



**ARMY ORGANISATION UNDER THE  
SULTANS OF DELHI  
(13th AND 14th CENTURY)**

*THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF*

**Doctor of Philosophy  
IN  
HISTORY**

*BY*  
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*M. Phil.*

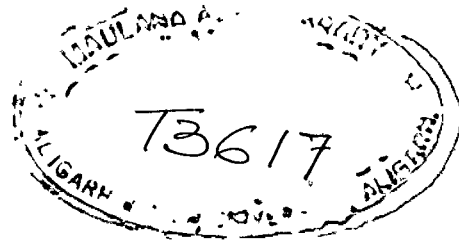
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ALIGARH (INDIA)*

*1987*



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## A B S T R A C T

The Delhi Sultans had assimilated, accepted and rejected in its military organisation the Central Asian and Rajput traditions of warfare, These two diverse military organisations had deep impact on the Indian army during the 13th and 14th centuries. It was therefore deemed necessary to incorporate the 'Military Organisation of the Mongols' and the 'Rajput Traditions of warfare' in the Introduction of this work which enables a better understanding of the Army Organisation of the Delhi Sultans.

The Mongols adopted the Central Asian traditions of warfare which gave emphasis on cavalry and the mobility of troops. They were a well knit military force, disciplined and ferocious. All these combined to give them enough success in their military expeditions.

The Turks established themselves as rulers in India after overcoming their Rajput adversaries whose resistance lasted till mid of 13th century. The incorporation of the Rajputs in the army resulted in the assimilation of Indian modes of warfare of employing elephants and the increase in the number of the infantry corps which was constituted mostly of Indian soldiers. A critical analysis of the Rajput tradition

of warfare has been dealt with in later part of the Introduction.

After the establishment of the Delhi Sultans a separate unit of administration called the Diwan-i-Ard took over the charge of organising the whole army. Chapter I deals with the duties and function of the Ariz, the administration of the cavalry, elephantry and infantry corps, the military hierarchy, duties of the military officers and mode of payments made to the army.

This chapter incorporates the study of the supply of horses and elephants for the army and their effectiveness in battles.

Recruitment of the soldiers their composition and Training is the second chapter of my thesis in which I have discussed the mode of recruitment of the soldiers in the army which was open to all and any one who possessed the desired qualification. This ushered a change in the composition of the army which now consisted of soldiers belonging to different races and nations. The significance of this change in the army brought criticism from Bārani who abhorred the rise of low caste people in the state's administration, The change gradually led to the dominance of the Afghans who ultimately carved out a separate kingdom for themselves.

The Delhi army inspite of being composed of men belonging to different social background never suffered from any problem relating to the conduct of the battle as all the soldiers were given thorough military training on the same pattern. The trainings imparted to the soldiers kept them agile and fit which were greatly responsible for maintaining the political authority in northern India and its extention in the Deccan, inspite of constant foreign invasions by the Mongols. Brave and able military generals like Zafar Khan and Ghazi Malik were feared by the Mongols.

Sultans like Balban and Ala-ud-Din Khalji paid due attention in maintaining an efficient army and took great interest in its upkeep. All the sultans took the army out for hunting which was organised in the manner of a military campaign.

Various military exercises and trainings had been discussed in this chapter on the availability of references as found in the sources.

The 'Methods of warfare' which constitutes the third chapter is a detailed account on the traditions and systems of warfare prevalent during our period of study. A military campaign was a well organised affair in which minute details of communications, routes to be followed, length of march,

speed, provisions etc. were chalked out.

Various methods of fighting a battle was adopted to surprise the enemy. The army was usually divided into four main divisions with flanking parties and the attack was initiated from the wing which could provide the initial success. Strategies and tactics of war changed considerable from time to time like feigned retreat, ambush, Sirriya, Shabkun etc. The camps was well protected and warriors always remained on duty as guards.

Apart from battles fought on the open plains, the army of the Delhi Sultans excelled in seige operations too. In such operations the army put into use mechanical artilleries, mines, sabats etc. which gave them easy victory over the Rajput strong holds.

Chapter IV deals with the study of various arms and armours used by the soldiers. It incorporates the details of their origin, means of manufactures, their use and effectiveness. The army of the Delhi Sultans had used weapons belonging to foreign origin and also those made in India. Among the offensive weapons the Kaman-i-hindavi, mauj-i-darya and neza-i-hindi were considered the best. The soldiers equipped themselves with bow and arrows, swords, lance along with lassoes and dagger which were used as the situation demanded. The soldiers protected themselves with shields and other armours like breast plate, helmet etc. The horses and the elephants were covered

with steel armours called barqustawana.

Weapons like manjanigs, arradas, Charkh, Zamburak etc. which discharged heavy missiles and fiery arrows were used during seige operations.

Chapter V, Forts and Their Importance is a survey of different forts in possession of the Delhi Sultans. The forts of the Rajput rulers were constructed on high altitude and had a defensive purpose. There forts had abundance of provisions, independent sources of water supply etc. and were capable of offering stiff resistance, but they were never employed as a military station. The Sultans of Delhi used these very forts as a means of initiating attack. They served as military garrisons which defended the territories located in its jurisdiction and maintained law and order.

This chapter includes the description of medieval forts as described in the contemporary records, supplemented by modern archaeological works. Some forts like Delhi, Gwalior, Ranthambor, Chittor, Deogir are studied in detailed.

Lastly the conclusion of this work is given along with a select bibliography.

*Dedicated To  
My  
Parents*



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The compilation of my thesis entitled 'Army Organisation under the Sultans of Delhi (13 & 14th Century)' owes much to my teacher and guide Prof. Khaliq Ahmed Nizami. His scholarly guidance and fatherly encouragement was enough to make my work move steadily towards its final shape.

My gratitude to him is too deep for words. It is a good fortune to work under his inspiring supervision.

My father Prof. Md. Qamaruddin has made very useful suggestions which I have zealously incorporated in this work. I received his constant encouragement and advice which made my work more intelligent. I am thankful and indebted to him for many more reasons which cannot be computed in materialistic form.

I am beholden to Prof. I.H. Siddiqui whose suggestions have enriched my knowledge. I have benefitted a great deal from his illuminating discussions on my topic of research.

I am also grateful to Prof. Irfan Habib, Chairman, Department of History, who took interest in my work and provided me with the facilities of the cartographic laboratory.

I take this opportunity to thank Mr. & Mrs. L. Moini, Mr. Rajiv Sharma, and his mother for their encouragement.

I am grateful to my friends in Calcutta especially Nawaid Akhtar and Matiur Rahman, whose inquisitiveness made me go more deeper into the details of my subject. I also benefited from discussions with my research colleagues- Ehsan Akhtar, S. Jabir Raza, Md. Alauddin and Raza Haider whose constructive criticism on different problems have been very valuable.

I also wish to thank my well wishers Abbas Zamir, Aejaz Zamir, Zarar and Saifur Rahman Malik.

My family members need more than mention of their names in the acknowledgement. I promise to repay them with sincere devotion and love due to their inspiration and blessings which are unaccountable. I shall ever remain obliged to my sister Mrs. Talat Sohrab, my brother Ali Arshad, his wife Zebun Nisa, Ali Akhtar and his wife Humaira, Ali Ashraf, Ali Anwar and Md. Aslam. My nephews Asadullah, Irfan, Kamran, Khalid, Shahid and Masood now have an answer of my absence from Calcutta.

I am thankful to the library staff of Centre of Advanced Study, Department of History who made all the books

available to me when ever required.

My thanks are due to Mr. Faiz for typing this thesis. My thanks are also to Mr. Z.A. Khan and Faiz Habib for reproducing the map.

I shall ever be grateful to the Indian Council of Historical Research which provided the fellowship to work on this thesis.

( ALI ATHAR )

The Central Asian Background  
Military Organization of the Mongols

An in-depth study of military organization of the Delhi Sultans needs a careful survey of the Central Asian scene as well as the Rajput military organization. In fact the Sultans of Delhi accepted, rejected and assimilated their military traditions from these two sources. The development of the art of warfare in Central Asia during the thirteenth century had certain amazing dimensions. The nomadic hordes who inhabited Central Asia were barbarians without any semblance of organization. To weld them into a single fighting force, which in course of time became a terror throughout Europe and Asia, was a task which only a military genius like Chengis Khan could achieve. He organised the Mongol hordes into a disciplined force which in the words of Juvaini was "so patient of hardship, so grateful for comforts, so obedient to commanders both in prosperity and adversity --- In time of action, when attacking and assaulting, they are like trained wild beasts out for game, and in days of peace and security they are like sheep; yielding milk, and wool, and many other useful things!"<sup>1</sup>

Chengis Khan first attempted to end the tribal feuds

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1. Ala-ud- Din Ata-Malik Juvaini, Tarikh -i- Jahan Gusha, 'The History of the World Conqueror' Manchester. Eng. Tr. Boyle, J.N. 1958, Vol. I pp.29-30.



and tribal loyalties in order to evolve an effective war-machine. Once the Mongol families were united under one chief, they developed feelings of brotherhood and esprit de corps, thus all dissensions were eliminated. He succeeded in developing martial virtues which were inherent in the Mongols due to steepe-war, such as "excellent horsemanship, rapid marching and counter marching, taking cover, guiding oneself by the stars at night, forecasting weather, following tracks, scouting, leaving fires burning in your camp to deceive the stupid enemy while you marched away at night."<sup>1</sup>

Chengis Khan then framed laws (yasa) to keep his people in check. The yasa comprised all the sphere of government, both civil and military. The yasa was compiled in stages; new laws were formulated as the situation demanded and the people obeyed it with true conviction.

The Mongol military organization was a new system altogether. The army of Chengis at the initial stage consisted of 4,000 troops and in course of time it increased to 300,000.<sup>2</sup> He divided his army into units (rinks) of ten (nai-tsi), hundred (Yuz), thousand (ming) and ten thousand

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1. Yuan-Chao-Pi-Shi- Eng. tr. by Wei Kwei sun, under the title of 'The Secret History of the Mongol Dynasty.' Aligarh, 1952, Introduction pp.24-25.

2. Introduction to Yuan-Chao-Pi-Shi Eng. tr. p.25.

(tuman). This division of forces into a decimal system was borrowed by Chengis Khan from the uighars.<sup>1</sup> Commanders for each unit were appointed. One from the nai-tsi was made the commander of its unit, from each ten commander of nai-tsi, the commander of the hundred was chosen and it continued to form a chain till it reached the commander of tuman or ten thousand.<sup>2</sup> Such an arrangement solved many problems, commands were easily communicated to the lowest unit in no time. Juvaini credits such an organisation thus.

" In accordance with this arrangement, if in an emergency any men or thing be required, they apply to the commandent of tumen, who in turn apply to the commanders of thousands, and so on down to the commanders of ten,----. If there is a sudden call for soldiers an order is issued that so many thousand men must present themselves in such and such a place and such an hour that day or night, and they arrive not a twinkling of an eye before or after the appointed hours."<sup>3</sup>

The commanders of the unit were held responsible for any matter arising from his unit. He was also given the assignement of civil administration. The rank of the

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1. Tarikh-i-Jahan Gusha Eng. tr. Vol. I, pp.25-33.  
Yuan-Chao-Pi-Shi. Eng. tr. pp.142-155.

2. Tarikh-i-Jahan Gusha Eng. tr. Vol. I, p.34.

3. Ibid - Vol. I, p.31.

general also represented the actual number of families assigned to him, for example a minghashi held command over one thousand household.<sup>1</sup>

Yuan-Chao-Pi-Shi refers of Chengis Khan's involvement in assigning soldiers to the commanders. Particular tribes were assigned to particular generals e.g. - Chengis rewarded Jurchidai with four thousand men of the uruts.<sup>2</sup> For some, he was considerate enough to accept their proposal. Wanguar, son of Mongetu Kiyar said "I will select my kinsmen of Bayaut tribe who are now scattered among the different tribes," to which Chengis Khan gave his consent and further promoted him to the commander of one thousand families.<sup>3</sup> Ninety five persons were appointed by Chengis as commanders of one thousand families and all of them were his devoted followers.<sup>4</sup>

People belonging to a particular territory formed one particular wing of the army and the commander of that wing held command over that area. An example would suffice for its illustration--Chengis rewarded Mukhali as the "commander of Ten Thousand Families of the left wing in

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1. Such examples are found in Yuan-Chao-Pi-Shi, English Translation pp. 144-145, 147, 150.

2. Yuan-Chao-Pi-Shi- Eng. tr. p.146

3. Ibid- Eng. tr. pp.147-148.

4. Ibid. p.142.

eastern country as far as Kharaun mountains."<sup>1</sup> While addressing Naya, Chengis said "I have made Bogurchi commander of Ten Thousand Families of the Right Wing and Mukhali the ruler of a Khanate and commander of Ten Thousand Families of the Left Wing. Now I appoint you commander of Ten Thousand Families of the Centre."<sup>2</sup> To eliminate dissidents and rebels one of the Yasa of Chengis strictly forbade any soldier from changing his unit to another or take refuge elsewhere. This Yasa was enforced with great strictness. If a man transgressed this law, he was executed, and the one who received him was severely punished, thus no one allowed anyone to enter his unit. Even the princes were very much cautious about their unit.<sup>3</sup>

Military Officers : The highest military officers were designated as noyons, kniáz, baiki (Bek) or amir. The noyons consisted of the princes and closeblood relations of Chengis. Chengis Khan's younger brother Temuga and Bilgutay were noyons and his youngest son Toli held the title of 'Great noyon' and was assigned the duty of organising the army and equipment of soldiers.<sup>4</sup> The chief of the army Ekka noyons was nominated by Chengis.<sup>5</sup> Many of the military officers fell into the category

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1. Yuan-Chao-Pi-Shi Eng. tr. p.144

2. Ibid- Eng. tr. p.150 also see p.144 fn. 11,12.

3. Tarikh -i- Jahan Gusha Eng. tr. Vol. I, p.32.  
Spuler, Bertold. History of the Mongols. Based on Eastern and Western Accounts of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries. Los Angeles 1922, p.41.

4. Tarikh -i- Jahan Gusha Eng. tr. Vol. I, p.40

5. Yuan-Chao-Pi-Shi Eng. tr. p.147.

of tarkhan. Juvaini illustrates the status of a tarkhan as "those who are exempt from compulsory contributions and to whom the booty taken on every campaign is surrendered. Whenever they so wish they may enter the royal presence without leave or permission."<sup>1</sup> They were exempted from punishment, whatever might be their offence.<sup>2</sup> The post of Baiki in the Mongol army was also of importance. The Yuan-Chao-Pi-Shi states that the title of Baiki was conferred upon men who held high dignity in the eyes of Chengis Khan. Chengis Khan had himself said that Baiki is a high rank, and he "will ride a horse, wear white clothes, and have precedence above others in sitting."<sup>3</sup> A ceremony was also held for conferring this title.<sup>4</sup>

Body guards: There was a separate army for the personal safety of the ruler who were select men possessing the best qualities of a warrior and were known as Keshik.<sup>5</sup> Earlier Chengis Khan's bodyguards numbered 80 soldiers, but later he increased it many folds to a number of 10,000 soldiers.<sup>6</sup> The body guard constituted well-shaped youth from the --

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1. Tarikh -i- Jahan Gusha Eng. tr. Vol. I, pp.37-38.

2. Ibid Vol. I, p.38.

Sharfu-Din Ali Yezdi, Zafar Namah. Calcutta ed. 1887, Vol. I, p.529.

3. Yuan-Chao-Pi-Shi- Eng, tr. p.149

4. Ibid p. 149.

5. Ibid p. 156.

6. Ibid - p.150.

sons of dignitaries and freemen (tarkat). They were chosen from each unit of the army and a statue was laid down for their recruitment. The son of the commander of one thousand had to bring his younger brother along with ten attendants, the son of the commander of one Hundred brought with him his younger brother and five attendants and likewise the son of the commander of Ten enrolled himself with his younger brother and three attendants.<sup>1</sup> The horses for the ten attendants, of the son of the commander of One Thousand, were given by the officer himself, while the other five attendants of son of the officer of one Hundred and three attendants of the son of the commander of ten were given by the state.<sup>2</sup> Thus 10,000 guardsmen (Keshikten) chosen from different units alongwith two thousand archers formed Chengis Khan's Yeko-Ko-Shive or the Great Central Army.<sup>3</sup>

Another elite corps of 1000 were chosen from the Keshikten and were designated bahadurs. In peace time they acted as the 'attendant corps' and during war they formed the first line.<sup>4</sup> These bahadurs were divided into four companies and each company was assigned specific duty. Their

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1. Yuan-Chao-Pi-Shi Eng. tr. p.150

2. Ibid p. 150.

3. Ibid- p.152.

4. Ibid- p.152.

turn of duty was fixed, if any one from the company failed to turn up for the duty, he was severely punished.

Chengis Khan had given them precedence over other soldiers. He once said " A personal guardsman of mine is superior to an ordinary comander of One Thousand Families, and an attendant of his, superior to an ordinary comander of Ten or One Hundred Families. If an ordinary commander of one Thousand Families attempts to dispute or fight with a guardsman of mine on equal terms, he will be punished."<sup>1</sup> The organisation of bodyguards or Keshikten became a permanent system. Marco polo mentions about the bodyguards of Kublai Khan and states that they consisted of twelve thousand men who were under the command of four superior officers and each unit of three thousand were on "constant duty in the palace during three successive days and nights, at the expiration of which the were relieved by another division."<sup>2</sup>

The Delhi Sultans had a similar set up of bodyguards called Jandars who were under the command of Sar-i-Jandar .  
Recruitment and Promotions- Chengis Khan himself appointed all the officers and commanders of the army, who in turn recruited their own followings for the army with the permission of Chengis. Each tribe and clan had separate functions

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1. Yuan-Chao-Pi-Shi- Eng. tr. p.153.

2. The Travels of Marco Polo- ed: by Manuel Komroff. New York, 1930, p.136.

in the army. e.g. the Urut. and Monkhut tribes were the best warriors. They formed the vanguard of the army.<sup>1</sup> It had been said that "they cannot be dispersed even by close cavalry charges they are skilful from their childhood both in use of spears and swords."<sup>2</sup> All able bodied persons were soldiers of the army. In the words of Juvaini-" It is also a peasantry in the guise of an army, all of them, great and small, noble and base, in time of battle becoming swordsmen, archers and lancers and advancing in whatever manner the occasion requires."<sup>3</sup> No fixed procedure of recruitment had been mentioned anywhere. The conquered people were classified into tens, hundreds and thousands and they were made responsible to present soldiers along with battle equipments whenever desired by the Khan.<sup>4</sup>

In the Delhi Sultanate strict rules were laid down for the recruitment of soldiers. Only those who showed mastery in horsemanship archery, swordsmanship in front of the ariz, were recruited in the army. Timur accepted everyone who wished to join his army. Incentives regarding distribution of spoils

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1. Yuan-Chao-Pi-Shi- Eng. tr. p.117.

2. Ibid- p.117.

3. Tarikh -i- Jahan Gusha - Eng. tr. Vol. I, p.30

4. Ibid- p.34.



among his soldiers attracted many to enroll themselves in the army.<sup>1</sup>

Promotion of the soldiers was the exclusive monopoly of the ruler. Chengis Khan personally promoted the soldiers and officers to high ranks.<sup>2</sup> Merit, Valour and loyalty were the only criteria for promotions.

Jurchidai, was rewarded for his service rendered in the battle against Wang Khan.<sup>3</sup> The former had pushed himself in the heart of the enemy's army and killed Senkuns<sup>4</sup> with his arrow.<sup>5</sup> Boloul was similarly rewarded for saving Chengis Khan's son Ogatai.<sup>6</sup> Post humous awards were also given. The descendents of Khuilder were rewarded for his meritorious services.<sup>7</sup>

Kublai Khan selected twelve noblemen to see to every matters relating to the army. Morco polo says this council called Thai, had to 'distinguish between officers who have given proofs of valour in combat, and those who have shown themselves base and cowardly in order to advance the former and to degrade the latter!'<sup>8</sup>

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1. Zafar Nama Vol. I, p.475.

2. Yuan-Chao-Pi-Shi-Eng, tr. pp.146-151.

3. Ibid- p.146.

4. Senkun was the son of Wang Khan, Ibid-p.112.

5. Ibid- p. 146.

6. Ibid- p.148.

7. Ibid- p.149.

8. The Travels of Marco Polo- p.161.

Timur rewarded soldiers's with land grants (jildu or Suyurghal)<sup>1</sup> and stipends (Wujuh). The amir who received stipends were known as Wujuh -i- Umara.<sup>2</sup>

REVIEW:The very organisation of the army into units of tens, hundreds and thousands helped greatly in matters relating to the upkeep of the army, viz. fitness of the soldiers, weapons, armours, horses etc. The Mongols did not have any separate office of muster or the department of ariz. In spite of this the army was reviewed regularly and the troops were subjected to strict scrutiny. The day and place of review (arzgah) was fixed by the ruler and the army postioned itself in battle array to be reviewed. The equipments of war were inspected and if anything was found missing, the defaulter was severely punished.<sup>3</sup>

Even during the reign of Timur the office of dafter -i- arz was not considered desirable. The Mongol system of counting (dim) was practised for inspection.<sup>4</sup> The weapons were supplied to the soldiers from the royal armourer's shop.<sup>5</sup>

Customs of War- The principal weapon of the Central Asian

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1. Zafar Namah- Vol. I, pp.283,447.

2. Ibid- Vol I. p.347.

3. Tarikh -i- Jahan-Gusha- Eng. tr. Vol. I, p.30.

4. Zafar Namah- Vol. I, pp.506-16, Vol. II, pp.409-12.

soldiers was bow and arrows. The mounted archers of Central Asia were feared throughout Asia and Europe. They were very quick and flexible in manoeuvre than their adversaries who ever they might be. They shot arrows accurately from the horseback without halting or dismounting. The Turkish and the Mongol tactics of war were similar due to their common home grounds, Central Asia. The Central Asia traditions of warfare emphasised on mobility of the troops and this gave them an upper hand in every battle. Their movements were very swift both in attack and retreat. R.C. Smail's description of the Turkish warfare gives a clear picture about the effectiveness of the Central Asian Cavalry.<sup>1</sup> He has analysed the importance of mobility thus (i) "it enabled them to remain at a distance from their enemy and to choose the moment at which they would close with him... If a charge was essayed against them, they were ready to retreat if the attempt were given up, they themselves attacked once more."<sup>2</sup> Regarding the Turks approach to battle he says " The Turks might be scattered, but always they returned to the fight, now they faced the enemy's now they turned away, they thought it no less creditable to retreat than to pursue, they were like

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1. Smail, R.C.- Crusading Warfare (1097-1193) Cambridge 1956. See Chapter IV on Muslim Armies, p. 64-87.

2. Ibid-p.78.

flies who could be beaten off but not driven away."<sup>1</sup>

(iii) They utilized their speed in attacking the flanks and the rear of the enemy. They even attempted to surround the enemy as if they were besieging a city.<sup>2</sup> (iv) With the help of their mobility they put into use a tactics of attacking the enemy on their march, thereby disorganising their battle formation. They aimed at attacking the rear of the enemy which caused great problems to the commander. With this they gained an upper hand in the battle.<sup>3</sup>

The Mongols had adopted all these tactics of warfare in battles against their adversaries. Their physiological qualities made them capable of enduring sufferings and pains of everykind. Morco Polo writes that the Mongols could remain on horseback for two days and nights without dismounting. They also slept in that position while their horses grazed.<sup>4</sup> Their horses fed on grass alone and they did not require barley or other grains.

Scouts were sent out to investigate the position of the enemy and estimate their number.<sup>5</sup> Ibn -i- Arab Shah in his Ajaib -ul- Maqdur writes that spies were selected from various class of people like wrestlers, learned fakirs, traders, labourers, physicians etc. and through them all sorts of informations were gathered.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Smail, R.C. Crusading Warfare p.78.

2. Ibid-p.79.

3. Ibid p.80

The army moved in an uniformed manner and strict discipline was maintained. Each officer led his contingent as assigned to him. The division of command and organisation of army into small units kept each soldier in check. Since the soldiers could get disorganised while collecting booty and spoils, (to avoid this) Chengis Khan instructed that "if they got the upper hand in the battle, they were not to scramble in haste for the spoils, everyone seizing or himself, the whole booty would be divided equally among them after the end of the battle."<sup>1</sup>

The Central Asian warriors never mixed with the enemy,<sup>2</sup> and avoided making the first move. If the enemy advanced on any division of the army, suitable defensive measures were employed. In course of battle the Central Asiatic tactics of war as stated by Marco Polo reveals that they "keep hovering about him, discharging their arrows first from side and then from the other, occasionally pretending to fly, and during their flight shooting arrows backwards at their pursuers, killing men and horses, as if they were combating face to face. In this sort of warfare the adversary

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f.n. contd.

4. The Travels of Marco Polo- p.93.

5. Yuan-Chao-Pi-Shi- Eng. tr. pp.116,133,134.

6. Ibn Arab Shah-Ajaib -ul- Magdur

1. Yuan-Chao-Pi-Shi- Eng. tr. p.105.

2. The Travels of Morco Polo- P.95.

imagines he has gained a victory, when in fact he has lost the battle for the Tartars, observing the mischief they have done him, face about, and renewing the fight, overpower his remaining troops, and make them prisoners inspite of their utmost exertions. Their horses are so well broken into quick changes of movements, that upon the signal given, they instantly turn in any direction and by these rapid manoeuvres many victories have been obtained."<sup>1</sup>

Generalship and military insight played a great role in wars. War was not only physical it was mental as well. A deceiving tactics of war is all mental and involves less of physical resources. One interesting account of Chengis Khan would suffice here. In 1204 AD Chengis Khan moved against the Naimans. In course of the march a Naiman scout spotted a soldier of Chengis Khan with his horse. After fully examing the horse the Naiman knew that the horses of Chengis were weak and lean and the army of Chengis was in a disadvantageous position. Furthermore Chengis's army was numerically less in number. To enable the horses to regain some of their virility, they were let to graze and a dummy force was scattered over Saali-Keyer. This created doubt among the Naimans over the number of Chengis's forces. Chengis further ordered every man

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1. The Travels of Marco Polo- p.95.

to light fire at five places, thus at night it appeared that too many soldiers were in the camp. This exactly was what the Naimans thought and they exclaimed "we thought the Dada were but few and now we see fires at so many places as there are stars in the sky.....Saali Keyer is by now full of the Dada men who are probably reinforced every day."<sup>1</sup> Thus Chengis averted a danger which could have divested his army.

The Mongols excelled in the 'ambush' tactics Qutlugh Khwaja attacked Delhi in the end of 1290 AD and though he had 2 lack horses with him,<sup>2</sup> he did not enter into a full fledged battle. He incited the valourous Zafar Khan to attack his left wing commanded by Hajlak. The forces of Hajlak could not withstand the onslaught and they retreated. Zafar Khan pursued the retreating army for a long distance and fell into a trap. A contingent of the Mongols under Targhi consisting of 10,000 soldiers left their ambuscade and attacked Zafar Khan from all sides and finally the whole division of Zafar Khan were killed.<sup>3</sup>

While beseiging forts the Mongols employed various methods like digging tunnels, mining etc. Their strategy for capturing forts differed according to its structure. Forts having deep and broad moats around it were reduced only by cutting of its supply line. Mechanical devices like catapults,

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1. Yuan-Chao-Pi-Shi- Eng. tr. p.134.

2. Zia ud Din Barani, Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi Bib India 1862, p. 254, he also gives the figure one lakh as p. 256.

3. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- pp.260-61.  
Isami - Futuh us Salatin- ed. A.S. Usha, Madras. 1948 pp.263-270.

mongonels, arrad<sup>a</sup> 3 etc. were used for throwing stones, animate and inanimate objects and other missiles, Naphta balls were also thrown in the fort to create diversions in case it lighted upon inflammable objects in the forts. Scaling ladders were used for climbing on the ramparts.

In the battle of Jand on 21st April 1219 AD, its fort which was considered impregnable was captured by utilizing all the war implements, bridges were built, catapult set in motion and after gaining few openings the fort walls were scaled from all sides with the help of scaling ladders.<sup>1</sup> Juvaini describes the capture of Bokhara by the Mongols in 1270 AD thus "the people of Bokhara were driven against the citadel. And on either side the furnace of battle was heated on the out side, were erected, bows bent and stones and arrows discharged, and on the inside, ballistas and pots of naphtha were set in motion.... But finally they were reduced to the last extremity, resistance was no longer in their power,... The moat had been filled with animate and inanimate and raised by with levies and Bokharians, the outworks (fasil) had been captured and fire hurled into the citadel."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Tarikh-i-Jahan Gusha- Eng. tr. Vol. I, p.89.

2. Ibid Vol. I, p.106



While beseiging the fort of Khorazm, since no stones were available in its neighbourhood, the woods of mulberry trees were used as missiles for the mangonels.<sup>1</sup>

Arms and Armour: The Central Asian army exclusively consisted of cavalry and weapons were accordingly kept so as to enable a horseman to use different weapons in different circumstances with great flexibility. Their main offensive weapon was bow and arrows with which they battled from a distance. For hand to hand fight they used lance, sword and club.<sup>2</sup> All were light weapons and they did not hinder in the mobility of the horse. The Mongol's defensive armour were made from hides of buffaloes and other beasts which when <sup>dried</sup> by fire became hard and strong.<sup>3</sup> In the later period the chronicles list following weapons used by the Central Asian warriors viz. sabres, shields, bows and arrows, maces, halberds, lances, pikes, breast plates, coats of mail or iron, corselets, helmets etc. The army of Timur had parks of artillery (arrada), Manjanigs, tura (screen for throwing missiles) etc.<sup>4</sup> All the nobles from tuman down to

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1. Tarikh-i-Jahan Gusha- Eng. tr. p. 126

2. Smail, R.C.- Crusading Warfare (1097-1193), p.82.

3. The Travels of Marco Polo- p.93.

4. Zafar Namah- Vol. I, pp.317-19, 346, 422, 648, Voo. II pp.267-68, 283, 331, 405, 473-77,577.

hundred and the soldiers were provided horses and weapons (jeba). Even the horse's shoes were supplied from the royal stables.<sup>1</sup>

Training: The training of the soldiers were imparted by taking them on hunting expeditions. The basics like horsemanship archery etc were commonly practised by the Central Asian people but putting such qualities in achieving military potentialities required a different training. One of the Yasa of the Mongols states "when there is no war raging against the enemy, there shall be hunting, the young shall be taught how to kill wild-animals, so that they became accustomed to fighting, and acquire strength and endurance and will subsequently fight, without sparing themselves, against the enemy as though against wild animals"<sup>2</sup>

Pay: During Chengis Khan's rule the Mongol troops were not paid either in form of fief or wages. He believed in the principle of "starve thy dog that it may follow thee," and the only means of subsistence was the collection of the qopchur on horses, sheep, felt and furs. Under the khan provisions were made available for selected troops, but later Ghazan Khan

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1. Zafar Namah- Vol. I, pp.496, 522, Vol. II, pp.184-85.

2. Spuler, Bertold- "History of Mongols, Based on Eastern and Western Accounts of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries. Los Angeles 1972 p.40.

spent heavy amounts on supplying provisions for the whole army. He ordered that" in each province at the time of harvest, whether summer or winter, the grain was to be put into stores which were to be made over to the commanders of the province. On the delivery of the draft, issue was to be made directly from the store, the intendants were neither to exact any premium nor were they to demand any provisions or payments for themselves."<sup>1</sup>

In Central Asia during the later fourteenth century the system of land grant came into existence. The military assignments was called Yurt.<sup>2</sup> The distinguished nobles were assigned wilayats.<sup>3</sup> Each Wilayat comprised several tumans, which were subassigned to the nobles by Timur.<sup>4</sup> There tumans were further subdivided into villages (mauzas, dehs or qariyas) and were assigned to darughas or dehdars. Even the smallest land grant of ulka or Yir were assigned by the ruler himself.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Rashid-Al-Din-Geschichte Gazan Hans ed Karl Jahn, Gibb Memorial Series, n.S. XIV London 1940 quoted in 'History of the Mongols, based on Eastern and Western Accounts of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries' -- Spuler, Bertold. pp.156-157.

2. Zafar Namah- Vol. II, p.13.

3. Ibid- Vol. I, p.343.

4. Ibid- Vol. I, p.143

5. Ibid- Vol. II, p.381.

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شاسب کرده بود

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طلایہ			

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وزراء دخانه

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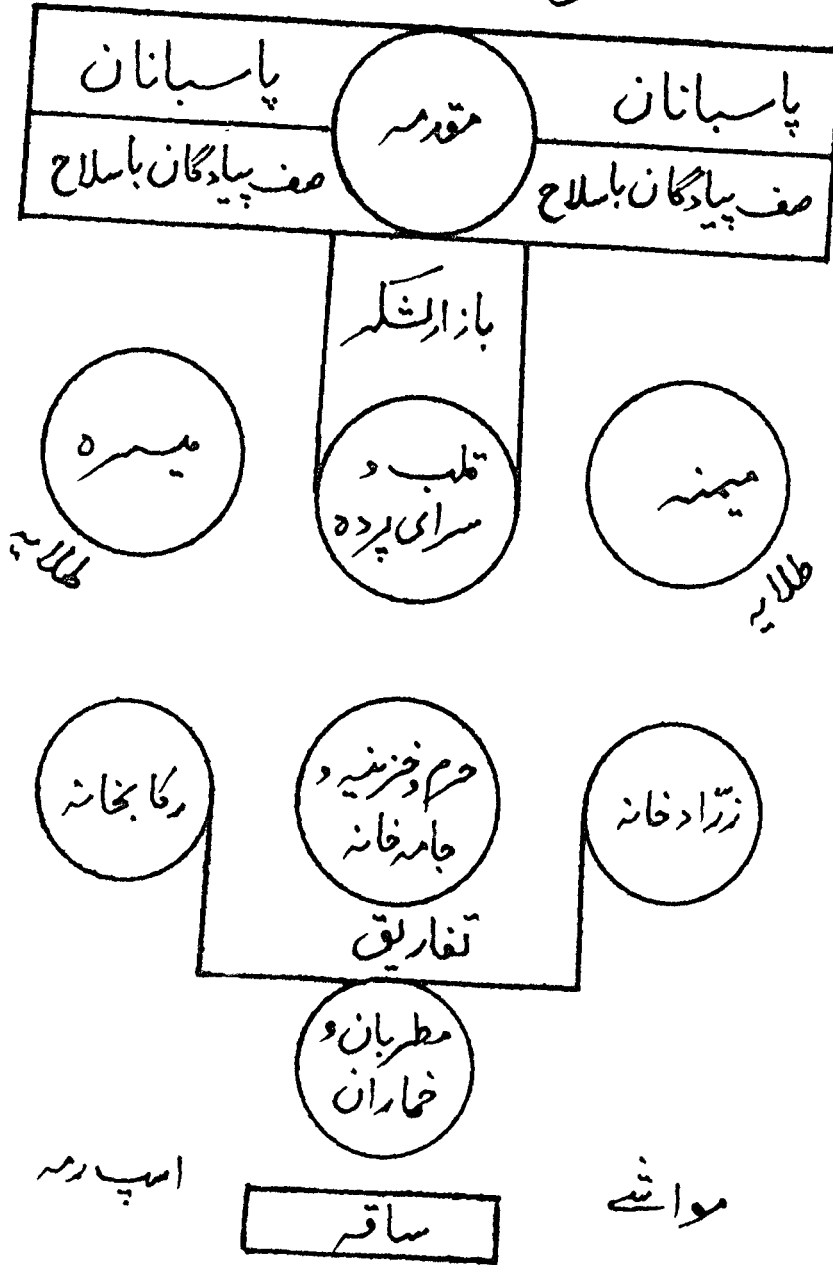
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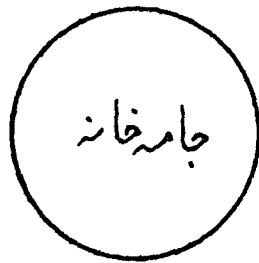
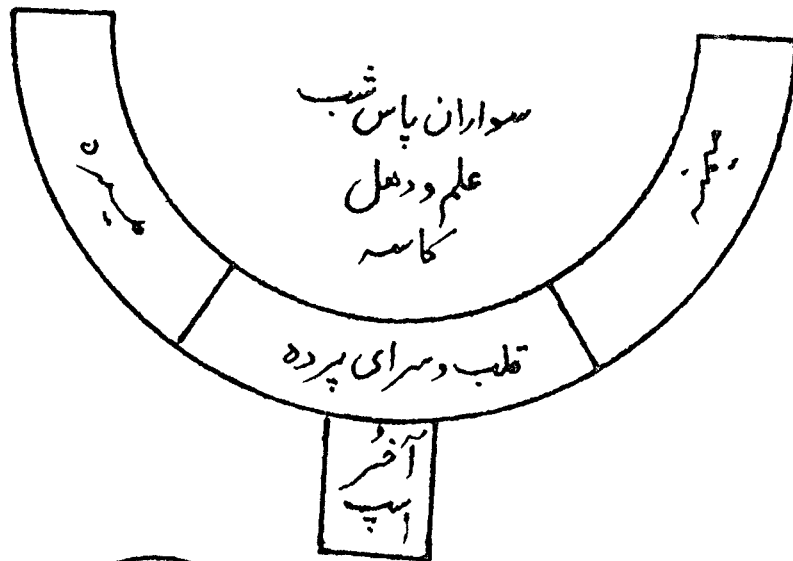
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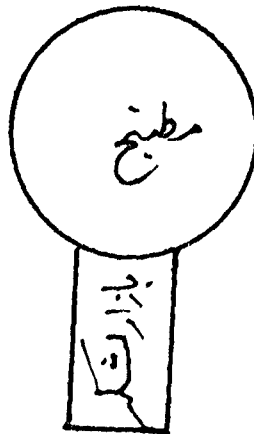
افعال  
دردمندان، بنزدیان  
ضعیفان و سوار جلد

# شکل لشکرگاه هندوان





بمعاقصه خود را بر قلب و  
سرای پرده زند و جهانی  
خراب کند تا از هر طرف  
کسی برسد او کار خود بکرده  
باشد و فارغ شده



شکل لشکر گاه کافران  
خدا بر این جمله است و  
نشانید که مسلمانان خود را  
بکافران مانند کنند و دیگر  
اگر خصمی خواهد که وقتی

Indian  
Traditions of War before the Turkish  
Conquest of North  
India

The Indian military system had been stagnant from the days of the Guptas. No outward change in the military strategy, tactics and use of weapons had taken place in the military organisation of India. The ideals of war were the incidents of Mahabharata. In our period the Rajputs came into being as the fighting force, replacing the ancient Kshatriya class. Their approach to war was traditional, as Prof. K. A. Nizami observes that " A sound military planning in which all possible eventualities and emergencies -- falling in the hands of the enemy, minor reversals, etc --- are taken into consideration, had little meaning for the Rajput warrior who knew how to die but not how to win a victory."<sup>1</sup> The performance of Jauhar is one example of their pessimistic mode of war. Among the Indian rulers it was Harsha Vardhana who took serious in organising the army. Hsuan-tsang states that Harsha's army consisted of four divisions viz infantry, cavalry, chariots and elephants.<sup>2</sup> The mention of chariot was only a

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1. Nizami, K.A.- ' Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century', New Delhi-Reprint 1978. p.80. Here after cited as 'Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India.'

2. Hsuan-tsang- Ta T'ang Hsiyuchi! Eng. tr. by S. Beal. Buddhist Records of the Western World, London 1906. Vol. I. p.82 Hereafter cited as Buddhist Records of the Western World.



reproduction of theoretical list which we find in Hsuan-tsang's account, as its use was discarded during the Gupta period. Banabhatt in Harsh Charita does not incorporate chariots as a division of the army. His narration that Harsha inspected his army while riding an elephant<sup>1</sup> testifies that chariots which had been otherwise used for the purpose had now been discarded.

There was a central standing army known as Maula-bala, and men possessing qualities of a soldier were taken into service.<sup>2</sup> Hsuan-tsang writes that this class of people followed hereditary profession. The Maula-bala "when they are garrisoned they guard the palaces, when there is war they act as brave vanguard."<sup>3</sup> Harsha felt the need of organising his army with utmost efficiency. Hsuan-tsang writes that Harsha assembled all the soldiers of his empire and drilled them for military campaign.<sup>4</sup> Al-Masudi refers to the standing army of the Pratihara King of Kannuj. He says that the Pratihara King maintained four armies" according to the four quarters of the wind."<sup>5</sup>

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1. Banabhatta- Harsha Charita- Eng. Tr. by Cowell, E.B. and Thomas, F.W., London 1929, p.203. Henceforth Harsha Charita Eng. Tr.
  2. Beal, S.-Buddhist Records of the Western World. Vol. I, p. 82.
  3. Ibid. Vol. I, p.82.
  4. Ibid. Vol. I, p.213
  5. Al-Masudi- Murju-l Zahab, Elliot, H.M. and Dowson, J.- The History of India as told by its own Historians. Vol.I p.23

The Palas of Bengal too entertained a standing army. The Bhagalpur inscription records that the Palas of Bengal possessed a fourth wing of the army i.e. the navy.<sup>1</sup> It was necessary to maintain and deploy naval forces in battles as the territories of the Palas were full of rivers hence long distances were easily covered by boats.

