

THE TUGHLAQ DYNASTY (1320-1414)

The brief reigns of the later Khilji rulers resulted in political chaos in Delhi. The strong and imposing personality of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq (1320-1325), combined with his skilful conciliation of rivals and usual generosity towards supporters, made him the most worthy successor to the throne of Delhi.

Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq (1320-1325)

Khusrau Khan, the last king of the Khilji dynasty, was killed by Ghazi Khan, who ascended the throne assuming the title of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq. He died in an accident and his son Ulugh Khan, who took the title of Muhammad- bin-Tughlaq, succeeded him.

Muhammad- bin-Tughlaq (1325-1351)

Prince Jauna, son of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq ascended the throne in 1325. During his reign, the capital was shifted from Delhi to Devangiri in the south, in 1327, and renamed Daulatabad; later he shifted it back to Delhi. Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq introduced taken coins of brass and copper, which had the same value as silver coins. His reign can be divided into two distinct phases: (1) From 1325 to 1335 (first 10 years), a period of peace and prosperity during which he introduced some important administrative innovations—also called the ‘era of innovations’; and (2) from 1335 to 1351 (last 15 years), a period that witnessed a series of revolts and the ultimate disintegration of the Tughlaq Empire. The five most important administrative innovations carried out by Muhammad during the first phase were: (i) enhancement of taxation in Doab; (ii) shifting of capital from Delhi to Devangiri in 1327; (iii) issuing of taken currency during 1329-1330; (iv) the Khurasan expedition; and (v) the Qrachal expedition. During the second phase the significant revolts that erupted were: Revolt of Malabar (1335); Revolt in Bengal (1336-1337); Revolt in Oudh (1340-1341); and Revolt in Sind (1342). He also carried out the Deccan Policies of nominal suzerainty and direct annexation, but both

failed and left him physically exhausted, politically dissipated and financially ruined.

End of Khiljis and Rise of Tughlaqs

After the death of Malik Rafur, Qutub-ud-din Mubarak Shah, another son of Ala-ud-din, removed his younger brother Umar from the throne and became the Sultan in 1316. During his rule the power was actually in the hands of a lowborn Hindu slave, who was given the title of Khusrau Khan by Mubarak. Himself. Khusrau, with the help of some of his friends, killed Mubarak and declared himself the Sultan. With this the rule of the Khilji dynasty came to an end. During his rule, Khusrau replaced Muslim officers with Hindu officers in all key positions of the country. The Hindu officers made the kingdom weak and the neighbouring Hindu states started attacking pockets of the empire. This situation was very difficult for the Muslims and they turned to a Tughlaq noble, popularly known as, Ghazi Malik. He defeated and killed Khusrau. He wanted to give power back to the Khilji dynasty, but could not find any survivor amongst the descendants of Ala-ud-din. In this situation, the nobles asked him to become Sultan. He ascended the throne on 8 September 1320, and assumed the title of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq Shah, thus becoming the founder of the Tughlaq dynasty. The Tughlaqs belonged to the Qarauna Turk tribe.

