
UNIT 15 TERRITORIAL EXPANSION

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15.0 OBJECTIVES

You have read in Unit 14 that after military conquests, the rulers of the Delhi Sultanate set themselves on the track of consolidating the Sultanate. The first hundred years of the Delhi Sultanate did not thus witness any large-scale expansion of the initial territorial gains of the Sultanate. It was only after first establishing the roots of the Sultanate that attention was paid to the expansion of the boundaries of the Sultanate in the fourteenth century.

After reading this Unit you will know about:

- the territorial expansion of the Delhi Sultanate in the 14th century in the north, north-west and north-east, and
- Sultanate expansion in the south.

15.1 INTRODUCTION

The initial surge of occupation under the early Turkish Sultans died down about the middle of the thirteenth century. Now the primary objective of the later Sultans became the consolidation of the Sultanate. Thus, it was not until the establishment of the Khalji rule that the boundaries of the Sultanate expanded beyond the early gains. The overthrow of the Turkish hegemony at the end of the thirteenth century and its replacement with the Khaljis, under whom the exclusive racial character of the ruling class was thoroughly diluted, is thus an event not without significance. The opening up of the Sultanate and diversified participation of ruling groups in managing the affairs of the Sultanate made territorial expansion a feasible proposition. Initial forays into Jhain and Ranthambhor soon after the accession of Jalaluddin Feruz Khalji to the Sultanate of Delhi, had brought home the fact that territorial expansion was now a political necessity. Neighbouring kingdoms had become strong and any concerted attempt against the Sultanate could cost it dear. Moreover, Alauddin's glittering prospect of the acquisition of wealth, besides extending territorial gains, had set the stage at the beginning of the fourteenth century for the adoption of an expansionist policy.

15.2 EXPANSION UNDER THE KHALJIS

The first of the Khalji Sultans, Jalaluddin, did neither have will nor resources to undertake any large-scale expansionist programme. His six years reign was gripped by the internal contradiction of having to reconcile between the policies of the Sultan

and the interests of his supporters. The resolution of this problem came in the unfortunate assassination of the Sultan. Alauddin Khalji, his assassin and successor, had a different imperial design. He was to herald an age of territorial annexation and expansion of the Sultanate which saw the frontiers of the Sultanate reaching close to the tip of the Southern peninsula by the middle of the fourteenth century.

15.2.1 West and Central India

Alauddin Khalji, after consolidating his position and firmly establishing himself at Delhi, undertook the first expedition in the region of Gujarat in 1299. This also happened to be the first project of territorial expansion under him. Possibly Alauddin was attracted by the wealth of Gujarat whose flourishing trade had always lured invaders.

The imperial army was jointly commanded by Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan, two of Alauddin's best army generals. Gujarat was an easy prey—the province was plundered and the capital Anhilwara was sacked. The administrative control of Gujarat was entrusted to Alp Khan as governor.

In the control and westward expansion of the empire, the next kingdom to fall was that of Malwa in 1305. It was an extensive region and was governed from the capital Mandu by Rai Mahalak Dev with the assistance of a powerful minister Koka Pradhan. The imperial army was outnumbered by the forces of Rai but did eventually succeed and the fort of Mandu was captured. The province of Malwa, after its fall, was given for administration to Ainul Mulk who was known to have soon brought Ujjain, Dhar and Chanderi, too, under his control.

Malwa was followed by Siwana, a town situated some eighty kilometres to the south-west of Jodhpur. Alauddin's army had been besieging Siwana for five or six years beginning 1304-05 without much success. The fort was finally captured in 1309. The ruler of Siwana, Rai Sital Dev, was killed in action and the fort and the territory was put under the charge of Kamaluddin Gurg.

In the same year (1309), Jalor was attacked and its ruler Kanhar Dev was killed in the battle and the fort annexed to the Sultanate under the control of Kamaluddin Gurg.