The king also maintained an elite corps called the National Guard which consisted of the best warriors. The Chinese pilgrim writes-

" The National Guard are heroes of choice valour, and, as the profession is hereditary, they become adepts in military tactics. In peace they guard the sovereign's residence, and in war they become the intrepid vanguard."<sup>2</sup> The Nolambas and the Hysalas enlisted special life guards called garudas. M.C. Bandyopadhyaya opines that "They were chosen for desperate enterprises, and they received the right or honour of getting betel from their masters on important occasions."<sup>3</sup>

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1. Indian Antiquary, Vol. XV, p.305.

2. Thomas Watters- On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India. AD 629-645. Delhi. Reprint 1961, p.171.

3. Bandyopadhyaya, Narain Chandra- Development of Hindu Polity and Political Theories. Calcutta 1927, p.312.

The King however depended heavily on the forces supplied by the feudatory chiefs and allies. At times soldiers from the defeated army were also taken into service. Sukra advises that the king should move against the enemy with his army consisting of Maula-bala as they do not leave the side of the king even at the most crucial time of the battle.<sup>1</sup>

Composition: The Indian army consisted of heterogeneous elements. The Bhagalpur plate of Narayanpala informs us that the Palas recruited soldiers from other states like Malava, Khasa, Karnata and Lata.<sup>2</sup> The Chachnamah mentions that the army of King Dahir, the ruler of Sind, consisted of 500 Arab troops which was commanded by Muhammad Allafi.<sup>3</sup> The defects in the composition of the Indian army has been pointed out by Prof. K. A. Nizami who states that the Rajput army which "mainly consisted of feudal levies - raised by different Rajput leaders, trained under different conditions and employed on different terms -- lacked unity of purpose and fought for individual glory."<sup>4</sup> It is stated in the Sukranitisara that soldiers may

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1. c.f. Udgaonkar, Padma, B-. The Political Institutions and Administration of Northern India During Medieval Times (750-1200 AD) Delhi 1969. p.137.

2. Indian Antiquary, XV p.306.

3. Chachnamah- Elliot and Dowson- Vol. I--p.156. ed. N.A. Baloch. Islamabad. 1983- p.50.

4. Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India- p.81.

be selected from the "Sudras, Vaishyas and Kashtriyas and Mleches or from mixed castes, provided they were brave, well built, devoted to their master and scrupulous in obeying the orders,"<sup>1</sup> but whether such a composition in the Indian army really existed, is doubtful.

We however have examples of Brahamana generals taking active part in battles. Gopala was a Brahamana general under the Chandella king Kirtivarman and the former helped his master in regaining the throne from the Chedi monarch Karna.<sup>2</sup> Another Brahamana general Madanapalasarman served under the Chandella king Paramarddidera.<sup>3</sup> We however dont find any reference of military officers belonging to any of the lower castes. A brahman may mix with the Kshatriya, but it is doubtful that the upper two castes had ever fought shoulder to shoulder along with the Sudras or other mixed castes.

STRENGTH OF THE ARMY: The Indian army were never lacking in the number of soldiers. As mentioned above the recruits from different sources (allies and feudatory chiefs) made the number of troops uncountable. The literary and epigraphical sources help us in determining the number of troops with the Indian

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1. Sukranitisara ed. Jivananda Vidyasagar Bhattacharya Calcutta 1890. Vol. II p. 139.  
The quotes of Sukraniti are based on Udgaonkar, P.B.'s incorporation of the Work in "The political Institution and Administration of Northern India during Medieval Times (750-1200 AD) Delhi 1969.
  2. Epigraphia Indica - Vol. I, p. 220.
  3. Indian Antiquary. XXV, pp.205-08.

rulers though the facts must be accepted with some reservation. Hsuan-tsang writes that Harsha forces increased from 5,000 elephant corps, 20,000 cavalry and 50,000 foot soldiers to 60,000 elephant corp, 100,000 cavalry.<sup>1</sup> Banabhatta refers to several ayuta<sup>2</sup> (strong elephant corps of Harsha) and since an ayuta is equal to 10,000, Hsuan-tsang figure of 60,000 elephant soldiers may be accepted. Al-Masudi's testifies that the Pratihara ruler of Kannauj maintained four armies " according to the four quarters of the wind", each numbering seven to nine lacks,<sup>3</sup> Thus the total strength of the army comes upto thirtysix lacks and such a numerous army may not have constituted the central army. It may be the sum total of the territorial armies along with those of the feudatories but still the number seems doubtful as we find in the later period from Utbi's account that Jaipal could muster up only 12,000 horsemen, 30,000 foot soldiers and 300 elephants, against Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni.<sup>4</sup> Similarly in the First Battle of Tarain against Shihab-ud Din Ghorī, the Chauhan ruler Rai Pithora could muster only 2 lack horsemen and 3 thousand elephants which included the army of the feudatory chiefs and other Indian Princess.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Beal, S.- Buddhist Records of the Western World, Vol.I, p.213.

2. Harsha-Charita- Eng. tr. Cowell, E.B. and Thomas, F.W. p.63.

3. Muru'ju-i Zahab Elliot and Dowson- Vol. I, p.23.

4. Tarikh-i-Yamini Elliot and Dowson, Vol. II p. 25.

5. Abul Qasim Hindu Shah Ferishta- Tarikh-i-Ferishta- Nawal Kishore Press. Lucknow, Vol. I, p.57.

Such a decrease in the army personale creates doubt about the figures given by Hsuan-tsang and Banabhatta. As mentioned earlier, the Indian army was divided into three divisions viz. elephant corps, cavalry and infantry. Navy was an exceptional division which was maintained by the Palas. In India, every kingdom had its own specialised military division for example, the Pratiharas of Kannauj were famous for their cavalry, the Bengal army was feared on account of its elephants and the Deccan forces effectively employed the infantry corps. The availability of good horses in Punjab and Afghanistan enabled the Pratiharas and the Rashtrakutas to possess good cavalry. The abundance of elephants in the region of Bengal enabled the Bengal army to employ them effectively in battles.

ELEPHANT CORPS: An elephant accomodated more than four men on the wooden frame fastened on its back<sup>1</sup> and its apperance created havoc in the adversary's camp.

Isami considered the defeat of the Ghorids in the Ist Battle of Tarain due to the ineffectiveness of the Muslim cavalry who were afraid of elephants. Thus Shahab-ud Din Ghori ordered Qutub-ud Din Aibek to train the horses to accustom themselves with the sight of elephants.<sup>2</sup> The soldiers from the

- 
1. Harsh-Charita- Eng. tr. Cowell, E.B. and Thomas, F.W. p.55.
  2. Futuh-us-Salatin- Persian Text. pp.74-75, Eng. tr. by Mehdi Husain, Calcutta, 1966, Vol. I, p.148.

elephants back used offensive weapons e.g. bow and arrows, lance, spears etc. Gobind Rai had injured Shihab-ud Din Ghorī with his javelin thrown from the elephant's back and Shihab-ud Din Ghorī was forced to leave the battle field with his men which led to the defeat of the Ghorids in the First Battle of Tarain.<sup>1</sup> The elephants were covered with strong armour and their tusks were provided with sharp spurs.<sup>2</sup> The elephants were trained to break the enemy's line of defence and to crush them under their feet. The elephants proved to be dreadful only when commanded by expert generals, at times their mishandling led to the defeat of their own army. The elephants were given more importance than the other two divisions of the army i.e. infantry and cavalry. The mahouts trained the elephants and taught them battle manoeuvres.

This division had separate officers to look after them. The gajasadhanadhikrita was the "commandant of the whole elephant troop."<sup>3</sup> The chief Mahouts were known as Mahamantras.<sup>4</sup> Other officers attached to the elephant corps were called Pilupati,<sup>5</sup> or elephant masters. The Sena records designate the

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1. Minhaj's us Siraj- Tabaqat-i-Nasiri Persian Text p.118 .  
Eng. tr. by Major H.G.Raverty. Reprint New Delhi 1970,  
Vol.I. p.460.

Tarikh-i-Ferishta- pp.5-7, Tabaqat-i-Akbari- Nizamuddin  
Ahmed . ed Barunse calcutta-1931-p.37.

2. Thomas Waters- On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India. A.D.629-645.  
p.171.

3. Harsha- Charita- Eng. Tr. Cowell, E.B. and Thomas, F.W.p.189.

4. Ibid- p.190.

5. Epigraphia Indica- Pala Records. IV p.248.

elephant's officer as Mahapilupati,<sup>1</sup> but it appears that the latter was the senior officer of the pilupati. The Sukranitisara refers to this officers as Gajapati<sup>2</sup> and below him stood the officer incharge of twenty elephants called Nayaka.<sup>3</sup>

CAVALRY: Since more emphasis was given to the elephant corps, the cavalry of the Indian army was deprived of its military effectiveness which otherwise would have served as the most effective division of the army. The last Indian ruler who showed interest in maintaining the cavalry with great efficiency was Harsha Vardhan. His cavalry numbered 100,000 and the horses were imported from Vanāyu (Vaziristan), Aratta (Vahika or Panjab), Kamboja (Pamir region), Bhātadraj (northern Gadhwal), Sindhu-desa (Sind Doab) and Parasika (Sassanian Iran).<sup>4</sup>

Banabhatta refers to the tangana horses in the stables of Harsha. He describes their qualities as 'Tall Tangana horses, which by the steady motion of their quick foot-falls provided a comfortable seat.'<sup>5</sup> P.K. Gode believes that the tangana horses

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1. Epigraphia Indica- XXI P. 217.

2. Sukranitisara- II p. 127.

3. Ibid- II p. 147.

4. Beal, S.- Buddhist Records of the Western World Vol.I, p.213.

5. Thomas Watters-On Yuan Chwang's Travel in India A.D. 629-645, I, p. 343.

5. Harsha-Charita- Eng. tr. Cowell, E.B. and Thomas, F.W p.201.



were obtained from northern Gadhwal.<sup>1</sup>

While coming down to the twelfth century the cavalry of the Indian rulers further deteriorated. In the words of P.C. Chakravarty "the cavalry never came to occupy the first rank in the army organisation of ancient India, it never in fact came to form the core of a Hindu army."<sup>2</sup> Thus the mobility of the army which was the most essential feature of warfare was lacking in the Indian army. The Turks who came to India could easily deploy their tactics and strategies of war with desired effects as they believed in mobility of the troops which helped them to attack, retreat, encircle a particular wing etc. in no time. Thus the Indian army with "their cumbersome war machine with its elephants and horses, trained more for royal pageants than for serious warfare, was easily overtaken and outdistanced by the agile mounted archers of the Turkish armies who could cover long distances far more quickly than easy going, vain-glorious Hindu chiefs."<sup>3</sup>

The cavalry was allotted to different officers, Banabhatta informs us that an officer called Brihadāsvara was a

- 
1. Parashuram, K.Gode- 'Tangana horses... in Harsha-Charita,' Indian History Congress. 8th Session 1945, p.66.
  2. Chakravarty, P.C.- The Art of War in Ancient India, Calcutta, 1943, p.36.
  3. Saran, P.- 'Resistance of Indian Princes to Turkish offensive, End of 10th century A.D. to First Quarter of the 14th century'.

Sitaram Kohli Memorial Lecture- Department of Panjab Historical Studies, 1967, p.57.

"chief officer of the cavalry, "while Sukra designates the superintendent of cavalry as Asvapati<sup>1</sup>, who was well versed in the military techniques involving cavalry. Next to the Asvapati came Mahasehanika and Mahasvasadhanika which are mentioned in the Chalukya records<sup>2</sup> and Chedi inscriptions<sup>3</sup> respectively.

The Chahamana epigraph designates Sahani as the master of stables<sup>4</sup>.

There are references to 'troops of Camels' in the Harsha-Charita<sup>5</sup>, and many have taken it literally in believing that camels formed a separate fighting force,<sup>6</sup> though a detailed study of Harsha-Charita reveals that they were used as beasts of burden.<sup>7</sup>

INFANTRY: The bulk of the Indian forces consisted of the Infantry infantry<sup>7</sup> writes Hsuan-tsang' "by their quick movements contribute to the defence. These men are chosen for their courage

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1. Harsha-Charita- Eng. tr. Cowell, E.B. and Thomas F.W. p177, Sukranitisara II p. 130. Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol. III No. 61 p. 260 f.n.2.

2. Indian Antiquary- XVIII p.341.

3. Epigraphia Indica- II, p.309.

4. Epigraphia Indica-XI p. 29.

5. Harsha Charita- Eng. Tr. Cowell, E.B. and Thomas, F.W. P.206.

6. Tripathi R.S.- History of Kannauj to the Moslem Conquest, Bararas, 1937, p.131. fn. 1.

7. Harsha Chaita - Eng. tr. Cowell, E.B. and Thomas, F.W.p.46.

and strength. They carry a long spear and a great shield, sometimes they hold a sword or sabre, and advance to the front with impetuosity. All their weapons of war are sharp and pointed. Some of them are these spears, shields, bows and arrows, swords, sabres, battle axes, lances, halberd, long javelins and various kinds of slings."<sup>1</sup>

Banabhatta mentions that the infantry which served as the vanguard of Harsha's army rubbed a thick ointment on their bodies <sup>2</sup> either for adourment, or to foul the enemy's attempt to get a firm grip on him in hand to hand combat or for protection against infection and injury. Harsha who had increased his army from 50,000 foot soldiers, 5000 elephants and 2000 cavalry to 60,000 war elephants and 100,000 cavalry<sup>3</sup> must have likewise increased his infantry many folds.

The infantry was given the greatest attention regarding its division of command. Under the Chahamanas the superintendent of the infantry was called Baladhipa<sup>4</sup> and during the Palas he was known as Baladhyaksha.<sup>5</sup> The other infantry officers

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1. Beal, S- Buddhist Records of the Western World. Vol.I, p.83, Thomas Watters- On Yuan Chwang's Travel in India A.D.629-645. Vol. I, p.171.
  2. Harsha-Charita- Cowell, .E.B. and Thomas, F.W. Eng. tr.p.200.
  3. Beal, S.- Buddhist Records of the Western World. Vol.I, p.213.
  4. Epigraphia Indica- XI p.308.
  5. Majumdar, R.C.- History of Bengal, Vol. I, Calcutta 1943, p.285.

in ascending order were Pattipalā<sup>1</sup> who was incharge of five to six soldiers. Next came the officer called Gaulmika,<sup>2</sup> who commanded thirty foot soldiers. The Satanika<sup>3</sup> held an important and responsible post. He had under him hundred foot soldiers. He was well versed in arts of war and battle strategies. He trained the soldiers and supervised military exercises. He was assisted by another officer of equal rank called Anusatika.<sup>4</sup> References are also found in the Sukranitisara of two other high officers who commanded one thousand and ten thousand soldiers, namely Sahasrika and Ayutika.<sup>5</sup>

MILITARY OFFICERS: The king was the over all commander - in-chief of the armed forces and he appointed different military officers to share the responsibility of commanding the army. The chief of the army had different designations under different dynasties. The Gahadavala<sup>6</sup> and the Paramara<sup>7</sup>

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1. Epigraphia Indica- IV, p.248.
  2. Sukranitisara, Vol. II p. 140.
  3. Ibid- Vol. II, p.141.
  4. Ibid- Vol .II, p.141.
  5. Ibid- Vol. II, p. 142.
  6. Epigraphia Indica- IV, p.121,
  7. Indian Antiquary-XXV, pp.205-8.

records refer to the commander in-chief of the army as Senapati, while the Palas<sup>1</sup> and the Senas<sup>2</sup> preferred the title Mahasenapati. Similar titles are also found in other inscriptions viz. Mahadandanayaka is synonymous with leader of the army.<sup>3</sup> The Bala-gamve inscription of Sankama-deva refers to dandanayaka as Samasta-sena agnesara or leader of the whole army.<sup>4</sup>

The commander in chief was responsible for the upkeep of the whole army. He had to be qualified and skilled in the modes of warfare, battle strategies and tactics, use of different weapons etc. Sukranitisara mentions that "if there be a danger ahead, the commander should normally march in crocodile array, if there be danger behind, in the Sakata array, if on the sides, then in the vajra array, if on all sides, then in the Sarvotobhadra or Chakra or Vyala array."<sup>5</sup> It is a direct reference from which we can infer about the qualities which a commander must possess.

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1. Indian Antiquary- Vol. XV p.306.
  2. Epigraphia Indica- Vol. XXI, p.217.
  3. Kargudari Inscription of Vikram-aditya VI and Taipala II.  
Indian Antiquary- Vol. X, p.252.
  4. Indian Antiquary- Vol. V, p.46.
  5. Sukranitisara- Vol. IV, Sect. VII, pp.279-84.

Banabhatta refers to a famous Senapati, Simhanāda who was "a man fore-most in every fight" with a his broad chest" which was" rough with great gashes of wound" and" all across it ran in lines the writings of many great scars graven by the axe edge of sharp swords." He was " the family priest of martial companies--The performer of proud speeches -- the executer of pledges.... the authority on openings in great wars" and" his very voice inspired the warriors with lust for battles."<sup>1</sup> Mahabaladhikrita was next to the senapati. He was the army commander officiating a particular corp.<sup>2</sup> Bal-adhikrita was under the command of Mahabaladhikrita. The former's function can be inferred from the Harhsa-Charita where it is mentioned that the bal-adhikrita gave orders to Pati-pati, the latter being translated by Cowell and Thomas as 'barrack Superintendent'.<sup>3</sup> Thus a baladhikrita must have been the chief of Barrack Superintendents. Bal-adhyaksha who was incharge of a battlion had been suggested to be Bala-adhikrita, but such an assumption is contrary to the fact stated above, as the functions of the two officers are quiet different.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Harsha-Charita-Eng. tr. Cowell, E.B. and Thomas, F.W.pp.150-82.
  2. Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum-III, No.23, p.109, fn.2
  3. Harsha-Charita- Eng. tr. Cowell, E.B. and Thomas, F.W.p.122.
  4. Agrawala, V.S.- Harsha-Charita, EK . Samskritik Adhyayen (Hindi) Patna, 1953. p.143 fn. 3.

A very important military officer was kottapala,<sup>1</sup> who was incharge of a fort. Maryadadhurya<sup>2</sup> is mentioned by the Pratihara records as the Warden of Marches. He kept strict vigilance over the frontiers and prevented infiltrations of hostile persons. At times, experienced and responsible officer was given the powers of Kotpal and Maryadadhurya.<sup>3</sup>

Inspite of the chariots being discarded for battle purposes, the title of Rathadhyasksha was given to officers who held the rank of commanding troops over 10,000 in number.<sup>4</sup>

MILITARY DEPARTMENT: There was a record office which kept all the documents related to military administration. The rolls of soldiers serving in the army and those who have retired from military service, were kept up to date.<sup>5</sup> The lekhaka was incharge of this office. He kept the account of the salaries paid to the soldiers and rewards given, and in return took the receipt from the soldiers of their payment.<sup>6</sup> The physical description of the soldier along with his age, caste, place of

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1. Epigraphia Indica- Vol. I p.154.

2. Ibid- Vol. I, p.154.

3. Ibid- Vol. I, p.154.

4. Sukranitisara- Vol. II, pp.131-132; IV, set VII, p.384.

5. Ibid- Vol. II, p.147.

6. IBid- Vol. IV, Sect. VII, p.389.

residence etc. were all recorded.<sup>1</sup>

The Military Department was also responsible for the disposition of troops in various part of the kingdom. Al-Masudi writes that the "king of Kannauj has four armies..... Each of them numbers 700,000 or 900,000 men. The army of the north wars against the prince of Multan, and with the Musulmans, his subjects, on the frontier. The army of the south fights against the Balhara, king of Mankir. The other two armies march to meet enemies in every direction."<sup>2</sup>

The Pala and Sena inscriptions mentions an officer called Mahavyuhapati,<sup>3</sup> who was most probably a high military officer in the Military Department. He studied the systems of battle army and implemented them during wars.

PAYMENTS OF TROOPS: Land grants were assigned to the soldiers and military officers in lieu of salary. The payments of ordinary soldiers were given in cash. Sulaiman, writes in his Salsilatut-Twarikh that Balhara gave regular pay to his troops<sup>4</sup> but again writes in the later pages that the troops of India

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1. Sukranitisara-Vol. IV, Sect. VII p. 388.

2. Muruju-l-Zahab- Elliot and Dowson- Vol.I, p.23.

3. Epigraphia Indica- Vol. IV, p.248.

4. Sulaiman Tajir- Salsilatut Twarikh- Elliot and Dowson- Vol.I, p.3.



do not receive any pay.<sup>1</sup> One may conclude that Sulaiman must be referring to the temporary recruits of the army who were paid in cash when he says that the soldiers were regularly paid. He may not be knowing that the main force i.e. the Maulabala were granted land instead of cash payment, hence his contradictory remark of non-payment of the Indian soldiers now seems clear. The Chandella king; Parmarddideva granted the village of Nandini in the Nandavana Vishya to his general Mandan pala-sarman.<sup>2</sup> A rock inscription of the time of Bhojavarman states that the Chandella king Kirtivarman appointed an officer Mahesvera and bestowed to him the grant of the village Pipalashika.<sup>3</sup> The Sukranitisara advises that full pay should be given to trained soldiers and half to those under training.<sup>4</sup> The dependents of deceased soldiers too were given land grants for their maintenance. The Garra plate states the king Trailokyavarmen - Chandella king granted two villages to the dependent of a deceased soldier.<sup>5</sup>

Apart from the regular pay, the soldiers were awarded <sup>rewards</sup> with/and gifts according to the bravery and valour shown in the battle. The Charkhari plate mentions that a grant of a village was given to Rauta-Abhi by the Chandella king Viravarmadeva on account of the bravery shown by the former in the battle of Sondhi.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Sulaiman Tajir- Salsilatut Twarikh- Elliot and Dowson Vol.I, p.388.
  2. Indian Antiquary- XXV, p.205.
  3. Epigraphia Indica- Vol. I, p.336.
  4. Sukranitisara-IV, Sect.VII, p.390.
  5. Epigraphia-Indica-XVI, p.227.
  6. Ibid- XX, p.132.

DISCIPLINE: The soldiers observed strict discipline. They kept themselves ever<sup>r</sup>eady to meet any eventualities. They kept their arms, weapons and uniforms quiet bright.<sup>1</sup> They were not allowed to enter the villages and harass the inhabitants, hence the military camps were always outside the villages<sup>2</sup> (camps near villages were avoided.)

METHODS OF WARFARE, A CRITICAL ANALYSIS: The traditions of warfare which was prevalent in India prior to the Turkish conquest was very defective. In words of Dr. D. C. Ganguly<sup>3</sup> the rules of warfare and the code of morals which guided the combatants of the Mahabharata war, guided also the kings and generals in the battles fields throughout the ages before the advent of the Moslem, Onslaught on the rear or on the flanks of the enemy was regarded as a sinful act. To advance in pursuit of a retreating enemy was considered unchivalrous."<sup>3</sup> The first drawback in the Indian army was its composition. The soldiers were recruited from the feudal lords and allies and such an army " raised by different Rajput leaders, trained under different conditions and employed on different terms- lacked unity of purpose and fought for individual glory."<sup>4</sup>

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1. Sukranitisara-IV, Sect. VII, p.385.

2. Ibid- IV Sect. VII, p.379.

3. D.C.Ganguly- Presidential Address. Indian History Congress, 1949, p.123.

4. Some Aspects of Religion and Politicisin India- p.81.

The caste system too was responsible for creating inefficiency in the military organisation. Military service was the monopoly of one particular caste group and the population was either incompetent or unwilling to join the defence forces', thus 'the idea of physical contamination must have division of labour practically impossible. A soldier had to fight, had to fetch water for himself, prepare food, look after his utensils and do similar other works."<sup>1</sup> The soldiers could have saved themselves from all these troubles & had the people of other castes been employed to do such works.

The Indian rulers despite being harassed constantly by the foreign invaders, they never attempted to plan a permanent defensive strategy against such invasions. The natural advantages of rivers, forests, mountains etc. were never utilized for military purposes of defense, ambush or to isolate the enemy and circumvent him.

STRATEGY & TACTICS: The Hindu army adopted a simple method of dashing against the enemy and forcing a hand combat. They were very much confident of their personal prowess and considered warfare as a 'game of wrestling on a magnified scale.'<sup>2</sup>

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1. Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India- p.80.
  2. Saran, P.- 'Resistance of Indian Princes to Turkish Offensive. End of 10th Century A.D. to First Quarter of the 14th Century, p.52.

The three main principles of war viz. mobility, surprise and deception, were completely ignored by the Hindu kings. There never had been any instance where the tactics of surprising the enemy or resorting to any trickery to circumvent him. On the contrary, the Indians themselves fell victim to such strategies adopted by the invaders who had "no such qualms of conscience against them as constantly inhibited the Hindu warriors. But the Hindus refused to resort to them even by ways of retaliative measures."<sup>1</sup>

Mobility or speed which is one of the most essential feature of warfare which included speed in attack, speed in retreat, speed in pursuit etc., was absent from the military code of Rajput Kings. The first reason which may be allotted to the absence of mobility in the Indian army was that the cavalry never came to occupy the first rank in the army organisation of ancient India, it never fact came to from the core of a Hindu army."<sup>2</sup>

Secondly the use of elephants further deprived the army of its swiftness. The elephants, no doubt had a very destructive role to play in the battle but when the "Indians

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1. Saran, P.-'Resistance of Indian Princes to Turkish Offensives. End. of 10th Century A.D. to First Quarter of the 14th Century; p.52.

2. Chakraverty, P.C.- The Art of War in Ancient India, p.36.

gave them a pivotal place in the disposition of their armies, they made a serious mistake. This deprived their forces of that element of mobility which the Central Asian powers rightly emphasized to be the key to success."<sup>1</sup>

The defects which may be pointed out regarding the use of elephants are that the elephants running amok caused destruction of its own forces. The defeat of great Hindu rulers like Porus and Anandapala were due to their elephants running away from the battle field.

The commanders sitting on the back of the elephant became an easy target for the enemy. In the battle between the Turks and Jai Chand (the Rai of Banaras) in 1198 A.D. the latter forces predominated over the Turks and nearly won the battle, but Jai Chand "who was seated on a lofty howdah, received a deadly wound from an arrow and fell from his exalted seat to the earth."<sup>2</sup> Thus Shihab-ud-Din Ghori took advantage of this situation and routed the Rajputs. Of deception or shock

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1. Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India, p.82.

2. Taju'l Maa thir- Hasan Nizami- Eng. tr. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. II, p.221.

tactics or guerilla warfare none were adopted by the Indian rulers in their mode of warfare. Since most of the battles were fought in the Indian soil the native rulers knowing the geography of the place could have easily put into use the above tactics and the frequent inroads of the Turks would have been made impossible. The morals of the Indian soldiers which prevented them from using such tactics of deception ultimately led to their own defeat. Mannuci writes that the notions of Indian warfare was "they considered it a sin and a disgrace to use bows and arrows... or any thing taking effect at a distance." The forts were used for the purpose of defence they never used it as a base of offensive attack, as Prof. K.A. Nizami points out "The forts consequently became a static defence and could not be linked by any mobile striking force all around. Under a different social order these fortresses would have served as a fortified base of a very dynamic character, linking up all the striking force, to that centre."<sup>1</sup>

The Medieval Rajput warriors were inefficient and ineffective in the art of besieging. Shahab-ud-Din Ghoriduring his campaigns in India reduced the fort of Tabarhinda or Bhatinda in a very short time.<sup>2</sup> while the Chauhans with

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1. Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India, p.80.

2. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- Text p.118, Eng. tr. Major H.G.Raverty, Vol. 1, pp. 457-58.

all their forces could capture it in thirteen months.<sup>1</sup> The Hindu rulers never attempted to develop the skill of besieging fortresses. The only method we know of, was they used elephants to strike against the fort gates. Even the simple means of cutting of the supplies to the fort or use of mines etc. were alien to the Rajput warriors.

Such defects in the Rajput tradition of war was primarily due to the lack of communication with the outside world in obedience to the suicidal doctrine of Kalivarjya, which meant things forbidden during the Kali age, promulgated by the monopolists of sacerdotalism, laying down, in the name of Hindu Dharam, a strict embargo on foreign travel and even contact with foreigners in any shape or form, as all of them were put down in the category of mlechas or unclean people.<sup>2</sup> Had there been a far sighted political policy of recovering the last dominions of the north west, the Central Asian political conditions during the second half of the twelfth century offered the ideal opportunity to put to task such a plan. The Ghaznavid hold in Central Asia was declining with the rise of the Seljuqs and the Ghorids and the Khwarazm-Shahs had squeezed the Ghaznavids in the Indian territory. In such a situation,

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1. Tabagat-i-Nasiri- Text- p.119 Eng. tr. Major H.G.Raverty, Vol.I, p.464

2. Saran, P.- 'Resistance of Indian Princes to Turkish Offensive- End of 10th century AD to first quarter of 14th century, p.14.

the Ghaznavids could have been completely washed out and a strong frontier against the foreign invaders could have solved all the problems, but the Rajput rulers did not take any advantage of such precarious political conditions which were totally in their favour.

Another example of their ignorance of political sagacity can be had from the narrations given in the Tabaqat-i-Nasiri. Prithvi Rai III after defeating the Turkish army under Shihab-ud-Din Ghorî in the battle of Tarain did not follow up this victory in completely routing the retreating army, but on contrary the Chauhan ruler spent 13 months in capturing the fort of Tabarhinda. He did not visualise that reducing a fort was in significant as against protecting the frontiers by establishing strong line of defence. Hence he waited for the next onslaught of the Turks which changed the whole course of future Indian History. The Turks invaded Indian again in 1192 AD and completely defeated the Indian forces in the second Battle of Tarain and established the Delhi Sultanate.

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## CHAPTER - I

### ADMINISTRATION OF THE ARMY

The army of the Sultans of Delhi was organised on the decimal system which was prevalent in Central Asia.<sup>1</sup> The Turks who established themselves in India, continued the same traditional pattern of military organisation. The number of troops under an officer determined his military hierarchy. The military designations were constantly reshuffled by induction of new posts during the early Muslim rule. Under the Ghaznavids the highest military officer was designated Amir, e.g. Amir Subuktigin, Amir Ishaq, Amir Bikaltigin etc. with the accession of Mahmud to the throne of Ghaznia, the title of 'Sultan'<sup>2</sup> was adopted by the ruler for himself and the designation of Amir was reserved for the princes. Under Sultan Mas'ud, the title of Amir was conferred upon civil and military officers. The wazir of Sultan Mas'ud enjoyed the title of an Amir.

The Ghorids, during the early phase of their history, used the title of Amir to denote high military officers. Thus

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1. Tarikh-i-Jahan Gusha- Eng. tr. Vol. I p..25-33.

2. Utbi- Tarikh-i-Yamini- Jurbazkhani. Tehran -1340 AH. p.182.

we find Ghoriid military generals like Amir Faulad Ghori Shansabi, Amir Banji ibn Bahran Shansabi, Amir Suri bin Muhammad. Later, the designation of Malik was introduced in the military hierarchy to designate the highest military officers, e.g. Malik Qutub-ud-Din Al Hasan bin Muhammad bin 'Abbas, Malik Nasir-u-Din Al Hasan Muhammad Al Madani. Shihab-ud-Din Muhammad Ghori did not attach the title 'Malik' to his name. During his period the titles of 'Amir' and 'Malik' were conferred upon both civil and military officers, but the latter held a higher protocol. The title holders of 'Malik;' like Malik Qutub-ud-Din Aibak, Malik Nasir-ud-Din Qabacha, Malik Taj-ud-Din Yalduz and even Iltutmish, later became independent Sultans. Sultan Razia had conferred additional title like Malik Kabir on Ikhtiyar-ud-Din Aitekin<sup>1</sup> and Malik-ul-Umara on Zia-ud-Din Junaid<sup>2</sup> to single out a favourite Malik.

The influence of the Mongol military system soon crept into the Delhi Sultanate and we find that after the reign of Sultan Iltutmish, the title of Khan had become the highest

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H.G.Raverty. Vol.I,  
1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- Eng .tr./p.642-

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2. Ibid- Vol.I, 644.

military rank. The princes and selected few military officers were designated as 'Khan'. In course of time many military officers who held the title of 'Khan' had a prefix attached to their names which signified their military achievements, valour and bravery in battles. Eg. Qutlugh Khan, Ulugh Khan,<sup>1</sup> Bughra Khan, Tughril Khan, Alp Khan, Akat Khan, Zafar Khan, Sher Khan, Nusrat Khan etc. At times the title of Khan-i-Khanan was used to project the most distinguished 'Khan' eg. Khan-i-Khanan Ikhtiyar-ud-Din was the full name of Sultan Jalal-ul-Din Khalji's son; Khan-i-Khanan Husam-ud-Din Khusrau Khan was the brother of Sultan Nasir-ud-Din. The title of 'Khan' was also suffixed with other names like Khan-i-Jahan, Khan-i-Azam, Khan-i-Mu'azzam. Khan-i-Azam Ulugh Khan was the title of Balban before his accession to the throne of Delhi. Khan Muazzam Tartar Khan and Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul<sup>2</sup> were high ranking officers during Sultan Firoz Shah's reign.

Zia-ud-Din Barani writes that Bughra Khan (son of Balban) advised his son Kaiqubad to maintain an army according to the Persian pattern in which a Sarkhayl commanded ten horsemen. a sipah salar,<sup>3</sup> ten sarkhayls or one hundred horse, an

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1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- Bib. Indica. Calcutta-1864- p.187.
  2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi Barani. pp.527-28.  
Shams Siraj Afif,- Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi, Bib. Indica ed. Wilayat Husain. Calcutta 1890. p.94. Henceforth cited as Afif, Tarikh-i-Ferishta- Vol. I pp.145-46. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.187.
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Amir ten sipah salars or one thousand horse, a Malik ten Amirs or ten thousand horse and a khan ten maliks or one hundred thousand horse.<sup>1</sup> On basis of the Mongol system, the military officers in the Sultanate of Delhi were also designated as: Amir-i-tuman<sup>2</sup> for a Commander of 10,000 soldiers, Amir-i-Hazarah<sup>3</sup> for an officer over 1,000 troops, Amir-i-Sadah<sup>4</sup> a commander of 100.

In the Adab-ul-Harb wash shujaah and the Tarikh-i-Firozshahi (of Barani) we find references to other military officers, like Arif commanding 10, 30 or 40 soldiers, a Khalifah or Amir-i-Panjah commanding 50, a-naqib being incharge of 100 troops and a Sarhang being a commander of 500 soldiers.<sup>5</sup>

f.n. contd.

3. Under the Ghaznavids the Sipahsalar was the commander-in-chief of the forces. Under him was the Hajib, below him the Sarhang who held 500 soldiers, next stood the Qaid who was incharge of 100 troops and finally the khail who officered 10 soldiers. See, Nazim, M- The life and Times of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna, Cambridge 1931. p.142.

The Sipahsalar under the Ghorids occupied a high rank and was the leader of the vanguard. Qutub-ud-Din Aibek along with Sipahsalar Izzud-Din Husain, son of Kharmil, were the leaders of the van of the army that fought against the Rae of Beneras, Jai Chand. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri p.140

1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.145. Amir Khusro- Qiran -us- Saifain ed. Maulvi Md. Ismail. p.35 Aligarh. 1918.
2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.219.
3. Ibid- p.219.
4. Ibid- p.376.
5. Fakhr-i-Mudabbir- Adab -ul- Harb-wash- Shujaah- ed Ahmed Sohaili Khawansari. Tehran. 1346 Solar pp. 331, 340-341. Tafikh -i- Firoz shahi p.376.

The Khaza'in -ul- Futuh mentions a military officer designated as Qarabeg, who was allocated a position in each main division of an army.<sup>1</sup> We also have other military officers namely Sahm -al- hashm and Zahir-al- Juyush mentioned in the chronicles.<sup>2</sup>

Such an organization continued in India throughout the 13th and 14th century, as we find writers like al-Umari and al-Qalqashandi mentioning explicitly that during reign of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq the 'Khan' commanded ten thousand horse, a Malik one thousand, an Amir one hundred and the sipahsalar less than hundred.<sup>3</sup> We are further supported by Ibn Batuta who mentions in this Rehla that the army contingent of Malik Khattab, the officer incharge of Repri unit had to maintain one thousand sawars.<sup>4</sup> A very interesting phenomenon which

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1. Amir Khusro Khazian -ul- Futuh- , Text ed. Wahid Mirza Calcutta. 1953, p.88.

2. Tabaqat -i- Nasiri, p.276 Tarkih -i- Firoz Shahi- p.62

3. Maasalik -ul- Absar fi Mamalik -ul- Amsar- Ibn Fadh -ullah al Umari. Eng. tr. by. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui & Qazi Ahmed- 'A Fourteenth Century Arab Account of India Under Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq. Aligarh. 1971. p.38 Elliot & Dowson. Vol. III p.577.

Shihabud-Din Abul Abbas Ahmad bin Ali bin Abighudda al Qalaashndi Subh ul Asha fi Sin'nat il insha- Eng. tr. by Otto Spies- 'An Arab Account of India in the Fourteenth Century.' Aligarh n.d.p.67.

4. Ibn Batuta- Rehla- Eng. tr. A.M. Husain. Baroda. 1976 p.162.

one finds while examining the military history of our period is that many military generals were not given the title of 'Khan'. During the reign of Sultan Muizz -ud- Din Bahram Shah, Nizam ul Mulk Muhazzab -ud- Din led the Imperial forces against the Mongols, but he was not a 'Khan.' Similarly Malik Kafur who had subdued the whole of Deccan during the reign of Sultan Alau -ud- Din Khalji was not a 'Khan', inspite of being a military genius.<sup>1</sup>

The Amir-i-Akhur, Amir-i-Hajib, Sar-i-Jandar and Amir-i-Shikar, all appear to have been civil officers, but they exercised military duties as well.<sup>2</sup>

The Amir-i-Akhur took part in battles. There were Kurbeq-i-Maisra and Kurbeq-i-Maimna in the army.<sup>3</sup> The Amir-i-Akhur was assisted by a deputy called Naib Amir-i-Akhur.

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1. For his military exploits see Khazain-ul-Futuh.
  2. One may mention here that the Sipahsalar who was a military officer, was entrusted with civil duties as well. The sipahsalar, Ali Karmakh, was the Wali of Multan, Tabaqat-i-Nasiri, P. 146. Likewise Amir Ali-i-Ismail, the Sipahsalar was the Amir-i-Dad of Delhi. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri. p.170.
  3. Yahya bin Ahmad bin Abd-ullah a's Sarhindi- Tarikhi-Mubarak Shahi-Text. ed Hidayat Husain. Bib. Indica. 1931. p.62. Khazain -ul- Futuh- Text pp.38,88.

We find in the Tabaqat-i-Nasiri that Malik Badr-ud-Din Sunker was first appointed as Naib Amir-i-Akhur and then promoted to the post of Amir-i-Akhur.<sup>1</sup> The Amir-i-Hajib or Lord Chamberlain, was one of the highest ranking officer of the royal household and he enjoyed great power and influence. The Amir-i-Hajib was also known as Sayyid -ul- Hujjab or Sharif-ul-Hujjab.<sup>2</sup> The Amir-i-Hajib inspite of being an officer of the Royal Household, he was given charge of military expeditions as well. During the reign of Sultan Nasir-ud-Din Mahmud, Ulugh Khan who was the Amir-i-Hajib in 1244 A.D., was sent with an army to ravage the territories around Koh-i-Jud and Nandana.<sup>3</sup>

The Jandars were the bodyguards of the Sultan. They were fully trained soldiers and great care was given to their uniforms and equipments. Balban employed Sistani soldiers as Jandars and paid them sixty to seventy thousand jitals per year.<sup>4</sup> The head of the Jandars was called Sar-i-Jandar and

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1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- Eng. Raverty, Vol. I, p.642.

2. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.294, for further example see Tarikh-i-Firoz shahi pp.527-28.

