

Delhi Sultanate

[UPSC Notes]

The **Delhi Sultanate** was an Islamic empire based in Delhi that stretched over large parts of the Indian subcontinent for 320 years (1206–1526). There was a total of five dynasties that ruled over the Delhi Sultanate sequentially: the Mamluk dynasty (1206–1290), the Khalji dynasty (1290–1320), the Tughlaq dynasty (1320–1414), the Sayyid dynasty (1414–1451), and the Lodi dynasty (1451–1526). On multiple occasions, the entire mass of India was being ruled under the Sultan, sometimes even stretching out to modern-day Pakistan, Bangladesh as well as some parts of southern Nepal. Delhi Sultanate has had a deep impact on the country's culture and geography. covered large swathes of territory in modern-day India,

This article shall cover all necessary details from the UPSC perspective as it is an important topic of Indian History and is enquired about often in the UPSC Prelims, UPSC Mains and optional papers alike. It is an important topic for Civil Services Exam 2022 preparation.

What was the Delhi Sultanate?

The Islamic era started with the invasion of Md. Bin Qasim captured the area of Sind in 712 AD. Initially, India's Islamic rule was fragile but changed drastically with the Turkish invasion.

- Muhammad Ghori was one of the famous names in the Sultan's era. Muhammad Ghori invaded India seven times to expand its rule over the Indian subcontinent, specifically Delhi.
- He fought two battles of Tarain. In the first battle, he lost badly to the era's most powerful Indian ruler, Prithviraj Chauhan.
- In the second battle, he defeated Prithviraj Chauhan. He fought with approximately one lakh soldiers in that battle which outnumbered the Rajput army.
- Thus, Muhammad Ghori is responsible for establishing the Islamic Empire in India.

After the death of Muhammad Ghori in 1206 AD, Qutubuddin Aibak, with Mangburni in Central Asia and Yalduz in Lahore, started the Slave dynasty, which marked the beginning of the Delhi Sultanate.

Timeline of the Delhi Sultanate

The Dynasties which ruled under the Delhi Sultanate are listed in the table below.

Sl. No.	Dynasty Name
1	Slave (Ghulam) or Mamluk Dynasty

2	Khilji Dynasty
3	Tughluq Dynasty
4	Sayyid Dynasty
5	Lodi Dynasty

Slave or Mamluk Dynasty: The First Dynasty to Rule Delhi

The slave dynasty belonged to the Turkish race. This dynasty had the maximum number of Sultans. It reigned the Indian subcontinent from 1206 AD to 1290 AD. The various Sultans and their reign has been listed below;

Ruler	Period	Relation to the Throne
Qutb-ud-din Aibak	(1206–1210)	Founder of Mamluk Dynast and Slave of Muhammad Ghori
Aram Shah	(1210–1211)	Qutb-ud-din Aibak's eldest son
Shams-ud-din Iltutmish	(1211–1236)	Qutb-ud-din Aibak's Son-in-law
Ruknuddin Feruz Shah	(1236)	Iltutmish's son
Razia Sultana	(1236–1240)	Iltutmish' daughter
Muizuddin Bahram	(1240–1242)	Iltutmish's son

Alauddin Masud	(1242–1246)	Ruknuddin Feruz Shah's son
Nasiruddin Mahmud	(1246–1266)	Razia's Brother
Ghiyas-ud-din Balban	(1266–1286)	Father-in-law of Nashiruddin Mahmud and the most powerful ruler of the Slave Dynasty
Muiz ud din Kaiqubad	(1287–1290)	Ghiyasuddin Balban's Grandson
Kaimur	1290	Muiz-ud-din Kaiqubad's son

The Slave dynasty ruled from c. 1206 – 1290 CE. It was also named the 'Mamluk' dynasty; the word Mamluk is an Arabic word that means "slave/owned". In fact, there were three other dynasties that were established during this period. They were –

1. Qutbi dynasty (c. 1206 – 1211 CE) – Its founder was Qutub-ud-din Aibak.
2. First Ilbari dynasty (c. 1211- 1266 CE) – Its founder was Iltumish.
3. Second Ilbari dynasty (c. 1266 – 1290 CE) – Its founder was Balban.