15.2.2 North-West and North India

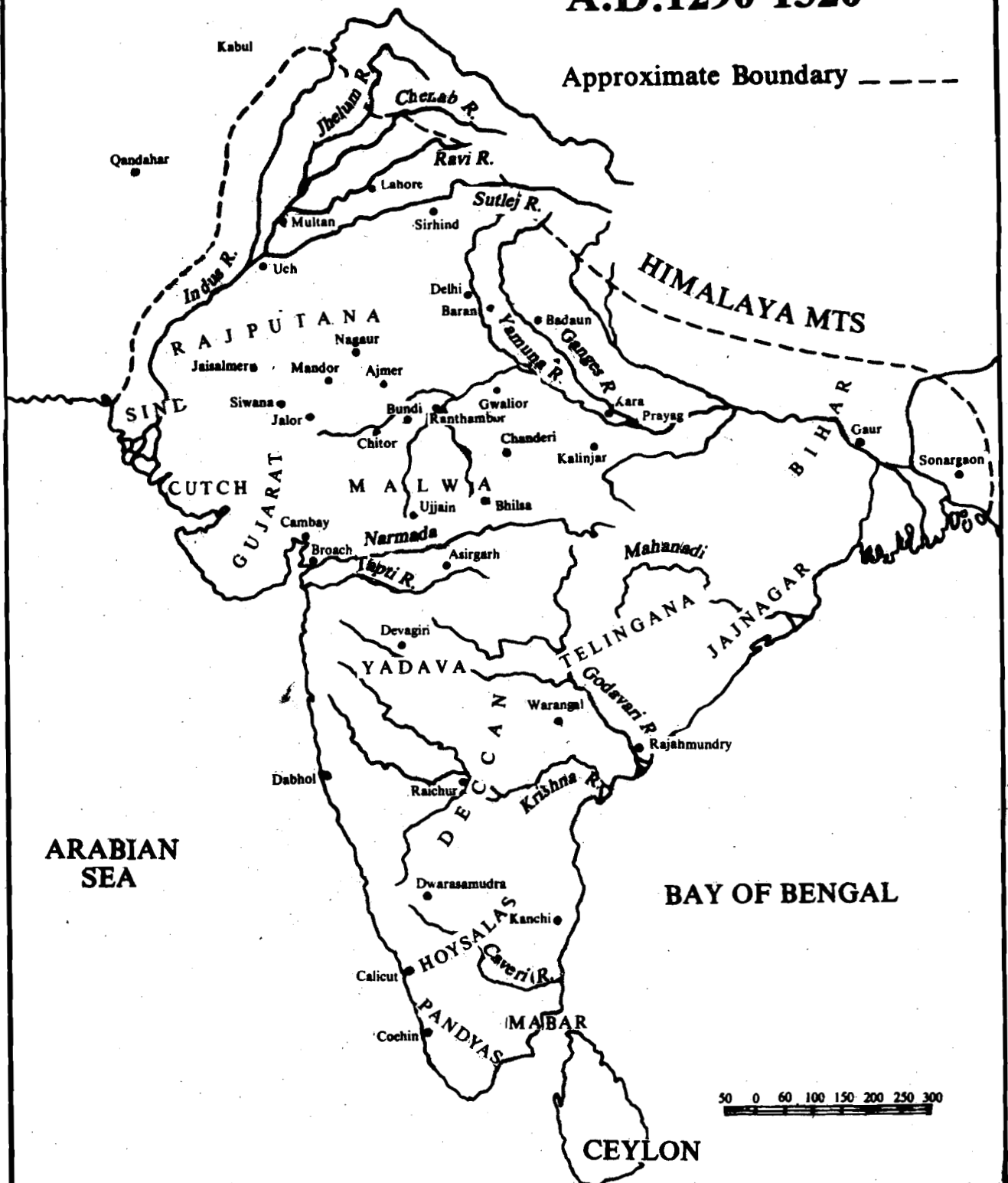
Soon after his accession, Alauddin was faced with the problem of suppressing the prospects of revolt by the surviving member of Jalaluddin's family who had fled to Multan. Ulugh Khan and Zafar Khan were entrusted with the job of eliminating Arkali Khan at Multan. Arkali Khan was made prisoner and escorted to Delhi. Multan once again came under the control of Delhi. Strictly speaking, Multan expedition was not an act of territorial expansion but formed part of the policy of consolidation.