3. Ibid- p.209. also see p.173; Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi p.332.

4. Tarikh-i-Firoz shahi-p.30.

at times there were two Sar-i-Jandar for the right and left wing of the army. Hence we have Sar-i-Jandar-i-Maimna and Sar-i-Jandar-i-Maisra.<sup>1</sup> The Sar-i-Jandar also held administrative posts as well. Sultan Balban had appointed Malik Sunj Sarjandar as the 'Naib of Samana and the commander of its forces'.<sup>2</sup>

The Amir-i-Shikar or the Chief Huntsman belonged to those categories of officials who were connected with the Royal Household. The position of the Amir-i-Shikar is higher than that of the Sar-i-Jandar. Iltutmish was promoted from the office of Sar-i-Jandar to few other posts and then made the Amir-i-Shikar.<sup>3</sup> He even commanded troops in the battles. During the Lakhnauti expedition of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq, Malik Dehlan who was the Amir-i-Shikar had under his command 3000 soldiers and was posted on the Maimna.<sup>4</sup>

The intermingling of civil and military affairs resulted in military achievements, and failures in civil administration. During the reign of Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji, Nusrat

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1. Ibid- p. 24. also see. Rahman, S.A.- Conduct of Strategy and Tactics of War during the Muslim Rule in India. Islamic Culture. Vol. XX No.2 April 1946. p.156.
  2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi p.85. Eng. tr. by Elliot & Dowson. Vol. III p.115.
  3. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- Taxt p.169.
  4. Afif- p.115.



Khan was the Wazir but he proved himself more worthy of being a military commander. He, with the Imperial army under him conquered Nahrwala and Gujarat.<sup>1</sup> Malik Kafur was the Naib - Mumalik, but distinguished himself as a military general by over running the Deccan.<sup>2</sup> Malik Dinar was the Wali of Gujarat and he subdued the whole of Gujarat during the reign of Sultan Mubarak Khalji.<sup>3</sup> Similarly Khusrau Khan held the post of Wazir during the reign of Mubarak Khalji, but when entrusted with an additional post of Sar-i-Lashkar, he led important military expeditions.<sup>4</sup>

DIWAN-i-ARZ. Position & Duties of the Ariz-i-Mumalik.

The Sultans of Delhi had an exclusive military department called the Diwan-i-Arz. It was under the supervision of an officer called Ariz-i-Mumalik, The Diwan-i-Arz was the supreme body which dealt with all the matters related with the army viz recruitment of soldiers, their promotion and demotion,

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1. Tarikh-i-Firozshahi- pp.239-41.

2. Ibid- p.326; Khaz àin-ul-Futuh- Text. p.66.

3. Ibid- p.388.

4. Ibid p. 391.

distribution of salary, review of the soldiers, maintenance of records which had complete bio-data of the soldiers and their equipments etc.<sup>1</sup> In short one may say that it was responsible for the efficiency and maintenance of the army. The stability of the country depended much upon the size and strength of the army which changes according to the excellence and negligence of the Ariz. "to whose judgement and care all the general and detailed affairs of the army are assigned".<sup>2</sup> Upon him rested great responsibilities and people possessing highest form of moral character were chosen as Ariz. It was deemed necessary for the Ariz to possess "the King's confidence to the same extent as the Wazir and in loyalty to the kings he should reach the extreme limit. He should be unsurpassed in trustworthiness, efficiency, honesty, affection of hearts truthfulness, notable birth, dignity, correctness of faith and the fulfilment of promises. The greater the loyalty and the

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1. Tarikh-i- Firoz Shahi- p.61; Tabaqat-i-Nasiri p.146.

2. Zia-ud-Din Barani- Fatawah-i-Jahandar - Eng. tr. by Md. Habib and Mrs. Afsar Salim. New Delhi. n.d. p.23.

Orthodox virtues (ausof-i-Sunnah) of the Ariz, the greater will be the size and the strength of the army he can control!"<sup>1</sup>

The Ariz recruited soldiers after they had proved their capability.<sup>2</sup> The duty of the Ariz was to see that the army was contended by encouraging the soldiers and the commanders with rewards and promotions.<sup>3</sup> He revised the salaries of the soldiers and promoted or demoted them accordingly.<sup>4</sup> The Ariz however had to place the case of promotion or demotion to the Sultan before he implemented his motives. There are occasions where the proposal of the Ariz was snubbed off. An example may be cited of Malik Ishaq's recommendation of dismissing old soldiers of the army, which was ignored by Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq.<sup>5</sup>

"The Ariz" writes Barani" should be kinder to the soldiers than a mother and father"<sup>6</sup> and he should throw a

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1. Zia-ud-Din Barani- Fatawah-i-Jahandari Eng. tr. by Md. Habib and Mrs. Afsar Salim- New Delhi A.D. p.23.
  2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi - p.102; Rehla Eng. Tr. A.M. Husain p. 14.
  3. Adab-ul-Harb Wash shujaah- p.277.
  4. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- pp.62,101, 102- etc.
  5. Afif- p.302.
  6. Fatawah-i-Jahandari- p. 24.

veil over the crimes of his men. He should punish and put to right the soldiers in the same way as a kind father punishes an undutiful son; he should not resort to extreme, cruelties and punishments, and in every penalty that he inflicts he should keep the door of reconciliation open. He should be able to discriminate (between offences) so that loyal and brave officers are not deprived of their dignity for every little fault. He should be content to punish wrong-doers and criminals, who have been impelled by their passions, by depriving them of their prestige, administering a few lashes and handing them to the military police (sahmal hashman) for being kept in confinement. He should from time to time keep the King informed of the crimes and defects of the army and so far as possible he should prevent the King from inflicting death - penalties and severe and harsh punishments on the army personnel. He should not make the king the enemy of the army, or the army the enemy of the king. He should consider the misfortunes of the soldiers to be his own misfortunes; he should be saddened at the sorrows and delighted at the joys of his men; and he should find his peace of mind, comfort and ease in providing properly for them. In all affairs and in all conditions, the Ariz should deal with the army in such a way that its confidence in him does not decrease; his awe and dignity should be

inscribed in the hearts of the men, and owing to their excessive confidence in him, the troopers should deem themselves to be his tribes men (khail), followers, slaves and servant."<sup>1</sup> Imadul-Mulk was the Ariz under Sultan Balban and he looked after the troops with great sincerity and affection. He is reported to have spent from his own resources on the needs of the soldiers. Barani writes that the Ariz once said that if he disregarded his responsibilities and did not consider the soldiers above his own brothers and sons, then he will be guilty of his deeds on the Day of Judgement.<sup>2</sup>

The designation of Ariz during the Delhi Sultans underwent some changes. Sultan Balban had designated his Ariz as Rawat-i-Ariz.<sup>3</sup> The other synonyms used for Ariz were Ariz-i-Mumalik,<sup>4</sup> <sup>2nd</sup> Diwan-i-Ariz.<sup>5</sup> During the reign of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq, the Ariz was conferred with the title of Imad-ul-Mulk.<sup>6</sup>

The Ariz took part in the war council and had the privilege of offering useful suggestions. He however had no right in the appointment of the Sar-i-Lashkar for campaign. Such an appointment was the sole privilege of the Sultan.<sup>7</sup>

1. Fatawah-i-Jahandari-p.24.

2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi pp.115-116.

3. Ibid- p.24.

4. Ibid- pp.174, 194, 248, 423.

5. Ibid- pp. 60, 360, 477, Afif- pp.298, 443.

6. Afif p. 438.

7. Khazainul-Futuh- Text. p.73.

The Ariz divided the spoils or Mal-i-ganimah in the presence of the Sar-i-lashkar.<sup>1</sup> In this matter, and of course other functions, the Ariz was assisted by a deputy called the Naib-i-Ariz.<sup>2</sup> The latter was responsible for the collection of spoils<sup>3</sup> and the distribution of the salary to the soldiers. During the expedition of Warangal, Malik Kafur was accompanied by the Naib-i-Ariz Khwaja Haji to share the responsibility of the army and collect the spoils.<sup>4</sup>

In each province there was one Ariz and a Naib-i-Ariz who<sup>was</sup> subordinate to the Ariz-i-Mumalik and his Naib, of the centre. An Ariz was appointed seperatedly for different campaigns, eg. Hizhabr-ud-Din Zafar Khan was the 'Ariz-i-wala for the Gujarat Campaign.<sup>5</sup> Malik Nasir-ul-Mulk Siraj-ud-Din<sup>6</sup> was the 'Ariz-i-Mumalik' for the Warangal campaign.<sup>7</sup>

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1. Khazainul-Futuh- Text. pp. 109,163.

2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi p. 428

3. Ibid- pp.326-28.

4. Khazian-ul-Futuh- Text pp.109-111.

5. Ibid- Eng. tr. M.Habib. Madras 1931. p.35 f.n.2

6. The names Malik Nasir-ul-Mulk Siroj-ud-Din and Khwaja Haji are of the same person.

7. Khazain-ul-Futuh. Text. pp.82,85.

HASHM-I-ATRAF: The central army stationed at Delhi/<sup>was</sup> called the Hashm-i-Qalb and the provincial armies called Hashm-i-Atraf<sup>1</sup>. The Hashm-i-Atraf was under the command of the governor or Muqta of the province and was assisted by the provincial Ariz in matters of review, recruitment of troops and their payment etc. The Ariz was represented in the centre by his Naib.<sup>2</sup>

The Muqta recruited the troops as he "enjoyed considerable freedom of action in the matter of fighting against the Hindus and also against foreign invaders".<sup>3</sup> He took care of the local disorders and only in case of serious upheaval, the army from the centre was sent to assist the muqta. The Sultans always advised and directed the muqta in matters related to the army. Sultan Balban felt the need of advising Bughra Khan, who held the province of Samana and Sunam, to increase the number of the provincial troops and raise their pay.<sup>4</sup>

The Hashm-i-Atraf of the neighbouring provinces always combined together against a formidable enemy, however it was

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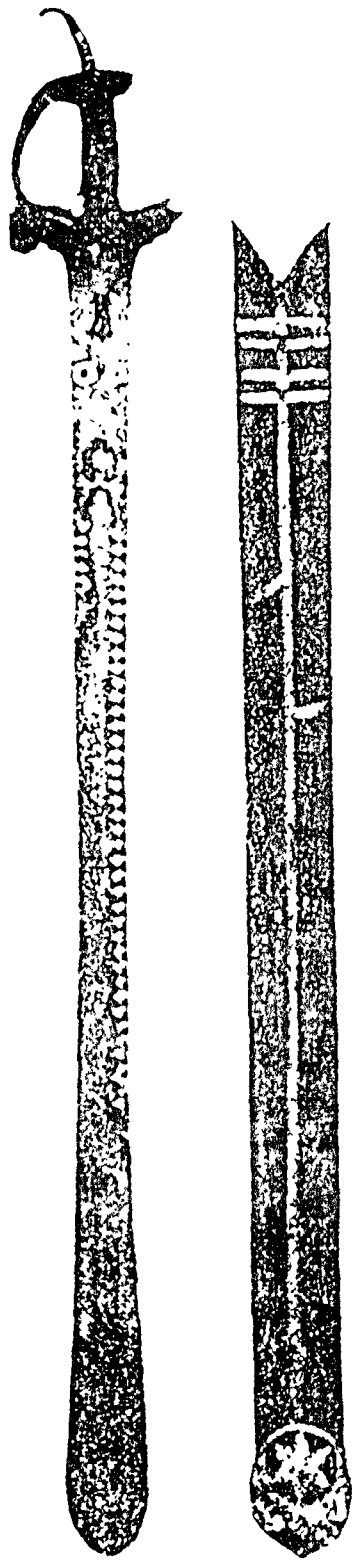
1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- pp.323, 444; Tarikh-i-Firozshahi p. 59.

2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi, 116.

3. Habibullah, A.B.M.- The Foundation of Muslim Rule in India. Allahabad 2nd rev. edition, 1961. p.255.

D.Y. U.N.- The Government of the Sultante. New Delhi 1972- pp. 142-43.

4. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi p.80.



SWORD OF  
ALAUDDIN KHALJI

One Persian  
inscription reads :

*In the name of God !  
The Compassionate !  
The Merciful !*

Another inscription is :

*Victory is at hand !*

Near the inscription are seen  
four dots  
which are said to denote that  
four heads fell to the sword.

*(Prince of Wales  
Museum, Bombay)*



the Sultan who ordered for such a combination. The Muqtas could not on their own make such a move. Sultan Balban once sent Bughra Khan from Samana, Martyr Prince (Khan-i-Shaheed) from Multan and Malik Barbak Baktars from Delhi to check the Mongols.<sup>1</sup> Similarly during the Gujarat campaign, Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji ordered Ulugh Khan to march from Sind<sup>2</sup> and join the forces of Nusrat Khan who had marched from Delhi, and move towards Gujarat.

Likewise during the revolt of Ainul Mulk, Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq called the forces from Samana, Amroha, Baran, Koil and Ahmedabad to assist him in suppressing the rebellion.<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand it was desired from the governors to help the Imperial forces in their campaign. When Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq was not assisted by the governor of Gujarat Amir Husain bin Amir Miran in the Thatta campaign, he dismissed the latter and appointed Zafar Khan as its governor.<sup>4</sup> The Hashm-i-Atraf was paid from the revenues of the province by the governor.

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi pp. 57-58; Elliot & Dowson Vol. III p.112.

2. Mir Masum. Tarikh-i-Ma'sumi- A History of Sindh. Poona 1938. p.44.

Tarikh-i-Ferishta - Vol I p.102.

3. Tarikh-i-Firozshahi- p.489; Rehla Ey tr. A.M. Husain p.106.

4. Afif - pp.219-220.

FORTS:<sup>1</sup> The whole subdued country had a network of forts which were garrisoned with best troops. It functioned as a military base in curbing internal disturbances and checking external threats. The frontier forts of the North-west were given preference in matters of their maintenance. The command of the North West Frontier were entrusted upon loyal generals or princes of royal blood. Trusted soldiers were placed in their charge. Sultan Balban and Sultan Jalal-ud-Din Khalji had appointed their most courageous and capable sons on the frontier.<sup>2</sup>

In other places of strategic importance new forts were built and old forts repaired. Sultan Balban had garrisoned important forts of Gopalgir, Kampil, Patiali, Bhojpur and Jalali with Afghan soldiers.<sup>3</sup>

The forts built by the Sultans of Delhi were offensive in nature. They were built at ground level to facilitate the movements of the cavalry. Such forts like Siri, Kilughari,

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ed. 1. Detail/survey of important forts and their importance has been dealt with seperately in chapter 5.

2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- pp.108, 238.

3. Ibid- pp.57-58, Elliot & Dowson Vol. III p.105.

Tughlaqabad, Kotla Firoz Shah, etc. were offensive in structure.<sup>1</sup>

DIVISIONS OF THE ARMY: The army of the Delhi Sultans comprised of Cavalry, Infantry and Elephantry.

CAVALRY: It was the Cavalry which formed the backbone of the Imperial army. The superiority of the Muslim cavalry was responsible for the foundation of Muslim rule in India, It averted Mongol invasions and created fear in their hearts.<sup>2</sup> The swiftness and superiority of the cavalry created inroads in the Deccan and in course of time the Deccani States accepted the suzerainty of the Delhi Sultan during the reign of Ala-ud-Din Khalji and continued to be obedient till the early years of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq's reign.

SUPPLY OF WAR HORSES: After the establishment of the Turkish rule in India, the rulers realised that there was paucity of good horses. The horses of good quality were found in the territories of Siwaliks, Samana, Sunnam, Tabarhinda and Thanesar<sup>3</sup> but they were much inferior in breed to the horses by of the Turks.

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1. Al Umari writes that Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq had 84 strong forts in his Empire. Maasalik-ul-Absar- Eng. tr. I.H.Siddiqui and Q.H. Ahmad p.29

2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- pp.320-23.

3. Ibid- p.53.

The Mulk-i-baladast (the land on the higher side of the north West region) where horses of good quality could be reared, were not in the control of the Delhi Sultans. These areas were infested by the Mongols and influx of good horses from these places were occasionally disrupted. Thus rearing of good horses was not possible and it necessitated import of horses from different countries. We therefore find the chronicles of our period mentioning the names of Yamini, Shami, Bahri, Qipchaqi and Arabi horses. The horse trade brought enormous profits to traders, hence the supply continued inspite of the trade route being controlled by the Mongols.

The Afghans, the Khokkars, the Jats and Mandahars reared horses and maintained a regular supply to the market in Delhi.<sup>1</sup> With the territorial expansion of the Sultanate during the 14th century, under the Khaljis and the Tughlaqs, the demand for horses increased many folds. Furthermore a large central army was required to check the frequent Mongol inroads. This increase in demand of the horses created many problems for the buyer. "Barani's statement about the price of horses in Delhi sheds light on the fact that it was sometimes difficult for people to distinguish between an imported horse, Tazi or

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.51.

Tartari and the horses bred in this region and called Hindi of Baladasti"<sup>1</sup>. Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji promulgated strict laws and punishments against such deceitful practices..He fixed the categories of the horses fit for military service into 1st grade, in which the prices varied from 100 tankas to 120 tankas; the second grade horses were available for 80-90 tankas, the third rate fixed was 25 to 50 tankas<sup>2</sup> and the tattoos' fetched 10-25 tankas.<sup>3</sup> Hence no horses of Hindi or Baladasti breed could be passed off as an Arabi or Tartari horses.<sup>4</sup>

IMPORTS: Ibn Batuta writes that horses from Dhofar (Zafar) Qipchaq, Crimea (Qiram) and Azor were sent to India in thousands. He further states. "The horse merchants pay a duty of seven silver tankas for each horses entering Sind at Shashnagar. Then they pay a further duty at Multan, the capital of Sind--- still the margin of the merchants profit in this trade is very high because in India even the most inferior type of

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1. I. H. Siddiqui- Politics and conditions in the territories under the occupation of Central Asian Rulers in North-Western India 13th and 14th Centuries. Central Asiatic Journal Vol. 27 No. 3-4 1983. p.301.
  2. The prices of Hindi and Baladasti horses ranged from 65 to 75 silver tankas. C.f. Dig by, Simon: War-Horse and Elephant in the Delhi Sultanate. Karachi 1971 pp.26-28. also see Maasalik ul Absar- Eng. tr. I.H.Siddiqui & Qazi Muhammad Ahmad -p.39 for the prices of horses during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughlaq.
  3. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.313.
  4. Ibid- p.313.

horse sells for a hundred silver tanka (dinar/darahim). An excellent horse sells for five hundred silver tanka (dinar) or more. The Indians attach importance to the strength of the horse and the length of its step. They cover their horses with armour and themselves they wear coats of mail at the time of war. The horses required for racing are imported to India from Yemen, Oman and Persia. and each such horse is sold at a price ranging from one thousand to four thousand silver tankas (dinar).<sup>1</sup>"

PLUNDER OR TRIBUTE: Horses were taken as tribute from the ruler of Deccan and since the Deccan was not a suitable place for horse breeding, the rulers of the South imported foreign bred horses. We thus find Amir Khusro referring in his Khazain-ul-Futuh, to imported horses. Pratap Rudradeva of Warangal surrendered to Malik Kafur in 1310 A.D. 20,000 Kohi and Bahri horses. These horses were such that Amir Khusro credits them in the following words. "The foreign horse flies like wind on the surface of water, without even its feet becoming wet. And when the mountain-horse steps on a hill, the hill trembles like a Hindi sword."<sup>2</sup> Similarly the Pandyas had to part

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1. Rehla- Eng. Tr. A.M. Husain p. XIV; Maasalik-ul-Absar Eng. tr. J.H. Siddiqui & Q.M. Ahmad, p.35.

2. Qiran-us-Sadain- p.63.

2. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Eng. Tr. M. Habib p,72, Text p.101.

away with 5000 horses which were of Yemani, Shani and Bahri breeds.<sup>1</sup>

NUMBER OF WAR HORSES DURING THE DELHI SULTANAT: Thus the paighas of the Delhi Sultans were always full with horses of different pedigree. Zia-ud-Din Barani writes that Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji possessed 20,000 horses of best breeds in his paigah at Delhi.<sup>2</sup> It was then, an honour for a person to be presented with a good horse, al-Umari informs us that Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq distributed 10,000 Arabi horses among the soldiers.<sup>3</sup> Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq who had completely neglected the military affairs, maintained five big paighas . Afif writes that the paighas were given great importance and attention among the royal karkhanas of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq. The Paighas were scattered in five different places. The first and the biggest one was at Saharwan Sultanpur, the second at Kibla, the third near the royal court called Paigah Mahal Khas, the fourth at Shakar Khana-i-Khas and the fifth was for the selected slaves.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Eng. Tr. M. Habib p.106.

2. Tarikh-i-Firozshahi- p.262.

3. Maasalik-ul-Absar- Eng. Tr. I.H.Siddiqui & Qazi Muhammad Ahmad p.39.

4. Afif- p.340.

The importance given to the cavalry by the Delhi Sultans can be deciphered from the number of sawars they maintained. Sultan Balban claimed that he could over run the Hindus (whose army consisted of numerous paiks) with 67 thousand horse which he possessed.<sup>1</sup> Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji's army numbered 75,000 horsemen,<sup>2</sup> likewise Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq's cavalry reached a figure of 900,000.<sup>3</sup>

EFFECTIVENESS OF CAVALRY: The invisibility of the cavalry during our period of study needs to be analysed. Apart from the strategy and tactics evolved by the Turks in proving the superiority of the cavalry, there were other reasons which accentuated its supremacy. The horses of the invading Turks wore saddles, stirrup and horse shoes. The saddle enabled the rider to have full control of the horse in course of gallop, canter, trot etc. The metal stirrup provided the horsemen a firm foothold which enabled him to shoot accurately from the horseback without losing his balance. It further advantaged the warrior to stand up and extend the reach of his sword or lance. In case the horse stood on its hind legs the

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi p.52

2. Tarikh-i-Ferishta- Vol. I. p.200.

3. Masalik-ul-Absar- Eng. Tr. I.H.Siddiqui & Qazi Muhammad Ahmad p.37.

Subhal Asha Eng. tr. Spies. p.66.



stirrup which furnished a good foothold prevented the horse-  
man from falling down. The horseshoe helped the horses in  
traversing the Indian environment which had diversified physical  
features in different territories.

The cavalry of Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji did not deter  
from moving deep into the Deccan despite numerous hardship  
they faced while going to Arangal. Amir Khusro states that the  
cavalry passed through lands which was "extremely uneven; there  
were innumerable clefts in it .....Owing to the rapidity of  
the streams, the ground at the foot of the hills had broken  
into many fissures. Every mound had a hundred thousand pointed  
thorns stuck to its head. Through such a forest the obedient  
army passed, file after file, as if that perfect wilderness  
were the straight path",<sup>1</sup> Apart from crossing many rivers the  
army passed through routes which "was narrower than a guitar  
string and darker than a beauty's locks.....The river-banks  
were so steep that it would have been difficult for a duck,  
or even on eagle, to cross them" yet " Many a dancing horse  
few swift as the wind; but once its foot slipped down the  
hill side, it tumbled and fell".<sup>2</sup>

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1. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Eng. Tr. M.Habib- p.57. Text pp.74-75.

2. Ibid- Eng. tr. p.59, Text pp. 78-79.

The cavalry were constantly trained in different military exercises like hunting, polo furusiya<sup>1</sup> and yarag ( Fat reducing exercise for the horses).<sup>2</sup> It thus resulted in maintaining an efficient cavalry.

The horseman was usually armed with bow and arrows, sword, mace, lance, lasso etc. The mobility and accurate shooting from the horse back made the Turks unresistable.<sup>3</sup> The earliest evidence regarding the appearance of the Turkish cavalry is found on the coins of Sultan Iltutmish "where the horse is seen at full charge, and the rider with upraised mace. The form of the saddle, the seat of the horseman, the chanfrein or head armour of the steed and his erect tail, all seem to point to Turki ideals."<sup>4</sup>

The horsemen and the steed both were protected by defensive armour. The horsemen wore a leathern suit, called khafan, a breast plate or jawshan and other protective plates

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1. Details of the exercises has been dealt in chapter II.

2. Rehla, Eng. tr. A.M. Husain p.48.

3. Smail, R.C.- Crusading Warfare- pp.80-81.

4. Thomas, Edward: The Chronicles of the pathan Kings of Delhi. Indian edition, Delhi. 1967, pp.78-79.

named Khazī (     ), Zirah (     ), Bagultaq (     ) Zarheen  
(     ) Raneen (     ) , Saiy-i-deen (     ) Sageen  
(     ) .<sup>1</sup> Dast (     ) , was another defensive suit which  
was worn for complete protection.<sup>2</sup>

The Tughlaq Namah mentions a chain armour (Zirrah-i-Daudi) worn by the troops of Ghazi Malik during his attack on Delhi<sup>3</sup>. Metallic armour were used by the forces of Shihab-ud-Din Muhammad Ghorī during the campaign against the Rai of Benaras. Our source of the period Taj-ul-Maathir contains such information. Hasan Nizami writes that the forces consisted of "fifty thousand mounted men clad in armour and coats of mail"<sup>4</sup>

The cavalry consisted of men with one horse and men with two horses,<sup>5</sup> Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji gave 78 tankas extra to those who possessed two horses. Ferishta, however mentions that when Shihab-ud-Din Muhammad Ghorī attacked Khusrāu Malik, his army consisted of 20,000 doaspa wa sih aspa<sup>6</sup>

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1. Adab-ul-Harb wash shujaah- p.369.

2. Adab-ul-Harb-Wash Shujaah-p.370; Rehla- Eng. Tr. A.M. Husain- p.61.

3. Amir Khusro. Tughlaq Namah- edited by Saiyad Hashmi Faridabadi. Aurangabad. 1933. p.81.

4. Taj-ul-Maathir: Elliot & Dowson Vol. II p.220.

5. Tarikh-i-Firozshahi p.303.

6. Tarikh-i-Ferishta Vol. I.p.52.

but through out the records of the 13th and 14th centuries we don't come across any reference of Sih aspa. The Sultans however kept large number of horses in reserve, so that those lost in the battles may be replaced at the expense of the state.<sup>1</sup>

Precautions were taken with regards to the selection of horses for the army. The horses brought for review were branded<sup>2</sup> so that they may not be replaced by inferior ones, and secondly, the same steed may not be placed again for review. Hence the number of horses in the army were recorded. At the time of dagh (branding) the breed of the horses, its physical properties etc. was noted alongwith the hulia of the horseman.<sup>3</sup> The horseman's name, address, face structure, identification mark etc. were all written down. This system and of dagh / hulia was neglected during the reign of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq who ultimately abolished the dagh system.<sup>4</sup>

ELEPHANTRY: Elephants were effectively employed in battles by the Delhi Sultans. There was a great need for elephants due to its effective role in battles. Sultan Balban considered an elephant to be equivalent to 500 war horses.<sup>5</sup> The war elephants could run at a speed of 15 miles an hour in course of the battle.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi p. 328.

2. Ibid- p.315.

3. Ibid- p.438.

4. Afif- p.303

5. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.53.

6. Futuh-us-Salatin- Madras edition p.260.

SUPPLY OF WAR- ELEPHANTS: Before the conquest of the Deccan by Ala-ud-Din. Khalji, Bengal supplied war elephants to the Sultans of Delhi. Sultan Balban advised his son Bughra Khan to send regular supply of elephants from Bengal or else the latter in return would be deprived of horses.<sup>1</sup> Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji had his supply of elephants from the South. During the Southern campaign of 1308-09 A.D. Malik Kafur captured 17 elephants.<sup>2</sup> In the campaign of 1310-12 A.D. the total number of elephants captured were 512.<sup>3</sup> Earlier the Rai of Warangal had presented 100 elephants.<sup>4</sup> In spite of the conquest of the ~~Deccan and acquiring~~ of elephants from the rulers of the South, Bengal remained a constant supplier of elephants. Since they were in abundance, elephants were trapped freely when ever required. Sultan Firoz Shah spent most of his time in hunting elephants during the Jajnagar campaign.<sup>5</sup> Ceylon also supplied elephants to India, Afif writes that Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq acquired elephants from Ceylon and also paid the price for the elephants that perished during the voyage.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz shahi- p.96

2. Ibid -p.326; Qiran-us-Sadain-p.63.

3. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Text. p.161.

Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi-p.333

4. Khasain -ul- Futuh- Text p.101.

5. Afif- pp.163-167.

6. Ibid- p.486.

Thus the pilkhanas at Delhi were full of elephants. Barani refers to one thousand five hundred elephants in the pilkhana of Ala-ud-Din Khalji.<sup>1</sup> Al-Umari writes that Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq possessed 3,000 elephants.<sup>2</sup> Similarly Firoz Shah Tughlaq had many elephants and he frequently took large number of them along with him in his military campaigns. Against Bengal, he took 470 elephants along with his army and during his Thatta campaign he had 480 elephants.<sup>3</sup>

The number of elephants dwindled after Firoz Shah's reign. The army of Delhi which faced Timur had only 120 elephants.<sup>4</sup>

The elephants were used in breaking the enemy's line of defence and if handled properly it fought in order,<sup>5</sup> trampling the enemies with their feet.<sup>6</sup> It was also used in tearing

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1. The Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi later mentions that he possessed many elephants, instead of giving the number of elephants p.262.
  2. Maassalik-ul-Absar- Eng. tr. I.H. Siddiqui & Q.M.Ahmed p.37.
  3. Afif- pp.144,197.
  4. Zafar Namah-Sharf-ud-Din Yezdi Eng. tr. in Elliot & Dowson Vol. III p.498., Text Vol. II p.100- however does not contain the number of elephants.
  5. Tuzukat-i-Taimuri- Persian tr. by Abu Talib Ali Husaini-p.139  
Tehran 1372 A.H. p.139.
  6. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Text p.107.
  6. Ibid- Text pp.138-139.

down the ramparts of forts.<sup>1</sup> Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq used elephants in crossing rivers. The elephants were stationed in a row in the river to break the flow of the current while the army crossed over to the other side.<sup>2</sup>

The elephants at the time of battle were covered with iron trapping inlaid with gold.<sup>3</sup> The authors of the Maasalik-ul-Absar and Subhal Asha both state that wooden cupolas were placed on the back of the elephants and in which six to ten warriors were easily accommodated. They were holes in the wooden structure through which the warriors shot arrows at the enemies.<sup>4</sup> Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji effectively used elephants against the Mongols in the battle of Kili (1299 A.D.)<sup>5</sup>

THE ROLE OF INFANTRY: The infantry were the most trustworthy and brave soldiers. They formed the vanguard of the army and thus they took the brunt of the enemy's onslaught on themselves.

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1. Khazain-ul-Futuh Text. p.161
  2. Affif- p.111.
  3. Maasalik-ul-Absar- Eng. Tr. I.H.Siddiqui A.H. Ahmed p.37.  
Rehla- Eng. tr. A.M. Husain p.106.
  4. Ibid  
Subhal Asha- Eng. tr. Ott Spies p.76, Rehla -Eng.tr. A.M. Husain p.106.
  5. Futuh-us-Salatin- p.260.

They were positioned in front of the elephants and "they attack the sawars of the enemy in order to make way for the elephants."<sup>1</sup> al-Qalqa-shandi writes that the elephants were behind the infantry and sawars on their right and left so that in face of enemy's attack the foot soldiers were unable to run away.<sup>2</sup> The Adab-ul-Harb wa'sh shujaah gives a detailed account of the arrangement of the infantry in the battle thus- "Foot soldiers wearing armour and armed with brood shields, bow and arrow formed the first row and served as a wall of protection. Foot soldiers wearing breastplates and armed with shields, swords and spears occupied the second row. Foot soldiers with swords, quivers, large knives and iron-bound sticks stood in the third row. The fourth row was also camposed of footsoldiers armed with lances and swords. Each of these rows were broken into several parts, so as to leave an open space between them for the horsemen and other warriors behind the lines to see what was happening in front, and to charge at the enemy when necessary or to retreat to their original places in the camp."<sup>3</sup> Sometimes they stood behind the cavalry or the elephants, depending on the strategy involved.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Maasalik-ul-Absar- Eng. tr. I.H.Siddiqui & Q.M. Ahmad.p.53.
  2. Subh-ul-Asha-Eng. tr. Otio Spies. p.76.
  3. Adabul Harb Wash Shujaah. p.330.
  4. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.301.



The foot soldiers were called paiks and the Hindus constituted the majority in the infantry. The Indian infantry was renowned of its capability to avert greatest dangers and it was an asset to have large division of infantry. Sultan Mamud of Ghazni enrolled Hindu paiks in his army.<sup>1</sup> The foot soldiers were not employed for campaigns which required swift movement of the army. They however went on distant campaigns. Ala-ud-Din Khalji as a prince had marched to Deogin with 2,000 paiks in his army<sup>2</sup> Barani gives credit to the paiks who hailed from Bengal as they excelled in archery and Dhanush was their favourite weapon.<sup>4</sup>

Chroniclers like Minhaj-us-Siraj and Amir Khusro inform us that many paiks were supplied with horses for fightings; they were however not paid the salary that of a horseman but remained as an infantryman.<sup>5</sup>

Instances have proved that the paiks played a very important role in bringing down one ruler and placing another

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1. Tarikh-i-Yamini- Text p.285.  
  . Tarikh-i-Ferishta- Vol. I. p.18.
  2. Tarikh-i-Firozshahi- p.222
  3. Ibid- p.593.
  4. Ibid- pp.52, 593.
  5. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.257.  
  Khazain-ul-Futuh Text. p.15.

on throne. They have also been loyal to their master. The paiks saved Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji from the murderous attack of Akat Khan.<sup>1</sup> Similarly Mubarak Khalji succeeded in capturing the throne of Delhi with the help of his loyal paiks who played an active part in the conspiracy against Malik Kafur.<sup>2</sup>

NAVY: Naval warfare during the 13th and 14th centuries was not common and hence no separate division for navy was emphasised. Boats no doubt were used in campaigns in those territories where the geographical conditions compelled the Imperial army to employ flotillas of boats. With the extension of the empire to such areas a designation of Amir-i-Bahr<sup>3</sup> was given to an officer responsible for supplying the army with boats. He was however not a naval commander. The state did not initiate any move to have a separate Imperial navy. The soldiers arranged for the boats by taking over the charge of the ferries. Instances of employing boats in campaigns are not difficult to find. Sultan Balban prevented the escape of Tughril Beg by employing boats as the latter planned to flee by sea.<sup>4</sup> Sultan

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.273.

2. Ibid- pp.376-377.

3. Afif- pp.198-199.

4. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- pp.87-88. Barani infact. means river.

Firoz Shah Tughlaq during his Lakhnauti campaign had 100 boats in his train.<sup>1</sup> Similarly he felt it necessary to collect 5000 boats to be used for the Thattah campaign.<sup>2</sup>

ARZ OR REVIEW OF THE SOLDIERS: The review of the soldiers were held periodically to ascertain the capability and efficiency of the army.<sup>3</sup> The descriptive rolls of the permanent and temporary soldiers were kept in record.<sup>4</sup> A place for review was selected where the whole army could be accommodated. Fakhr-i-Mudubbir writes that while reviewing the Ariz should occupy a seat at an elevation, so that he can see both the cavalry and foot soldiers. He should be attended by a naqib who will announce each man as he presents himself for inspection. When an army is reviewed on the eve of a battle, it should be so arranged that when a contingent is reviewed and is marched off; some of the cavalry should return to join a fresh contingent to be inspected by previous arrangement, so that the total strength of the army appears to be much larger than its actual number. This is done to confuse the spies of the enemy if there be any, in the army. This practise should be repeated so

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1. Afif- p.109.

2. Ibid- pp.198-199.

3. Afif- pp.299-300.

4. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah-p.276.

Maasalik-ul-Absar- Eng. tr. Elliot and Dowson- Vol. III p.576.

that the total strength goes up apparently. This may dishearten the enemy and they might be persuaded to come to terms and a fight is thus avoided.<sup>1</sup>

Barani suggests in his Fatawah-i-Jahandari that "it is necessary after examination, to prepare a record of the horses and arms of the men twice a year.... The review (arz) should be at such times and places that it can be finished at one stretch."<sup>2</sup>

During the review the soldiers and their mounts and equipments were examined minutely. Neither the recorded mount or the weapon were allowed to be substituted by inferior ones.<sup>3</sup> It, no doubt took a long time in completing the whole task. Amir Khusro states that during the Warangal campaign of 1309A.D. the review of the army took fourteen days.<sup>4</sup>

The strictness of the Ariz slackened during the period of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq as the officers were bribed to

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1. Adab/Harb Wash Shujaah- pp.276-78.
2. Fatawah-i-Jahandari Eng. Tr. M. Habib & Afsar Salim Khan- p.
3. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah p.276.
4. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Text p.76.

pass off the soldiers and his mount fit,<sup>1</sup> though earlier we find that the soldiers were punished if they tried any fraud. If Barani is to be believed, Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji withheld three years salary of those who failed to turn up for review.<sup>2</sup> Ghiyas-ud-Din Tughlaq was also strict in this matter<sup>3</sup> and there are hardly any instance when soldiers tried to avoid the review or join the battle.

OTHER UNITS OF ADMINISTRATION: Apart from the organisation and administration of the army mentioned above there were separate Karkhanas which constituted in the organisation of the army viz. Pilkhana, Paigah, Silah, Shutur Khana, Alam Khana etc.<sup>4</sup> All these were under the overall supervision of the Wazir,<sup>5</sup> but separate officers were given charge of these departments, The Amir-i-Akhur was in charge of the royal horse stable, the Shahna-i-pil was incharge of elephants stable, Shahna-i-Nafar<sup>6</sup> was the keeper of the camels' stable and Sar -i-silahdar was an officer in-charge of armoury, who was also called Mir Salah.<sup>7</sup>

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1. Afif- pp.299-301.

2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.295.

3. Ibid- p.431.

4. Afif pp.337-39.

5. M. Akram Makhdoome- Organisation of Central Government under the Turkish Sultans of Delhi. J.I.H.Vol. XIV part I April 1935 p.104.

6. Afif- p .304.

7. Maasalik-ul-Absar, - Eng. tr. I.H.Siddiqui & Q.M.Ahmed.p.44. Afif- p.338; Tarikh-i-Firozshahi p.24.

Qiran-us-Sadain. p.96.

SALARY: The salary to the soldiers and military officers varied considerably during the 13th and 14th centuries. The mode of payments were at times in form of land grants and sometimes given in cash. Such variations were due to the political and economic exigencies of the period. Sultan Iltutmish granted iqtas, to the soldiers and officers in lieu of salary. Barani writes that when an account of grant was inspected by Sultan Balban, he found that 2000 Turkish soldiers were given iqtas in the Doab. Balban ordered the resumption of such grants but later withdrew the order on the request of Malik Fakhr-ud-Din, Kotwal of Delhi.<sup>1</sup> Such a step of abolishing land grant was a later thought out plan, as earlier Sultan Balban had himself assigned villages to the soldiers and officers of the central army (qalb-i-aala).<sup>2</sup>

Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji paid 234 tankas per annum to the soldiers who had one horse and paid on extra allowance of 78 tankas for an extra horse.<sup>3</sup> But such a paltry amount had greater purchasing power since he regulated the prices of all the commodities and adopted new economic measures to ensure that the sum paid to the soldiers were sufficient.<sup>4</sup> Qutub-ud-Din Mubarak and Ghiyas-ud-Din Tughlaq assigned iqtas to the

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.64.

2. Ibid p.29.

3. Ibid- pp.303-04

4. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- pp.303-04

officers.<sup>1</sup> The reign of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq witnessed large assignments being given to the military officers, slaves etc. The detailed information with regards to salaries of the soldiers can be had from the Maaslik-ul-Absar which states:

"The soldiers are employed by the Sultan himself and they are paid their pay and allowances by the state exchequer. The iqta assigned to the Khan, Malik, Amir or Ispahla are for their own personal expences.---In case the iqta (assigned to the noble) does not yield more revenue than assessed by the states it is in no way less. It (revenue) is generally more than the estimated amount. Every Khan gets about two lac tankas, one lac, being equal to 100,000, and every tanka being eight Dirhams. This amount is for the personal use of the Khan. He is not required to spend it on his own contingent, Every Malik gets a salary from 60,000 tankas to 50,000 tankas and the Amir from 40,000 to 30,000 tankas, while the Ispahla receives about 20,000 tankas salary. The soldier's pay ranges from ten thousand to one thousand tankas. The Turkish slaves of the Sultan get from five thousand to one thousand tankas. In addition to it, they are supplied food, dress and fodder for their horses free of charge.<sup>2</sup> The soldiers and Turkish slaves are not assigned iqtas but they are paid by the royal exchequer. The Khan, Malik, Amir and Ispahla get Iqtas, the estimated revenue of which is much less than actually mentioned in the state papers. However, if the revenue of an iqta is not much more than the estimated one,

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.382.

