

Chapter – 61

## 'Alauddin Khilji

(1266 - 1316 AD)

'Alauddin's name is 'Ali and another name is also told as Gershasab. His date of birth is supposed to be around 1266AD. Father's name is Shahabuddin Khilji.

'Alauddin did not get a regular chance to read and write in his childhood, but at a young age he received regular training in the use of weapons, horse riding and other sports. His early victories reveal that he must have received better training in sword fighting and other men's exercises.

Firoz Shah Jalaluddin Khilji, who ruled India from 1290AD to 1296AD, was the uncle and father-in-law of 'Alauddin Khilji. Jalaluddin was a gentleman, God-fearing and peaceful ruler. He was regarded as one of the most pious Muslims of his time. He treated his countrymen like a father to a family. The period of Jalaluddin's reign was short. After that, his successor 'Alauddin Khilji played the most important role in the field of Indian history.

During the reign of Jalaluddin, 'Alauddin Khilji held various positions and also participated in many war fronts.

After the death of his uncle, 'Alauddin became his successor in 1296AD. The public was generally delighted for taking over his throne, but they themselves had many problems. The most important of them was the constant threat of the Mongols from the northwest of the country. The second issue was the presence of Gakkhar tribe in Punjab. Moreover, they

were also worried from the Rajput states of Gujrat, which were apparently thin in quantity but were quite self-governing. They were also feeling danger from the Hindu rulers in Bihar, Bengal and Orissa. Above all, Jalaluddin's own sons were also one of their causes for concern. Issues of internal unity and governance were also there.

Before taking over as ruler, he had already gained much fame as a military commander due to his earlier amazing success against the powerful Maratha army of the Devgiri in southern India. Thus, after the attainment of the throne, he made the first military operation towards Multan and Gujarat with the assistance of Alag Khan and Nusrat Khan and succeeded. With the help of other military journals such as Alp Khan, he also gained many successive victories. In 1299AD, he defeated the Qatlagh Khwaja. In 1303AD, he repelled the most dangerous Mongol invasion. In the same year he also conquered Chittor. In 1308AD he succeeded in Savanna. On account of his abilities, action plans, and unparalleled strength, he quickly became one of India's greatest rulers of the Middle Ages. During his time, the most dangerous combats were either against the Mongols or fight with Rajputs. Most of them were led by 'Alauddin himself. There, he very well demonstrated his organizational ability, tactics, and military skills.

Though 'Alauddin Khilji was not an educated person, but he was a master of immense aptitude, agility and intelligence. He was naturally hard-tempered. The historians attribute his lack of knowledge as the reason for his hardship and dexterity in nature. Despite all this, he was a true Muslim. He had strong belief in his religion. He did not tolerate being told or heard of anything against his religion. He had great respect to his contemporary saints. He never met Sheikh Nizamuddin Auliya personally but he believed in the spiritual powers of the Sheikh

Sahib. It was quite natural not to give equal opportunities to the Hindus, but at the same time, there is no evidence that 'Alauddin had oppressed the Hindus community simply because of their religion.

'Alauddin took great interest in the welfare of his people. During his tenure, he made rules for banning liquor. First he gave up drinking alcohol himself and then he banned others from drinking alcohol and taking other drugs. He abolished open public sexuality and forced prostitute women to marry at the earliest. In the same way, he stopped those who were indulged in magical and mysterious things. In this way, he was a social worker too.

The greatest passion of 'Alauddin Khilji was his enthusiasm. He wanted to go beyond Alexander's conquests. One thing that is certain that whether it was the matter of his victories, or his constructive masterpieces, or his economic reforms, in every item the extraordinary eagerness of 'Alauddin Khilji is evident. The desire to create a name for himself was undoubtedly alive in him.