In 1300, Alauddin sent Ulugh Khan to march against Ranthambhor ruled by Rai Hamir. Nusrat Khan, then posted at Awadh, joined Ulugh Khan. The Imperial army captured Jhain on the way and then laid a siege. Alauddin had to personally take the command of the campaign. The siege lasted for over six months. Ultimately, the women inside the fort performed *jauhar* and one night the gates of the fort were opened by Hamir Dev who died fighting.

In pursuance of the same policy, Alauddin attacked the kingdom of Chittor in 1303. After several assaults, the ruler of Chittor suddenly sent an offer of surrender to the Sultan on his own. The heir apparent Khizr Khan was assigned the governorship of the territory. But soon the fort was bestowed upon Maldeo, a son of the sister of the earlier ruler of Chittor, who remained loyal to Delhi till the end of Alauddin's reign.

By the end of the first decade of Alauddin's rule the frontiers of the Delhi Sultanate had expanded to cover almost the whole of north, west and central India. From Multan in the north-west to the Vindhya in central India, and almost the entire

DELHI SULTANATE A.D.1290-1320



15.2.3 Deccan and Southward Expansion

Devagiri in the Deccan had already tasted Alauddin's plunder in A.D. 1296 during his tenure as the governor of Kara. The next military campaign in the Deccan was again planned by Alauddin against Rai Ram Chandra Dev of Devagiri in 1306-7. An immediate cause for this was an unduly long delay in sending the annual tribute to Delhi in 1296.

The command of the Deccan campaign was given to Malik Kafur, and directions were sent to Ainul Mulk Multani and Alp Khan for providing assistance. Only a feeble resistance was provided by Ram Chandra Dev as he surrendered to the imperial army under the assurance of personal safety. His son, however fled with a part of the army. Ram Chandra Dev was accorded great honour by the Sultan and restored to the throne of Devagiri in return for the assurance of regular and prompt payment of an annual tribute to the Sultan. The Rai also gave his daughter in marriage to the Sultan. It appears that Alauddin's policy was not to annex Devagiri but retain it as a protectorate and amass as much wealth as possible from the kingdom.

Malik Kafur's careful handling of the affair of Devagiri enhanced Sultan's confidence in his abilities as a military general and he decided to entrust him with the responsibility to make forays in the peninsular region in the South. Acquisition of wealth from southern kingdoms and not actual territorial annexation seems to have been the prime motive in sending these expeditions. Accordingly, in October 1309 the imperial army began its southward march under the command of Malik Kafur. Amir Khusrav has given details of these campaigns in his *Khazain-ul Futuh*. Enroute a surprise assault was made by Malik Kafur on the fort at Sirpur (in Adilabad District). The nobles of Sirpur fled to Rai Rudra Dev of Warangal and the fort was captured by the Imperial army.

By the middle of January 1310, the marching army had reached the suburbs of Warangal.

On 14 February 1310, Kafur attacked the fort. The war came to an end because Rai Rudra Dev decided to surrender. He agreed to part with his treasures and pay an annual tribute as token of submission.

Warangal was a spectacular success for the Sultanate army: the booty comprised of 20,000 horses, 100 elephants, and an enormous stock of gold and precious stones laden on thousand camels. The province was not territorially annexed but accorded the status of a protectorate. The imperial army came back to Delhi at the beginning of June 1310. Sultan's avarice now knew no bounds. Since the Sultanate was by this time made secure of Mongol menace and almost the entire country to the north of the Vindhyas had come under the sway of Alauddin, he planned another military campaign in the far south.

The sight of the Sultan was now set on Dwarasamudra, further south of Warangal. Malik Kafur was once again commanding imperial army and was instructed to capture nearly 500 elephants besides the treasures of gold and precious stones. The fort was besieged in February 1311 and the very next day a message seeking peace came from Ballala Dev, the ruler of Dwarasamudra. Like earlier cases the terms included parting of much wealth and a promise for annual tribute.

Encouraged by his success in Dwarasamudra, Malik Kafur decided to move further south. Accordingly, he marched towards Ma'bar in a little less than a month's time reached Madura, the capital of the Pandyas. Sundar Pandya, the ruler, had already fled. The elephants and treasure were captured by Malik Kafur. There were 512 elephants, 5000 horses and 500 mans of precious stones.