2. Shihab-ud-Din Muhammad Ghorî had given great responsibilities to his slaves. Many of his slaves later become independent rulers. Firozshah Tughlaq paid the slaves 20 to 125 tankas a month in addition to food and clothing. Afif-p.270.

it is in no way less. Some of the assignees get more than double of the estimated amount. Every slave of the Sultan receives one maund of wheat and rice as his ration every month Besides he is supplied, three seers of meat along with other things necessary for cooking daily. He is also paid ten silver tankas every month and in every year five suits of clothes."<sup>1</sup>

Such allowances no doubt existed, but few reservations should be kept in mind and corroborated with facts. Ibn Batuta writes that the salary of soldier was fixed according to his merit, efficiency and effectiveness<sup>2</sup>, similarly the salary of the military officers were reduced and increased according to the wish of the Sultan. Amir Bakht Sharafal-Mulk's ranks was reduced from forty thousand to one thousand tankas since Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq was displeased with him.<sup>3</sup> Under Firoz Shah Tughlaq the nobels benefitted a lot as they were assigned bigger iqtas and if they had a strong following they controlled larger iqtas<sup>4</sup>. The soldiers too were assigned lands as salary, further more such assignments were made hereditary by employing the son in place of his father as a soldier.<sup>5</sup> Such permanent assignments

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1. Maasalik ul-Absar. Eng. tr. I. S. Siddiqui and Q.M. Ahmed, pp. 37-39.
  2. Rehla- Eng. tr. A.M. Husain. p.14. ) Subhal Asha Eng. Tr. Otto spies- p.71.
  3. Rehla- Eng. Tr. A.M. Husain p.14.
  4. Ibid- p.112.
  5. Afif- p.296.



were for the regular soldiers called Wajhi. We also come across soldiers called Ghair Wajhi who were enrolled before a military campaign and disbanded afterwards. They were advanced loans for purchasing equipments and horses and were paid directly by the state.<sup>1</sup> They were at times paid by an order on some local treasury; this cheque was called an Itlaq and its holder itlaq-dar.<sup>6</sup>

SPOILS; The Ghazis who joined the army as volunteers received a share in the spoils as their allowances.<sup>3</sup> The spoils of war or Mal-i-ganimah was distributed among the soldiers with state's share being 1/5 of the total spoils and the soldiers' share being 4/5th, Barani writes that Ala-ud-Din Khalji appropriated from the spoils---elephants, horses and treasure, and the rest were distributed accordingly.<sup>4</sup> The exaction of the spoils from the soldiers had led to a serious mutiny by the Imperial forces during its Gujarat Campaign in 1299 A.D.<sup>5</sup> Hence Ala-ud-Din Khalji advised Malik Kafur, before the latter went for the campaign of Warangal; that, apart from the gold and silver he should not be

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1. Afif- pp.220, 288-292.

2. Ibid- pp.296-97, Qureishi, I.H. The Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi, New Delhi, 1971. p.155, Appendix F pp.238-39

3. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.317. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.80; Afif-p.289.

4. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi-p.327.

5. Ibid- pp.252-53; Futuh-us-Salatin-pp.244-45. Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi- p.76.

strict in exacting the State's share. The soldiers must be treated with affection and unnecessary cruelty should be avoided. Next, if an Amir desires to keep few horses or slaves, those should be left with him.<sup>1</sup>

Firoz Shah Tughlaq is stated to have said that many of his predecessors went against the Shariah with regards to the distribution of the spoils. Hence he issued orders that only 1/5th shall be the State's and 4/5th of the spoils should be distributed among the soldiers.<sup>2</sup> One may thus conclude that the early Sultans appropriated 4/5th for themselves and 1/5 for the soldiers.

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- pp.327-28.

2. Futuh-at-i-Firoz Shahi- Muslim University Journal.  
1943- Eng. tr. p.109.

## CHAPTER - II

### RECRUITMENT OF THE SOLDIERS THEIR COMPOSITION AND TRAINING

RECRUITMENT: The soldiers in the army were recruited on the basis of merit. A recruit had to exhibit his personal prowess and skill in the use of weapons in the presence of the Ariz before he was recruited in the army.<sup>1</sup> The Ariz exercised the right to admit or discard a soldier according to his wish. Muhammad-i-Bakhtiyar Khalji was rejected by the Diwan-i-Arz in Ghaznin because "his outward appearance was humble and unprepossessing". In Delhi too he was rejected on the same ground.<sup>2</sup> Zia-ud-Din Barani advises in his Fatawah-i-Jahandari that only men belonging to the higher class should be recruited in the army.<sup>3</sup> This advice however remained with Barani, as the Sultans of Delhi who wanted a large army with well trained soldiers recruited all those who were physically fit and professionally excellent. Barani himself mentions in his Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi that during the reign of Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji soldiers were tested before the Diwan-i-Arz, in archery and only those who were perfect in shooting and possessed good arms were enrolled.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.102.

2. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- Eng. tr. Vol. I p.549, Text p.146.

3. Zia-ud-Din Barani- Fatawah-i-Jahandari Eng. tr. Md. Babib and Mrs. Afsar Salim, Allahabad- n.d. p.23.

4. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.319

Ibn Batuta gives a detail description of recruitment held in Multan which was inspected by its governor. He says- "This Amir was sitting on a big dais... Near him was the Qazi and the Khattib. On his right and left were military chiefs, the armed warriors stood high behind his head. The troops passed before him in review. There were many bows. When anyone came desiring to enlist as an archer in the army, he was given one of these bows to pull. These differed in strength, and the salary of the candidate was fixed according to the strength he displayed in pulling the bow. And if he desired to be enlisted in the cavalry a drum was placed. He would drive his horse and strike it with his lance. A ring was also suspended against a small wall. The horsemen would make his horse run until he came abreast of it. Should he succeed in lifting it up with his lance he was considered an excellent horsemen. If one desired to enlist as a mounted archer, a ball was placed on the ground. The candidate galloped on horseback and aimed the arrow at the ball. His salary was fixed proportionately to his success in striking the ball."<sup>1</sup>

Zia-ud-Din Barani repeatedly stresses on the recruitment to be done after a severe test. He even emphasized that the ghazis too should be tested in horsemanship to prove their

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1. Ibn Batuta- Rehla Eng. tr. A.M. Husain-Baroda. 1976, p.14.

capability. He rightly says that recruitment of amateur would throw the army in disorder.<sup>1</sup>

Not adopting a sectarian attitude or racial favouritisms the Sultans of Delhi admitted to their armies all those who wanted to join the military service. In fact they threw open service in the army to "anyone who had the strength to bear the strain of war..... recruitment was made from all sections of the Indian population."<sup>2</sup>

COMPOSITION: The army of the Delhi Sultans were composed of diverse elements belonging to different race and nationality. During the thirteenth century the army was basically composed of Turkish elements. The others belonged to Khital,<sup>3</sup> Qarakhita,<sup>4</sup> Qipchag,<sup>5</sup> Garji,<sup>6</sup> or Ilbari<sup>7</sup> tribes; the local Hindus too were recruited. Fakhr-i-Mudabbir states that Qutub-ud-Din Aibek had Hindu cavalry in his army.<sup>8</sup> Under Iltutmish the foreigners

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1. Fatawah-i-Jahandari- Eng. tr. p.25.

2. M.Habib and Nizami, K.A.- Comprehensive History of India Vol. V, New Delhi, Reprint 1982, p.188.

3. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.238.

4. Ibid- pp.242, 249, 252.

5. Ibid- pp.247, 256, 258, 262.

6. Ibid- p.259.

7. Ibid- pp.276, 281.

8. Fakhr-i-Mudabbir- Tarikh-i-Fakhr-ud-Din Mubarak Shah ed. Denison Ross. London. 1927. p.33.

of non Turkish origin known as Tazik also formed a microscopic section in the military hierarchy. These Tazik entered India after the rise of Chengis Khan. They came to Delhi for refuge and the talented from amongst them were incorporated in the administration. They occupied high post in the administration and the Turkish nobles felt jealous of their position. We find in the Tabaqat-i-Nasiri that the Taziks were massacred by the Turkish nobles. Some important and notable Tazik officers who were killed, had been named by Minhaj, viz; Bahauddin Hasan Ashari, Karimuddin Zahid, Ziyaul Mulk son of Nizam-ul-Mulk Junaidi, Nizamuddin Sharqani, Khwaja Rashid-ud-Din Malikani and Amir Fakhrud-Din.<sup>1</sup> Razia did not hesitate to fight along with local Hindus when she with Altunia marched with an army towards Delhi in 1240 A.D. Her army was composed of Khokars, Jats and Rajputs.<sup>2</sup>

The Afghans who entered the Indian boundaries along with Jalal-ud-Din Mankabarani to escape the onslaught of Chengis Khan, enrolled themselves into the military service of Sultan Iltutmish.<sup>3</sup> The infiltration of the Afghans increased considerably and they all opted for military service. They proved their worth in the army so much so that Balban who had always

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1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.183.

2. Futuh-us-Salatin . Madras ed pp. 132-137.

3. Olaf. Caroe - The Pathans. London- 1958- p.135.

been race conscious, had 3000 Afghan soldiers in the army during his campaign against the Mewatis.<sup>1</sup> Further we also find that Balban had garrisoned all the important forts like Gopalgir, Kampil, Patiali, Bhojpur and Jalali exclusively with Afghan soldiers and officers.<sup>2</sup> Balban who wanted to establish a realm on the pattern of the Sassanids, provided high incentives to foreign elements. Barani writes that Sultan Balban had employed Sistani soldiers as his body guards. When ever he went out the Sistani soldiers accompanied him with unsheathed swords. To these soldiers he paid sixty to seventy thousand jitals a year.<sup>3</sup>

The Mongols under the leadership of Ulghu came to India and settled near Delhi during the reign of Sultan Jalal-ud-Din Firoz Shah Khalji. They were taken into service and were given high ranks.<sup>4</sup> The Mongols who were now known as neo Muslims, along with the local converts had great access to the services of the State. The Mongols who were the warrior class were in considerable number in the army of the Delhi Sultans. We find that during the Gujarat campaign of 1299 the Mongol officers Muhammad Shah, Kabhru, Yalhaq and Burraq along with two to three thousand horseman mutinied against Ulugh Khan on

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1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.315.

2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi-pp.57-58.

3. Ibid- p.30.

4. Ibid- p.219.

account of inhuman tortures inflicted upon the soldiers to exact the plunder. They killed Malik Aizz-ud-Din, a brother of Nusrat Khan and attacked Ulugh Khan's camp (though the latter escaped). This was a very serious mutiny and Ala-ud-Din-Khalji retaliated by inflicting corporal punishment on the families of the rebels.<sup>1</sup> Similarly Akat Khan who attempted to kill Ala-ud-Din-Khalji, had Mongol followers to carry out his plan.<sup>2</sup>

When Ghiyath-ud-Din Tughlaq attacked Delhi his army was composed of soldiers having different racial, tribal and national background. They were, Ghuzz, Turkish, Mongol, Greek, Russian, Persian, Tajik and Hindu soldiers in his army.<sup>3</sup> Such foreign elements must have also constituted the army of Sultan Ala-ud-Din-Khalji, as we don't find any reference to the recruitment of such diverse elements by Ghiyath-ud-Din-Tughluq to attack Delhi. The Hindus too were in his army and they constituted a larger part of the Delhi army under Nasir-ud-Din-Khusrau.<sup>4</sup> The Tughlaq Namah describes the composition of the Delhi army under Khusrau thus, " It was half Muslim and half Hindu, mixed together like black and white clouds. The Musalmans in the service of the Hindus were as friendly to them as their own

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.253, Futuh-us-Salatin. pp.244-45.

2. Ibid- pp.273-74.

3. Tughlaq Namah- p.84.

4. Ibid- pp.128,131.



shadows, they were as closely bound to the Hindus as the charity of the Musalmans is bound up with their sins. The army was so full of Hindus and Musalmans that both Hindus and Musalmans were surprised."<sup>1</sup>

The Maasalik-ul-Absar states that soldier's in the army of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq were composed of Turks, Khitais, Persians and Indians.<sup>2</sup> Muhammad bin Tughlaq believed in having a broadbase administrative system by recruiting for service persons, irrespect of their religion, caste, nationality etc. Zia-ud-Din-Barani writes:

"The Sultan talked as if he hated low born people more than he hated idols. Nevertheless, I have seen him promoting the low born son of a musician, to such an extent that he rose higher in status than many maliks, for Gujarat, Multan and Badaun were put in his charge. Similarly he raised Aziz Khummar (the vintner), and his brother, Firuz Hajjam (the barber), Manka Tabbakh (the cook), Masud Khummar (the vintner) Laddha Baghban (the gardener) and many other jeins of low birth (jawahir-i-tatrah) to a high status and gave them offices and territories. He gave Shaikh Babu, the son of a Nayak weaver, a position near to himself and elevated the rank and position of such a low born man among mankind. He assigned the ministry

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1. Tughlaq Namah-pp.112,119- The Qiran-us-Sadain also mention of Hindu cavalry in the army of Muiz-ud-Din Kaiqubad. p.-36.

of revenue (diwan-i-wizarat) to Pera Mali (the gardener), the lowest of the low-born and mean-born men of Hind. and Sind, and placed him over the heads of maliks, amirs, and governors. He assigned to Kishen Razran Indri, who was meanest of the mean-born, the territory of Awadh. To Muqbil, the slave of Ahmed Ayaz, who in appearance and character was a shame for all slaves, he gave the governorship of Gujarat, which has been a post for great Khans and Wazirs. It was strange how he gave high offices and governments of extensive territories and great provinces to men of low and mean birth"<sup>1</sup>.

Ibn Batuta testifies Barani's statement as we find in the Rehla that the Hindus held high position e.g. Ratan was appointed as the governor of Sind with the title of Azim-us-Sind.<sup>2</sup> He was even permitted to keep a drum and flag, which

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f.n. contd.

2. Maasalik-ul-Absar al-Umari- Eng. tr. I.H. Siddiqui Q.M.Ahmed. p.37.

Elliot & Dowson- Vol. III p.576.

Subh-al-Asha al Qalqashandi- Eng. tr. Ottospies, Aligarh-p.66.

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.505.

2. Rehla- Eng. tr. p.8

was a honour conferred upon great amirs only.<sup>1</sup>

For the Khorasan expedition Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq recruited 370,000 soldiers withing one year.<sup>2</sup> The incentives offered were very tempting hence soldiers from different parts of the country and outside joined the army. Barani informs us that Amir Nauroz<sup>3</sup> had come to enroll himself in this army with his followers.<sup>4</sup> Other foreigners like Ismail Afghan, Gul Afghan, Shahu Afghan and Halajun Khan had most probably come to India during this recruiting period.<sup>5</sup>

The Afghan steadily consolidated their position in the administrative hierarchy. Shahu Afghan even went to the extent of claiming kingship in 1334 A.D. after killing Behzad the governor of Multan.<sup>6</sup> He later appealed for pardon and proceeded to Barani's 'Afghanistan' to which Ibn Batuta identifies with the territories of Cambay, Broach, Gujarat and Nahrwala as being the home of the Afghans and it holds true<sup>7</sup> for that period.

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1. Rehla- Eng. tr. p.8

2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.477.

3. Son-in-Law of Tarmashirin.

4. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.533.

5. Ibid- p. 505.

6. Ibid- p.482, Rehla - Eng. tr. p.113.

7. Ibid- pp.482-83, Rehla - Eng. tr. p.113.

Malik Khattab was the commandant of Rapri and had successfully defeated the refractory zamindars who had besieged its fort.<sup>1</sup> Malik Khattab's loyalty was doubted by the Sultan and the former was punished, but Afif informs us that later he was restored to his original position.<sup>2</sup>

Qazi Jalal, lived in Gujarat with his followers and his rebellion was of a very serious nature. An army sent under the command of Malik Muqbil was defeated and Qazi Jalal advanced his claim to kingship.<sup>3</sup> Finally Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq himself arrived and defeated him.<sup>4</sup>

The Afghan rebellions or the rebellions of the Sadah amirs<sup>5</sup> soon spread in Daulatabad where Malik Makh Afghan was proclaimed king.<sup>6</sup> He gained support of the Sadah Amirs of Dabhol and Baroda.<sup>7</sup> This rebellion too was curbed down but such

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1. Rehla- Eng. tr. p.162.

2. Afif- p.50

3. Rehla- Eng. tr. P. 114. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.507.  
in here we find the affirmation of Muqbil's failure.

4. Rehla- Eng. tr. p.92.

5. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- pp.503-07.

6. Ibid- pp.513-14.

7. Ibid- p.514.

suppressions were of temporary nature as it could not prevent the emergence of the Bahamani Kingdom.

SLAVES: The slaves formed one of the most important unit in the composition of the army. They belonged to different nationalities and races. The slaves were either prisoners of war or were bought into courts as presents. The boy slaves were trained during their early years in all the traditions, and mode of warfare, use of weapons, horsemanship etc. They formed the elite corps of the army and served as body guards of the ruler. The Jandars were chosen from among these slaves. Slaves were very loyal to their master, Barani credits them thus in his Fatawah-i-Jahandari" They strive with their hearts and souls for the success of every enterprise. They hurl themselves like balls into running waters and flaming fires. Then it becomes necessary for the whole army (in emulation) to take the same path as they have done. The value of slaves (as a shock-battalion) is obvious."<sup>1</sup>

The ruler had extreme faith in his slaves and they were considered as sons. Shibab-ud-Din Muhammad Ghorî had remarked" I have many sons in my Turkish slaves, they will inherit my lands and continue the Khutbah in my name when I am dead and gone."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Fatawah-i-Jahandari- Eng. tr. p.25.

2. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.132, Eng. tr. by Major H.G.Raverty  
Vol. II- p.497.

The slaves on account of their courage valour and bravery rose to high position, some like Qutub-ud-Din Aibek, Iltutmish and Balban became independent Sultans of Delhi.

Ala-ud-Din Khalji who paid great attention to his army, kept boy slaves who were trained in all fields of warfare and finally when they grew up, they made his army stronger. He is reported to have kept 50,000 boy slaves.<sup>1</sup> The most prominent and able military general of Ala-ud-Din Khalji, Malik Kafur too was a slave.

During the reign of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq "the institution (of slaves) took root in the very centre of the land and the Sultan looked upon its due regulation as one of his incumbent duties. To such an extent were matters carried that there was a distinct muster master (majmu'dar) of the slaves, a separate treasury for the payment of their allowances, a separate jao-shughuri, and deputy jao-Shughuri and a distinct diwan, that is to say, the officers for administering the affairs of the slaves (ashab-i-diwan-i-bandagan),

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1. Afif- p.272.

were entirely distinct from those under the Prime Minister (ashab-i-diwan-i-ala-e-wizarat)."<sup>1</sup>

A scene of royal procession accompanied by numerous slaves was also a custom of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq, who had "two lakhs of Stirrup slaves" writes al Qalqashandi "who wear weapons, accompany him always and fight on foot in front of him" (Sultan).<sup>2</sup>

Firoz Shah Tughlaq was always accompanied by his slaves whenever he went out. Afif writes that the slaves, while accompanying the Sultan were organized thus "first the archers, fully armed, next the swordman, thousands in number (hazarhazar), the fightingmen (bandagan-i-award), the bandagan-i-mahili riding on male buffaloes, and slaves from the Hazara, mounted on Arab and Turki horses, bearing standards and axes. These all thousands upon thousands, accompanied the royal retinue."<sup>3</sup> Firoz Shah Tughlaq had one hundred and eighty thousand slaves out of which many were employed in civil administration.<sup>4</sup> The prominent slave of Firoz Shah Tughlaq was Malik Bashir entitled Imad-ul-Mulk who was the

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1. Afif- pp. 270-71 Eng. tr. Elliot and Dowson Vol. III pp.341-42

2. Subh-ul-Asha- Eng. tr. p.67.

3. Asif- p.271; Eng. tr. Elliot and Dowson Vol.IV p.342.

4. Ibid- p.270.

Ariz-i-Mamalik.<sup>1</sup>

The Siyasat Namah states that a slave was first trained as a foot soldier, the next year he was given a horse with plain saddle. After another year's training he received an ornamented belt and so on. By the seventh year alone he was fully trained and fit to become a tent commander.<sup>2</sup>

The Sultans of Delhi too adopted a similar system of training for the slaves.<sup>3</sup> Many of the slaves were trained as commandos who on account of their deeds and war-like accomplishments could be identified as suicide squads. The battle between the Qarlugh ruler Saif-ud-Din Hasan and Balban Kashlu Khan at Multan in 1249 A.D., witnessed on heroic deed of such commandos. In the battle which was evenly contested a group of soldiers in the service of Balban Kashlu Khan with the intention of killing Saif-ud-Din Hasan Qarlugh, attacked the centre of his army where he stood and killed him. However, in pursuing their objective, all the members of this band got killed. Such groups were in the service of the Delhi Sultans.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Afif- p.436.

2. c.f. Reuben. Levy-Social Structure of Islam. Cambridge 1962. p.74.

3. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi-pp.51-52.

4. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- Eng. tr. H.G. Roverty Vol. II p.782.



The Fatawah-i-Jahandari too possesses such informations regarding the deeds of the slaves.<sup>1</sup> An evidence in the Tabaqat-i-Nasiri of an earlier incident can be viewed from the same angle. It states that in the First Battle of Tarain (1191 A.D.) Sultan Shihab-ud-Din Muhammed Ghori was saved from the jaws of death by a slave. The Sultan who was struck "in the upper part of the arm" by a javelin was "unable to continue on horseback .....the Sultan was very nearly falling from his horse. Seeing which a lion (hearted) warrior, a khalj stripping .....sprang up behind him, and supporting him in his arm, urged the horse with his voice, and brought him out of the field of battle".<sup>2</sup>

On the battle field the Khasa-i-Khail i.e. the elite corps of the slaves were posted on the right and left wing of the centre and were commanded by Sar-i-Jandar-i-Maimana and Sar-i-Jandar-i-Maisra.<sup>3</sup> Boy slaves too joined the ruler in battles and they were under the supervision of Amir-i-Ghilman-i-Maimana and Amir-i-Ghilman-i-Maisra.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Fatawah-i-Jahandari- Eng. tr. p.25.

2. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- Text p.119.

3. Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi- Yahya bin Ahmad Sirhindi.  
Bib. Indica. Calcutta. 1931. p.62.

4. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.30

MILITARY EXERCISES: The army of the Delhi Sultans were fit and energetic due to their military exercises and training they received after being enrolled as a soldier. The horseman trained in horse riding and played polo to keep himself fit, the archers practiced on target and took part in hunting. The soldiers in general did weight lifting, practised boxing and wrestling, lasso throwing etc.<sup>1</sup>

HUNTING: It<sup>was</sup> a large scale military exercise in which the ruler along with his army participated. It helped in keeping the army physically fit and enabled the horses which had grown fat to regain its form. An hunting expedition was organised in the manner as if the army was going out for a military campaign, the soldiers were fully armed and they marched in battle formation,<sup>2</sup> Sultan Balban regularly took his army out for exercise on the pretext that he was going out for hunt. Even during winter, in the early hours of the morning he took with him a thousand horsemen and thousand archers on foot for exercise and returned late at night.

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1. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah- p.466.

2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.85, Afif- pp.317-18, Maasalik-ul-Absar- Eng. tr. Op. cit p.44.

Zia-ud-Din Barani adds that Halaku praised Balban's military foresight with regards to his hunting (exercise) expeditions.<sup>1</sup> If one goes through Afif's<sup>2</sup> account of Firoz Shah Tughlaq hunting expeditions, one finds great similarities in the organisation, arrangements of troops, camps etc. with a military campaign. Afif writes that the Sultan was accompanied in his hunting expeditions by his army, maliks, princes and the women folk. The army moved in battle formation with their baggage, tents, standards etc. On reaching the hunting ground the troops were arranged in battle order. On the right and left were two Maliks with special banners and the distance between the two ranged from five to ten kos. The arrangement of troops on the hunting ground were thus- the first line was of the <sup>ε</sup>lançers, in the second row stood the cavalry, then the Amir s took their position, behind them stood some horsemen and then the hunters. These arrangements were such that they formed a circle.

The tents were also arranged as battle camps which covered an area of four to five kos. The Emperor started the hunt and the other viz. Princes, Amirs, Maliks etc.

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.55, Afif-pp.317-18, Maasalik-ul-Absar- Eng. tr. Op. cit. p.44.
  2. Afif- pp.315-239.

joined him. Afif states that Firoz Shah Tughlaq used to cover a distance of 70 kos for hunting with all his retinue. Firoz Shah Tughlaq's Jaj Nagar campaign of 1360 A.D. was initially an hunting expedition through later it turned into a military campaign involving 40,000 soldiers.<sup>1</sup>

Polo

POLO OR CHAUGHAN:- /was one of the most popular sport in medieval India, & horseman played chaughan to train himself and his horse in different manoeuvres. A horseman learnt to control the horse at various speed. Qutub-ud-Din Aibek took great interest in playing polo and he even died while participating in this sport.<sup>2</sup> The Adab-ul-Harb too mentions polo as a military exercise.<sup>3</sup> A horseman was so well trained that one will be astonished at their skill. Minhaj writes in his Tabaqat-i-Nasiri with regards to the warlike accomplishments of Malik Taj-ud-Din, Sanjar-i-Kurek Khan that "he would have two horses under saddle, one of which he would ride, and the other he would lead after him, and thus used to dash on, and whilst the horses were galloping, he would leap from this horse to that with agility, would return

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1. Afif- pp.163-65;

Sirat-i-Firoz Shahi- anonymous- Rotograph in the Department of History, A.M.U. Accession No.R168 of the Banki pore MS. Vol.7. No.547-pp.5977, Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi-Text p.129;

Ainul Mulk Mahru- Insha-i-Mahru- ed. Prof. S.A. Rashid. Aligarh pp.27-35. No.14.

2. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.140.

3. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah- p.466.

to this first one again, so that, during a gallop, he used several times to mount two horses."<sup>1</sup>

ARCHERY: The Turks excelled in accurate shooting from the bow and they trained themselves to perfectness. They could shoot accurately from the horse back and they could even turn around and shoot behind with same accuracy.<sup>2</sup> The author of Taj-ul-Maathir writes that the Muslim archers (Turks) could shoot at the mirror on the forehead of the elephant in the dark night without any fault.<sup>3</sup> In every army, writes Fakhr-i-Mudabbir there was a hukm-andaz or master archer who could shoot with great accuracy at any target.<sup>4</sup> They were employed for the purpose of shooting down the enemy's commander and decide the battle in their favour.

The author of Adab-ul-Harb gives an account of target practise by archers. He writes that an archer was taught to hold the bow firmly in his grip. The forefinger should be placed on the nails of the thumbs or on the arrow's head. The front foot should be steady; the left foot and the

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1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri-Eng. tr. H.G.Raverty Vol.II p.756; Text p.258.
  2. Smail, R.C.- Crusading Warfare, p.81.
  3. Taj-ul-Maathir- Eng. tr. by Elliot and Dowson-Vol.II p.235.
  4. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.246.

other fingers should be loose. The body should be straight, the head held upwards, elbow too should be straight and aim must be taken with one eye, the other being closed. Both the hand must be towards one direction.<sup>1</sup>

It has been further suggested that while shooting a horseman at a distance of 200 yards, the head of the sawar should be made the target. The arrow would thus pierce the victim's heart. If shooting from a distance of 100 yards the face must be made the target, so as to achieve the required result, finally at the distance of 50 yards the arrow must be aimed at the horse's thighs which will result in injuring the breast of the sawar.

The archers spent most of their time in target practise. Their methods of exercises were completely professional. W.F. Paterson in his article 'The Archers of Islam' mentions about 'furusiya' exercises, namely qiqaj and qabaq. In qiqaj the target was basically a mound of earth, or something similar, on the ground, at which the archer shot as he went by at full gallop. The other form of shooting was qabaq where a gourd was hoisted to the top of a mast and served as a target at which the archer shot as he rode beneath it.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah- pp.245-46.

2. Paterson, WF- The Archers of Islam, JESHO Vol. IX, Part -II, Nov. 1966 p.84.

FENCING: Fencing was practised for close combat: The sword was regarded as the complete weapons. The swordmanship of Zafar Khan (a military general during the reign of Ala-ud-Din Khalji) against the Mongol's in the battle of Kili proves how a soldier fared in close fight. Isami writes that Zafar Khan killed 5000 Mongols with his sword. Even if the number stated is an exaggeration of Isami, one can still, clearly state that Zafar Khan did kill many in a close combat, before being overpowered by a large number of Mongols.<sup>1</sup>

The training of a swords man is stated in the Adab-ul-Harb. It advises that the right hand should grip the handle of the sword and the left fixed on the sword's belt. While riding with a naked sword the rider should bent down a little to his right and hold the sword parallel to the neck of the horse. While striking, the waist must be given a twist to give the 'strike' a momentum. The gap between the body and the arm must be maintained. Three fingers should be curled firmly on the grip of the sword and while striking the grip must be in the correct position so that it brings the desired effect and at the same time keeping the horse safe from any injury. The mount must be kept moving while fighting as it provides flexibility to the rider in attacking the enemy.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Futuh-us-Salatin, p.256.

2. Adab-ul-Harb-wash-Shujaah-pp.263-64.

The lancers trained themselves in various exercises which required to dislodge a rider from his mount or elephant. Shihab-ud-Din Muhammad Ghori during the first battle of Tarain attacked Gobind Rae with a lance, who was seated on the back of an elephant, was so injured by the attack that his teeth fell into his mouth.<sup>1</sup>

The lasso throwers or Kamand andaz were so trained that they could rope a horseman and dislodge him from the horse. Barani's statement is very significant in this respect when he mentions that a do aspa used to capture ten Mongols by putting halter round their necks.<sup>2</sup>

The other military exercises of the soldiers were throwing stones with a sling ( فولخان انراختن ), disc throwing ( چک انراختن ), mace manoeuvring ( لتنه بازی ) etc.<sup>3</sup> Fakhr-i-Mudabbir states in his Adab-ul-Harb that the soldiers were also trained to make and repair bow and arrows so that they may not be handicapped during emergency. Similarly the horseman knew how to repair the saddle etc.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.119.

2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.320

3. Adab-ul-Harb-Wash Shujaah- pp. 466-67.

4. Ibid- p.332.



The Turks were quick in understanding their military weakness and they made amends to overcome such drawbacks. One may cite an example from Isami's post Tarain version of the First Battle, Shihab-ud-Din Muhammad Ghori had felt that the defeat of his army was due to the horses who were afraid at the sight of elephants, hence he ordered Qutub-ud-Din Aibek to make suitable arrangements for the training of the horses. He is reported to have said "The horses of our army have never seen the features of elephants. Our cavalry men suffer defeat because our horses fight shy of elephants. You should order some elephants of mud and wood--mountain like and steady -- by made and installed in the midst of the field, all wearing arms and clad in armour. Then all our troops should mount their horses, wearing war arms and arrive in the field galloping their distance travelling horses. When our horses become accustomed to the sight of the elephants our cavalrymen will not be defeated".<sup>1</sup>

Due to constant fighting and travelling the warriors very soon became veterans and experienced soldiers. They easily overcame difficulties and hardships and in course

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1. Futuh-us-Salatin- pp.74-75, Eng. tr. A.M.Husain,  
Bombay- p.148.

of military problems they applied their intelligence and experience to solve them. Minhaj writes in his Tabaqat-i-Nasiri that Malik Nusrat-ud-Din Tayasai was once pursuing the Rae of Kalinjar (during the reign of Sultan Iltutmish)

"Having succeeded in obtaining a Hindu guide, he set out, on their trace, in pursuit of the fugitive (Hindus) and pushed on for four nights and days, and part of the fifth night until half the night had passed, when the Hindu guide stated that he had lost the road; and was unacquainted with the route in advance. Malik Nusrat -ud-Din-began to act as guide himself. So they reached some high ground at which place the fugitives had watered, and the cattle of their army had cast the water and heavy baggage away. In the victorious army everyone said" It is night and the enemy near. Let it not be that we fall among them. Their camp must be nearby". Malik Nusrat-ud-Din Tayasai dismounted from his horse and went up round the place on foot, and examined the water cast away by the horses of the infidels. He exclaimed (after his examination):" Be of good cheer, my friends, the force, which is here and has watered here, is the rear most column of the enemy's rear, by this proof. Had it been

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the van or the main body in this place would have been tracks of the rest of their army, but, on this place, there are no tracks, keep up your hearts, for we are on the rear of the enemy."<sup>1</sup> We can see how military experience had helped in analysing the real situation. It helped in averting the demoralisation of the troops and it must have also taught the warriors to act according to one's senses.

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1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- Eng. tr. Major H.G. Raverty  
Vol. II, pp.734-735.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODS OF WARFARE

The methods of warfare evolved by the Sultans of Delhi was not merely a clash of two armies but an organized military system. The battle was the last stage of a process which included, the continuance of supply line, choosing of battle ground, strategies involved, arrangement of troops, war councils etc. The battle ensued after all these systems were to the satisfaction of the Sultan or the nominated commander in-chief or Sar-i-Lashkar.<sup>1</sup>

The army when sent out for an expedition was accompanied by a Qazi and Amir-i-Dad. The Qazi led the prayers and the Dadbek settled the disputes of the soldiers.<sup>2</sup> In case the Sultan did not lead the expedition, he received daily reports of the army through the Kafiyat Nawis.<sup>3</sup>

STANDARD: The Sultans of Delhi had distinct standards and banners which could be sighted from a distance and were easily recognizable. The Ghori's banners were of two different colours; on the right was the black flag (depicting the Abbasids) and on the left was the red colour (of the

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi, pp. 34, 111, 151, 477.

2. Ibid- pp. 361, 358.

3. Ibid- p. 331.

Ghorids). This standard continued to be displayed till the time of Ghiyath-ud-Din Tughlaq.<sup>1</sup> The war-standard of Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji bore a crescent.<sup>2</sup> Ghazi Malik's standard during his fight against Khusrau Khan depicted a fish.<sup>3</sup> Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq's standard displayed a dragon.<sup>4</sup> Afif writes that the Sultan's standards were so big that it was visible from a distance of 2-3 krohs.<sup>5</sup> During the Bengal campaign Firoz Shah had 500 standards, one of his (shaft of the) standard was of copper which was one man in weight and two other banners were of iron which weighed 30 seers each.<sup>6</sup>

The nobles also possessed flags. The author of Maasalik-ul-Absar states that during the reign of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq a Khan was allowed to carry 9 flags

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1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- pp.127, 179, 207, Tughlaq Namah-p.133
  2. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Text. p.60
  3. Tughlaq Namah- p.122, Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi ed. only after ascending the throne, Ghiyath-ud-Din Chose the Imperial standard.
  4. Afif- pp.270-369.
  5. Ibid- pp.369-370.
  6. Ibid- p.370.

and an Amir 3 flags.<sup>1</sup>

The banners were not merely a part of the royal paraphernalia but it had a definite purpose. The victory of the army depended a lot on the banners. The soldiers gained moral support when they saw the banners fluttering. These standards were guarded by brave warriors called Alamdars<sup>2</sup> and they saw to it that the standards were not damaged. An instance cited in the Tughlaq Namah suggests the great importance attached to the royal standard. When Ghazi Malik fought against Khusrau Khan, the latter's soldiers cut down many flags belonging to the former which caused a consternation in his army and the troops started to disperse. Ghazi Malik told the alamdar of his standard that he would be rewarded if <sup>he</sup> stuck to his post with the banner. When the soldiers saw the standard of Ghazi Malik still fluttering in the battle field they rallied once again and routed Khusrau's Khan army.<sup>3</sup>

PROVISIONS AND SUPPLY LINE: For a positive result of a military campaign it was necessary to provide the army with all the requisite provisions so that they may not be wanting

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1. Maasalik-ul-Absar- Eng. tr. I.H.Siddiqui and Q.M.Ahmed  
P.44

2. Tughlaq Namah- p.129.

3. Ibid- pp.129-130.

at the time of need. If the military campaign was close to the capital, the provisions were supplied from the capital itself. For a distant expedition the army was accompanied by the banjaras and Saudagers called carva-i-yan by Barani.<sup>1</sup> They supplied all the materials required for the army. Steps were also taken to the effect that the muqta of the territory through which the army proposes to cross during the march, provided every help and necessary supplies.<sup>2</sup> At times, the tributary chief was also responsible for the arrangements of provisions for the Imperial army.

Ferishta mentions that the Imperial forces under the command of Malik Kafur while on their way to Warangal was provided with all the facilities by Rai Rayan Ram Deva.<sup>3</sup> Similarly during the expedition of Dwarsamudra, Amir Khusro writes that Ram Deva made all arrangements for the army. "He ordered all things needed by the army to be placed in the market,.... the money changers set with bags of small and large coins, and red and white tankas lay before them like

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi-pp.314-17.
  2. Ibid-p.328.
  3. Tarikh-i-Ferishta, Vol. I p.119.

roses and many petalled flowers, the cloth-merchants had every variety of cloth from bahari-i-Hind to the baward-i-khorasan,.....piled up in their shops ... Fruits better than pomegranates and rarer than naghz lay in heaps."

"The material provided for the army hard and soft goods of wool and leather, brass and iron was beyond all computation. Everyone gave good money and bought things at a just price."<sup>1</sup>

Many an expedition had ended in a disaster due to the lack of provisions. Such cases were of those expeditions which depended on the availability of crops and fodder on the field without making any suitable arrangements in preventing the corps from being destroyed by the enemies. Bhakhtiyar Khalji's forces on their expedition to Tibet suffered a great loss as all the vegetation were burnt down by the enemies.<sup>2</sup>

The Tabaqat-i-Nasiri informs us of a debacle faced by the Turks under the command of Malik Yuz Bak who was trapped in Kamrud. The Rae of Kamrud ordered his people to obtain all grains available so that the Turkish army had

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1. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Eng. tr. pp.84-85, Text -pp.122-124.

2. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- pp.153-56, Eng.. tr. Major H.G. Raverty Vol. I. p.368.



no provisions with them. "Depending on the cultivated state and flourishing conditions of the country, Malik Yuz Bak did not lay up any stores of grains, and, when the time of the spring harvest came round, the Rae, with the whole of his subjects, rose, and opened the water dykes all around, and brought Malik Yuz-Bak and the troops of Islam to a state of helplessness, in such wise, that they were near perishing through destitution. They now took counsel together, and came to the conclusion that it was necessary to retreat, otherwise they would die of starvation".<sup>1</sup> The Turks could not follow up their plan of retreat due to the flooded areas and they were completely routed.

The most serious disaster of all the expeditions involving the Imperial army was during the Thattah campaign of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq. The provisions in the army was finished and grain became scarce. Afif writes that out of 90,000 horses which marched with the Sultan only one fourth remained. The prices of "grain rose to one tanka and two tankas a Sir, and even at that prices was not to

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1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- Eng. tr. H.G. Raverty Vol. II pp.765

be obtained .... As no corn was to be procured, carrions and raw hides were devoured, some men even were driven by extreme hunger to boil old hides, and eat them".<sup>1</sup>

Ambulance: The army had all the provisions of attending the injured or sick. The Adab-ul-Harb has mentioned the existence of doctors; physicians etc in the army.<sup>2</sup> The Tughlaq-Namah testifies that Ghazi Malik dressed the wounds of a soldier with his own hands during the fight against Khusrau Khan.<sup>3</sup>

BATTLE GROUND: An experienced and intellegent general always chose the battle-field which served the purpose of their strategy and tactics. It was therefore necessary to select a suitable place which provided sufficient provisions and fodder and a source of constant water supply. The ground condition too had to be ideal. Stony grounds were avoided as it injured the hooves of the horses. Since the army of the Delhi Sultans primarily consisted of cavalry, swampy or wet ground were never preferred as it hindered the movements of the horses. Dusty grounds were also disliked as the dust raised during a battle prevented clear visibility. Fakhr-i-Mudabbir stresses that the battle ground should not be too close to habitation nor too far.

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1. Afif- pp.208-10, Elliot & Dowson Vol. III, p.324;  
also see p.322.

2. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah- p.331.

3. Tughlaq Namah- p 102.

Being close to habitation would cause diversions to the army in case the people of the area thought of harassing the army. Being too far from villages or towns would prevent the retreating army from taking shelter therein.<sup>1</sup> The battle field over all had to be spacious for a big army to move about with ease during the fight.<sup>2</sup>

Natural protections provided great advantage to a strategist. Khusrau Khan gained the initial advantage in the battle against Ghazi Malik by positioning his troops in Hauz-i-Alai with the orchards in front, and the fortifications of Delhi behind him.<sup>3</sup> Ibn Batuta informs us that when Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq marched to suppress the rebellion of Ainul Mulk, the governor of Awadh, he "marched along the river banks to have the city of Kannauj (Qinawj) behind him to fall back upon if necessary, and to fortify himself in view of its impregnability and strength."<sup>4</sup>

CAMP: The army while on march chose a suitable place for camping. The Sultan and the high nobles, had tents with distinguishing features. In the Gujarat campaign of 1299 A.D. Ulugh Khan escaped from the mutineers by hiding in Nusrat Khan's tent. The rebel soldiers had attacked Ulugh Khan's

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1. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah- pp.314-15.

