole considers Balban as "one of the most striking figures in the history of India". He turned the weak state of India into a strong and disciplined state. His strict policies proved

effective in strengthening the rule
of Muslims in the sub-continent.