Alauddin's Deccan and southward campaigns were aimed at achieving two basic objectives: (i) a formal recognition of the authority of Delhi Sultan over these regions, and (ii) the amassing of maximum wealth at the minimal loss of life. His

policy of not annexing the conquered territories but accepting the acknowledgement of the Sultan's suzerainty speaks of Alauddin's political sagacity.

Within a year, however, of Malik Kafur's return from Ma'bar, developments in the Deccan called for a review of the policy of non-annexation. Ram Dev, the ruler of Devagiri, died sometime in the latter half of 1312 and was succeeded by his son Bhillama. Bhillama refused to accept the suzerain status of the Sultan of Delhi and declared his independence. Alauddin sent Malik Kafur to suppress the rebellion and instructed him to take temporary charge of the province. But Malik Kafur was soon called back and asked to handover charge of the province of Ainul Mulk. In January 1316, after Alauddin's death, even Ainul Mulk was called back to Delhi, leaving the affairs of Devagiri unsettled. Thus, Mubarak Khalji, the successor of Alauddin, wanted to march to Devagiri soon after his accession, but was advised by his nobles to take some more time so as to consolidate his position in Delhi. In the second year of his reign in April 1317, Mubarak started for the campaign. The march was uneventful. Devagiri offered no resistance, and the Maratha chiefs submitted before the Sultan. The province was annexed to the Sultanate.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) From the places given below, identify the first one conquered by Alauddin Khalji as Sultan of Delhi:
 - a) Devagiri
 - b) Malwa
 - c) Gujarat
 - d) Ma'bar

- 2) Which of the following places were annexed to the Delhi Sultanate by Alauddin Khalji:
 - a) Warangal
 - b) Siwana
 - c) Devagiri
 - d) Jalor

- 3) Explain Alauddin's policy with regard to the kingdoms in the Deccan and far south.

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- 4) Who from among the names listed below was appointed the first governor of Devagiri after its annexation by the Sultanate:
 - a) Rai Ram Chandra Dev
 - b) Malik Kafur
 - c) Mubarak Khalji
 - d) Khusrau Khan

15.3 EXPANSION UNDER THE TUGHLUQS

The Tughluqs came to power in Delhi when Ghiyasuddin Tughluq ascended the throne in 1320. The Sultanate was suffering from unsettled political conditions and demanded immediate attention of the new ruler. The outlying provinces had proclaimed independence as the effective control of the Sultanate had shrunk only to the heartland. The administrative machinery was completely out of gear and the treasury had been completely depleted. Ghiyasuddin naturally addressed himself first

to the task of restoring the exchequer and the administration. But soon after that came the question of restoring prestige and authority in the outlying parts of the empire.

15.3.1 The South

The political condition in the Deccan was not assuring in any way. The acceptance of Alauddin's suzerainty and the promise of loyalty by the rulers of the South was only nominal. Fresh military expeditions were certainly needed for the reinforcement of imperial authority in Devagiri and Telingana. Devagiri, as you have already read, had been annexed to the Sultanate by Mubarak Khalji. But the southern states beyond Devagiri had completely overthrown whatever little semblance of imperial authority remained there. The Telingana, therefore, claimed Ghiyasuddin's immediate attention.

In 1321, Ulugh Khan (later Muhammad Tughluq) started for the south with a large army. Without much resistance in the way he reached Warangal. After two sieges, each lasting four or five months, the ruler Rai Rudra Dev finally decided to surrender. But this time there was no forgiving the recalcitrant: the fort was occupied, plundered and some demolitions effected. The Rai was made a prisoner and escorted to Delhi. Warangal was annexed to the Sultanate under direct imperial administration.

In continuation of the same policy Ulugh Khan also brought Ma'bar to submission and set up direct imperial administration there. The region of Telingana was thus made a part of the Delhi Sultanate and divided into several administrative units. The local talent was abundantly employed in the administration and acts of vandalism against the vanquished were forbidden.