2. Ibid- p.317.

3. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.417.

4. Rehla - Eng. tr. p.106

tent and had killed Ala-ud-Din's nephew under the impression that he was Ulugh Khan himself.<sup>1</sup>

Ibn Batuta describes the tents used during an expedition; he writes, "I had bought a tent-enclosure (Seracha) which is also called afraj and can be freely set up by everyman in this country, and the grandees cannot do without it. The royal seracha is characterized by its red colour, whilst all others are dotted with blue. Also I bought the Sivan which serves as a sun shade for the interior of the tent-enclosure and is set up on two big poles."<sup>2</sup>

The camp was well protected from external attacks by trenches and erected wooden barriers. The soldiers were always on guard and they positioned themselves in the camp as in battle field. The troops were divided into four sections. One division of foot archers, swordsmen and lancers were appointed to guard the troops on the side from which the attack was evident. The right wing and the centre remained in their position without being seen in the dark.

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1. Futuh-us-Salatin- Madras edition-pp.254-65.

2. Rehla- Eng. tr. p.135; Khazain-ul-Futuh- Text. p.63.

Fire was lighted at a deceiving place so that the enemies' entrance could be easily seen. As soon as the enemies entered the camp, the centre and the right wing dealt with them. The responsibility of the left wing was to join the fight only on emergency. A separate section armed with different weapons kept guard on the approaching road and moved out to meet the enemy if sighted.<sup>1</sup>

Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji when faced with the Mongols at Siri, ordered his soldiers to dig trenches around the camp and built wooden barriers for protection.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly at Kili writes the author of Futuh-us-Salatin Ala-ud-Din Khalji's camp was protected by the Jumna at one side and a vast stretch of thorns and bushes from the other.<sup>3</sup>

Amir Khusro in his Khazain-ul-Futuh mentions about the defensive measures adopted by the Imperial army during the siege of the Arangal fort. He writes " Every soldier was ordered to erect a Kath-garh (wooden defence) behind his tent. Immediately all hatchets became busy and every

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1. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- pp.299-300.

2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.301.

3. Futuh-us-Salatin- p.259.

soldier was transformed into Ishaq, the wood-cutter.... clever carpenters sharpened their instruments on the tree trunks and soon cut them into proper shape with their axes. Finally, a wooden fence was built round the army. It was so strong, that if fire had rained from the sky the wooden fort would have been as safe from fire as Noah's ark was from water"<sup>1</sup> The military camps were kept clean and free from filth or dirt of any type which may give rise to epidemic. It has been related in the Fawaid-ul-Fuwād that the camps were much better than the cities in matter of cleanliness and had an hygenic atmosphere.<sup>2</sup>

SPIES AND SCOUTS: It was necessary to have complete information about the enemies . territories, the numerical strength of their forces and their where abouts. With such informations at hand a thorough battleplan was chalked out. There were trained spies and scouts who performed their duties with great efficiency. The scouts were called Talaya or Mugaddam-i-Paish<sup>3</sup> who moved much ahead of the main army and investigated for all relevant information. Fakhr-i-Mudabbir discusses in detail the qualities of the scouts and the 'dos and donts' of their functions. The scouts were intelligent,

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1. Khazain-ul-Futuh-Eng. tr. pp.63-64. Text pp.86-87.
  2. Amir Hasan Sijzi- Fawaid-ul-Fuwad. ed. Md. Latif Malik. Lahore. 1966. p.195.
    - Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- pp.122,288.
    - Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.290

experienced and brave soldiers. They travelled with very light equipments but armed themselves with necessary weapons. If forced by circumstances to fight, they proved themselves to be the best soldiers. This group when they moved in groups made sure that there was sufficient distance between them. If any information was to be conveyed to the commander of the army one of them returned to the camp while the rest carried on their duties.<sup>1</sup>

The spies mixed freely with the masses and even entered the enemies camp. They brought in detailed informations as required.<sup>2</sup>

The spy system through out the 13th and 14th centuries in India had been very efficient. All the Sultans of Delhi gave great importance to the department of intelligence. Communications were easily and most efficiently conveyed to the Sultan in no time.<sup>3</sup>

Informations were collected by capturing few prisoners. Malik Kafur had once during the Warangal campaign ordered swift horsemen to capture few soldiers of the enemies to make enquiries about the condition of the country.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, while on the campaign at Maabar, Malik Kafur sent

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1. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah- pp.290-293.

2. Ibid- p.292.

3. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- pp.45, 81, 330-32.

Maasalik-ul-Absar- Eng. tr. 57-58., Rehla- Eng. tr.pp.3-4, 44, 105.; Fatawah-i-Jahandari- Eng. tr. pp.30-31;

4. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Text. p.83.

scouts for making enquiries. The scouts provided a very useful information regarding the disunity among the Pandayas brothers; Rai Bir Pandaya had left the cities unguarded and had gone after Sunder Pandaya (his brother) thus making the task of the invading forces easy.<sup>1</sup>

WAR COUNCIL: A council was held by the Sar-i-Lashkar in which high military officers participated. During the meeting these military officers decided the strategies of war and everyone present put forward their views. This meeting called Majlis<sup>2</sup> by Amir Khusro or Anjuman<sup>3</sup> was a regular affair before the start of a battle. Before the campaign against the invading Mongols in 1258 A.D, Sultan Nasir-ud-Din called a council of his military chieftains in order to discuss the strategy to repulse the Mongols. Isami reports that the Sultan asked "what do you suggest in regard to repulsing the Mongols? Your intellect is the ultimate repository of wisdom. What method must we pursue in this matter? What strategy must we adopt against the Mongols?" The chieftains unanimously decided that the army should lie in ambush for the Mongols and as soon as they appear the Imperial forces should take them by surprise.<sup>4</sup> This plan

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1. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Text pp.126-127.

2. Tughlaq Namah- p.48, In Khazain-ul-Futuh it is referred to as Majlis-i-Malik- Text p.132.

3. Futuh-us-Salatin- p.264.

4. Ibid- Text, pp.146-48, Eng. tr. pp.270-71.



as decided was carried out in the battlefield.

Many a times the commander gave a fiery speech to boost the morale of the soldiers. At the battle of Kili between the Mongols under Qutbugh Khwaja and the Imperial forces of Ala-ud-Din Khalji, Zafar Khan (one of his general) after being surrounded by the enemies consulted his officers as to what steps should be taken in such a situation. He queried "How do you think we should acquit ourselves on this battle-field? If we side track this infidel contingent, how shall we explain our conduct to the emperor? If we hereby decide to give battle what shall be the result, there being no propotion between our numbers and theirs- ours being one thousand and their rising to ten thousands.....Neither can we advanced nor can we retreat, I shall act according to your advice". Some of the officers suggested that Zafar Khan should order retreat. Zafar Khan was annoyed at this and he addressed to them" ... At all events, when one has to die, one must die in the attempt to achieve victory. Here and now, I am going to die for India like a man of repute. I shall immediately fight such a fight as will be immortalized in the epics. Any brave warrior who stands by me in the battle-field at this critical moment will be considered a Mujahid and his name will become a proverb for loyalty and faithfulness. Those of you who would prefer to retire

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are not prevented from doing so. Those who are not prepared for the battle may safely withdraw from the battle-field before the action begins."<sup>1</sup> Such oration from Zafar Khan had deep impact on the officers and they all decided to give battle. The Tughlaq Namah also narrates a similar incident of Ghazi Malik (later Ghiyath-ud-Din Tughlaq) who called a Majlis of his commander before the fight against Khusrau Khan on the plains of Sarsuti. Ghazi Malik sensing the strong opposition he had to face in the battle declared in a speech to the commanders that he (Ghazi Malik) is faced with grave opposition and thus he wants to put into test the loyalty and bravery of his soldiers. Even if they prove otherwise he would fight alone as he had faith in God and his own prowess. Those who thus wish to die fighting alongwith him should join and take pledge for doing the same.<sup>2</sup> The officers agreed to the proposal of Ghazi Malik and they all took vows to fight till death.

BATTLE ARRAY: The soldiers were arrayed in the battle-field in the manner which was followed in Central Asia. The Tabaqat-i-Nasiri describes the disposition of the Ghori forces in the second battle of Tarain which consisted of the Quddam-i-Lashkar (Vanguard), Maimna (left wing) Maisra

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1. Futuh-us-Salatin: PP.264-65, Eng. Tr. A.M.Husain  
Vol. II. pp.436-437.

2. Tughlaq Namah- pp.84-86.

(right wing) Qalb (centre) and Khalf (Rear).<sup>1</sup> There were flanking parties of these divisions called Jinah.<sup>2</sup> Which were classified thus- The Maimna was divided into Dast-i-Rast-i-Maimna (the right hand of the left wing) and Dast-i-Chap-i-Maimna (the left hand of the left wing), the Maisra consisted of Dast-i-Rast-i-Maisra and Dast-i-Chap-i-Maisra,<sup>3</sup> similarly the Qalb was supported by the Dast-i-Rast-i-Qalb and Dast-i-Chap-i-Qalb.<sup>4</sup> Fakhr-i-Mudabbir has given a detailed account with regards to arrangements of troops in battle array. He states that the warriors were classified into four categories. In the vanguard were the infantry men who were arrayed in four lines, the first row consisted of the foot soldiers in armours equipped with bows and arrows, lances, who defended themselves with broad shields. The second line of the foot soldiers wore coats of mail and were armed with spears and swords. The footsoldiers standing in the third line were armed with swords, bows and arrows and lances and in the fourth row they stood with spears, shields and swords.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.120, also see Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi which does not mention the terminologies for the four divisions but only refers to the disposition of forces into four parts. p.10, Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.330
  2. Futuh-us-Salatin-p.260.
  3. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.260.
  4. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah- p.331.  
Futuh-us-Salatin-p.259.
  5. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah-p.330.

There was sufficient gap between one rank and other to provide a passage for the movements of the cavalry.

This arrangement was altered according to the strategy that was to follow. For an offensive action the cavalry was placed in front and the battle array was arranged accordingly. Elephants in the vanguard were used to break the enemies lines of defence and the same time protect the army from the enemy's attack. Ghazi Malik employed elephants for offensive use against Khusrau Khan.<sup>1</sup>

On the Right wing, writes the author of Adab-ul-Harb, were posted those warriors who were brave and vainglorious. On the left wing were expert archers and those who possessed calm and patience. The standard bearers, drummers, buglers etc. who encouraged the soldiers were suitably placed.<sup>2</sup> The commanders of various divisions all took the position assigned to them assisted by lower officers, sarhangs, grooms, attendants and servants who were totally armed.

The king stood in the centre (Qalb) surrounded by senior generals, senior sarhangs, physicians, Nadims, astrologers, guides etc. On the Dast-i-Rast-i-Qalb were the generals, Khas Hajibs, Bandagan-i-Khas, Ulema and nadims, along with the Wazir, learned men, the Jandars and guards (Nigahban). On the Dast-i-Chap-i-Qalb were the archers, the strategist, naphta throwers and close together were the governors,

1. Tughlaq Namah- pp.92,93.

2. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.330.

brave soldiers and lasso throwers. The manjanig and arrada operators were positioned on the Dast-i-Rast.<sup>1</sup> The harem, treasures, armoury, kitchen etc. were close to the centre.

If the situation demanded, the elephants were also arrayed in front of the Centre. Ala-ud-Din Khalji had placed elephants in front of every division.<sup>2</sup> The author of Subh-al-Asha writes that elephants covered with iron-harnesses with howdahs on their back carrying warriors were posted in front of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq.<sup>3</sup>

The rear guard or Khalf<sup>4</sup> prevented the attack from behind and it guarded the bazaar, animals, armoury etc.

The battle array discussed above was a common feature in the battle arrangements of the Sultans of Delhi. In the second battle of Tarain (1192 A.D.) Shihab-ud-Din Muhammad Ghorî had deployed his forces thus. The Centre divisions of the army, the baggage, the standards and banners, his canopy of state, and the elephants were left several miles in the rear.<sup>5</sup> The light armed and unencumbered horsemen he had directed should be divided into four divisions and

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1. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.331, Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.26.

2. Futuh-us-Salatin pp.259-60.

3. Subh-al-Asha- Eng. tr. Otto Spies. p.76, Maasalik-ul-Absar Eng. tr. I.H.Siddiqui and Q.M.Ahmed p.53.

4. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.120, Adabul-Harb Wash Shujaah- pp.331-32.

5. It was a queer arrangement of leaving the Centre division in the rear.

had appointed them to act against the infidels on four sides'.<sup>1</sup>

At Siri, Ala-ud-Din Khalji made the following arrangement. He stood at the Centre (Qalb) with Zafar Khan, along with his followers, the Hindu soldiers stood on his right (Dast-i-Rast). Nusrat Khan was on his left (Dast-i-Chap) with innumerable number of troops. Ulugh Khan was positioned behind Nusrat Khan for his support. The Vanguard (muqaddama) was officered by Akat Khan. There was a reserve force behind every rank who lay in ambush to act at the right moment. Next, forty elephants were proportionately placed in front of each wing.<sup>2</sup> One can easily see that the Left Wing was more strong, and no wonder Ala-ud-Din Khalji ordered the attack from the left.<sup>3</sup>

Apart from very minor alteration as required during the battle there were no change in the battle array which remained as it is even during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughlaq. Al-qalqashandi writes that 'the Sultan stands in the centre (of the army) and the Imams and Ulama around him while the archers stand before and behind him. The right and the left wing

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1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.120, Tarikh-i-Ferishta, Vol. I, p.56.  
Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi - p.10.
  2. Futuh-us-Salatin- pp.259-60
  3. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.260.

spread on both sides. In front of him there are elephants covered with iron harnesses, and on them are towers in which the fighters were hidden. In these towers are holes for shooting arrows and throwing naphta bottles. In front of the elephants march the slaves in tight dress wearing shield and weapons. They hold the ropes of the elephants while the horses are on their right and left in order to draw together the flanks of the army in front of and behind the elephants so that not one of them can run away.<sup>1</sup>

The Centre of the army was always commanded by the Sultan and this formed the main division of the army. There was also a reserve force which were stationed away from the main army and they entered in the battle at the appropriate moment for giving the final onslaught or in help of any particular wing which was hard pressed.<sup>2</sup>

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS: Fakhr-i-Mudabbir suggests a strategy for an army with lesser number of troops than the opposing force. He writes ' you should not start a battle in the morning, because if you cannot carry it on till the evening and get defeated, you can easily be pursued and taken prisoners. Start

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1. Subh-al-Asha- Eng. tr. Otto Spies. p.76.

Maasalik-ul-Absar- Eng. tr. I.H. Siddiqui and Q.M.Ahmed p.53.

2. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.120

Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah p.334.

it in the afternoon, so that if you cannot win it by the evening, the night may give you respite and you can take rest and regain strength and resume it the next day. It may be that you are attacking the enemy in the morning, which has a large force, the enemy can then send half of its troops and fight you while the other half is taking rest. When the first half gets tired, the enemy will overwhelm you and you will be either killed or taken prisoners.'<sup>1</sup>

Shihab-ud-Din Muhammad of Ghor in the second battle of Tarain attacked the Rajput forces in the early hours of the morning and completely routed them by the evening.<sup>2</sup> Muhammad Afi describes the strategy of the Ghorids in the second Battle of Tarain thus "It is related that when the martyr Muizz-u-dunya wau-ddin Muhammed Sam (May God illumine his tomb) was about to fight the second time against Kola, between Hanjar and Tabarhinda, it became known to him that (the enemy) kept their elephants drawn up in a separate array when preparing for action. The horses were afraid of them, and this was an element of disaster. When the opposing forces approached each other and the camp fires were visible on either side, the Sultan gave directions that everyman should collect plenty of wood before his tent. At night he directed a party of soldiers to

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1. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujah- pp.314-15.

2. Tarikh-i-Ferishta- Vol. I, p.58.



remain in the camp, and to keep fires burning all the night, so that the enemy might suppose it to be their camping ground. The Sultan then marched off in another direction with the main body of his army. The infidels saw the fires and fell assured of their adversaries being there encamped. The Sultan marched all night and got in the rear of Kola. At dawn he made his onslaught upon the camp followers and killed many men. When the rear pressed back on the main army Kola sought to retreat, but he could not get his forces in order, nor the elephants under control. The battle became general, the enemy was signally defeated, and Kola was taken prisoner".<sup>1</sup>

It was also necessary to chalk out the time for distant campaigns. Sir. J.N.Sarkar rightly remarks, 'The physical geography of India has also dictated the campaigning season. There can be no movement during the three months of rain, 15 June to 15th September. The rivers are then in high flood, the roads are turned into mud pools, and the fields are sub-merged, with the higher villages standing up like islands surrounded by a sea of water.'<sup>2</sup>

Amir Khusro states that the Imperial army under Malik Kafur while on the Maabar campaign were faced with great

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1. Maulana Nur-ud-Din Muhammed Awfi- Jawami-ul-Hikayat wa Lawami ur Riwayat- Elliot & Dowson, Vol. II p.198.

Compare the Mongol tactics as given in Yuan Chao Pi Shi- p.134.

2. Sarkar, J.N.- Military History of India, Calcutta-1960,p.4.

difficulties on account of rain. 'The water rendered the bow ineffective and made the Hindi swords rusty, it got in between the arrow and its (iron) point and separated them from one another', further more the roads were "completely covered by water that you could not distinguish the road from a well."<sup>1</sup>

On the day of the battle the troops were arrayed in battle formation behind their commanders under the supervision of the nagibs, chawush<sup>2</sup> and Sahmu'l hashms. The soldiers did not leave the place allotted to them, as they were severely punished for disobedience.<sup>3</sup> The commander issued orders for the army to get ready for the battle. This was communicated with the beat of a drum and the blowing of horn. Fakhr-i-Mudabbir states a drum was beaten at four successive intervals for the warriors to be fully prepared.<sup>4</sup> It was a custom to lead the attack from the Right wing (Mairara) followed by the Centre (Qalb) and then Left wing (Maimana)<sup>5</sup> but this tactics was changed keeping in view the situation.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Eng. tr. p.100. Text-pp.151-52.
  2. Qiran-us-Sadain-<sup>p.84</sup> Tughlaq Namah- p.92 Chawush- A sergent. Stein- p.387. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.30,
  3. Futuh-us-Salatin- p.260.
  4. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah. p.370.
  5. Ibid- p.334.
  6. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.260.

The king or the commander-in-chief was ever busy issuing instruction to his forces. He kept on moving from right to left to judge the situation and order accordingly.<sup>1</sup> In course of the battle, flag signals, drums, trumpets and couriers were used to convey and communicate the orders of the commander to the subordinate officers.<sup>2</sup>

During our period of study, the armies of the Delhi Sultan followed the traditional Central Asian methods of warfare. They did not close upon the enemy but harrassed them from a distance. The Tabaqat-i-Nasiri illustrates the tactics of the Turks in the second battle of Tarain which Sultan Shihab-ud-Din in Muhammad of Ghor had adopted against the Rajputs. The Sultan had ordered 'It is necessary that on the right and left, and front and rear, 10,000 mounted archers should keep the infidel host in play, and when their elephants, horseman and foot advance to the attack, you are to face about and keep the distance of a horse's course in front of them.'<sup>3</sup> This was done to tire out the enemy in this 'hit and run' method and finally attack them from the advantageous position for the final onslaught. The archery and mobility, both combined to give them the advantage of inflicting heavy losses on the enemies. When elephants formed one

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p. 332.

2. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.378.

3. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.120, Eng. tr. H.G.Raverty. Vol.I, pp.467-68.

of the lines of attack in the army it was intended to break into the centre of the enemy's formation where the commander of the opposing force stationed himself.<sup>1</sup> As soon as the insignia of the enemy's commander disappeared from the sight the enemies fled away.<sup>2</sup>

The tactics of feigned retreat had been one of the most effective tactics. While retreating, the mounted archers turned in their saddle and shot at the pursuers with great accuracy. The pursuing army usually got disorganised in the chase and thus received a shock when the Turks turned back and attacked once more. While retreat the soldier's threw tempting articles live cloths, silver, gold, vessels etc. for the pursuing army to busy itself in its collection while they all of a sudden attacked the disorganised force. Such a tactics had many a times had helped the losers to gain victory.<sup>3</sup>

If the retreat was really intended the fleeing army threw hasak or caltrops to wound the hooves of the enemies horses and allow them the time for escape.<sup>4</sup> Many a times the retreat was intended to drive the enemy into a trap or ambush.

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1. Tughlaq Namah- pp.92-93, Subh-al-Asha- Eng. tr. Otto Spies p.67; Maasalik-ul-Absar- Eng. tr. p.53.

2. Futuh-us-Salatin- pp.385-86.

3. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah p.367.

4. Ibid- p.367.

Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq during his campaign of Lakhnati, had to adopt the strategy of feigned retreat. Haji Ilyas the ruler of Bengal, took shelter in the fort of Ekdala and avoided an open engagement with the Sultan's forces as the former waited for the rains to come down so that Firoz Shah would be forced to retreat. Firoz Shah feigned retreated to bring out the enemy from the fort. Rumours were spread that the Imperialist had retreated on which Haji Ilyas came out with his forces to attack the rear of the Imperialist but was surprised to find them arrayed in battle formation and was defeated.<sup>1</sup>

The ambush (Kamin) was organised with great care. Fakhr-i-Mudabbir writes that precautions were taken that the natural animals of the area in which the ambush is intended, 'are not disturbed, because the fleeing animals draw the attention of the enemy.'<sup>2</sup>

Sultan Nasir-ud-Din laid on ambush for the Mongols who invaded the Indian territory in 1256 A.D. Isami writes that, "the chief-tiens led troops according to the king's order.....and lay in ambush in the Indus valley. For a

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1. Afif- pp.111-114, Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi-pp.590-92

2. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.304.

week, they lay in waiting for the filthy enemy to arrive. After a week all the infidel contingents came like birds, of their own accord into the net. Having raided the territories of Hindustan all of them soon arrived in the Indus valley with their horses laden with heavy booty. Someone had placed his captives on his horse and carelessly thrown the war equipments on the saddle. Another having freed himself from the worries of war had loaded his horse with heavy booty to such an extent that his horse could hardly move freely and he stumbled ten times in the way. In this manner, when the accursed herds arrived suddenly in the danger zone, the royal army sprang from the ambush from every side. They fell upon them swiftly and speared their bodies."<sup>1</sup>

Such a practise was also common with the Mongols. In the battle of Kili (1299 A.D.) the Mongols laid an ambush for the forces of Zafar Khan and completely annihilated the Imperial forces.<sup>2</sup>

Various means were employed to win a battle. One Malik Nusrat-ud-Din Tayasai during the reign of Sultan Iltutmish had received orders to plunder Kalinjar which he successfully did, but on his return the road was blocked by

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1. Futuh-us-Salatin-pp.148-49. Eng. tr. Vol. II p.272.

2. Ibid- Text. pp.263, 264-270.

the Rana of Ajar called Chahar "in the narrow parts of (some) deep ravines, and was drawn up (with his forces), out the head of the road, prepared to oppose their passage Malik Nusrat-ud-Din Tayasai divided his force into three bodies, at the head of three roads---the first body consisted of the uncumbered horseman (under his own command), the second body of the baggage material, and the followers of the forces, with an Amir in charge, and the third consisted of the body and the cattle with an Amir with it also". He planned it thus so that "in the event of the Hindu confronting me and the uncumbered horsemen, the baggage and war material and cattle might pass on in safety, and in case he should show a desire towards the baggage and war material or cattle, I, together with the auxiliaries of the true faith, would come behind him and take satisfaction on his malignity." The Rana confronted Tayasai's own division and was completely routed.<sup>1</sup>

Deception also formed one of the tactics of warfare to un-nerve the enemy. Many a times warriors were sent out by night and they arrived the next morning as if new reinforcements had arrived.<sup>2</sup> In one of the battles Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq deceived Qazi Jalal and his followers in a very novel fashion. Ibn Batuta writes-- that the Sultan did not

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1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri-Eng..Tr.Vol. II, p.734-Text p.239-41.
  2. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.278,422.  
Rehla- Eng. Tr. A.M.Husain p.106.

at first raise the parasol, the insignia of royalty over himself but when the battle was at its height the parasol was raised. When the rebels saw the parasol all of a sudden, they were confounded and were completely routed.<sup>1</sup>

Muhammad bin Tughlaq had once gained victory over his adversary by deceiving him with a dummy placed in his place of battle. It so happened that when Kishlu Khan revolted, the Sultan marched out in person to suppress the rebellion.<sup>1</sup> In course of the battle the Sultan acted with shrewdness. He placed Shaikh Imad-ud-Din, brother of Shaikh Rukn-ud-Din Multani under the royal parasol to pass for himself<sup>2</sup>. When the fire of battle blazed, the Sultan withdrew with a handful of four thousand soldiers, whilst Kishlu Khan's troops fell upon the parasol believing that the Sultan was under it. They killed Imad-ud-Din and the news spread through the whole army that the Sultan had been killed. Consequently Kishlu Khan's forces fell to plundering. And they left Kishlu Khan who was stranded with a small following. Then the Sultan with his adherents fell upon him and killed him.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Rehla- Eng. tr. p.115.

2. Shaikh Imad-ud-Din resembled the Sultan very much  
Rehla- Eng. tr. p.90

3. Rehla- Eng. tr. A.M. Husain p.97.



To take the enemy unaware was one of the most shrewd methods of war. Fakhr-i-Mudabbir states that the ideal time for surprise attack on the enemies camp is the afternoon during summer and early hours of the morning in winter. During the period the guards are usually asleep and the security is neglected.<sup>1</sup>

Tughril, who had revolted at Lakhnauti had twice been victorious over the army sent by Balban. This was a great setback to Balban who personally marched in 1280 A.D. to suppress the rebellion. However it was a small reconnoitering party of Balban which suddenly fell upon Tughril, who was taken unaware in his camp and killed.<sup>2</sup> It was the suddenness of the attack which proved advantageous in this raid. Had the approach of the scouting party been sighted, the result would have been otherwise.

During the battle the two opposing forces usually got mixed together and hence precautions were taken against the infiltration of enemies in the royal camp, by having pass words. Ghazi Malik in the battle against Khusro Khan fixed 'Qala' as the pass word for his troops.<sup>3</sup> Sultan Muhammad bin-Tughlaq during his operation against Ainul Mulk ordered that the pass words for his troops to be 'Delhi' and 'Ghazni'. So a trooper was addressed to with the word 'Delhi' and he replied

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1. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah-p.304.

2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- pp.86-91.

3. Tughlaq- Namah- p.123.

saying 'Ghazni'. If any one failed to give the password he was challenged.<sup>1</sup>

The Turkish army was so confident at their wown military prowess that they performed prayers even while the battle was on. While one division fought the other performed the prayers. If it was not possible to form the 'saf' the horsemen prayed from the horseback.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from full fledged battles fought, there were other types of engagements viz. Sirriya and Shabkun. In Sirriya a small contingent of soldiers was sent on a particular assignment. This contingent included the most efficient men who moved without being noticed and took every precautions of being successful in their enterprise. Fakhr-i-Mudabbir writes that in such a campaign not more than 400 men should be sent,<sup>3</sup> so that there are no problems in the organisation, communication etc.

The Shabkun was an attack carried out during the night. The ideal time for such an attack was chosen between midnight to dawn. The soldiers when they reached the enemy's camp, they created a chaos by cutting the ropes of the tents,

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1. Rehla- Eng. tr. A.M. Husain- p.107.

2. Adab-ul-Harb- Wash Shujaah- pp.356-62.

3. Ibid- p.293.

loosening the horses and mass killing. After performing such deeds they returned to their own camp.<sup>1</sup> Thus such an attack was always feared by the armies which went out on a campaign. Measures were taken to safeguard the camp from such attacks.<sup>2</sup> Though references of Shabkun raid by the armies of the Delhi Sultans are not found, but they had been made victims to such raids. Ainul Mulk when he revolted against Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq, made a night raid on the vanguard of the Sultan's army, but was soon over-powered and the attempt of killing the Sultan went abegging.<sup>3</sup>

SEIGE OPERATIONS: The seige operations required great patience and will-power from the soldiers. Capturing of forts in hostile territories was always dangerous and the army had to deal with the local population along with the enemy's troops. A seige operation took a long time in acquiring the result and hence the soldiers had to be very cautious. They had to arrange food and fodder for themselves and the animals and at the same time keep in touch with the centre for assistance and reinforcement if necessary.

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1. Adab-ul-Harb-Wash Shujaah- pp.298

2. Ibid- pp.299-300.

3. Rehla- Eng. tr. A.M.Husain, p.107.

An army which was involved in a seige operation was equipped with all necessary arms and war materials required for the capitulation of the fort, apart from having intelligent commander and strategist officers. The Adab-ul-Harb informs us that the beseigers possessed ladders, Iasso, Kharak, Matrars, Manjanig, Arrada, Atishkush, Nizah Mardagir, Siparchakh etc.<sup>1</sup> It was a practice to psychologically depress the defenders of the fort by false propoganda, Rumours were circulated that a large reinforcement is due to arrive and to effect this a part of the army moved away at night and which came the next morning with standards held high and beating drums.<sup>2</sup> Other strategies like throwing letters in the forts to create suspicion among the beseiged and to send messages in the fort to win over the defenders by offering bribes and other incentives were practiced.<sup>3</sup> Such offers did lead many to come over to the other side. Many guided the forces into the fort. During the seige of Mandu (130 A.D.) the Imperial army was guided into the fort by a traitor and the fort was captured.<sup>4</sup> Similarly Malwa fell because of such defectors. The Shodh Patrika states that during its seige a traitor named Bhala guided the Imperial commander to a lake which supplied water to the fort., a cow's head was thrown into the lake and the beseiged surrendered themselves.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah: p.423.

2. Ibid- p.422, Rehla- Eng. tr. A.M. Husain p.106.

3. Ibid- p.421.

4. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Eng. tr. p.45-46, Text pp.58-59.

5. Shodh Patrika- p.55, cited in Lal.K.'History of the Khaljī's p.115.

The medieval forts were constructed with a defensive approach rather than offensive. Sites for forts were selected on hill tops and it was impossible to invest such forts viz. Chittor, Ranthambhor, Gwalior, Devagiri etc. It was also not possible for the residents of the forts to take offensive as the structure of the forts and the topography of the area did not allow the movements of forces in a large numbers. It was thus expedient on the part of the beseigers to cut off the supply line of good, fodder, water etc. Many forts had independent water supply as they were built near river banks viz Kalinjer, Qannauj and also Ranthambhor.

Attempts had been made by the army of the Delhi Sultans to divert the course of a springs so that the fort may be deprived of the water supply. The fort of Kalingar which depended on the hillside spring succumband to the Turkish onslaught in 1202 A.D. as the course of the spring was diverted to another direction.<sup>1</sup>

The Khazain-ul-Futuh refers to the capitulation of the fort of Ranthambhor in 1301 A.D. which fell to the beseigers due to lack of provisions and unavailability of any other source of supply.. "Their provisions being finished they ate stones. Famine prevailed in such an extent within the

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1. A.B.M. Habibullah- The Foundation of Muslim Rule in India- Allahabad- 1961- p.69.

fort, that they would have purchased a grain of rice for two grains of gold but could not get it. The fire of hunger had roasted their hearts within their earthen bosoms- and they wished to open their bosoms and eat up their roasted hearts."<sup>1</sup>

It was a common tradition in the construction of forts to protect it by deep and broad moats. The beseigers had to employ various means for bridging the gap before reaching the walls of the fort to carry out the operation. Sand bags and other available materials were used to fill the moat so that the soldiers may reach the foot of the wall and make breaches in it.<sup>2</sup> However heavy mechanical artilleries were used for making opening in the walls by constant bombardment. "The havoc wrought by the maghrabi stones had created new doors in the gate wall."<sup>3</sup> Such was the function of the artillery which led to the capture of the fort of warangal. The manjanigs and arradus were also employed to throw into the fort, Naphta & flasks, stones, foul matter etc.<sup>4</sup> The manjanigs were also adjusted to volley missiles vertically so as to effect the seige on a fort located on a higher elevation.<sup>5</sup> These artilleries were used in practically all seige operations of the Sultans of Delhi.<sup>6</sup> The Kharak and Charkh also formed a part

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1. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Eng. tr. p.40. Text. p.52.
  2. Ibid- Eng. tr. P.39, Text. p.50, Bhandu Vyas- Hammirayan. ed Bhanwar Lal Nahata, Bikaner 1960 pp.5,170 cited in History of the Khaljis- p.93.
  3. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Eng. tr. pp.54,66;Text pp.70.90.
  4. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah-p.421-422.
  5. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Text. p.52.
  6. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi-pp.302, 446;Afif p.150

of seige devices, the functions of which has been discussed in Chapter- IV.

Pasheb was constructed to reach the wall of the fort and continue the attack from the top. It was constructed by piling up sandbags, mud etc. and it provided a passage broad enough for soldiers to march in line together.<sup>1</sup> The pasheb provided great advantage to the beseigers as they led their attillery on the top of the pasheb and volleyed missiles in the fort. During the seige of Ranthambhor "when the pasheb rose high enough to touch the western tower of the fort, the Imperial westerns (maghrabis). appeared like trunk of an elephant on its summit and shot large earthen balls."<sup>2</sup> Malik Kafur had pasheb constructed in course of his operations against Ranthambhor,<sup>and</sup> /Sewana and desired for one during the seige of warangal.<sup>3</sup> The pasheb being open, it did not provide protection to the soldiers, hence on many occasions the seige operations were conducted with the help of gargaj. It was a redoubt in front of a fort.<sup>4</sup> It was constructed of wood which would be moved from one place to another, but still, it was a difficult task to do so on account of its weight and the ground conditions.<sup>5</sup> Barani while describing the seige of Ranthambhor states

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1. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Text pp. 70, 91.

2. Ibid- Eng. tr. p.39, Text p.51.

3. Ibid- Text pp.50-51, 70, 91.

4. Steingass- p.1083.

5. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi-p.288.

that the soldiers laid the foundation of the pasheb and raised the gargaj<sup>1</sup> thus giving an impression that it was the upper part of the pasheb. Amir Khusro in his Khazain-ul-Futuh gives an obscure description, he writes" when the sabats and gargajes were completed and rose so high that the garrison of the fort was placed suddenly on a lower elevation."<sup>2</sup> Akram Makdhoome had aptly analysed its structure and function thus--" "it was nothing but the wooden tower so often used in seige work in the Middle Ages. This movable tower had a double use, men posted on its top and armed with missiles overlooked the defenders of a rampart and shot them down from above, in order to clear the way for on assault from below, and often enough the tower was fitted with a draw bridge which at a propitious moment was let down on to the walls and served as a path for a column of stormers"<sup>3</sup>

Sabat was another device used in capturing forts and it was more safe and beneficial than the pasheb and gargaj. We find its references in the Khazain-ul-Futuh but its proper function and structure etc. had been examined by later works viz. Akbar Namah and Tabagat-i-Akbari. Nizamuddin Ahmed while describing the seige of Chittor writes "When the period of the seige was prolonged, an order was to be obeyed by all the world was issued, for the construction of sabats (covered ways) and the digging of mines. About five thousand expert

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.288.

2. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Eng. tr. p.66- Text. p.90.

3. The Art of war in medieval India-Islamic Culture. 1937, pp.476-77.



builders and carpenters and stone masons were collected, and they commenced the construction of the covered ways from both sides of the fort. Sabat is a word used to express two walls, the foundations of which are laid at a distance about one musket shot (from the fort), and under the protection of planks, which are fastened together by raw-hides, and are made strong, and forming something like a lane are carried to the wall of the fort, and from it the walls of the fort are demolished by cannon balls. Brave young warriors entered the fort by means of breaches thus made. The Sabat- had such a breadth that ten horsemen could ride abreast inside it, and it was so high that a man mounted on an elephant and with a spear in his hand could pass inside it....Within a short time the sabats were completed and reached the immediate vicinity of the fort. The men constructing mines, dug them, and carried them to the foot of the citadel. They then made a cavity under two bastions, which were close to each other and filled it with gun powder."<sup>1</sup> The great number of masons, carpenters etc. employed to construct a sabat may have been a reason why such construction was not favoured in our period. The army of the Delhi Sultans could not have been accompanied by such a large number of non-fighting force. The soldiers were never dependent on such professional class as they themselves participated in construction of pasheb, kathgarh etc.

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1. Nizamuddin Ahmad - Tabaqat-i-Akbari- Eng. tr. B.De. Calcutta. 1936, Vol.II, pp.343-44. Text. ed. B.De. Calcutta edition- Vol. II. pp.216-17; also see Sirat-i-Firoz Shahi- p.180.

Akbar Namah- Abul Fazl. Calcutta. 1879, Vol. II-p.318  
I am indebted to my colleague Mr. Ehsan Akhtar for this information.

When the assailants were successful enough to reach the walls of the fort they attempted to make breaches in the walls. Swords, javelins, hammers spades etc. and other implements were used in making openings in the walls. The soldiers appeared as if they were "arguing a way the foundations of the edifice with their eloquent tongue's while 'some had thrust their swordpoints into the solidified earth as if determined to carve fine figures out of it.'<sup>1</sup>

Elephants were also employed for the purpose of making breaches in the walls or bringing down the gate of the fortress.<sup>2</sup>

Mines were planted for creating bigger passages in the walls for the soldiers to enter. After a breach had been made the empty space was filled with combustibles and then lighted with the result the wall or a portion of it collapsed. The fort of Arangal was damaged by mines which enabled Malik Kafur to enter the fort with his forces. The effect of a breach was such that 'one half of the earthen fort flew up like dust to the sky, the other half threw itself down to seek protection from the ground.'<sup>3</sup>

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1. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Eng. tr. P.68, Text pp.93-94, -  
Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.329.
  2. Ibid- Text p.120.
  3. Ibid- Eng. Tr. p.67. Text p.93.

Ibn Batuta informs us that the rebellion of Malik Naib Nusrat Khan came to an end when Qutlugh Khan ordered his forces to make breaches in the fort wall of Badrakot.<sup>1</sup>

An attack on the fort was done from all the four sides,<sup>2</sup> each wing of the beseigers doing the best to enter the fort. Since it was very difficult to scale the walls of the fort with the defenders shooting arrows and various missiles, it was made possible by diverting the attention of the defenders to other side or by means , to make the latter's attack ineffective. In course of the seige of Warangal, Malik Kafur" ordered high ladders and all other requisite to be constructed in every division (Khail) in the course of the night, when ever the drums beat to action, everyone was to come out of his entrenchment and carry the ladders to the fort"..  
the next day" men with scaling ropes began to jump up to the fort wall like lions in the forest."<sup>2</sup>

One may be surprised as to how the beseigers protected themselves from the onslaught carried out from the fort. It was not that the defenders were illequipped or were inferior in number to the beseigers but one has to accept that the army of the Delhi Sultans had patience and strategist

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1. Rehla- Eng. Tr. A.M.Husain- p.104

Khazain-ul-Futuh- Eng. Tr. p.54. Text p.70

2. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Text pp.92-93.

Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- pp.329-30

mind to compell strong and impregnable forts to succumb easily. There has never been an instance when the Sultans had been beseiged hence improvement were done on the offensive aspect of fort capturing. The soldiers, writes Fakhr-i-Mudabbir, always protected themselves with armours like Jaushan, Khud, Khaftan, Begultag etc.<sup>1</sup> hence attacks of arrows could be made futile.

The defenders of the fort had all the necessary equipments and other requisites to defend themselves. They kept various size of rocks, wood for making Kharak and adhesive for joining them. Hides of cows, buffaloes chains were also kept and persons who operated Charkh, Manjaniqs, arradas were always at work during a seige.<sup>2</sup> The defenders shot fiery arrows and bombarded the beseigers below with their manjaniqs and arradas.<sup>3</sup> Amir Khusrau mentions how the beseigers and the beseiged exchanged shots volleyed from their respective war machines.<sup>4</sup> The beseigers had a tough time in approaching the walls of the fort and even after they did succeed in it they met with resistance from the defenders who poured boiling oils at the assailants.<sup>5</sup> Thus the soldiers

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1. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.425.

2. Ibid- pp.423-24.

3. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.277. Nusrat Khan was killed during the seige of Ranthambhor when struck by a missile shot from a maghrabi. Ibid- p.272.