Qutub-ud-din Aibak (1206 – 1210)

After the demise of Muhammad Ghori, Qutubuddin Aibak got his possessions in India in 1192 and declared himself the Sultan. The Slave dynasty is also known as the Mamluk dynasty. In Arabic, Mumluk means enslaved person.

- Qutub-ud-din Aibak founded the Slave/Mamluk dynasty. He was Mohammad Ghori's Turkish slave. He became important to Ghori because he played an important part in the expansion of the Turkish Sultanate in India, especially after the Battle of Tarain. This caused Muhammad Ghori to make him the governor of his Indian possessions.
- He was also known as Lakh Baksh due to his generosity.
- He constructed two mosques, namely the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque in Delhi and the Adhai din ka Jhompra mosque at Ajmer.
- He constructed Qutub Minar.
- After ruling for four years, he died in 1210 while playing chaugan (polo).
- His son Aram Shah succeeded the throne in 1210 but was incompetent and removed from the throne.

Aram Shah (1210)

- Qutub-ud-din Aibek was succeeded by his son Aram Shah but he was quickly declared incapable as a ruler. He was opposed by the Turkish armies making his rule last for only eight months.

Ilutmish (1210 – 1236)

Sultan Ilutmish is considered the integrator of the Turkish conquest of Northern India. Ilutmish was from the Ilbari tribe making his dynasty the Ilbari dynasty. He was sold into slavery by his half-brothers to Aibak who eventually made him his son-in-law by marrying his daughter to him. He was appointed as the Iqtadar of Gwalior by Aibek.

It was in 1211 CE when Ilutmish dethroned Aram Shah to become the Sultan and took the name of Shamsuddin. He is regarded as the real consolidator of Turkish rule in India.

- One major threat that came upon his reign was that of the Mongols in the year 1220 when Chengiz Khan, the leader of the Mongols, started his march towards Central Asia. He defeated Jalal-ud-din Mangabarni, the ruler of Khwarizm. Mangabarni escaped and sought refuge under Ilutmish. By denying him shelter, Ilutmish cleverly saved his reign from the Mongolian onslaught.
- He formed a group of 40 powerful Turkish nobles and named it Turkan-i-Chahalgani and introduced a system in which the father's land would be succeeded by his son, and the succession of land would continue as the family progressed.
- He made Delhi his new capital. He shifted the capital from Lahore.
- Ilutmish was regarded as a great statesman which was cemented when he received 'mansur', a letter of recognition sanctioned by the Abbasid Caliph in 1229 which made him the legal sovereign ruler of India.
- He completed the construction of Qutub Minar in Delhi, the tallest stone tower in India (238 ft).
- He also introduced a new system of coinage in India. The silver tanka weighed 175 grams and became the standard coin in medieval India. It is important to note that the silver tanka became the basis of the modern rupee.
- He patronised many scholars and a number of Sufi saints came to India during his reign. Minhaj-us-Siraj (author of Tahaqqat-i-Nasuri), Taj-ud-din, Muhammad Junaidi, Fakhrul-Mulk-Isami, and Malik Qutub-ud-din Hasan were some of the important names that graced his halls.
- He divided the empire into Iqtas, a practice that was brought to India by Ghori. In this system, the nobles and officials were assigned specific land pieces for revenue collection that made up to be their salary.
- He nominated his daughter as his successor. He reigned from 1210 AD to 1236 AD.

Ruknuddin Feruz Shah (1236)

While Ilutmish had named his daughter, Razia Sultan as the next ruler in line. The rulers found it unsettling for a woman to be holding the position of Sultan.

- Ruknuddin was the eldest son of Ilutmish who was helped by the nobles to ascend the throne.
- The governor of Multan revolted against this causing Ruknuddin Feroz Shah to march to suppress the revolt.

- This opportunity was used by Raziya and with the help of the Amirs of Delhi, she was able to seize the throne of the Delhi Sultanate that rightfully belonged to her.