15.3.2 East India

The expedition in the eastern parts of India came as a consequence of the wars in the South. Bhanudeva II, the ruler of Jainagar in Orissa, had given support to Rai Rudra Dev of Warangal at the time of imperial offensive against the latter. Ulugh Khan, therefore, after leaving Warangal sometime in the middle of 1324, marched against Jainagar. A fierce battle took place in which victory sided with Ulugh Khan. He plundered the enemy camp and collected large booty. Jainagar was annexed and made a part of the Sultanate.

Bengal was another kingdom in the east which had always been a hotbed of sedition. Its governors would not miss any opportunity of asserting independence. In 1323-24 a fratricidal quarrel broke out in Lakhnauti after the death of Feroz Shah, the ruler of this independent principality. Some nobles from Lakhnauti came to Ghiyasuddin for help who responded and decided to march to Bengal in person. After reaching Tirhut the Sultan himself made a halt and deputed Bahram Khan with a host of other officers to march to Lakhnauti. The rival forces confronted each other near Lakhnauti. In the battle that ensued the forces of Delhi easily pushed back Bengal army and pursued them for some distance. One of the warring groups led by Nasiruddin was conferred a tributary status at Lakhnauti.

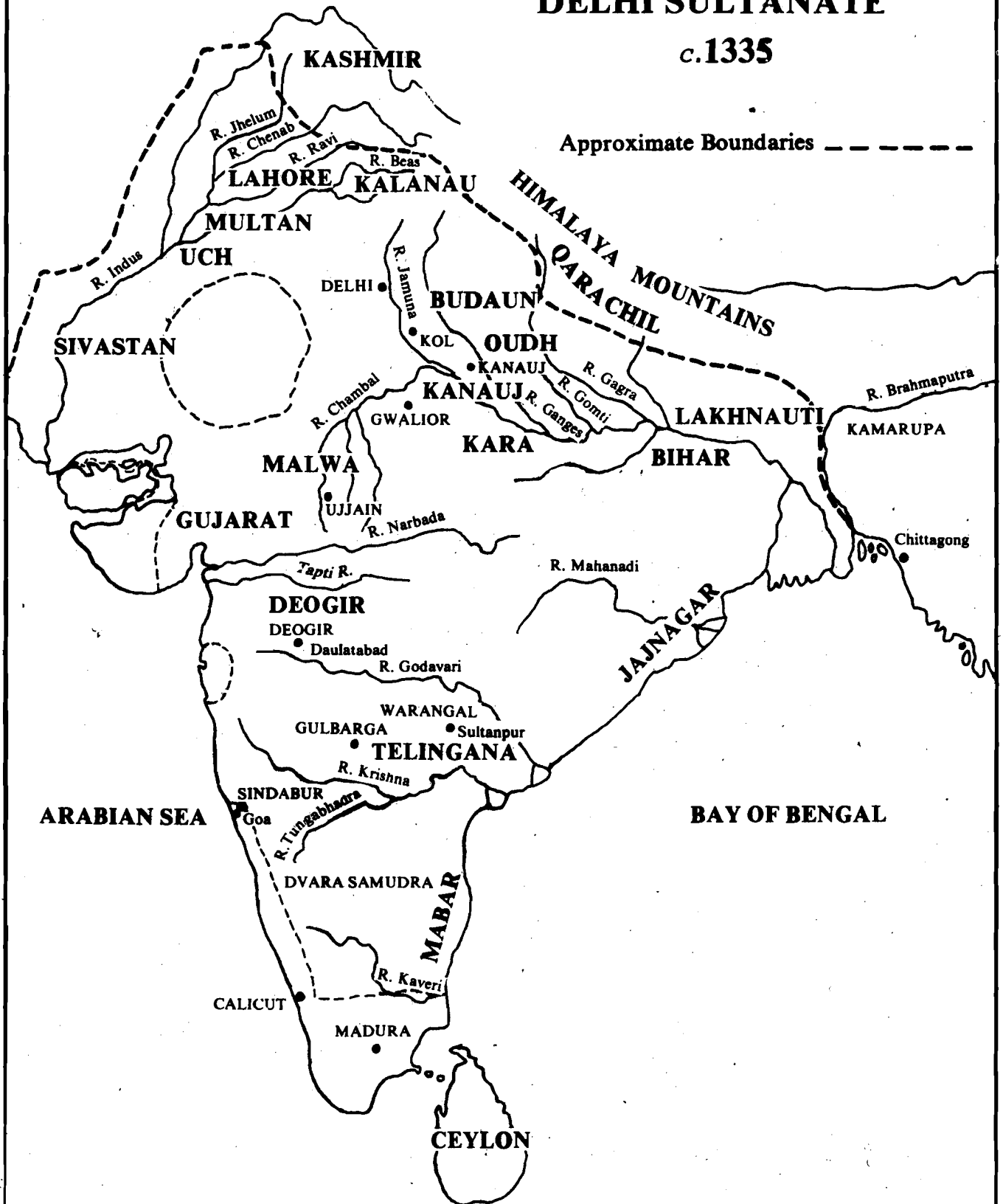
15.3.3 North-West and North

Since Alauddin's expedition to Multan the north-western frontier of the Sultanate had remained fixed. Subsequent Sultans were mostly occupied with the affairs of the South and Gujarat. It was after Muhammad Tughluq acceded to the throne that attention was paid to the north-west frontier. Soon after his accession, Muhammad Tughluq led campaigns to Kalanaur and Peshawar. Probably it was a sequel to the invasion of the Mongols under Tarmashirin Khan in 1326-27 and was aimed at securing north-western frontier of the Sultanate against future Mongol attacks. On his way to Kalanaur, the Sultan stayed at Lahore but ordered his army to march and conquer Kalanaur and Peshawar. The task seems to have been accomplished without much difficulty. The Sultan settled the administrative arrangement of the newly conquered regions and marched back to Delhi.

DELHI SULTANATE

c.1335

Approximate Boundaries - - - - -