4. Khazain-ul-Fufuh- Text pp.90,94.

5. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.425.

protected themselves with leather coverings soaked in vinegar. The waf machines were safeguarded by covered roof pasted with mud or sheltered with hides soaked in vinegar and covered with mud.<sup>1</sup>

The beseigers also took great precautions during a seige. Fakhr-i-Mudabbir stresses on the following points which were mandatory on the beseiged (i) Strict watch must be kept all through the night. (ii) Knowledge regarding the extent of damage done to the walls of the fort. (iii) The watch man must not be relied upon (iv) At night the keys of the fortress must be taken away from the gate keeper (v) the security men must be transferred every night from one tower to the other so that there ware no communication with the beseigers (vi) During the night the beseigers must be prevented from making breaches in the fort wall (vii) The chief security officer must inspect the gates of the fort at frequent intervals all through the night. (viii) He should be courteous with the soldiers and security men and promise them rewards for their deeds. (ix) Manjanig and arrada operators must be praised for their performance and given presents and robes (x) Nawaks must not be carelessly used (xi) If the soldier from inside kills a beseigers with a nawak, the former should be suitably rewarded. (xii) If a skirmish ensures

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1. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah-pp.424-26.

at the gate of the fortress, no one should leave his position from the fort walls and trenches, and at the same time the gate must not be left unguarded. (xiii) The brave soldiers should be deployed at the gate at the time of battle and must be equipped with bow and arrows, nizahs, mimnizah guri, siparchakh etc. (xiv) The archers, nawak andaz, naphta andaz should be posted at the gate.<sup>1</sup>

It is not that Fakhr-i-Mudabbir had stated the above facts as models but such precautions were practised through out our period of study. When Firoz Shah Tughlaq laid seige to the fort of Ekdala, one of the prominent bastions collapsed and this damage was repaired by the Bengalis during the night.<sup>2</sup> The beseigers entered the fort only after winning over taitors or compelling the beseiged to come out in the open for a fight after cutting off their supply lines and depriving them of rations and provisions.

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1. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- pp.425-26.

2. Afif- pp.149-52.

## CHAPTER - IV

### WEAPONS AND ARMOURS USED

The Turkish Sultans of Delhi equipped their army with the best weapons which was then in vogue. It is an undisputed fact that in Central Asia the warriors armed themselves with various types of weapons for offensive and defensive purposes. They had separate weapons which were used from a distance viz, bow and arrows, and likewise various handy weapons for close combat viz, swords, lance, mace etc.. After establishing themselves in India, they adopted many weapons of the Rajputs which suited them in the Indian environment. A detailed study of the arms used by the army of the Delhi Sultans reveals a synthesis of Rajput and Turkish weapons. A change in the strategy and tactics of war also brought about a change in the use of arms. For example, the use of elephants in battles ushered the adoption of defensive armour for the elephants and also device<sup>1</sup> for injuring their feet.

Among the weapons, Indian bows viz, Kohi and Hindivi were favoured along with the best of Indian swords called the Mauj-i-darya. The neza-i-Hindivi was considered to be the best among all the lances used. The majority of the weapons used,

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1. Caltrops made of wood or iron was used for the purpose. The Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah names it hasak. p.367.

however, were of non Indian origin since the composition of the Turkish army which consisted of soldiers hailing from different nations, employed weapons which they considered were handy.

A detailed study which follows is an attempt to analyse the effectiveness of the weapons and the armours used for defence against these weapons. The effectiveness of the weapons depended on the material of which it was made. The mountainous areas of Ghur which had abundance of iron catered to the manufacture of weapons and other war equipments, in great number, so much so that these weapons and armours were exported to adjoining countries.<sup>1</sup> The Hūdū-ul-Ālām too contains an information of this sort ----" from this province comes slaves, armour (zirah) coats of mail (jaushan) and good arms".<sup>2</sup> The Tabaqat-i-Nasiri informs us about the availability of arms made of steel.<sup>3</sup> The information contained in it states that Izz-ud-Din Husain of Ghur's (1100-1140 A.D) tribute to the Seljuq Sultan Sanjar included armours, coats of mail, steel helmets and other war equipments. It thus

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1. Bosworth, C.E.- The Early Islamic History of Ghur'. Central Asiatic Journal. Vol. VI 1961- p.118.
  2. Hudud-ul-Alam- Anonymous. Eng. Tr. V.Minorsky- Regions of the World, London-1937. p.110.
  3. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.47.



appears that the Turks possessed weapons and armours made of iron and steel.

In India whatever quantity of iron was available, it was employed in the manufacture of excellent swords. Al Idrisi writes in his Kitab Nuzhat Al Mushtaq fi Khtiraq al Afag that the "Indians are very good at making various compounds of mixtures of substances with the help of which they melt the malleable iron, it then turns into Indian iron, and is called after India. There (in India) there are work shops where swords are manufactured and their craftsmen make excellent ones surpassing those made by other people. In same ways the Sindhi, Sarandibi and the Baynimani iron vie with each other for superiority as regards the climate of the place, skill in industry, the method of melting and stamping and beauty in polishing and scouring. But no iron is comparable to the Indian one in sharpness. This is a well known fact, and no one can deny its superiority".<sup>1</sup> The availability of reed and poplar, in the hilly tracts of India led to its use in the manufacture of arrow shafts and lance. The study will be divided into - light weapons bow and arrows, swords, lance, etc. (ii) Heavy weapons- viz. Khark, manjanics,

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1. Al-Idrisi- Kitab Nuzhat Al Mushtaq fi Khtiraq al Afag  
Eng. Tr. S. Maqbul Ahmad. Leiden 1960. p.23.

arradas (iii) Defensive Armours of soldiers and war animals.

Bows and arrows were prized offensive weapons as they were used from a distance against the enemies.<sup>1</sup> The army of the Delhi Sultans used various types of bows namely Chachi, Khwarizmi, Parwanchi, Ghaznichi, Lahori, Karori, Hindivi and Kohi. The Chachi bow was most effective and was favourite with the Central Asian archers. The Khwarizmi bow was strung with the strings made from the hides of horses and were thus thick. The arrow used for this bow was also thick and hence it did not travel far. The Parwanchi, Lahori and Karori were all similar in shape and function. The Kohi bow was strong and was made from the horns of mountain goats. The Hindivi bow was light since it was made of bamboo. The arrows shot from a Hindivi bow did not travel far but it inflicted deep wound at a close range.<sup>2</sup>

ARROWS: Varieties of arrows were used, each having its own effectiveness. The heads of the arrows were greatly responsible for inflicting different types of wounds since they were made of different materials and were of various shapes. Many of the arrow heads were made from the bones of dead animals and were very poisonous.<sup>3</sup> Some arrows had fishedback (Mahi pushta) or

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1. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.241.

2. Ibid- pp.242-43.

3. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah- p.243, Khazain-ul-Futuh- p.71.

round (Ghaloola) shaped arrow heads which could pass through a coat of mail or a breast plate.<sup>1</sup> In India arrows having several arrow points or barbed arrow heads were used. These were also poisoned. Once the arrow pierced into the flesh it was difficult to extract it.<sup>2</sup>

The arrows intended for different purposes were named accordingly. The Tir-i-partabi was an arrow which travelled fast. The Tir-i-zirah was meant to pass through the zirah of the soldier. Likewise the Tir-i-khaftan and Tir-i-begultakh were effective in piercing into the armours viz .Khaftan and Gultaq.<sup>3</sup> Amir Khusro mentions that there were arrows which were manufactured with such a skill that it could pierce ten layers of heart.<sup>4</sup>

The arrow shafts were generally made of poplar or cane tree. In the regions of Transoxiana, Khurasan and Iraq, arrow shafts were made of poplar. These arrows were heavy and did not travel far, though at a close distance they were very effective. To the tails of the arrows were attached feathers

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1. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah- p.243, Khazain-ul-Futuh- p.71.

2. Ibid- p,242.

3. Ibid- 243.

4. Amir Khusro- Ijaz-i-Khusravi- Nawal Kishore Press.  
Lucknow. 1876. Vol. IV-p.47.

of birds such as kites, falcons, hawks, eagles, ostrich etc.<sup>1</sup>  
The arrow shafts made of reed were considered the best as  
it travelled fast, straight and far. The arrows made of reed  
when fitted with steel point caused a very deep wound. Fakhr-i-  
Madabbir writes that a skilful archer with a reed arrow could  
make a coat of mail useless.<sup>2</sup>

References to fiery arrows (tir-i-atishin) are found  
in the contemporary chronicles. The Khazain-ul-Futuh refers  
to such arrow being discharged by the Imperial forces during  
the seige of Mandu in 1305 A.D.<sup>3</sup> and Arangal. The tip of the  
arrow was most probably fixed with a cloth dipped in combu-  
stible solution and fired after being lighted.

An archer protected his thumb and the forefinger by  
wearing rings (anghustuwana). Fakhr-i-Mudabbir mentions three  
types of such rings worn by the archers viz. Ghaziwar, Mariwar,  
Turkiwar. The best among them being anghustawan-i-ghaziwar.<sup>4</sup>

SWORDS: In the chronicles it is mentioned as tegh<sup>5</sup> and  
Shamshir respectively. The author of the Adab-ul-Harb writes,

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1. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah-p.244.
  2. Ibid- p.244.
  3. Khazain-ul-Futuh-pp.59,71, also see  
Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.277
  4. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah-pp.245, 255.
  5. Qiran-us-Sadain-pp.79-80.

that if a soldier has all the weapons with him except the sword, he is not considered a fully equipped soldier, but on the other hand if he possesses the sword and no other weapon he is not regarded as an illequipped soldier. On the contrary a soldier armed with a sword has a lesser chance of being harmed.<sup>1</sup> The warriors of the middle ages gave great importance to the sword and it was considered the best weapon for self defence.

The army of the Delhi Sultans, possessed various types of swords.<sup>2</sup> viz. Chini, Rusi, Khizri, Rumi, Firangi, Yemani, Sulaimani, Shahi, Alai, Kashmiri and Hindi<sup>3</sup>. Among these the Hindi swords were regarded the best (gauhar-dartar). The Hindi swords too had its variety viz. Paralak, Tarawatah, Ruhina, Makhbar, Mangauhar and Parmagas.<sup>4</sup> The sword called mauj-i-darya was the best among the Indian swords and was also considered above all the other swords mentioned earlier. The mauj-i-darya was very costly and was not manufactured in abundance, even the royal treasuries did not possess more than one.<sup>5</sup> The Indian soldiers preferred to fight with Paralak,

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1. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.263.

2. Soldiers of different nationalities in the army preferred different swords.

3. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah-p.257.

4. Ibid- p.257.

5. Ibid- p.259.

Tarawatah and Ruhina as these swords were hard and strong and they inflicted deep wound.<sup>1</sup> It's properties suggest that it was a cutting sword. Another sword called Bakhari was also a revered sword which was very strong and the wound inflicted by this was of a very serious type.<sup>2</sup> This sword which was of Indian origin had great appeal for the people of Khurasan and Iraq and they tried to manufacture swords of the same kind but could not make it as good as the Indian.<sup>3</sup> Nibah was a sword manufactured in India which was made of soft iron along-with small proportion of silver and copper. Fakhr-i-Mudabbir writes that the wound received by such a sword was incurable<sup>4</sup>

In the areas around R. Sindh called Kuwaj near Karuz<sup>5</sup> the iron smiths produced excellent swords by a process of forging the blade watered like a datepalm leaf.<sup>6</sup> Amir Khusro also refers<sup>to</sup> certain black smiths who manufactured swords as thin as a leaf of willow which trembled with out the slightest touch of breeze, at the same time the water on heating became as hard as iron<sup>7</sup> The Afghans in the army favoured swords

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1. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- 259.

2. Ibid- p.259.

3. Ibid- p.259.

4. Ibid- p.259.

5. The places are unidentified

6. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.259.

7. Ijaz-i-Khusravi- Vol. IV p.47.

The Afghans in the army favoured swords called Surman and Turman.<sup>1</sup>

The swords mentioned above were straight, hard and strong which were intended to inflict wounds even after coming in contact with the armour worn by the opponent. Hence they were heavy, so that the force of the sword alongwith its sharp and strong blade gave the opponent a lesser chance of being uninjured.

There were also other swords which were used for thrusting and slashing, among them the Qalachuri was very famous. It was a sword which was a favourite with the Central Asians (especially the Ghaznavids).<sup>2</sup> It was of Turkish origin. In structure it was long and curved. The curvature inflicted serious wounds. It performed both the function of a sword and a lance if the latter broke.<sup>3</sup>

The Nachakh was a royal weapon, writes, Fakhr-i-Mudabbir, which combined in its structure both the sword and the mace, thus it was used both for slashing and smashing.<sup>4</sup> The Dashnah was a sword small in size, slightly curved and

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1. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah- p.259. Digby, S-War-Horse and Elephant in the Delhi Sultanate Oxford. 1971, p.19. These swords were very hard and strong.
  2. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah.-p.452.
  3. Ibid- p.260.
  4. Ibid- p.260

broad at the apex. The Adab-ul-Harb states that it was used by the leaders (Peshqhan) and brave soldiers (Janbaaz)<sup>1</sup>. Katarah was a short sword used by the Indians.<sup>2</sup> It has a hilt with two branches extending along the arm' so as to shelter the hand and part of the arm. The blade is very thick with two cutting edges, having a breadth of three inches at the hilt and a solid point of one inch in breadth. The blade cannot be bent .... The hilt, has at right angles to the blade, a cross-bar, by which the weapon is grasped, and it is thus only available for a forward thrust.<sup>3</sup>

There were also smaller weapons like Khanjar or a dagger, which was carried by the Turks for close combat.<sup>4</sup> The Kard was a weapon of the Afghan. It was similar to a butcher's knife which was kept in a sheath.<sup>5</sup>

LANCE: The lance or the neza was the weapon of the Arabs and the Turks.<sup>6</sup> Fakhr-i-Mudabbir writes that it is said, if one

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1. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.260.

2. Ibid- p.473.

3. Irwine, W- 'The Army of the Indian Moghuls,' New Delhi, 1962. p.85.

4. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.473 Steingass. F-Persian-English Dictionary, London, 1947, p.476.

5. Ibid- pp.262,473, Irwine, W-Opcit. p.88, Steingass p.1002.

6. It was a weapon for thrusting.



person fought 1,000 horsemen all alone, it would be true of no other person than a lanceman. The lance is a light weapon which can be easily handled.<sup>1</sup>

The Khorasani and Iraqi neza were made of willow and were used by the Central Asians warriors, but the author of Adab-ul-Harb gives preference to the Indian lance which was made of reed. The neza made of reed was hollow and thus very light. It travelled straight and the nezabaaz seldom missed his target.<sup>2</sup> This long weapon was both heavy and light. The light ones were thrown at the enemy from a distance<sup>3</sup> and the heavy ones were wielded just like a sword.

TYPES OF LANCE: Shil was one of the types which was long. One may call it a long javelin or spear.<sup>4</sup> The lance of a similar variety was called a Zopin which was long and heavy. The zopin was very much favoured by the warriors and if the attack by a zopin failed then only the soldiers resorted to fight with a sword.<sup>5</sup> The Shil and Zopin were commonly used by the Afghans and Indians swordsmen. The Nim-neza was a

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1. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah- p.261.
  2. Ibid- p-261.
  3. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.119.
  4. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah-p.260
  5. Ibid-p.260, Tughlaq Namah- p.20.

short spear which was used by the infantry. The distinguished attendants and servants of the Sultan too were equipped with nim-neza.<sup>1</sup> A special neza called pilkush was used for attacking the elephants.<sup>2</sup> The Arabs in the army fought with a heavy neza called Sumeri, and neza-i-Radini.<sup>3</sup> A neza known as neza-i-Khatti was used by the tribes of Bahrain.<sup>4</sup> The Adab-ul-Harb also mentions a very famous neza called neza-i-mardagir which was a long lance as big as a polostick with a curved point.<sup>5</sup> The Harbah (short lance) were kept by the bodyguards or Jandars and other security men of the king.<sup>6</sup> The Indian used a heavy lance called bhallah. It's point was often poisoned to make the attack more effective.<sup>7</sup>

BATTLE AXE AND MACE The battle axe and the mace was carried by the cavalrymen to use it in hand to hand fight. These weapons had different functions. The axe was primarily used

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1. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.260, Steingass- p.1446.
  2. Ibid- p.260, In the text it is printed
  3. The Sumeri had a heavy point c.f. Steingass-p.698.  
    Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah- p.261.
  4. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah-p.261.
  5. Ibid- p.423.
  6. Ibid- p.260, Steingass-p.415.
  7. Ibid-pp. 372-73.

to cut open the armour of the opponent and if wielded with greater force it fatally wounded the enemy. The mace on the other hand was used for 'smashing' unprotected parts of the body. Those warriors without a sound protective headgear fell easy victims to the attack from the mace. There were varieties of maces and battle axes in use during our period of study. Among the battleaxe the most commonly used was the tabar. It had a simple triangular blade fixed to the shaft. The sharpness of the blade and the weight performed a 'cut and smash' function.<sup>1</sup> The tesha was another form of a battle axe which was similar in structure to those used by the carpenters. However, the ones used in battles combined in their structure the point of a lance.<sup>2</sup> Similar to the tesha was the khist in the format of which, the lance was more prominent than the axe.<sup>3</sup> The tabarzin was the battle axe which was used by the cavalymen only in emergency. They always carried it fixed to the saddle.<sup>4</sup>

GURZ:<sup>5</sup> It was a mace which was usually made of gold, silver or iron depending on the preference given to the metal and

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1. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.262, Steingass p.279.

2. Ibid- p.262, Steingass p.342.

3. Ibid- p.260, Steingass-p.461.

4. Ibid- p.262.

5. Ibid-pp.260,262, 267.

the official status of the wielder. The staff of the gurz was about 2 ft. in length surmounted by a heavy round structure on the top.<sup>1</sup> The other forms of mace were Amud, Kopal and Dabus.<sup>2</sup> A lighter club was called the Dahra which had a small head on the top.<sup>3</sup>

There were many handy weapons too, viz, the Durbash, was a heavy baton which was kept by the securitymen of the ruler to press the mob back by holding it horizontally.<sup>4</sup> The Falaqun was a sling by which the soldiers threw stones at the enemies. If the stone hit the temple or the heart of the victim, the latter rarely survived.<sup>5</sup> The jak<sup>6</sup> was an iron disc with sharp edges and it had a hole in the middle to facilitate the grip. When thrown, it flew very fast and used to slice away that part of the body where it made contact. The warriors usually aimed at the enemy's neck. A heavier jak was also used and it was so effective that if it landed vertically on one's head the body was cut in two. The hasak<sup>7</sup>

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1. Steingass- p.1082.

2. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah-pp.369, 467.

3. Ibid- p.260.

4. Ibid- p.260, Qiran-us-Sadain-pp.78-79. Rehla- Ibn Batuta- Eng. tr. p.60.

5. Ibid- p.469.

6. Ibid-p.472.

7. Ibid-p.367.

was a spiked ball made of iron or wood. It was thrown on the ground to injure the hooves of the horses and feet of the enemy's elephants. The Kamand or lasso were used by the cavalymen to dislodge the enemy from the horseback or the howdah of an elephant. The Adab-ul-Harb informs us of an instance where a soldier in the army of Sultan Mahmud of Ghaznin, threw a kamand at his opponent with the result, the latter got entangled along with his horse and was dragged away from the battle field. This caused a consternation in the ranks of the enemy who fled away leaving the camp behind.<sup>1</sup> Barani too refers to the use of Kamand by the Imperial forces of Delhi. He writes that a do aspa used to capture ten Mongols with their halter.<sup>2</sup>

Heavy weapons were used in capturing forts. Here I would mention the mechanical artillery which discharged missiles and those which were used in making breaches in the fort-wall, Manjanigs and arradas were mechanical artilleries which was used through out the middle ages and were used both by the besiegers and the besieged. But there are other two devices whose functions have been described in detail

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1. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah- pp.474-75.

2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.320.

in the Adab-ul-Harb viz. Kharak<sup>1</sup> and Charkh<sup>2</sup>. The Kharak was a weapon which was used by the besiegers in making holes in the walls of the fort.<sup>3</sup> It had a beam with a sharp point which was responsible for making holes in the wall. The beam was supported by ropes or chains which were suspended from two big vertical posts. The beam was pulled and then released to make a forceful contact with the wall. Such repeated contacts created an opening in the walls of the fortress thus enabling the besiegers to enter into the fort. Its defect has been very well analysed by M. Akram Makhdoome. He writes "the defenders of the fort very often rendered the kharak ineffective by thick mattress-like sheets of sacking filled with straw or broad or thick beams which they hung from the wall over the point in which the machine played. An additional disadvantage of this engine was that it would not be used from a distance, and had to be pushed right up to the foot of the wall, which the fire and the missiles thrown by the besieged rendered very difficult. And if the fort was protected by a ditch it had to be filled up with sacks full of earth or crossed by means of a bridge"<sup>4</sup>

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1. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- pp.421,422, 423, 424 etc.

2. Ibid- pp.423-24.

3. Ibid- p.422, Burhan-i-Qatae- Ibn Khalful Tabriz  
Muhammad Hasan alias Burhan. Lucknow, 1273 AH p.144.

4. M. Akram Makhdoome- "Mechanical Artillery in Medieval India"  
Journal of Indian History, August 1936 p.190. also see  
Islamic Culture Oct. 1937- p.475.

The Charkh worked on the mechanism of a cross bow, the only difference being that it was a huge structure which was handled by several men. Due to its large structure the work was eased by the mechanical advantage of employing pulleys.<sup>1</sup> The Charkh discharged heavy arrows or javelins<sup>2</sup> to a very long distance. Fakhr-i- Mudabbir mentions two other varieties of charkh namely Zanburak and Nim Charkh<sup>3</sup>. The Zanburak discharged missiles like heavy arrows namely baylak and nim neza.<sup>4</sup> The nim-charkh too shot similar missiles which Akram Makhadoome specifies to 'fiery arrows'<sup>5</sup> which is doubtful on the basis of references he has given. The Burhan-i-Qatae or Steingass have not specified nim-charkh as a device which discharged fiery arrows.

The most commonly employed siege engines were manjanigs and arradas. The Manjanig<sup>6</sup> was a mechanical artillery which threw missiles of various types including naphta bottles or pots to a very long distance. The above two mentioned

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1. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- pp.423-24,  
Qiran-us-Sadain- p.80.  
Steingass- p.390  
Burhan-i-Qatae- p.127.
  2. Burhan-i-Qatae- p.127.
  3. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.424, Qiran-us-Sadain-p.80  
Burhan-i-Qatae- pp.195,388
  4. Ibid- p.424.
  5. Islamic Culture, October 1937, p.476,  
Burhan-i-Qatae- p.388,  
Steingass- p.1445.
  6. For detailed description see Islamic Culture October 1937-  
pp.475-76, Journal of Indian History, August 1936, pp.190-93.

devices viz. Kharak and Charkh belonged to the category of manjanig. The Adab-ul-Harb mentions four types of manjanigs namely manjanig-i-arus,<sup>1</sup> manjanig-i-deva, manjanig-i-Ghuriwar and manjanig-i-ravan.<sup>2</sup> The manjanigs shot missiles with great force which often resulted in making openings in the fort walls.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes it was used to injure the enemies inside the fort. If hit by a manjanig stone the victim hardly survived. Nusrat Khan was killed, when hit by a maghrabi<sup>4</sup> stone during the siege of Ranthambhor.<sup>5</sup>

Before discussing the functions of manjanigs I would first sort out a clear understanding of maghrabi which I tend to use equivalent and in substitute for manjanig. Barani and Amir Khusro have both mentioned maghrabi in Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi and Khazain-ul-Futuh respectively, alongwith arrada and manjanig. To say that it may have been a 'improved type of manjanig' from maghrab or west ..... or North west Africa<sup>6</sup> seems doubtful. Just as Fakhr-i-Mudabbir had mentioned the types of Manjanigs, it appears that maghrabis too was used as a synonym for manjanigs by the chronicles of the fourteenth century. Amir Khusro in his account of the conquest

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1. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah- p.427. It could discharge missiles on all the four sides.

2. Ibid- p.427.

3. Khazain-ul-Futuh- p.70.

4. The maghrabi was a type of manjanig.

5. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.272.

6. Journal of Indian History- August 1936- p.193.



of Siwana, had used manjanigs and maghrabi as synonyms. He says: manjanigs on the west were entrusted to Malik Kamal uddin Gurg (the Wolf .... The maghrabis under the command of the 'wolf' made a cave in the hill with every shot."<sup>1</sup>

The manjanigs could be taken to the top of the pasheb<sup>2</sup> from where projectiles could be discharged. Many projectiles were shot at one time from the same machine. The Khazain-ul-Futuh states "The stones of the besieging maghrabis went up in the air and struck the clouds with such force that lighting was emitted from them. Heavy stones fell like hail on the heads of the besieged".<sup>3</sup> If the construction of a pasheb was not possible the manjanig were made capable of throwing stones vertically at the enemies on the top of the fort.<sup>4</sup>

The heavy manjanigs were worked by several men which is borne out from the Khazain-ul-Futuh. It states that wrestlers were employed to 'draw the westerners (maghrabis)' and 'other warriors began to place heavy stones in the arm (palla).<sup>5</sup>

The arrada was a lighter manjanig which was fitted on wheels<sup>6</sup> which during a siege operation could be taken

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1. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Text p.70, Eng. tr. p.54.

2. Ibid- Text- p.51.

3. Ibid- Eng. tr. p.40, Text. p.52.

4. Ibid- Text p.52.

5. Ibid- p.61, Tr.p.48- Qiran-us-Sadain-p.140

6. Steingass- p.841.

from one place to another for more effective use. This is how Amir Khusro compares the two (maghrabi and arrada) "The maghrabis outside exchanged shots with the iradas inside the fort, It seemed as if youngman and vieled brides were throwing loving stones at each other, .... If one ball was discharged from outside, it fell as two balls within, but if two balls were discharged from within, no misfortune befell the proclaimers of the one God."<sup>1</sup>

The arrada too had its varieties namely arrada-i-gardan, arrada-i-Khafta and arrada-i-rawan.<sup>2</sup> The Khushkanjir<sup>3</sup> too was a mechanical siége device which threw projectiles. This device should not be confused with the Khushkanjir of the later period where it denotes a cannon.

ARMOURS: The soldiers in the army protected themselves with armours made of iron and steel and also at times with leather jackets. The infantry in particular, apart from the armours they put on, defended themselves with shields. The horses and elephants too were protected by defensive armours. Thus

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1. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Eng. tr. p.68; Text p.94.

2. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah- p.427

3. Ibid- p.424 also see Burhan-i-Qatae- p.304.  
Steingass- p.1033.

the whole army effectively equipped themselves with offensive and defensive arms and armours. The army of the Sultans of Delhi wore various types of armours, each serving its own purpose.

The head of the warriors was protected by a steel helmet called Khud.<sup>1</sup> Next, the mighfar or network of steel worn under the cap, was worn to protect the neck and the back.<sup>2</sup> The rest of the body was safeguarded by other armours. Initially broad steel framework was used as protection, but of later developments in manufacture/steel led to the production of more flexible armours which facilitated the movements of limbs and the other parts of the body. The jaushan<sup>3</sup> was an armour which covered the breast and the stomach. Below this steel breast plate the warriors wore a leather jacket called the khaftan.<sup>4</sup> The zirah<sup>5</sup> was a coat of mail which also extended to the arms. The zirah was made with intersections of chains - which had a variety called the zirrah-i-Daudi.<sup>6</sup> Afif mentions that Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq used an armour which consisted of 44 pieces.<sup>7</sup> It appears that the quality of the

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1. Adab-ul-Harb wash Shujaah- p.263, Steingass- p.482  
Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.47.

2. Steingass- p.1281.

3. Adabul Harb wash Shujaah-p.263,  
Hudud-ul-Alam- p.110. Steingass- p.378.

4. Adabul Harb wash Shujaah-p.425, Steingass-p.468.

5. Ibid- p.263, Steingass-p.616.

6. Tughlaq Namah- p.81, Khazain-ul-Futuh-p. 61  
Prof. M. Habib had translated it as strokes like those of David, Eng. tr. p.48.

7. Afif- pp.150-51.

zirah depended upon the number of pieces or chains it had. Many of the soldiers wore two armours the inner one was called the dast.<sup>1</sup> Apart from the above mentioned armours, a soldier also wore an iron armour on top of the zirah which was known as Chaharaina. It consisted of four plates one covering the breast, the other protecting the back and two smaller pieces which sheltered the sides. All the four plates were joined together with leather straps. The Adab-ul-Harb mentions an armour called begultak<sup>2</sup> which most probably was an iron robe or kurta. No wonder Hasan Nizami calls the army of Shihabuddin Muhammad Ghorî as an army "clad in armours and coats of mail".<sup>3</sup>

The shields were used by the infantry and they varied in size and structure. The sipar<sup>4</sup> (shield or buckler) were made of iron or steel and also from the hides of rhinoceros (Sipar-Karg). We find Fakhr-i-Mudabbir mentioning the types of shields used by the soldiers viz- Sipar Chobin (wooden Sipar Shushak), Sipar neza, Sipar Chakh, Sipar Karg, Sipar - Khadang (made of white poplar tree).<sup>5</sup> I feel that the lighter shields mentioned above namely sipar chobin and sipar Khadang were used by the cavalymen to ward off attacks. Since

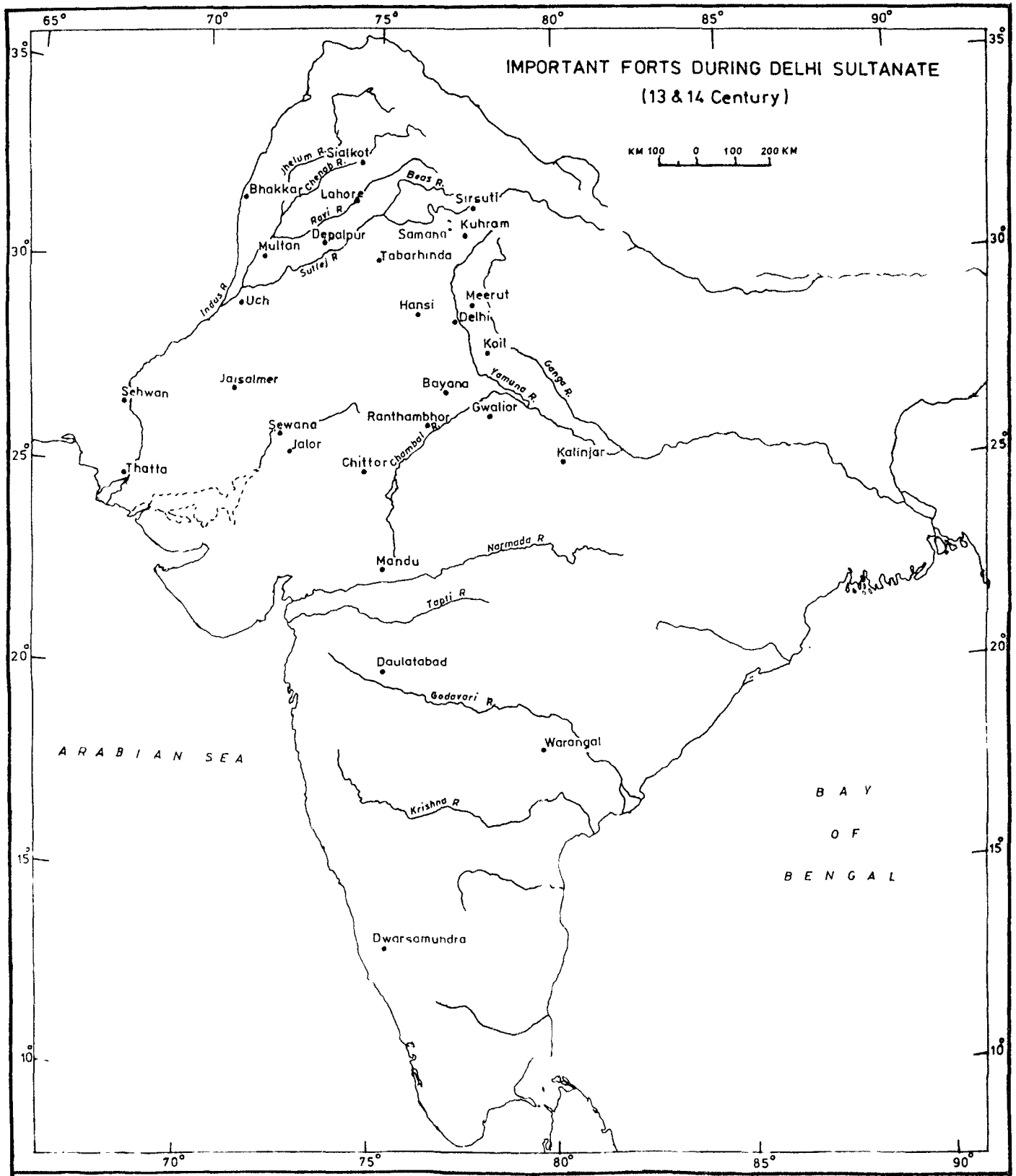
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1. Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi- p.215, Rehla- Eng. tr. p.115.
  2. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah-p.425
  3. Taj-ul-Maathir- E & D Vol. II p.220.
  4. Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah-p.262, Stengass- p.651.
  5. Ibid- pp.242,247, 260, 342.

the cavalrymen were very mobile and were a difficult target, the lighter shields were quite effective. The infantry who were the first to bear the brunt of the enemy's attack had to arm themselves with strong shields.

The animals used in warfare viz. horses and elephants too were protected by armours. The burgustawan was a special armour meant for the horses.<sup>1</sup> One could visualise the appearance of these animals in the battle field clad in battle armours. The contemporary chroniclers have all described the armoured elephants in the battle field as 'mountains of iron'.<sup>2</sup>

Thus the study of arms and armours used in the army of the Delhi Sultan, would suggest that the soldiers were equipped with all the requisite and ideal weapons of the age which they effectively employed according to the tactics they preferred was the best. Similarly, they did not ignore the defensive aspect of warfare. They were heavily armoured, along with the horses and elephants. Hence it is not surprising that they were very few casualties in the Imperial army<sup>of Delhi</sup> than the adversaries they faced.

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1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri, p.119,  
Adab-ul-Harb Wash Shujaah-pp.261, 272, 425.  
Steingass- p.178.
  2. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri p. 89,  
Zafar Namah Vol. II- p.100,  
Rehla- Eng. tr. p.106.



## CHAPTER - V

### FORTS AND THEIR IMPORTANCE

In the Middle Ages, forts played an important part in warfare. Mere battles did not decide the success of one and the defeat of the other, until and unless the forts which incorporated in itself the palace of the ruler, his treasury and of course the town, where a large section of the medieval population which professed diverse occupations resided,<sup>1</sup> was also captured. In case of any invasion, the population residing outside the towns moved inside the fortified city. The Khair-ul-Majalis informs us that at the onset of the Mongol invasion Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji issued orders for the people of the surrounding villages to come into the city.<sup>2</sup>

The forts of the Rajputs were however not meant for the masses. Only the privileged caste groups resided inside the fortified city. Al-Beruni writes that the Antyaja which constituted the bulk of the masses resided outside the towns.<sup>3</sup>

The Turks when they entered the Indian dominion had to encounter many forts. The Rajputs had built huge and massive forts which served as their military base. These forts

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1. Barani writes that during the reign of Sultan Nasir-ud-Din Mahmud the Meos entered the city of Delhi and molested the people in one way or another. Due to the fear of the Meos, the western gates of the city closed after the Zuhr prayers and nobody from the population dared to go out of the city. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi-p.56. It is thus evident that the population resided inside the city of Delhi.

2. Khair-ul-Majalis- pp.259-60

3. Al Beruni - Kitab-ul-Hind, Eng. Tr. 'Al-Beruni's India' by Edward C. Sachau. New Delhi 1964, Vol. I p.101.

were built on high and inaccessible spots for the purpose of defence. However --- "In the north Indian plains, where the ground was level, these fortifications were built on artificial mounds, the earth for which was obtained from the foot of the site, thus providing, an enclosure of a ditch or a large pond for the protection of the fort.... In the Deccan, the forts constructed on the precipitous rocky hills or boulder strewn hills with wide moats defending the curtain were unpregnable for the siege engines and the devices of those days. Similarly numerous summits of the hill range running north-east through the south of Radjasthan and the hills of Malwa are provided with strong fortifications, which even in their present condition are most imposing structure."<sup>1</sup>

There is no doubt that the forts of India built by the Rajputs were of a class beyond compare in view of their structure and strategic location, but they failed to serve the purpose which was the desideratum of the time. They were never utilised for offensive purposes. The Rajputs never cared to chalk out a strategy of combining the forces of different garrisons in checking the Turkish inroads. The Turks therefore were not disturbed by the presence of a

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1. Encyclopaedia of Islam. Vol. III, Leiden, London, 1971, p.481.



nearby Rajput garrison. They concentrated their attack on one fort and after its capitulation they moved on to the next. There has never been an instance where one can find the Rajput forces of one fort going into the rescue of the other. The Turks on the other hand utilised the captured forts as their military base for launching attacks on the next target. Uch and Multan, for examples served Shihab-ud-Din Muhammad of Ghor as a base for penetrating into Gujarat. Likewise the conquest of Kuhram and Samana in 1192 AD was essential for the subjugation of the eastern territories and for the defence of adjoining forts. Minhaj writes that when Jatwan beseiged Hansi in Sept. 1192 AD, Qutub-ud-Din Aibek rushed from Kuhram to relieve it,<sup>1</sup>

Shihab-ud-Din Muhammad planned all his moves in the most strategic manner. He captured Multan in 1175 AD to make inroads into India. Next he consolidated his position in Sind by taking Uch.<sup>2</sup> Lahore was squeezed out of Khusran Malik's hand<sup>3</sup> and soon became a very strong and strategic military

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1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.120,  
Tarikh-i-Ferishta- Vol. I, p-56.
  2. Tarikh-i-Ferishta- Vol. I, p.58.
  3. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri, p.117,  
Tarikh-i-Ferishta -Vol.I, pp.56-57.  
Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi- p.6,  
Tabaqat-i-Akbari- p.37

station of the Turks. It was a bone of contention between Yalduz, Kabajah and Iltutmish<sup>1</sup> on account of its strategic location. Iltutmish however incorporated it into the Delhi Sultanate in 1217 AD. Lahore later became the Western Frontier province of the Delhi Sultans and its charge was entrusted upon prince of royal blood and able military generals. The Doab was also annexed in the same manner with a chain of forts falling in the hands of the Turks. During the reign of Sultan Balban the whole of northern Indian plain formed the Sultanate. The forts of the frontier provinces were garrisoned and new forts were built at different places to check local uprisings. On the orders of the Sultan the new forts of Kampil, Patiali and Bhojpur were garrisoned with Afghan soldiers. A fort was also constructed at Jalali. These checked the rebels, robbers etc. of the areas and helped in maintaining peace and tranquility. Old forts were also repaired and garrisoned.<sup>2</sup>

To safeguard the Sultanate from being over run by the Mongols, the Delhi Sultans fixed their frontiers on the north west. The forts of Multan, Lahore, Depalpur, Sialkot etc. served as the frontier military stations which had the responsibility of checking foreign invasions. Most trustworthy

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1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri -pp.135,143,171,236.

2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- pp.55-59

military commanders were posted on the frontiers. Sultan Nasir-ud-Din Mahmud had given the charge of the north-west to Balban-i-Zar.<sup>1</sup> Sultan Balban had bestowed this responsibility on his nephew, Sher Khan and later Prince Muhammad took over the charge.<sup>2</sup> Ghazi Malik (later Sultan Ghiyath-ud-Din Tughluq) was the warden of the western marches and held the iqta of Depalpur under the Khaljis. He is reported to have fought twentynine battles against the Mongols.<sup>3</sup>

There was great cohesion among the forces of the frontier forts. For Example, Barani writes, Sultan Balban had appointed a place of rendezvous for the armies of different commanders to meet. In case of a Mongol invasion, Prince Muhammad was to move from his position in the frontier province and Kurra Khan from Samana and Sunam to join the Imperial army from Delhi, at Lahore.<sup>4</sup> This system was followed during the Sultanate period in all important military expeditions. We also find that during the expedition of Gujarat in 1299AD, Nusrat Khan moved with the Imperial forces from Delhi.<sup>5</sup> and Ulugh Khan marched from Sind<sup>6</sup> towards Gujarat. Both these

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1. Futuh-us-Salatin-p.152

2. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi-p.81

3. Rehla - Eng. Tr. p.48.

4. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi-p.61.