Raziya Sultan (1236 – 1239)

Razia Sultan was the first and last woman to rule Delhi. She was the daughter of Iltutmish. She faced opposition when she appointed a non-Turk, Yakut, as cavalry head.

- The governor of Bhatinda, Altunia, rebelled against Razia Sultan imprisoning her under a conspiracy in which Yakut was murdered.
- Razia Sultan married Altunia to get out of jail and reclaim the throne but was killed by Muizuddin Bahram Shah, son of Iltutmish. She reigned from 1236 AD to 1240 AD.

Bahram Shah (1240 – 1242)

The fall of Raziya Sultan paved the way for the ascendancy of 'the Forty'. There were a lot of quick successions after Iltutmish's death.

- Bahram Shah's reign saw a continued struggle for supremacy between the Sultan and the nobles.
- Initially, the Turkish nobles supported Bahram Shah. However, later the reign became disordered and during this unrest, Bahram Shah was killed by his own army.

Alauddin Masud Shah (1242 – 1246)

He was the son of Ruknuddin Feroz Shah and nephew of Raziya Sultan.

- After the death of Bahram Shah, he was chosen as the next ruler.
- However, he was incompetent and incapable of handling the affairs in the government and was replaced by Nasiruddin Mahmud.

Nasiruddin Mahmud (1246 – 1265)

Nasiruddin was Iltutmish's grandson. He has claim to the throne but he was young and inexperienced.

- Balban/Ulugh Khan, a member of Chahalgani (the Forty), helped Nasiruddin ascend to the throne.
- He married his daughter to Nasiruddin and hence, the real power resided in the hands of Balban who was powerful and organised in the stately administration/ however, he faced several rivals in the royal court.
- In 1265, Nasiruddin Mahmud died and according to some historians like Ibn Batuta and Isami, Balban poisoned him and ascended the throne.

Balban (1266 – 1286)

Nasiruddin, the younger son of Iltutmish, had his reign from 1246-1265 AD, but as he was interested in philosophy, he was inefficient at ruling. Balban proclaimed the throne in 1265 after killing all members of the Iltutmish family.

- Balban was experienced as a regent which made him understand the Sultanate's problems well. He recognised the real threat to be the nobles called 'Forty'. He removed the Chahalgani as it became very powerful after the death of Razia Sultan.
- He separated Diwan-i-arz (military department) from Diwan-i-wazart (finance department). He reorganised the army.

- He declared himself as Zil-i-Ilahi, which literally translates to 'the shadow of God'. Owing to the fact that the Sultanate went through ruler in such quick succession, it was for Balban to enhance the power of the monarchy. He introduced a strict court discipline with new customs like prostration (sajida) and kissing the Sultan's feet (paibos)
- He upheld the Persian literature and gave up wine to highlight that nobles were not equal to him.
- He implemented the policy of Blood and Iron and started the famous festival of Navroz.
- His reign, too, saw the threat of Mongolian invasion. He was one of the main architects of the Delhi Sultanate. However, he could not fully safeguard India from the Mongol invasion.
- He reigned from 1265 AD to 1287 AD.

Kaiqubad (1287 – 1290)

Kaiqubad was the grandson of Balban and was made the Sultan of Delhi by the nobles.

- He was soon replaced by his son, Kaimur.
- In 1290, the Ariz-e-Mumalik (the minister of war) of Kaimur named Feroz murdered him and captured the throne.
- He assumed the title of Jalal-ud-din Khalji and established the Khalji dynasty.

Khilji Dynasty

The Khilji dynasty also belonged to the Turkish race. It was in power for the shortest period, i.e., 1290 AD to 1316 AD. The sultans under this dynasty have been listed in the table below;

Rulers	Period	Events
Jalal-ud-din Firoz Khilji	1290–1296	Founder of the Khilji/Khalji Dynasty
Alauddin Khilji	1296–1316	Jalal-ud-din Firoz Khilji's nephew
Qutb-ud-din Mubarak Shah	1316–1320	Son of Alauddin Khilji

Jalal-ud-din Khalji (c. 1290 – 1296 CE)

Jalal-ud-din Khalji was the founder of the Khalji dynasty. He was already 70 years old when he came to power. He was a seasoned warrior who had been the warden of the marches in the northwest under Balban's reign. He had fought many successful battles against the Mongols.