Sometime in 1332, Sultan Muhammad Tughluq planned the conquest of the Qarachil region identified as the modern Kulu in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. It formed part of the plan to fortify north and north-west frontier. For this purpose, he enlisted a large army under the command of Khusrav Malik. The army succeeded in occupying Jidya, an important place in Qarachil region, and was then instructed to return. But in his enthusiasm, Khusrav Malik exceeded the instruction and marched ahead towards Tibet. Soon the rains set in and the army was overtaken by disease and panic. The disaster was such that only three soldiers returned to tell the tale of the catastrophe. Qarachil expedition led to tremendous waste of resources and an erosion in the authority of Muhammad Tughluq.

A little before Qarachil expedition, Muhammad Tughluq had launched an ambitious project of bringing Khurasan under submission. A large army of soldiers numbering about 370,000 was recruited for this purpose and the soldiers were paid a year's salary in advance. Large sum was also invested in the purchase of costly equipments for the army. Ultimately when the project was abandoned as an unrealistic scheme and the army disbanded, it led to a tremendous financial loss. The authority of the Sultan also suffered a serious setback and a series of rebellions followed that hollowed the most extensive of the empire of Delhi Sultanate.

Check Your Progress 2

1) When were southern kingdoms annexed to the Delhi Sultanate:

- a) Under Alauddin Khalji
- b) Under Mubarak Khalji
- c) Under Ghiyasuddin Tughluq
- d) Under Muhammad Tughluq

2) Which of the following military expeditions was abandoned:

- a) Warangal
- b) Qarachil
- c) Jajnagar
- d) Khurasan

3) Why was Qarachil expedition a disaster?

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4) Which of the following formed the eastern limit of the Sultanate in 1335?

- a) Jajnagar
- b) Peshawar
- c) Kalanaur
- d) Malwa

15.4 LET US SUM UP

You have read in Unit 14 how after the death of Iltutmish in 1235 the process of expansion of the boundaries of Delhi Sultanate came to a halt. Following this for nearly a half century all efforts of the Sultans of Delhi were geared towards consolidating early territorial gains by strengthening the fiscal and administrative base of the Sultanate. The next phase of territorial expansion, therefore, began with the opening of the fourteenth century under the Khaljis. Alauddin's administrative and economic measures had helped consolidation as well as widen the base of the

Even then we find Alauddin moving in this direction with a reasonable distance from the central seat of the Sultanate for implementing an effective control of the Sultan over directly annexed territories and made them the provinces of the Sultanate. But more distant regions were conquered for two main reasons—the acquisition of wealth and according the status of a protectorate rather than making them a part of the Sultanate. This was particularly true of kingdoms conquered in the Deccan and in far south.