5. Khazain-ul-Futuh-p.47

6. Mir Masum- Tarikh-i-Masumi- ed. U.M. Daud pota  
Poona. 1938. p.44.

Tarikh-i-Ferishta- Vol. I. p.102.

forces met at Chittor and headed jointly towards their destination. Such cohesiveness in military movements were never adopted by the Rajputs. The military stations were recruiting centres as well<sup>1</sup> for the Hashm-i-~~at~~traf. They provided provisions and other requisite items to the Imperial army whenever required. The forts served as base camps which facilitated the Imperialistic and expansionist policies of the Khaljis and Tughluqs. Expeditions were organised and sent from those forts. Distant campaigns of the Delhi Sultans were successful on account of the chain of forts (in the possession of Delhi Sultans ) which lay on way to the campaigning target. When Sultan Ghiyath-ud-Din Tughlaq ordered the Imperial army under his son Ulugh Khan to proceed towards Telingana in 1321 AD.<sup>2</sup>, Ulugh Khan made Devagiri his base camp from where he carried out the campaign. Daulatabad as a military base enabled Muhammad bin Tughluq to suppress the rebellion of Sayid Ahsan Shah.<sup>3</sup> In the north-west, Muhammad bin Tughluq made Lahore his base for the campaign of Kalanaur and Peshawar.<sup>4</sup> The Delhi Sultans utilised the forts very effectively in consolidating their position in the conquered

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1. Rehla- Eng. Tr. p.13-14. for recruitment of troops at Multan.

2. Futuh-us-Salatin- p.400. The place mentioned is Sunari which is very close to Daulatabad.

3. Rehla- Eng. tr. pp.100-102.

4. Futuh-us-Salatin-p.423.

territories. They could reach out to the people through these military stations and garrisons.

The forts of medieval India (of the Rajputs) were built in the most defensive manner which could ward off any attack. The medieval chronicles are full of praise for the forts which shook the imagination of the viewers. The Rajputs had taken into consideration all the known methods of seige operations and had constructed the forts likewise. The common factor among the Rajput constructed forts <sup>∠ were that their forts</sup> were on hills or on inaccessible heights, surrounded by a vast ditch with natural protections. Few of the forts which serve our interest for the study of their structure, and military purposes are mentioned thus.

RANTHAMBHOR: This had been one of the most problematic forts for the Sultans of Delhi. Practically every Sultan had to reconquer it back from the Rajputs. Sultan Iltutmish had to relieve it after the death of Qutub-ud-Din Aibek,<sup>1</sup> During the reign of Razia it was again in the hands of the Rajputs and she had to issue orders to Malik Qutub-ud-Din Husain to capture it back.<sup>2</sup> At the time of Sultan Nasir-ud-Din Mahmud it was not in the possession of the Sultanate and expeditions

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1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.172, Futuh-us-Sulatin, p.221

2. Ibid- p.187.

were sent against it. Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji personally led an army against it which succeeded in annexing it in 1301 AD.<sup>1</sup>

The importance of Ranthambhor, to be in the hands of the Delhi Sultans was to have a strong foothold in the hostile territory of Rajputana. This fort was defended by natural barriers with deep and impassable ravines. It stands on a rock 1578 feet above sea level, surrounded by a massive wall strengthened by towers and bastions.<sup>2</sup>

Minhaj writes that this fort for its exceeding strength, solidity and impregnability was famous and notorious through out all Hindustan.<sup>3</sup> Amir Khusro describes Ranthambhor as a 'towering fort, which talked with the stars through its lofty pinnacles'.<sup>4</sup> From his account it is also evident that the fort had 10 towers.<sup>5</sup> Even Isami credits Ranthambhor as being unparallel in its structure.<sup>6</sup>

GWALIOR: At the onset of the Ghurid invasion Gwalior was under the control of the Parihara Rajputs who accepted the

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1. Khazain-ul-Futuh- p.53,

2. Imperial Gazetteer of India- Vol.21, pp.235-36.

3. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.172

4. Khazain-ul-Futuh- p.50- Eng. Tr. p.38.

5. Ibid- p.50

6. Futuh-us-Salatin- p.121.

suzerainty of Shihab-ud-Din Muhammad. In 1200 AD it was forcefully occupied by Qutub-ud-Din Aibek<sup>1</sup> after the initial harassment carried out by Baha-ud-Din Tughril. This occupation did not deter the Rajputs from gaining control over the fort in which they succeeded under the leadership of Mangal Diw.<sup>2</sup> Sultan Iltutmish took possession of the fort in 1232 AD<sup>3</sup> but again we find that under Sultan Razia the Delhi army had to evacuate the fort on account of constant hostilities commenced by Chahardeva, the ruler of the area.<sup>4</sup> Ulugh Khan (Balban) took military action in 1251 AD and occupied Gwalior.<sup>5</sup> Gwalior, according to Minhaj, remained in the hands of the Turks till 1260 AD.<sup>6</sup> We however don't find any expedition taken against Gwalior during the 13th century, thereby confirming its possession in the hands of the Delhi Sultans. The Khaljis and the Tughluqs were in complete possession of Gwalior.

The fort of Gwalior stands on 'an isolated sandstone hill, which towers 300 feet above the old town, measuring 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles long and 2,800 feet across at its widest part. The walls above the scrap are about 30 feet high'.<sup>7</sup> In the words of Hasan

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1. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.145,  
Tarikh-i-Fakhruddin Mubarak Shah-p.24.
  2. Ibid- p.175.
  3. Ibid- p.175.
  4. Ibid- p.187.
  5. Ibid- pp.215-16
  6. Ibid- p.278.
  7. Imperial Gazetteer- Vol. 12p.439

Nizami it was 'the pearl of the necklace of the castles of Hind, the summit of which the nimble footed wind from below cannot reach, and on the bastion of which the rapid clouds have never cast their shade, and which the swift imagination has never surmounted, and at the height of which the celestial sphere is dazzled.<sup>1</sup> Ibn Battuta gives more details about the fort. He writes that --- 'This fort of Gwalior (Kaliyur) lies at the height of a high mountain and looks as if it is cut out from the rock, in its vicinity there is no other mountain. It contains a water cistern and about twenty wells around which are walls leading to the fortress with mangonels and ballistas set up. The fortress is reached by a road which is so wide that an elephant and a horse can easily pass through it.'<sup>2</sup>

The charge of Gwalior was always considered as a prestigious appointment. Iltutmish as an amir received Gwalior as his post of appointment.<sup>3</sup> Later Malik Tayasi, also an able commander (his deeds are mentioned elsewhere) took over its charge.<sup>4</sup> The fort of Gwalior also served as a prison for recalcitrant princes. Isami informs us that Khizr Khan

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1. Taj-ul-Mauthir- Eng. Tr. Elliot and Dowson Vol.II p.225

2. Rehla- Eng. Tr. p.45.

3. Tabaqat-i-Nasiri- p.169.

4. Ibid- p.240.



was prisoned in this fort.<sup>1</sup> Gwalior was thought to be an ideal place for Sultan Jalal-ud-Din Firoz Khalji to meet Ali Gurshap who was returning from the campaign of Deogir (1295 AD).<sup>2</sup>

CHITTOR: It had remained in the hands of the Rajputs throughout the 13th century, but ultimately it fell prey to Ala-ud-Din Khalji's expansionist policy, in 1303 AD. The Sultan himself laid the seige to the fort which according to Amir Khusro was such that 'even hail stones were unable to strike. For if the flood itself rushes from the summit, it will take full day to reach the foot of the hill.'<sup>3</sup>

This fort 'stands on a long narrow hill, lying almost exactly north and south and about 500 feet above the surrounding plain. It's length is about 3½ miles and its greatest breadth half a mile, and it covers an area of about 690 acres!<sup>4</sup> It is also defended by the confluence of two rivers namely Gambheri and Berach on the east and on the north by another hill called Chatar-wari.<sup>5</sup> Hence there was no problem of water

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1. Futuh-us-Salatin- pp.341-42

Rehla- Eng. Tr. p.43.

2. Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi- p.67. It is written <sup>1946</sup> which is meant for <sup>1946</sup> also see. Futuh-us-Salatin p.238, Eng. Tr.406.

3. Khazain-ul-Futuh-pp.61, Eng. Tr. pp.47  
Amir Khusro Dewal Rani Khizr Khan- ed. Rashid Ahmad  
Aligarh- 1917 pp.66-67.

4. Imperial gazetter- Vol. X p.298.

5. Khazain-ul-Futuh- pp.60-61, Eng. Tr. pp.47 fn. 1 and p.48.

supply, Amir Khusro writes, that in the fort itself there were many springs and reservoirs<sup>1</sup> "The fort," writes Sidney Toy<sup>2</sup> is surrounded by a powerfully crenellated curtain wall and is approached on three sides, north, east and west, by sinuous paths, checked by gates at intervals in their ascent.<sup>2</sup>"

With the fall of Chittor, the Rajputs resistance gave away and Ala-ud-Din Khalji even went to the extent of giving it's charge (later on) to Maldeo, a son of Rai Ratan Sen's sister.<sup>3</sup> Ferishta states that he remained loyal to the Sultan and always offered his service with his followings whenever required.<sup>4</sup> He also adds that after Ala-ud-Din Khalji's death, Chittor again become independent,<sup>5</sup> but we find that at the time of Malik Kafur's death Ainul Mulk Multani was encamped with an army at Chittor. Malik Tughlaq went to Chittor to persuade Ainul Mulk to go forward with the orders of suppressing the rebellion of Haider and Zirak in Gujarat.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Dewal Rani- p.67, Toy, Sidney - The Strongholds of India- p.89.

2. Toy, Sidney- The Strongholds of India, p.84  
Archaeological Survey of India- Vol. 23, pp.101-110.

3. First it was given to Khizr Khan, Khazain-ul-Futuh- p.63  
Malik Shahin was also its governor and after he fled away on account of political reasons, Malik Kafur was made its governor. Futuh-us-Salatin -pp.280, 283.

4. Tarikh-i-Ferishta- Vol. I, p.115.

5. Ibid- Vol. I, p.123.

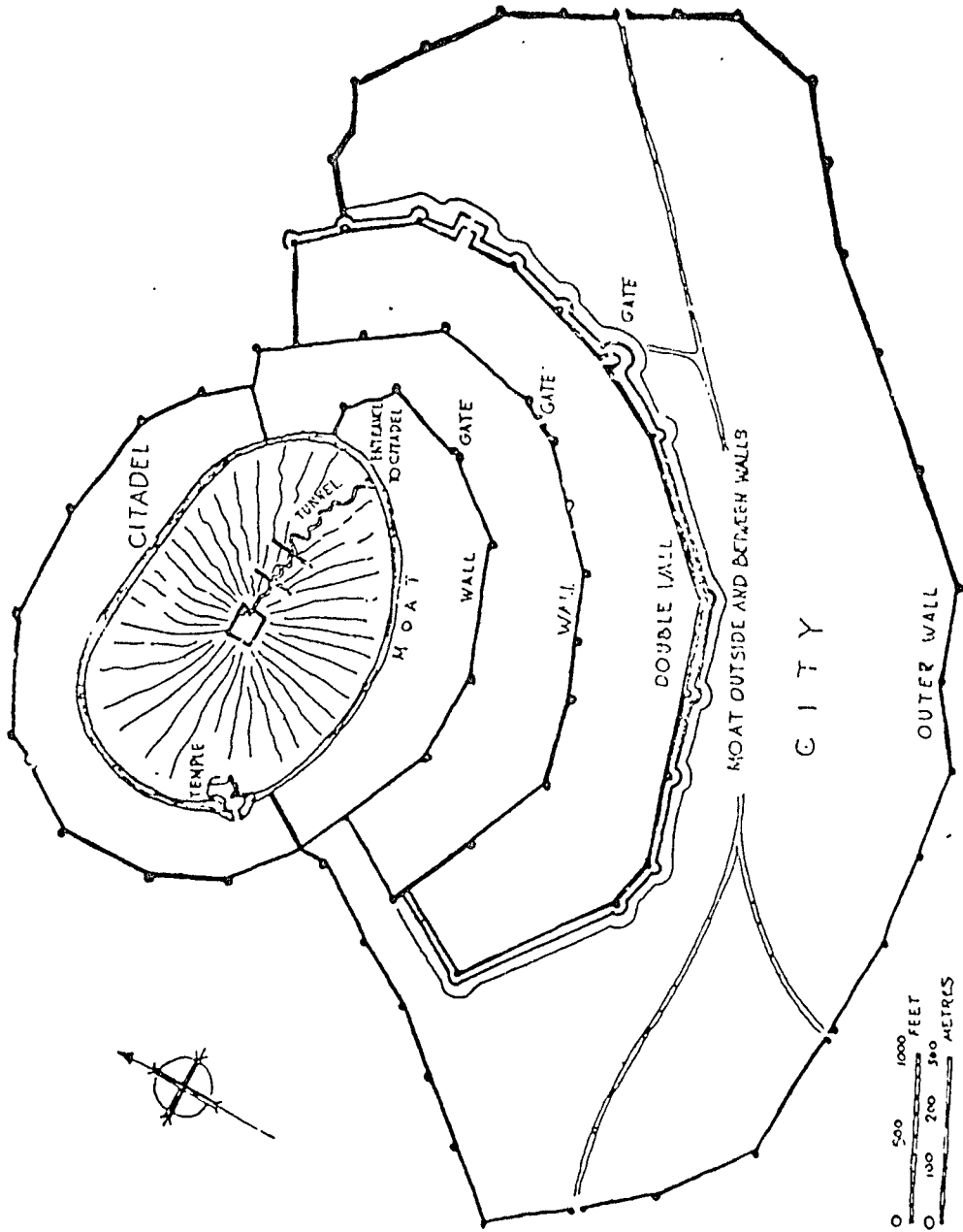
6. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- pp.388-89,  
Futuh-us-Salatin-pp.348, 356,

MANDU: Mandu occupied a strategic position from where the conquest of the Deccan was easier. Hence Ala-ud-Din Khalji was not prepared to leave any thorn that remained in that land.<sup>1</sup> "The fort of Mandu, an edifice so high, that the eye was unable to see its summit"<sup>2</sup> were the visualisation of Amir Khusro. Its circumference has been given as four farsang.<sup>3</sup> This fort was built on a flat-topped bill in the Vindhyan range, 2079 feet above sea level. The fort is formed of the entire hill, round which runs a battlemented wall nearly 23 miles in circuit.<sup>4</sup> Amir Khusro has given the details of its seige in the Khazain-ul-Futuh and Dewal Rani.<sup>5</sup> After its capitulation the whole territory was given to Ainul Mulk Multani as he was considered by Ala-ud-Din Khalji as one of the most responsible officer.<sup>6</sup>

#### The Deccani Forts- Devagiri or Daulatabad

The success of the Khalji penetration in the Deccan was greatly due to its hold over Devagiri. The Rai of the place, Ram Chandra Deva extended full cooperation to the

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1. Khazain-ul-Futuh- p.56.
  2. Ibid- p.56, Eng. tr. p.44
  3. Dewal Rani- p.68
  4. Imperial Gazetteer. Vol. 27, pp.171-172.
  5. Khazain-ul-Futuh-pp.55,59,  
Dewal Rani- pp.68-69
  6. Ibid- p.56.



Daulatabad  
Plan of the fortress



DAULATABAD—Close up of the fort

Delhi army in their campaigns of the other Deccani states. It was one of the most important military base, which provided all the necessary facilities to the Imperial army on their way to Warangal<sup>1</sup> and Dwar Samudra.<sup>2</sup> The Rai who acted as a tributary showed so much benevolence on the Delhi army whenever they crossed Devagiri, that Ala-ud-Din Khalji invited him to the marriage of his son Khizr Khan.<sup>3</sup> The son of the Rai, named Singhana, discarded the tributary status and showed defiance to Ala-ud-Din Khalji. The Sultan could not tolerate the infringement of his authority and he thus sent an army under Malik Kafur to deal with the 'rebel'. Malik Kafur was successful in his enterprise and he made Devagiri his headquarter from where he sent the annual tributes to Delhi.<sup>4</sup> After the death of Ala-ud-Din Khalji, Sultan Qutub-ud-Din ~~Mubarak~~ Khalji annexed Devagiri to the Sultanate. It was the first annexation of a Southern Kingdom in the Delhi Sultanate. The importance of Devagiri increased during the Tughlaqs. It continued to serve as a military base under

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1. Khazain-ul-Futuh-p.79.
  2. Ibid- pp.122-123,  
Futuh-us-Salatin, p.294.
  3. Futuh-us-Salatin p.324.
  4. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.368.

Sultan Ghiyath-ud-Din Tughlaq, During the campaign of Warangal in 1321 AD. Ulugh Khan stopped at Devagiri where his younger brother Mahmud Khan served as a mugta,<sup>1</sup> Giving the charge of Devagiri to a prince, shows the importance which was attached to it. The conquest of Warangal by Ulugh Khan (later Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq) was possible only by having Devagiri as a back up military station,<sup>2</sup> Ibn Batuta describes the fort thus-" the first division is Daulatabad which is reserved for the Sultan's residence and his troops, the second division is called Kataka<sup>3</sup> and the third is the peerless fortress which is called Deogir and has no equal in impregnability"<sup>4</sup> A closer view of the fort makes it look very impressive. It stands on a conical rock, scarped from a height of 150 feet from the base. The hill upon which it stands rises perpendicularly from the plain to a height of about 600 feet. The outer wall is 2½ miles in circumference, with three lines of fortification between it and the base of the upper fort."<sup>5</sup>

"The entrance to the citadel is defended by a wide and deep wet moat which has been excavated out of the living

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.446,  
Futuh-us-Salatin-p.399.

2. Futuh-us-Salatin- pp.401-402.

3. Mehdi Husain calls it a military cantonment  
Rehla Eng. Tr. p.169, fn. 1

4. Rehla- Eng. Tr. p.169 .

5. Imperial Gazetteer- Vol. XI P.201

rock, leaving dams across it and a submerged causeway for the bridge..... The height of water in the moat was under control and any adjustment in this height could be restricted to the space between the dams. In time of siege, if the enemy had carried all the outer barriers, the portion of the moat including the bridge could be flooded, and the water in that portion raised to such a height as to render the bridge impassable....."<sup>1</sup>

Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq had chalked out a plan for a residential complex for the different section of the people at the foot of the citadel.<sup>2</sup> Muhammad bin Tughlaq's interest in Devagiri developed, as Barani puts in, due to its location being equidistant from all the other provinces<sup>3</sup> and the Sultan thought in terms of transferring the status of capital from Delhi to Devagiri. However it was not so. As the Deccani states were being annexed, it was thought to make Devagiri an administrative centre to look after the newly acquired territories of the South.<sup>4</sup> The rebellion of Baha-ud-Din Gurshap, who had also made the Rai of Kampila

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1. Toy, Sidney- The Strongholds of India- p.38

2. Maasalik-ul-Asar- Eng. Tr. I.H.Siddiqui and Q.M. Ahmed. p-32.

3. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- pp.473-74

4. Tarikh-i-Ferishta- Vol. I-p.136.



his ally, was a threat to Muhammad bin Tughlaq's hold of the South.<sup>1</sup> However Devagiri (renamed Daulatabad) developed to such an extent that it was considered parallel to Delhi and was addressed as 'Qubbat-ul-Islam.'<sup>2</sup> It later became the centre of the Bahamani power.

WARANGAL: Warangal was the capital of Telingana which at the time of Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji, was ruled by Pratap Rudra Deva. Ala-ud-Din Khalji after having obtained the loyalty of Ram Chandra Deva of Devagiri, wanted to have control over Warangal as well, so that annual tributes from the South could fill his coffers. Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji was bent upon conquering Warangal inspite of the fact that sending an army to a far of territory involved many risks. Ala-ud-Din instructed Malik Kafur with the 'dos and don'ts' of leading a campaign before the army left for Warangal in order to have positive result.<sup>3</sup> The hold over Devagiri enabled the Imperial army to apply military pressure in the South which was a success.

The fort of Warangal has been described by Amir Khusro in a very explicit manner. This fort had two lines of fortification. The first fortification was of mud but yet"

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1. Futuh-us-Salatin- pp.427-30, Rehla- Eng, Tr. p.95
  2. Maasalik-ul-Absar- Eng, Tr. I.H.Siddiqui and Q.M.Ahmed.p.32.
  3. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- pp.327-28,  
Futuh-us-Salatin- pp.289-90.

"so hard that a spear of steel could make no impression upon it, if a maghrabi stone were to strike it, it would rebound like a nut thrown by a child. Its earthen towers were stronger than Taurus, and the Orion only came up to its waist.... This fort had been so excellently constructed, that there was nothing on its walls that one could catch hold of or lay one's finger on.....The inner fort resembled the (Arabian) Khaiber---- the stone of which rose up to the sky, and even the sky had raised its mirror higher (lest it might break from contact) with the rocky towers. Its stones were joined so carefully together that the head of a needle could not get in between them, its walls were so smooth that a fly attempting to sit on them would have slipped down. Its stones and plaster had been welded so excellently together that the tongue of the spade was unable to separate them. In addition to this, therefore was such a wonderful charm in its walls and buildings that no maghrabi had the heart to do them any wrong. You might say that the fort was a stiff spear, which the ant could not climb, or else that it was a flute in which the wind lost itself as in a wooden pipe. Its towers stood upright in the air and ascended to the moon, its foundations sank deep in the earth, down to the Fish....."

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"When the multitudinous army came to the lip of the ditch, they found its mouth full of water, if anyone talked to it about crossing to the other side, it tried to drag down to the bottom."<sup>1</sup> Pratap Rudra Deva, offered to surrender to the Imperial forces and gave away all the treasures he had and also agreed to pay annual tribute.<sup>2</sup> With the death of Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji, the situation at Delhi tempted Rudra Deva to cast off the allegiance made to the Delhi Sultan. Ghiyath-ud-Din Tughlaq when he ascended to the throne, ordered the subjugation of Telingana. In 1321 AD Ulugh Khan led the expedition to Telingana which he reached by forced marches.<sup>3</sup> When the siege dragged on for six months<sup>4</sup> the Raja promised to surrender and pay annual tribute<sup>5</sup> but Ulugh Khan refused, as he wanted complete conquest of the territory which was thought in terms of being annexed to the Delhi Sultanate. The siege was abandoned on account of consternation in army due to the rumour that Sultan Ghiyath-ud-Din Tughlaq had died. After the matter was sorted out, a renewed attack on Telingana finally led to its annexation and was named Sultanpur.<sup>6</sup> The

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1. Khazain-ul-Futuh-Eng. Tr. pp.62,68-69, Text pp.84,94-97.

2. Ibid- pp.105-113.

3. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- pp.446-50

4. Futuh-us-Salatin- P.392.

5. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.447.

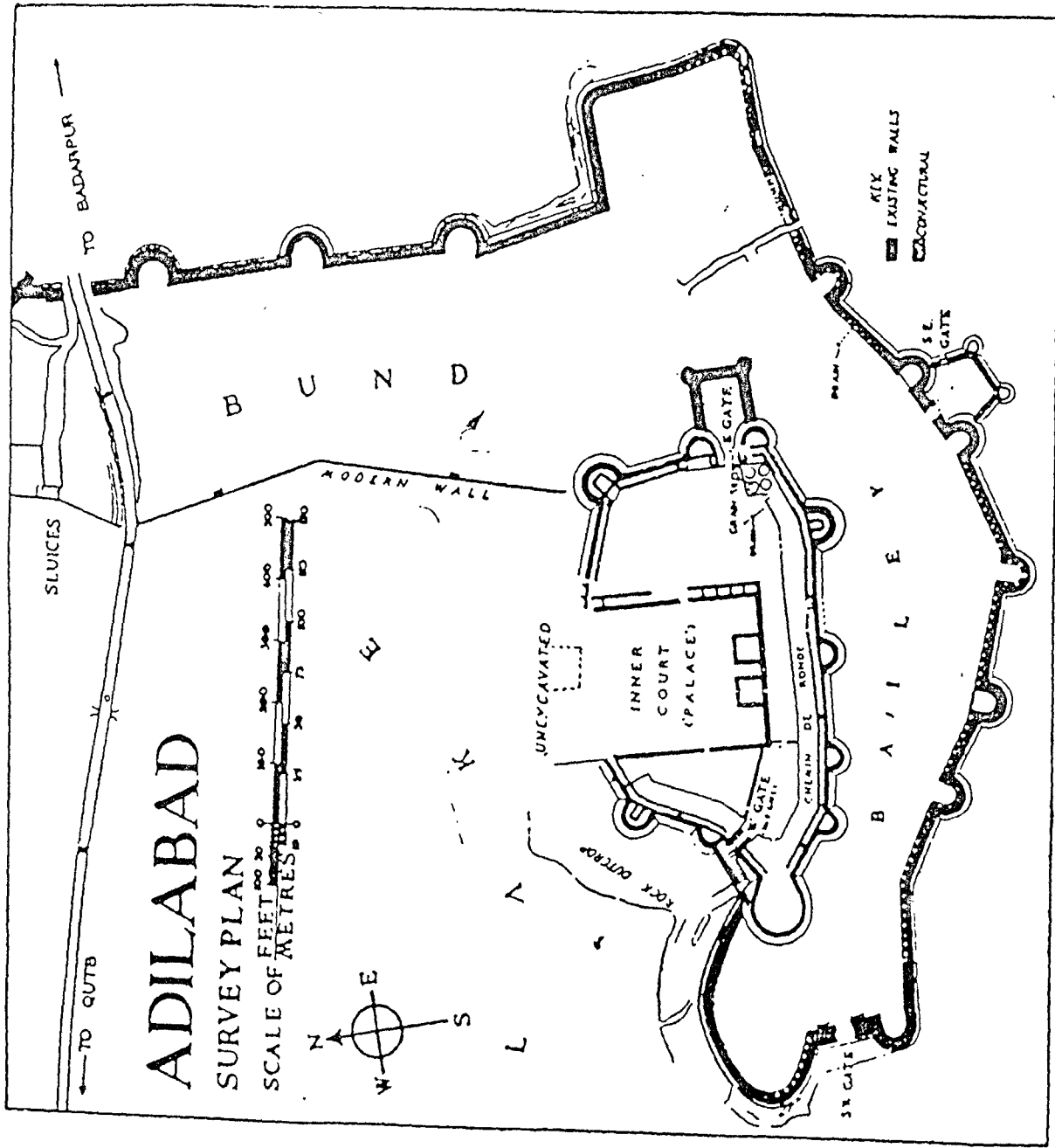
6. Ibid- p.450  
Futuh-us-Salatin-pp.400-401.

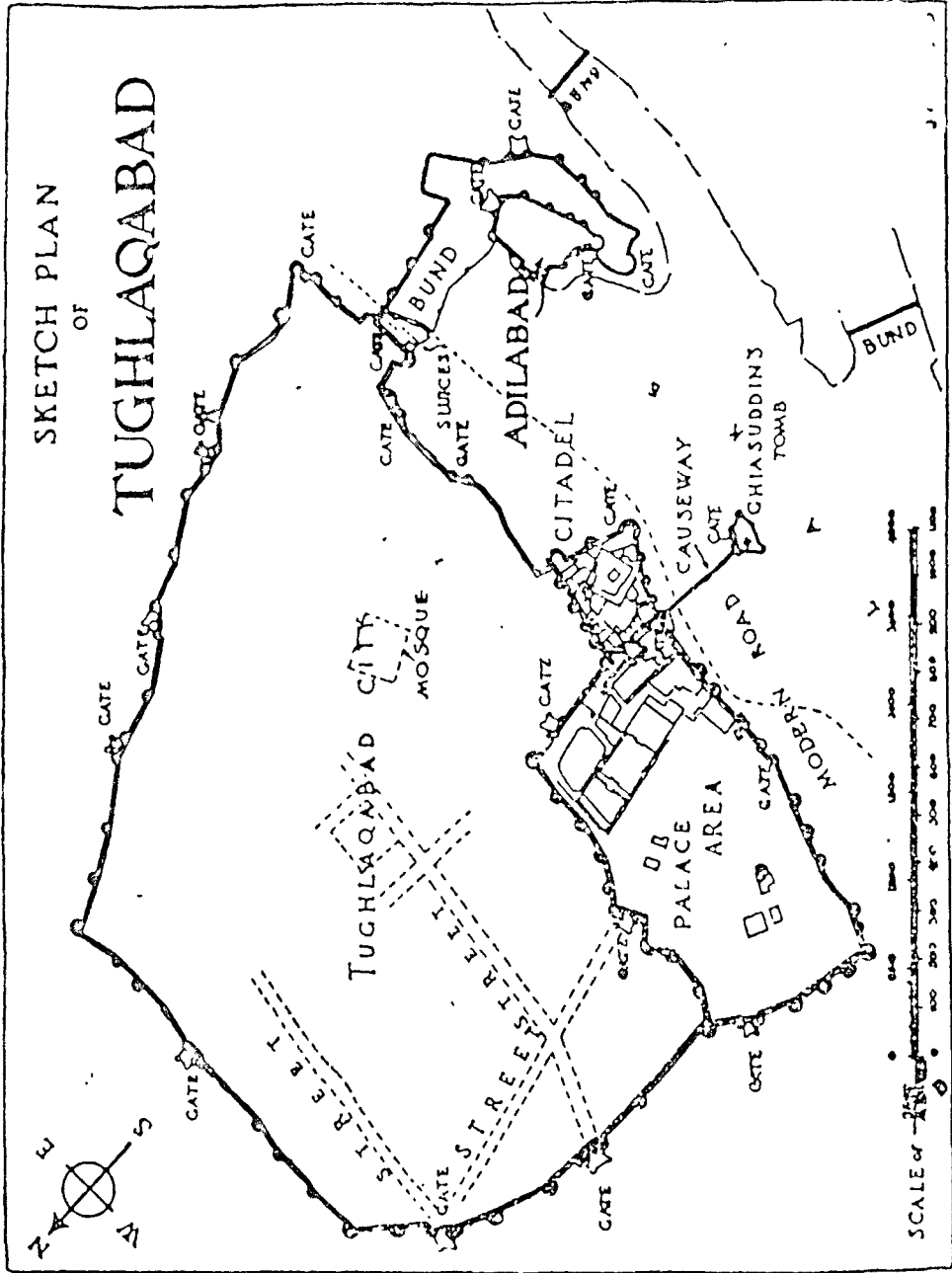
whole administrative machinery was set up in Telingana which was controlled by the Sultanate's officials, but this annexation did not last long, as during the reign of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq the chaotic political condition and rebellions (numbering to eighteen) provided an opportune time for the alienation of this territory and the establishment of the Vijaynagar kingdom.

DELHI: In Delhi various fortifications were raised during the Sultanate period. Sultan Muzz-ud-Din Kaigubad built Kilukhari which later was also the place of residence of Sultan Jalal-ud-Din Khalji. It was not built for military purpose or the ruler lacked the military insight, as Targhi's invasion of 1303 AD proved how ineffective it appeared when surrounded by the Mongol forces. It was Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji's military capability which averted the danger. He chose a strategic position at Siri and arranged the troops accordingly. The line of defence was so strong that the Mongols had to return. Ala-ud-Din Khalji felt the need of having a strong fortress at Siri. He started its construction and some part of it was completed by his successor Qutub-ud-Din Mubarak Khalji.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- p.302,  
Futuh-us-Salatin-p.301.  
Tarikh-i-Ferishta- Vol.I, pp.111-112.







THE FORT OF TUGHLAQABAD

The Khazain-ul-Futuh mentions that "the emperor ordered stones and bricks of golds to be taken out of the flourishing exchequer and spent in defraying the expenses of the fort. Skilful masons applied themselves to the work and a new fort was quickly built in place of the old. The new fort with its strong forearm and seven towers shakes hands with the coloured pleiades, squeezes the powerful Mars under its armpit, and uses the high sky as a sort of waistband."<sup>1</sup> When Timur visited the site, the description recorded in the Zafar Namah states that Siri was surrounded by a round wall having seven gates.<sup>2</sup>

The result of this fortification was that the Mongols when they next invaded India in 1305 AD,<sup>3</sup> they completely avoided Delhi knowing that the siege of Delhi would be futile and instead they moved towards Doab and Awadh and ravaged those territories.

Sultan Ghiyath-ud-Din Tughlaq built another fortress four to five miles east of Siri called Tughlaqabad. Isami writes that --- "From the foundation to the turret, according as the emperor ordered, that fortress was built of hard stone and its foundation was laid in rough stones.

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1. Khazain-ul-Futuh- Eng. Tr. p.18, Text p.28.

2. Zafar Namah- Vol. II p.125. also see A. Cunningham- Archaeological Survey of India Vol. I. pp.207-212, C. Stephen- Archaeological and Monumental Remains of Delhi-Allahabad 1977, pp.83-86.

3. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi- pp. 319-20- The invasion of Ali Beg, Tartag and Targhi.

Khasain-ul-Futuh- Text pp.37-41.

Futuh-us-Salatin- pp.301-305.



Beneath the lofty fortress, a reservoir was dug out under the royal orders so that every moment its clear water gushed in sparkling waves like the Seventh Sea under the Caucasus mountain."<sup>1</sup>

Cunningham's survey reveals that this fort is half hexagon in shape, with three faces of rather more than three-quarters of a mile in length each, and a base of mile and a half, the whole circuit being only one furlong less than four miles. The fort stands on a rocky height, and is built of massive blocks of stones, so large and heavy that they must have been quarried on the spot. The largest stone---measured 14 feet in length, by two feet two inches and one foot ten inches in breadth and thickness, and must have weighed rather more than six tons. The short faces to the west, north, and east, are protected by a deep ditch, and the long face to the south by a large sheet of water, which is held up by an embankment at the south-east corner. On this side the rock is scarped, and above it the main wall rise to a mean height of 40 feet, with a parapet of seven feet, behind which rises another wall of 15 feet, the whole height above the low ground

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1. Futuh-us-Salatin- Eng. Tr. Vol. 2, pp.622, Text p.412.  
Rehla- Eng, tr. p.25.

being upwards of 90 feet. In the south-west angle is the citadel, which occupies about one-sixth of the area of the fort... The ramparts are raised, as usual, on a line of doomed-rooms, which rarely communicate with each other, and which, no doubt formed the quarters of the troops that garrisoned the fort. The walls slope rapidly inwards.... The rampart walls are pierced with loop-holes, which serve also to give light and air to the soldiers quarters. The parapets pierced with low sloping loop-holes which command the foot of the wall, and are crowned with a line of rude battlements of solid stone, which are also provided with loop-holes. The walls are built of largely plainly dressed stones, and there is no ornament of any kind. But the vast size, the great strength, and the visible solidity of the whole give to Tughlakabad an air of stern and massive grandeur that is both striking and impressive.

The fort of Tughlakabad has 13 gates, and there are three inner gates to the citadel."<sup>1</sup>

During the reign of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq a new face lift was given to the fortifications of Delhi. A small fortress called Adilabad was added to the south corner of

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1. A. Cunningham. Archaeological Survey of India, Vol. I, pp.212-213.

Tughlaqabad. Next, Old Delhi and Siri was joined by a fortified wall and the area between the two came to be known as Jahanpanah. Delhi now appeared to be a very large city with the incorporation of the other fortified cities. Ibn Batuta writes that -- 'It is now a combination of four adjacent and contiguous cities.. The first of them goes by the name of Delhi... The second city is known as Siri... The third is named Tughlaqabad after its founder Sultan Tughlaq .. The fourth is known as Jahanpanah, a city particularly distinguished as the residence of Sultan Muhammad Shah Emperor of India.<sup>1</sup> All these incorporated together was given a single name Delhi. The Maasalik-ul-Absar too illustrates clearly about Delhi --- "Delhi v.. comprises different cities, everyone bears its own particular name, but all of them combined together are called Delhi. It is extensive in length and breadth and has a circumference of forty miles.... It is surrounded on three sides by gardens in straight lines, each one stretching to the extent of twelve miles. The western side is without gardens on account of the range of Lahaba (Aravali) hills."<sup>2</sup> The whole of Delhi when taken together appeared in the words of Ibn Batuta thus ---- "The rampart \_round the Delhi city is without parallel. The breadth of its walls is eleven cubits, and

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1. Rehla- Eng. Tr. A.M.Husain, p.25.

2. Maasalik-ul-Absar-Eng. Tr. I.H. Siddiqui & Q.M.Ahmed-pp.35-36.

inside it are houses in which live night sentinels and gate keepers-- and in the interior of the rampart horsemen as well as infantrymen move from one end of the city to the other. It is pierced through by windows which open on the city side, and through these light enters. The lower part of this rampart is built of stones, the upper part of bricks. It has many towers close to one another- There are twenty eight gates of this city which they call drawaza (Bab)."<sup>1</sup>

The Zafar Namah described the fortress as it (they) appeared to Timur during the close of the 14th century.---  
"Siri is surrounded by a round wall. Old Delhi by a similar wall, but larger. From the wall of Siri on the north-east to wall of old Delhi on the south-west, a wall has been erected on both sides, and all the space between is called Jahanpanah, It is larger than old Delhi. Three gates of Siri open towards Jahan panah and four towards the open country. Of old Delhi five gates open into Jahanapanah and thirteen to the outside. Jahanapanah has thirteen gates, six to the north-east and seven to the south-west, making in all thirty gates to these three cities known by the common name Delhi."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Rehla- Eng. Tr. A.M.Husain. p.26

2. Zafar Namah- Vol. II, p.125, Elliot and Dowson Vol.III p.504.

With such detailed information available to us about the physical structure of the forts built by the Delhi Sultans, one aspect of architecture comes out very prominently, the number of gates in a fort are present in quick intervals. This signifies the offensive nature of the forts. It was by no means constructed for a passive defence as the Rajputs did. They had only one entrance to their fort and their defence was concentrated on that place. The Delhi Sultans who believed in facing the enemy in open battlefields constructed the gates deliberately for the quick movements of the troops from the various gates. It also enabled the soldiers to take their position by going through any of the gates which was near to their place of allotment. The army of the Delhi Sultans always moved outside the fort to meet the approaching enemy. Even if the enemy is at the very gate of the city, they never confined themselves to the fort as it was against their very nature of warfare.

Secondly, the forts of the Delhi Sultans were never constructed on hills or places of inaccessability. This was done by keeping in mind the mode of warfare. Since the bulk of the Delhi army consisted of cavalry, forts were therefore constructed at lower levels of the ground to facilitate the

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movements of the cavalry. Hilly forts would have hindered the mobility of the cavalry. The Rajputs on the other hand had constructed their forts because of their defensive mode of warfare. They usually fought by confining themselves to their forts and leaving the whole countryside in the hands of the enemy. The Delhi Sultans thus made use of the forts constructed by the erst-while rulers according to their needs and made them into offensive military stations from where campaigns were organised.

## C O N C L U S I O N

The Indian Military system prior to the Turkish invasion which considered the incidents of Mahabharata as the ideals of war, failed to live up to that standard. In spite of possessing classical works on polity of their ancestors, they never took into account the suggestions made in the works. No outward change in the military strategy, weapons, organisation etc. had taken place in the Indian army from the days of the Guptas. During the reign of Harsha, we however find a large scale organisation of the military system. He formed the central army which consisted of the elephantry, cavalry and infantry. The Pratiharas and the Palas too organised their army. The Pratihara king maintained four armies to encounter enemies coming from any of the four sides. The Palas employed boats to traverse their territories which was full of rivers.

Chosen soldiers were placed near the king's person at the time of battle. They were reckless warriors who did not leave the king even at times of danger. These soldiers however constituted a very microscopic section of the army. The king depended a lot on the soldiers of the feudatory chiefs and allies. Hence an heterogeneous character crept into the Indian army which resulted in an army possessing soldiers having different motives and notions of war. Unity

was thus absent from this type of an army. With regards to the composition of troops, only the Kshatriya caste from the masses were taken into service, though in the theory compounded by Sukranitisara it is stated that the Sudhras, Vaishyas, Kshatriyas and Mlechhas or mixed caste too could be provided with an opportunity to take up military career, but such a composition did not exist. The rigid caste system alienated the bulk of the population from joining the army. Very few references are however available which informs us of Brahmin generals commanding an army.

The approach of war was of fighting individuals of the enemy. Praises are always bestowed upon individual's valour and bravery. Compliments with regards to the whole army as a fighting unit is absent.

Emphasis had been given more to the elephantry corps than to the cavalry which was the need of time. The infantry formed the bulk of the Rajput army thus affecting the mobility of troops, formation of troops in battle array, etc. Salary of the soldiers were paid in form of land grants, the temporary soldiers recruited at the time of battle were paid in cash.



The strategies and tactics of war suffered a great deal as the Rajput rulers did not keep their soldiers well equipped and drilled which was prevalent outside India. Their mode of warfare was meant only for fighting in the Indian environment against an Indian counterpart. The ruler having more soldiers won the battle and not due to any strategy or tactics evolved during the battle. The defects in the Indian army were indentified when they faced the Turkish warriors of Central Asia. A series of invasions from the north-west did not deter the reigning Indian monarchs from detaching themselves from the ancient mode of warfare. A permanent policy to check the inroads would have unnerved the invaders, but the Rajput rulers allowed the invaders to enter into their territory and only when the latter approached very near to their doors, then only the Rajputs armed themselves to meet their opponents. The frontiers were never strongly garrisoned and the resultant was that in quick succession the Rajput forts fell before the Turks. On the battlefield the Rajputs resorted to a simple method of dashing against the enemy and joining in a hand to hand combat. The various strategies of ambush, surprise attack, feigned retreat etc. were never adopted by them. They always employed a

defensive method. The forts too were constructed for the purpose of hiding in them, rather than initiating attacks from therein. The art of seige craft was also very defective. The fort of Tabarhinda was captured by Shihab-ud-Din Muhammad in a matter of two-three months, whereas after the 1st battle of Tarain, the Rajputs could not capture it even in one year.