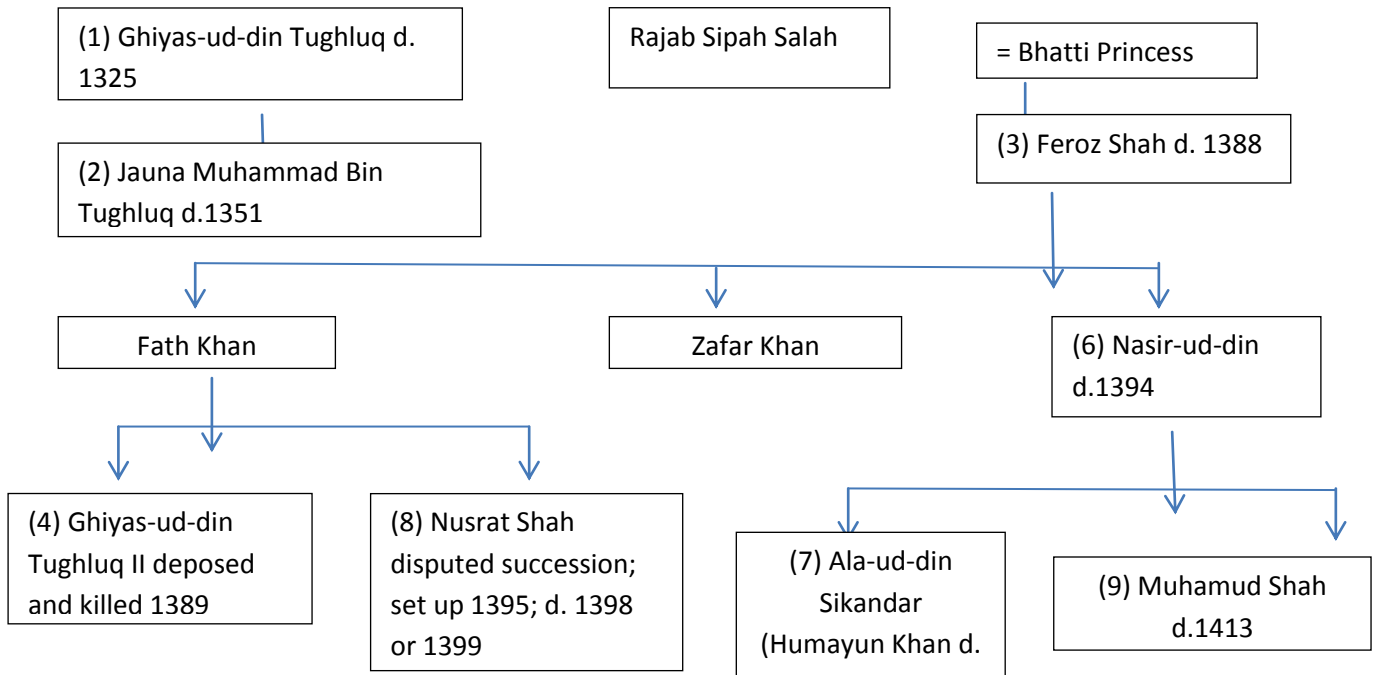


FIG 2.3 The Tughlaq Dynasty

Nasir-ud-din Tughlaq (1388-1414)

The Tughlaq dynasty could not survive much after Firoz Shah’s death. The Malwa, Gujarat and Sharqi kingdoms broke away from the Sultanate. During Timur’s invasion Punjab, Jammu, Delhi, Haridwar and Nagarkot also fell without much opposition, marking the end of the Tughlaq dynasty.

Ibn Batuta was an African traveller, who visited India in 1333 during the reign of the Tughlaqs, He was appointed as Chief Qazi of Delhi by the Sultan and subsequently as his ambassador to China in 1342.

Timur, a Turk-Mangol, invaded India in 1398 during the reign of Nasir-ud-din Tughlaq. His army mercilessly ransacked and plundered Delhi. Timur returned to Central Asia, leaving a nominee ruler in Punjab, thus, ending the Tughlaq dynasty.

The Advent of Sayyids

Khizr Khan, the founder of the Sayyid dynasty, claimed to be a descendant of the Prophet of Islam, Hazrat Muhammad. Khizr collaborated with Timur during his invasion of India. As a reward, on his departure from the area, Timur made Khizr the governor of Lahore, Multan, and Dipaipur. When Mahmud Shah the last of the Tughlaq rulers, died in 1412, Daulat Khan Lodhi and Khizr both attempted to occupy the throne of Delhi. In 1414, Khizr won the battle and established the rule of his dynasty in Delhi. Although Khizr Khan was completely sovereign. He preferred to rule in the name of Timur, and then in the name of Timur's successor, Shah Rukh.

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