This policy was changed, in the case of Devagiri, by Mubarak Khalji. It was followed by Ghiyasuddin Tughluq in the distant kingdoms in far south like Warangal and Ma'bar. The question of effective administrative control was addressed by Muhammad Tughluq by making Devagiri the second administrative seat of the Sultanate. But that experiment was shortlived and failed due partially due to the unwillingness of the ruling and other classes of the Sultanate. Nonetheless, under Muhammad Tughluq's reign the boundaries of the Sultanate were at their apex touching Peshawar in the north-west and Ma'bar in the South, and Gujarat in the West and Jainagar in Orissa in the East. It was, however, an irony of fate that in the closing years of the reign of the same Sultan, the boundaries of the Sultanate shrank nearly the A.D. 1296 status. The reasons for this decline have been discussed in Unit 18 of Block 5.

15.5 KEY WORDS

Avarice: Greed for wealth

Booty: Things captured from an enemy in war

Jauhar: The practice of committing mass self-immolation by women in case of imminent defeat at the hand of enemy followed in some Indian kingdoms

Vandalism: Destruction of public and private property

15.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) (a) × (b) × (c) ✓
- 2) (a) × (b) ✓ (c) × (d) ✓
- 3) See Sub-Section 15.2.3
- 4) (a) × (b) ✓ (c) × (d) ×

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) (a) × (b) ✓ (c) × (d) ×
- 2) (a) × (b) × (c) × (d) ✓
- 3) See Sub-Section 15.3.3
- 4) (a) ✓ (b) × (c) × (d) ×

Appendix

CHRONOLOGY OF THE DELHI SULTANS (A.D. 1206-1526)

ILBARITES

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| 1) Outbuddin Aibak | 1206 – 1210 |
| 2) Aram Shah | 1210 – 1211 |
| 3) Iltutmish | 1211 – 1236 |
| 4) Raziya | 1236 – 1240 |
| 5) Bahram Shah | 1240 – 1242 |
| 6) Masud Shah | 1242 – 1246 |
| 7) Nasiruddin | 1246 – 1266 |
| 8) Ghiyasuddin Balban | 1266 – 1287 |
| 9) Kaiqubad | 1287 – 1290 |

KHILJIS

1) Jalaluddin Khalji	1290 – 1296
2) Alauddin Khalji	1296 – 1316
3) Qutbuddin Mubarak	1316 – 1320

TUGHLUQS

1) Ghiyasuddin Tughluq	1320 – 1325
2) Muhammad Tughluq	1325 – 1351
3) Feruz Tughluq	1351 – 1388
4) Tughluq Shah-II	1388 – 1390
5) Nasiruddin Muhammad Shah	1390 – 1394
6) Mahmud Shah Tughluq	1394 – 1412*

SAYYIDS

1) Khizr Khan	1414 – 1421
2) Mubarak Shah	1421 – 1434
3) Muhammad Shah	1434 – 1443
4) Alauddin Alam Shah	1443 – 1451

LODIS

1) Bahlol Lodi	1451 – 1489
2) Sikandar Lodi	1489 – 1517
3) Ibrahim Lodi	1517 – 1526

* Period between 1412-1414 was a period of internal conflict

SOME USEFUL BOOKS FOR THIS BLOCK

A.B.M. Habibullah, The Foundation of Muslim Rule in India

K.S. Lal, History of the Khaljis A.D. 1290-1320, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1980 (Revised Edition).

(Agha) Mahdi Husain, Tughluq Dynasty.

Mohammad Habib & K.A. Nizami (ed.), Comprehensive History of India, Vol. V: Delhi Sultanate.

Awadh Behari Pandey, Early Medieval India, Central Book Depot, Allahabad.