One of the most important factor for the defeat of the Rajputs was their pre-conception of war which was basically pessemistic in approach. They went into the battle field with the belief of dying for their country. Thus Jauhar was performed by the ladies who took for granted that the soldiers going for the battle were going to die. well, no one can win a war by dying for his country. A war can only be won by the enemies dying for their country. Had this belief, of the enemies dying in the battle field, rather than themselves, been even considered by the Rajputs, their valour and bravery combined together by an optimistic view would have changed the whole course of history. These very Rajputs when incorporated in the army of the Delhi Sultanate and later in the Mughal army, proved to be the back bone of the Imperial army. While studyin, Indian history, one cannot ignore the fact that the drilling of elephants and horses were not up to the standard required for a battle. The elephants could be made to counter attack their own forces, the horses too were more for royal pageants than for serious warfare.

Notwithstanding the apparent defects in the mode of warfare of the Rajputs, serious attention should also be paid to their achievements as well. Each Rajput soldier was an able bodied warrior and he was not less in any form to any other soldier outside India. They could defy death at times of need. In hand to hand combat very few could match them, but as an organised force they failed to achieve the objectivity of war. They were gentlemen (if I am permitted to use the word) on the battle field too, as "They considered it a sin and a disgrace" Manucci points out 'to use bows and arrows' ... or anything taking effect at a distance ... They desisted from fighting if the enemy put a row of cows in front, because they could on no account incur sin of killing the cows'. They never attacked from behind or assaulted the enemy who lost his weapon. On the contrary such practices are unheard of in battles. In a battle every means of taking the enemy unaware, or employing methods of deceit are given primary regards. A battle must be won at all cost notwithstanding whatever methods be applied.

The Rajputs thus were not the warriors of the age, they were warriors of past traditions, later a change in their approach of war turned them into an irresistible fighting force.

In Central Asia the martial race of the Turks and the Mongols had a very different approach towards the methods

of war. Physically the Central Asia soldiers were superior with regards to their ability to endure various hardships arising from the climate of the place. Secondly, there was a strict rule for the Mongols incorporated in the yasa that when there is no war raging against the enemy, there shall be hunting, the young shall be taught how to kill wild animals, so that they became accustomed to fighting, and acquire strength and endurance and will subsequently fight, without sparing themselves, against the enemy as though against wild animals. One can estimate their warrior like character if they indulged in such activities during peace time. Constant prairie wars and tribal feuds too moulded the people into warriors. These qualities when combined with the leadership of Chengis Khan who succeeded in uniting the steeper people into one unit, gave rise to the most feared Mongol force which swept across the Asian and European territories without being challenged. When the leadership of Chengis Khan was acknowledged by the people, he promulgated yasa to keep them in check. He believed in the principle of 'starve the dog that it may follow thee'. The Mongols were so much dependent on Chengis Khan who feeded them with the idea of forming a national state, that they never dared to disobey the Yasa, which they held in high esteem. Chengis

khan organised his army into units of ten (nai-tsi), hundred (yuz), thousand (ming) and ten thousand (tuman) and placed commanders over each unit. The commander of the unit was responsible for the well being of his soldiers, he was held guilty if any problem arose from his unit.

The division of the forces into the decimal system enabled the relay of communication to the lowest unit in no time. The power of recruitment was partially enjoyed by the various military officers who could recruit soldiers with the permission of the Khan. Later, recruitment were the ~~task~~ assigned to a separate military department.

Reviews were regularly held and war equipments were scrutinized very minutely.

The mode of warfare prevalent in Central Asia was common to both the Mongols and the Turks. Cavalry was the back bone of the army and mounted archers comprised the bulk of the army. Swiftness of the cavalry both in attack and retreat gave the Central Asian warriors an upper hand in the battle against those adversaries who were not acquainted with the practise of war prevalent in Central Asia. The main thrust of the army was to possess beforehand detailed informations about their enemy. Strategies of war were thus decided on basis of the report received from the spies and the

scouts . The success of the Mongols during the 13th century rested upon the spy system which could supply all the information about the enemy's country, routes, places fit for camping, water-supply etc. Chengis Khan knew more about the enemy than the latter knew about him. Various methods of war were employed during the battle, like feigned retreat, out flanking the enemies and attacking from rear, disorganising the enemies battle formation etc. In case of victory, the soldiers were instructed not to scramble for booty immediately. Spoils were divided equally among the soldiers.

In view of the traditions of war practised ; in Central Asia, the soldiers never overburdened themselves with heavy supplies. They kept light weapons, like bow and arrows, spears, lance etc. Their armours too were made from the hides of buffaloes or other animals, so that it may not hinder the flexibility required during a battle.

The military organisation of the Delhi Sultans was very systematic and took into consideration each and every aspect of the army. The military officers were designated as Khan, Malik, Amir, Sipahsalar and Sarkhayl. The designation of Khan denoted the highest rank, but even then the

favourite from among the Khan was singled out. The Khan-i-Khanan was considered to be the highest rank among the Khans e.g. Khan-i-Khanan Ikhtiyar-ud-Din was the full name of Sultan Jalal-ud-Din Khalji's son. The Malik <sup>had</sup> suffixes and prefixes like Malik Kabir and Malik ul Umara. Prior to the adoption of the title of Khan, the highest military officers were called Malik. e.g. Malik Qutub-ud-Din Aibek, Malik Nasir-ud-Din Qabacha etc. The military hierarchy after the establishment of the Sultanate was adjusted with the adoption of designation from the Central Asian system or the Persian system. On the whole the organisation after the assimilation and adoption of the two renowned military systems into the Delhi army appeared thus --- a Khan commanding ten thousand horsemen, a Malik one thousand, an Amir hundred and a Sipah Salar less than hundred. Sources like the Adab-ul-Harb and Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi also mention military officers like the Arif commanding 10, 30 or 40 soldiers, a Khalifah or Amir-i-Panjab being incharge of 50 soldiers, a naqib commanding 100 troops and a Sarhang supervising 500 soldiers. The Amir-i-Akhur, Amir-i-Hajib, Sar-i-Jandar and Amir-i-Shikar though appointed as civil servants, were also military officers. The Amir-i-Akhur took part in battles. There was a separate post of Qurbeq-i-Maimna and Qurbeq-i-Maisra in the army. The Amir-i-Hajib

also performed military duties and led expeditions. The Sar-i-Jandar was the head of the bodyguard and he along with the Jandars formed the crack force of the army which was posted at the Centre with the king. There were Sar-i-Jandar Mainna and Sar-i-Jandar Maisra who were commanders of the Jandars of the two wings of the army. The Sar-i-Jandar also held administrative charge of territories. The Amir-i-Shikar was a higher designation than that of Sar-i-Jandar. They also took charge of troops in battles. Anyone who was capable of sharing responsibilities were given charge of important expeditions. Malik Kafur for example inspite of being a Malik over ran the whole of Deccan which surpassed many deeds of the Khans.

This organisation was under the ministry of Diwan-i-Arz the head of which was called the Ariz-i-Mumalik. He took keen interest in his duty which laid emphasis on the efficiency of the army. The well being of the army depended upon him as he was the chief recruiter of troops, he inspected the horses, weapons and the soldiers themselves, and maintained a register in which all the details were recorded. The huliya of the soldiers, his equipment etc. were all noted down; a soldier could neither impersonate other nor could he substitute his horse or weapon with another of inferior



quality. The Ariz encouraged the soldiers with rewards and those found guilty of indiscipline were punished. He was assisted by a Naib-i-Ariz. At the provinces too there were similar offices.

At the provincial level the muqta maintained a separate army called the Hashm-i-Atraf. This army checked internal disturbances, and cooperated with one another during danger. Sultan Balban once sent Bughra Khan from Samana, Prince Mahmud from Multan and Malik Barbak Baktars from Delhi to check the Mongols. The Hashm-i-Atraf accompanied the central army when ever required.

There were three main division of the army viz. Cavalry, Infantry and Elephantry. The Cavalry formed the backbone of the army, hence horses of good quality were imported and also reared. The Mulk-i-baladast where best horses were available, were not in control of the Delhi Sultans hence high prices were paid for the imported ones. The paigahs were full with horses which were taken as tributes from the Deccani states. In Delhi the brokers were punished if they passed a Hindi horse as an Arabi or Tartari. Hence horses of good breed were always available due to the demand they carried in India. Hence Yemani, Bahri, Shami, Arabi, Tartari, all such breeds were found in the army. Sultan Balban had 67 thousand horsemen, Sultan Ala-ud-Din Khalji's cavalry numbered 475,000 and Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq is reported

to have maintained 900,000 horsemen.

The horses of the Delhi army, wore saddles, stirrup and horseshoe. The saddle provided the rider firm grip over the horse in course of gallop, canter or trot. The metal stirrip facilitated the rider to shoot arrows from the horseback without loosing his balance. The horse shoe enabled the cavalry to traverse in the various regions having diverse physical features. The army from Delhi could go to the South till Maabar proves the effectiveness of the horse shoe.

The horsemen was usually armed with bow and arrow, sword, mace , lasso etc. The mobility of the horse plus accurate shooting from the horseback made the army of the Delhi Sultans irresistible . A cavalryman appeared very impressive.

The Indian fashion and mode of warfare of using elephants crept into the Delhi army as well. The Sultans incorporated elephants in their army and they occupied a very important position on the battle field. Elephants were supplied from Bengal and from the Deccan. They were used in breaking the enemy's line of defence and tearing down ramparts of forts. They were also used in crossing rivers. They were stationed in a row to break the current of the river, which enable the army to cross over.

In the battles, the warriors accommodated themselves on wooden cupolas which were placed on the back of elephants. Six to seven warriors were easily placed in the wooden structure from where they shot arrows and naphta. In the Indian environment, the elephants proved very effective. The army of Timur was demoralised on account of elephants in possession of Sultan Mahmud. The infantry formed the vanguard of the army and they played a very important role in battles. They were first to face the enemy's attack on account of their position in the battle. They attacked the sawars of the enemy to make way for elephants. They were given the name paiks and usually the Hindu soldiers constituted the majority. Barani credits the paiks who hailed from Bengal as they excelled in archery and Dhanush was their favourite weapon. The paiks have shown great courage and loyalty to their master. They once saved Ala-ud-Din Khalji from the <sup>7</sup>murderous attack of Akat Khan. The paiks also played a vital role in placing Mubarak Khalji on the throne of Delhi.

All the soldiers were periodically reviewed to ascertain the efficiency of the army. Reviews were also taken before a battle. If desired the army was also inspected during a campaign so that the total number of troops and their condition could be examined. It was a practise to send of a division of troops after inspection to march back for review just to give an impression of a large army to the spy of the enemy if present. A review was a long process and at times

took fourteen days at a stretch to examine the whole army. Those who did not turn up for review were severely punished. During the days of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq this whole system deteriorated. There were separate administrative units having different functions viz. Pilkhana, Paigha, Silah, Shutur Khana, Alam Khana etc. all these karkhanas were under separate officers. The Amir-i-Akhur was incharge of the paigha, the Shahna-i-Pil for pilkhana, Shahna-i-Nafar incharge of Camel's stable, and Sar-i-Silahdar incharge of armoury.

These whole military organisation depended a lot on the salary given to the officers, soldiers, caretakers etc. There has never been any complaint with regards to the salary fixed by the Sultan. Iltutmish granted iqtas to the soldiers and officers in lieu of salary. This system continued for quiet sometime. Ala-ud-Din Khalji after enforcing the price control and market regulations, fixed 234 tankas for a soldier with one horse and 78 tankas more for an extra horse. The officers were granted land assignments. The reign of Muhammad bin Tughlaq witnessed iqta assignments to the Khan, Malik, Amir and Isfahlar. The Khan received an iqta whose estimated value was about two lack tankas, a Malik likewise had an iqta equivalent to 50,000 tankas 60,000 tankas, an Amir got 30,000 tankas to 40,000 tankas and the Isfahla

received 20,000 tankas. The soldier's pay ranged from 1,000 tankas to 10,000 tankas. During the subsequent period these assignment became hereditary. The ghazis who joined the army before a campaign had their share in the spoils. They were not paid by the state. Likewise Ghairwajih were enrolled before a campaign but they were paid by the State.

The soldiers who were recruited in the army were well versed in the use of weapons. The Ariz took a test for all those who wanted to join military service. Only those who excelled in the prescribed test were put on roll. Anyone who wanted to enlist himself as an archer, had to prove his credibility in front of the Ariz and other military officers. A cavalryman similarly showed his skill in horsemanship.

After the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, people of various ethnic groups who possessed the desired qualities of a soldier were incorporated in the Sultanate's army. The procedure involved in the recruitment eliminated amateurs and unwanted candidates. The army was thus composed of most able warriors who after rigorous training turned into the best professional soldiers.

The army was composed of soldiers belonging to different nationality, race and community. During the 13th

century the army was basically constituted of Turks though having a separate identity of being a Khatai, Qarakhita, Qipchaq, Garji or Ilbari. The non-Turkish foreigners called Taziks entered in the service of the Delhi army with the rise of Chengis Khan. These Taziks proved themselves able administrators. The Turkish nobles had them massacred out of jealousy.

The Indian elements like the Jats, Khokars and Rajputs too were a small section of the army, who later increased in number during the Khalji period. The Indian elements were usually absorbed in the role of infantry in which they excelled. With the rise of Tughlaqs they were so great in number that the forces of Ghazi Malik and Nasir-ud-Din Khusrau were half Hindus and half Muslims. The court of Delhi attracted so many foreigners that even Ghazi Malik, could boast of having Ghuzz, Turkish, Mongols, Greek, Russian, Persian and Tajik soldiers in his army.

The Afghans entered India alongwith the Turkish conquerors and at the time of Sultan Balban they were so much favoured that important forts like Gopalgir, Kampil, Patiali, Bhojpur and Jalali were entrusted in their charge. There was a constant influx of the Afghans and they became a very powerful section. The reign of Muhammad bin Tughlaq

ultimately witnessed their uprising and the formation of an independent Bahamani Kingdom.

The constant Mongol invasions was responsible for the rise of Mongol elements in the Delhi army. During the reign of Jalal-ud-Din Khalji, Ulghu came to India and settled near Delhi along with his followers. Many were taken into service. Muhammad bin Tughlaq recruited many Mongols for the Khorasan expedition.

One may however doubt the efficiency the Delhi army since it had various section of people as discussed above, with a different background and culture, which could have adversely effected the quality of the army. This doubt is cleared when one analyses their mode of warfare. All the foreigners were used to fighting from the horseback. They formed the cavalry in the Delhi army and they possessed the same skill of horsemanship whet er they be Afghans, Mongols or Turks. The infantry was in control of the Indian elements.

The slaves formed the crackforce of the Delhi army. They were the Khasa-i-Khail and were posted at the centre of the army alongwith the king. They also formed the royal bodyguards called Jandars. The king took personal interest in the welfare of the slaves, their military training etc.

All the Sultans of Delhi possessed slaves. Balban had Sistani slaves as bodyguards. Ala-ud-Din Khalji had 50,000 boy slaves who grew up to add punch to his army. During the reign of Firoz Shah Tughluq a separate department for slaves came into existence. There was a separate muster master and diwan for administering the affairs of the slaves.

The Delhi army proved irresistible on many fronts and could thwart off all the Mongol invasions and at the same time extend the dominion of the Sultanate due to the efficiency and physical fitness of the soldiers. The army was involved in various military exercises which enabled them to face any calamity and any situation. The horseman trained his horse in different manoeuvre, played chaugan etc. The archers practised on targets and took part in hunting. The soldiers in general did weight lifting, practiced boxing, wrestling etc.

Hunting was one of the military exercise in which the ruler participated. An hunting expedition was organised in a manner of a military campaign. Balban took his army out for exercise on pretext of hunting. The camps, the movements of the troops, their position etc. were just like the battle formation.

Polo was also an exercise which required great skill of horsemanship. It enabled the rider to have good control



over the horse. Archery and sword fencing were rigourously practised. An exercise known as furusiya turned an ordinary soldier into a dreaded mounted archer. The presence of hukum andaz in the Delhi army, itself confirms the height of efficiency which the army maintained on account of exercises and training. There were also training for lasso throwers. Barani writes that a doaspa used to capture ten Mongols by putting halter round their necks. The soldiers also knew how to repair their bows and arrows, saddles etc. so that they may not be wanting during emergency.

The army made amends if a weakness showed up during a battle. Trainings and military exercises helped the Delhi Sultans to rule effectively for two centuries, until Timur routed the Delhi army. The defeat, no doubt was primarily due to inefficiency, of the army which was ill-equipped, untrained and indisciplined. Till the time strictness was maintained, the army reached the highest water-mark during the Khaljis and early Tughlaqs.

The warfare practised by the Delhi army was basically on Central Asian traditions along with the Rajput mode of warfare of employing elephants. The army moved out for a battle in a well organised manner. The banners, ward-runs and buga were all in the paraphernalia of the army.

Signals and messages were communicated by beat of drums, or flags signs . The presence of the Royal standard in the battle boosted the morals of the troops. The disappearance of standards had been causes of defeat for armies.

The success of campaigns rested a lot on provisions and supply line of the army. For distant campaigns, the banjaras and saudagars accompanied the army. The mugta of the province through which the Imperial army of Delhi. marched, had to cater to all their needs. The distant campaigns of Dwar Samudra and Maabar by Malik Kafur succeeded on account of abundance of provisions supplied by Rai Rayan Ram Deva of Deogir. Likewise the Thattah campaign of Firoz Shah Tughlaq witnessed the miseries which befell upon the Delhi army due to scarcity of provisions.

An ideal battle ground which suited the army on basis of the strategy and tactics of war, was chosen. Since cavalry formed the back bone of the army, the commanders of the Delhi army avoided swampy, dusty and stony grounds. A spacious ground which facilitated the movements of the cavalry was given preference.

The military camp was well protected by trenches and wooden barricades called Kathgarhs. The soldiers remained in the camp in accordance with the position allotted to them for battle. Strict vigilance was maintained and precautions were taken to ward offnight attacks on the camp.

The Sultans of Delhi had a well organised spy system which kept the rulers well informed of every thing inside and outside his dominion. While the army moved out for a military campaign, the spies brought reports about the position of the enemies, their military strength etc. The scouts called  Talaya  moved ahead of the army in search of information.  Mugaddam-i-Paish  or  These scouts  were trained soldiers who could defend at times of emergency.

One of the most important feature of the Delhi army was that before the start of the battle a war council was held in which the military officers decided the strategy of the battle. After much deliberation a line of action was chosen which was to be employed in the battle. Such councils were also held during emergency to chalk out a hurried plan. Oratory of Zafar Khan at the battle of Kili and that of Ghazi Malik before the battle against Khusrau Khan on the plains of Sarsuit, had enabled them to rally the soldiers around, to fight against the adversary.

On the day of the battle the army of Delhi Sultans arrayed themselves in the typical Central Asia fashion which was thus -- the  Quddam-i-Lashkar  (vanguard)  Maimna  (Leftwing),  Maisra  (Right wing),  Qalb  (Centre) and  Khalf  (Rear). There were flanking parties of these divisions called  Jinah . The  Maimna

was divided into Dast-i-Rast-i-Maimna (Right hand of the Left wing) and Dast-i-Chap-i-Maimna (Left hand of the Left wing), the Maisra consisted of Dast-i-Rast-i-Maisra and Dast-i-Chap-i-Maisra, the Qalb was supported by the Dast-i-Rast-i-Qalb and Dast-i-Chap-i-Qalb. In the vanguard were the infantry who were arrayed in four lines with sufficient gaps for the movements of the cavalry. Elephants were used in the Vanguard and also in front of the Centre. There are occasions when elephants were posted in front of every division of the army. The Sultan stood at the Centre. There was also a separate division of an army which was used only during emergency. The attack was usually led by the Vanguard but it was not an established tradition. Ala-ud-Din Khalji ordered the attack from the left. The author of Adab-ul-Harb suggests the attack from the Right wing, followed by the Centre, then the Left wing.

The attack on the enemy was essayed from all the four sides by mounted archers to disorganise the enemy's formation. At times the tactics of feigned retreat was adopted to bring the enemy into an ambush. The Sultans of Delhi employed different methods of warfare like deception, attacking the enemy unaware, night attacks etc.

Small expedition called Sirriya was sent on assignments like sabotage, spreading of false rumours etc.

Since in a battle the two opposing forces got mixed together, hence precautions were taken by having passwords.

If any one failed to give the correct pass word he was challenged, hence infiltration of spies into the army was avoided.

As the Delhi army excelled in an open battlefield, it also proved to be the conqueror of forts as well. Capturing of forts in an hostile country was a dangerous job as the army had to deal with the local population and the enemy's troops as well. The Delhi Sultans could afford to keep an army for a long period in seige operations. Capturing of forts required great patience as the forts of medieval India were impregnable on account of its structure and it required the best from the besiegers to capitulate the fort. The besiegers kept lassoes, ladders, kharak, manjanigs, irradas etc. For making breach in the fort's walls various means were adopted to enter into the forts. The enemies were bribed, by offering huge sums of money and a service of high rank. Rumours were also circulated to declare the approach of an reinforcement. Many traitors fell into the trap of bribes and led the besiegers into the forts.

If the seige carried on for a long time, attempts were made to cut off the supply line of provisions and supply of water. Moats were crossed by filling it up with sand bags. The walls of the forts were carved out by using spades and

other implements. Mines were also planted to create an opening in the walls. Manjanig and irradas threw heavy missiles in the fort. Pasheb was constructed to reach the top of the fort wall and ensure the attack from there. A garqaj was also used to press the seige. Elephants too formed a mean of making breach in the fort walls.

The Sultans of Delhi equipped their armies with the best arms and armour which was then in vogue. Among the weapons the Delhi army was armed with bows and arrows, swords, lances, mace etc. The presence of elephants ushered the use of caltrops to wound its feet. In India, there was the best bow called Kohi or Hindivi, best swords called the Mauj-i-darya, best lance known as the neza-i-hindivi, but inspite of such monopoly the Rājputs were no match to the Turks who could use various types of weapons as the situation demanded. Since the army of the Delhi Sultans were composed of troops belonging to different races and nationalities, these soldiers favoured their native weapons. Hence we have an army which possessed both Indian weapons and foreign arms.

The area around Ghur had abundance of iron, hence the Turks initially capitalised its presence by having weapons and armours made of iron and steel. In India whatever quantity of iron was available it was employed in the manufacture of best

swords, though it was very less in number. All the soldiers of the Hindu king did not possess the best weapons. With regards to bow and arrows the army of the Delhi Sultans possessed Chachi, Khwarizmi, Parwanchi, Ghaznichi, bows, each having its own effectiveness. Some were used to shoot at a target from a great distance while some were effective at a close distance. The arrows too were of different type, made of different material and had different purpose. Eg. mahi-pushta or gheloola shaped arrows heads could make a coat of mail ineffective. The Tir-i-Partabi travelled fast, Tir-i-Khaftan and Tir-i-begultaq were intended to pass through armours viz. Khaftan and Gultaq. Fiery arrow called Tir-i-atishin were also used during seige operations. Since the army of the Delhi Sultans were famous archers they protected their fingers by wearing rings called anghustuwana.

A soldier possessed the sword of his liking. The Afghans, for example, preferred to fight with swords known as Surman and Turman. Other varieties of swords were Chini, Rusi, Rumi, Firangi, Yemani etc. In India too, various types of swords were manufactured called the Paralak, Tarwatah, Ruhina, Parmaghas etc. These swords alongwith those of foreign origin were in possession of the Imperial forces of Delhi. The soldiers also kept daggers for hand to hand fight. The lance

served the soldiers well. It has been said that one person can fight 1,000 horsemen if he is armed with a lance. It can be thrust into the body of the enemy, and can also be thrown from a distance. The Khorasani and Iraqi neza made of willow were favoured by the soldiers of Central Asian origin. Heavy lances called Shil and Zopin were used by the Afghans. There was a separate neza which was used for attacking elephants, called pilkush. The Arabs fought with Sumeri and neza-i-Radini, while the tribes of Bahrain used neza-i-Khatti. Lances of Indian origin called bhalla and heza-i-hindivi were also used by the warriors. The bodyguards of the Sultan called Jandars, used small lances called harbah.

Battle axes were used for close fight. Axe and mace, these were to chop and smash the different parts of the body. The most commonly used axe was called tabar. There were hybrid too in the weapons e.g. tesha and Khist had in its structure the point of a lance also. The different forms of mace were Amud, Kopal and Dabus. Other handy weapons were falaquns, jaks, hasaks etc. Among the heavy weapons, usually those used in siege operations were manjanigs, irradas and maghrabi. All were mechanical artilleries which were used to throw heavy missiles at the enemy. The Kharak, was a weapon which was used for making holes in the walls of the fort. The Charkh was a magnified cross-bow which discharged heavy arrows or javelins. Other varieties



of Charkh were known as Zamburak and Nimcharkh. The latter could discharge fiery arrows.

Since there was such a development in the use of weapons, the soldiers likewise protected themselves with armours made of iron or steel and had helmets and shields for further protection. A mighfar was worn under the helmet which protected the neck and the back. The body armours, were, plates of steels, but later more joints were made in the armours to provide flexibility to the soldier. Jaushan protected the breast and the stomach and underneath was a leathern jacket called Khaftan. The zirah protected the whole body, a variety of which called Zirrah-i-daudi was very famous. The Chaharaina was another type of armour consisting of four pieces to defend the front, back and the sides. The horses and elephants too were protected with armour called burgustawan. Thus the army of the Delhi Sultans, apart from having best offensive weapons, were at the same time protected by best defensive armours as well. They were thus very reckless fighters who knew that the chances of injury was less than compared to their adversaries mainly the Rajputs who came with a prenotion of dying for their chief. One should hence not be surprised when the chronicles of our period mention less casualties on the side of the Delhi army

and more of their enemies.

The forts served the purpose of expansion and consolidation of the territories. Initially the conquerors had to subdue a number of Rajput garrisons which though appeared impregnable were capitulated on account of siege crafts employed by the Turks. The Rajput resistance were isolated ones, as none of the adjoining garrison ever went in support of the besieged. This made the task easier for the Delhi army to occupy the forts of the Rajputs one by one. The forts of the Rajputs were meant exclusively for the purpose of defence, but after they fell into the hands of the Delhi Sultans, their functions changed. The forts now became a base for launching attacks. Uch and Multan, for example served Shihab-ud-Din Muhammad, as a base for penetrating in Gujarat. To safeguard for Mongol invasion the north west frontier of the Sultanate consisting of a chain of forts like Multan, Lahore, Depalpole, Sialkot etc. were garrisoned with seasoned soldiers and able commanders. They always helped the fort which was hard pressed. The forts also served as a centre of recruitment of fresh soldiers, and a military base full of provisions etc. The distant campaigns of the Delhi Sultans were successful due to these chains of forts which supplied all the provisions, soldiers, mounts etc. to the main army. Local uprisings and political upheavals were checked by the soldiers of the forts at the local level.

In case of grave disturbances the army of the adjoining territories were called for.

The Rajputs had built their forts in a defensive manner. They had taken into account the known means of seige operations while constructing their forts, hence to ward off direct onslaught, their forts occupied hill tops, defended by deep moats etc. It no doubt took new methods of seige crafts, general ship etc. to make the forts succumb to the pressure.

Ranthambhor after changing hands frequently with the Rajputs and the Delhi Sultans required the presence of Ala-ud-Din Khalji, who with full military might and mechanical artilleries succeeded in bringing it under his control in 1301 AD. This fort was on rock 1578 feet above sea level surrounded by massive walls and bastions.

Initially, Gwalior too did not remain with any of the two powers for long. Constant military activities was witnessed for its control. The Khaljis and the Tughlaqs however had it under their sway. Gwalior was given much importance on account of its strategic location. The charge of Gwalior was considered as a prestigious appointment<sup>as</sup> all the chronicles of our period are full of praise of this fort which was

the pearl of the necklace of the castles of Hind. It had independent source of water supply containing water cistern and wells. Chittor was captured by Ala-ud-Din Khalji in 1303 AD. It was necessary to bring it under the control to keep strict vigilance in the territory of Rajputana, along with the other hostile forts. It was defended on one side by the confluence of two rivers namely Gambheri and Berach, and the other side by another hill.

In the south the fortress of Deogir (Daulatabad) was responsible for the Khalji penetration in the Deccan. It served as a military rendezvous for the Imperial army which swept the whole of the Deccan. During the Khaljis it was handed over to its ruler Ram Chandra Deva who accepted the suzerainty of the Delhi Sultans. The various military campaigns of the South, saw the Imperial army being stationed at Deogir and supplied with all the requisite provisions in form of man power and material. The Warangal, campaign or that of Duar Sumudra could not have been effected if the Khalji control over Deogir was not present. The importance of its location could be gauged from the step taken by Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq who made it a second capital.

The Delhi Sultan made their own forts too though it was located only in Delhi and its surroundings. The ,

presence of so many Rajput forts did not appeal the Delhi Sultans of constructing any new forts. They satisfied themselves with whatever they possessed, and repairing those which suffered in battles. The forts in Delhi were constructed due to the military requirement of the period, and secondly, since it was the capital, the palace for the Sultan were constructed there with the fortifications serving as walls of defence which incorporated the palace and the place of residence of the military personels and the population.

Ala-ud-Din Khalji however chose to construct the fort at Siri as he deemed it necessary to have a line of defence there after being taken unaware by the Mongols in the year 1303 A.D. The fortification was responsible for the change in the route of the Mongols who arrived again in 1305 A.D. and during their invasion they avoided Delhi. The fort in Siri consisted of seven gates.

Next Sultan Ghiyath-ud-Din Tughlaq constructed the fort of Tughlaqabad which was one furlong less than four miles in circumference. This fort consisted of 13 gates. Muhammad bin Tughlaq constructed the fort of Adilabad on the south corner of Tughlaqabad and encompassed it with a common wall connecting Siri and old Delhi. All together this fortification had 30 gates thus signifying the offensiveness of the fortress. It is very significant that the forts built by

the Rajputs were on heights and had one gate, the rest of the fort being protected by walls, whereas the forts constructed by the Delhi Sultans were on ground level and offensive in character. The gates provided quick mobility of the troops and confusion was thus avoided. The area of disturbance was reached much quickly by having such gates. The ground level of the forts too enabled the cavalry to move about in case.

The whole military system of the Delhi Sultans till it was maintained properly elevated the Sultanate to empire which was recognised for its might. The disintegration of the military organization during the reign of Firoz Shah Tughlaq and his successors ushered the invasion of Timur who struck the last nail in the coffin.

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EVALUATION OF SOURCE MATERIAL

The study of the military organization of the Sultans of Delhi appeared futile for me at the initial stages, due to the accounts given in the chronicles of the period, which does not deter in giving highest form of exaggeration of political events. It was therefore necessary, as my supervisor, Prof. K.A. Nizami pointed out, to study the psychology of the author before accepting or rejecting the facts stated by him. Next, if the fact was supplemented by another source material; a rational and scientific interpretation must be given with true conviction and belief, which should be the objective of a modern writer.

The 13th century accounts of medieval India is based entirely on the works of Hasan Nizami, Fakhr-i-Mudabbir and Minhaj-us-Siraj. One thing common among these chroniclers was, they wrote for the ruler of the time, though their approach towards history writing were no where similar.

The Taj-ul-Maathir supplies us with the information of events that took place in India from 1191 AD. onwards, till the early reign of Sultan Iltutmish. In spite of the literary flow of language, I could gather detailed

information with regards to the use of various weapons and armours, defensive nature of Rajput resistance whose forts are described in great details, and the methods of seige operations. However the political events are unusually extolled. His accounts regarding the destruction of temples and massacre of Hindu population are all the result of his enthusiastic fanatical ideas. It has been rightly pointed out by Prof. K.A. Nizami that - 'If the number of Hindus killed in different campaigns, as given by Hasan Nizami, is put together it would appear that the entire population of India was destroyed as a result of the Turkish campaigns'<sup>1</sup>

Fakhr-i-Mudabbir's Adab-ul-Marb Wash Shujaah is a treatise on the art of war. It is a work of immense value for military history. Detailed accounts had been given by Fakhr-i-Mudabbir on the training of horses, arts of seige operation, use of various weapons of war, military exercises etc. etc. These informations had been incorporated in my work and had been dealt with in the chapters dealing with weapons, military exercises, strategy and tactics of war. We also find references of various military designations and their functions. A comparative study of different systems of war could be studied on basis of illustrations of the battle array and camp formation as given in this work.

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1. Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India- p.368.



The Tarikh-i-Fakhru-ud-Din Mubarak Shah has been useful in studying the military institutions and deeds of Qutub-ud-Din Aibek.

Minhaj-us-Siraj's Tabaqat-i-Nasiri is a very authentic account for the 13th century, as it supplies first hand information about the Ghorids and their establishment of political authority in India. The events taken place in the Delhi Sultanate till 1261 AD. had been given as witnessed by him. The accounts supplied for the Mongols enables us in studying the two most powerful forces viz. the Delhi Sultans and the Mongols at their nascent stage. The political events had been mercifully given in chronological order. The separate study of the nobles proves useful for analysing the racial composition of the Delhi army, the different phases of administrative hierarchy and duties of military officers etc. The first and the second battle of Tarain are illustrative and had been valuable for citing the differences in the battle strategy and tactics of invading Turks and the Rajputs.

Heroic deeds of the warriors and nobles of the early Delhi Sultans are also depicted in the Tabaqat-i-Nasiri which informs us of their valour and martial qualities.

The Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi of Zia-ud-Din Barani takes up the events from the reign of Sultan Ghiyath-ud-Din Balban

and ends with the sixth regnal year of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq. Barani has been made the subject of great controversies, regarding which I have nothing to add. My information does not suffer on account of his weak memory and disorderly chronological order. One should not forget that it is only on account of Barani that details about Ala-ud-Din Khalji's market control and price regulation had been studied. The information given with regards to the mode of payment prevalent during the reign of Balban and the changes evolved in this system during the reigns of later Sultans especially Ala-ud-Din Khalji had been very useful. His writings throw light upon the campaign of the Mongols in India, the military measures adopted by Sultans like Balban and Ala-ud-Din Khalji in averting such threats by constructing and repairing forts are of great significance. We also come across references which touch upon the changes in the administrative setup regarding which Barani complains that people of low caste were given preferences in the state machinery. We can thus grasp the information for studying the ethnic and racial composition of the army and the nobility. It is also from his accounts that we find that the paiks exercised more influence within the palace since most of them were recruited as body guards. The Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi appears more appealing when compared with Isami's Futuh-us-Salatin (completed in 1348 AD). Barani's furnishes information about the Deccan

campaign of Ala-ud-Din Khalji which along with Amir Khusro's Khazain-ul-Futuh clears many doubts which arises while studying any one of them exclusively.

Another attempt of giving a full historical information for the 13th and part of the 14th century has been the work of Isami, whose account of the earlier period viz. the Ghaznavid and partly the Ghorid invasion needs careful attention of every scholar in accepting it at face value. The details about the early Sultans of Delhi and the Khaljis are reliable though the period covering Muhammad bin Tughlaq suffers an account of his biased and prejudiced character. However his knowledge about military techniques and manoeuvre are worthy of praise. He gives minute details about the battles and even goes to the extent of writing the speeches and conversations that took place, which should be thoughtfully tapped in getting the true information. The Futuh-us-Salatin has given the description of the battle array of Ala-ud-Din Khalji at Siri, the battle formation of the Mongols and Ala-ud-Din's army at Kili, the ambush tactics employed by the Mongols for Zafar Khan, which goes to prove Isami's knowledge about medieval warfare.

Dynastic history has primarily been the contribution of Amir Khusro. The details of the military campaigns of the Deccan during the reign of Ala-ud-Din Khalji which is wholly dealt with in the Khazain-ul-Futuh, is a mine of information

for military history. It contains detailed description of the routes taken by the Delhi army, the weapons of war and their functions in seige operations, the structural and physical discription of the Deccani forts which provides more knowledge about the types of forts. Amir Khusro does not end here in supplying additional and valuable information. He also incorporates the details of spoils gathered from the South in which we find references to the supply of war elephants and horses for the royal stables at Delhi. The reference of pedigree horses in the army of the Delhi Sultan had been the contribution of the spoils gathered from the South, apart from the other sources of supply of the horses.

Dewal Rani Khizr Khan and Qiran-us-Sadain have also traces of military details, useful for our study. Khusro's Tughlaq Namah has been used for studying the various military strategies and tactics adopted by Ghazi Malik against Khusrau Khan. The author has given the racial composition of the two armies which met on the field of Laharawat, of which he says that the troops of the rival armies were surprised to find Hindus and Muslim in equal numbers in both the opposing forces.

The reign of Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq consists of various source materials e.g. Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi, of Afif Sirat-i-Firoz Shahi, Futuh-at-i-Firoz Shahi etc. Subjective informations had to be traced with minute study of the above

mentioned sources with regards to military organization. Afif gives in excess the hunting expedition of Firoz Shah and the manner in which it was carried out, the function of various military departments and those attached to it, (especially the Karkhanas established by Firoz Shah), the mode of payment which was reverted to the earlier system of granting iqtas etc. These accounts are important for analysing military reforms and changes which had taken place in his period.

The military campaigns of Lakhnauti, Thatta, and Jajnapur when collaborated by the Sirat-i-Firoz Shahi and Insha-i-Mahru of Ainul Mulk makes the significance of the facts much easier. Afif has been very thorough in stating the causes for the failure of the first campaign of Thatta and the remedies which were sought for making the second attack a success.

The accounts of Ibn Battuta, who came during the reign of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq, along with the works of Al-Umari and Al Qalqashindi helps us in derieving references of facts which otherwise had been ignored by the choriniclars. The Rehla gives an eye witness account of the period of Muhammad bin Tughlaq and the preceeding period on basis of talks prevalent among the people. The Afghan rebellions has been discussed at length. The description of the fort of Daulatabad, Delhi, Gwalior etc. besides the method of recruitment of the

soldiers, the spy system of the Sultanate are all of historical significance.

The Maasalik-ul-Absar and a similar account Subh-al-Asha, have given details of the administrative set up as prevalent during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughlaq. We have explicit information with regards to the military hierarchy, the salaries of the military officers, the presence of foreigners in the Sultan's army, the method of warfare etc. The effectiveness of elephants in the battles and the manner in which they served their purpose are narrated in these sources.

General history of the Sultanate which provides details about military organisation are dealt with in the later sources like Tarikh-i-Ferishta (1612 AD) of Abdul Qasim Hindu Shah Ferishta, Yahya Sirhindi's Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shah compiled in 1434 AD, Nizamud-Din Ahmed's Tabaqat-i-Akbari (1593 AD). All these help in corroborating facts supplied earlier by Barani and Isami. Ferishta, at times tends to be over confident in himself when he gives inflated number of soldiers in the army of Shihab-ud-Din Ghorî and Prithviraj in his account of the two battles of Tarain and other military campaigns.

The chapter on Mongol warfare had incorporated a valuable Chinese source called Yuan Chao Pishi. It deals with the systems of administration, modes of warfare etc. of the

Mongols at the time of Chengis Khan. Juvaini's Tarikh-i-Jahan Gusha also provides details of Mongols military system during the early 13th century. Zafar Namah of Sharf-ud-Din Yezdi and Malfuzat-i-Timuri gives the account of Central Asian warfare during the close of the 14th century. It also supplies us with an insight to the defects in the army of the Delhi Sultan at the end of 14th century. The description of Delhi and the number of gates as it appeared to Timur are quite true since such a description has been earlier furnished by Ibn Battuta.

Surprisingly the Khairul Majalis compiled by Hamid Qalandar, too has information relevant to our topic of research, along with Fuwaid-ul-Fu'ad, compiled by Amir Hasan Sijzi which contains at one place the atmosphere of the military camp.

Notwithstanding the limitation of the study which deals exclusively with military organisation, informations relevant to the subject had also been taken from Alberuni's Tarikh-ul-Hind, Utbi's Tarikh-i-Yamini, Hudud-ul-Alam, Al-Idrisi's Nuzhat-ul-Mushtaq, Sulaiman's Salsilat-ut-Tawarikh, Chach Namah, Tarikh-i-Masumi by Mir Muhammad Ma'sum and Jawami-ul-Hikayat wa Lawami-ur-Riwayat of Sadid-ud-Din Muhammad Awfi.

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