- The Khaljis were of Turkish-Afghan descent. Unlike the rulers before them, they did not execute or dismiss the Turkish officials. However, the rise of Khaljis marked the end of the Turkish monopoly.

- He was a pacifist to a great extent and tried to soften some of the harsher aspects of Balban's rule.
- He was the first ruler of the Delhi Sultanate who was secular to a great extent and denied India to be an Islamic state as the majority of the population was Hindu. To him, a state should be based on the generous support of its people.
- He adopted the policy of tolerance and avoided harsh punishments. However, his reign came to an end when he was murdered by his nephew and son-in-law Alauddin Khalji.

Alauddin Khalji (1296 – 1316)

Alauddin Khalji is known as the Alexander of India (Sikander-i-Sani). Alauddin Khalji was the first emperor to have a permanent army and paid the soldiers in cash. He constructed the entrance gate of Qutub Minar, known as Alai Darwaja, Mahal Hazrat Satoon, Hauz Khas, and Siri fort. He collected tax in cash.

- Alauddin Khalji was the nephew and son-in-law of Jalal-ud-din Khalji. During the reign of Jalaluddin Khalji, he was appointed as the Arizi-i-Mumalik (minister of war) and the Amir-i-Tuzuk (Master of ceremonies)
- His policy was similar to Balban's way of governance which was quite contrary to Jalaluddin's policy of tolerance. He identified a few problems in the system that caused rebellions (according to him) like the increased wealth of the nobles, intermarriage among noble families, an inefficient spy system and consumption of liquor.
- Therefore, he passed four laws:
 - The public sale of liquor and drugs was prohibited.
 - The intelligence system (spy) was reorganised more efficiently and nobles were under their direct purview. Any secret activities by them were immediately reported to the Sultan.
 - Confiscation of the property of the nobles.
 - Social gatherings and festivities without the permission of the Sultan were not allowed.
 - It is because of such stringent rules that his reign was rebellion-free.

Military Campaigns of Alauddin Khalji

- Alauddin was skilled at warfare and had experience as well. He understood the importance of having a strong army and how it was key to a stable reign.
- For this reason, he maintained a permanent standing army. He had been successful in stopping Mongolian invasions several times. The northwestern frontier was fortified and Ghazi Malik (Ghayasuddin Tughlaq) was appointed as the Warden of Marches to protect the frontier.
- Some of his famous conquests have been listed down below for your reference;
 1. **Conquest of Gujarat:** Alauddin Khalji sent two generals, Nusrat Khan and Ulugh Khan, with his army to win Gujarat in 1299. King Rai Karan and his daughter were able to escape while the queen was caught and sent to Delhi. Another person, Malik Kafur, a eunuch was also sent to Delhi. He later became the military commander.
 2. **Conquest of Rajputana:** After capturing Gujarat, Alauddin's attention turned toward the Rajput kingdoms.
 - Ranthambore: Considered the strongest fort in Rajasthan, Khalji had a tough time initially. However, in 1301, the fort fell to Alauddin. The Rajput women of the palace committed Jauhar, an act of self-immolation.

- Chittor: Chittor, another powerful state of Rajputana, fell to Khalji in 1303. According to folklore and some scholars, Alauddin's prime motivation behind attacking Chittor was the coveted beauty of Queen Padmini, the wife of Raja Ratan Singh. Despite having fought bravely, Raja Ratan was defeated. The Rajput women of the palace including Rani Padmini performed Jauhar. This episode has been mentioned in the book Padmavat written by Jayasi.
 - Malwa and others: Under the able leadership of Ain-ul-Mulk, the Khalji army captured Malwa in 1305. Ujjain, Mandu, Chanderi and Dhar were also annexed. After the annexation of Jalore in 1311, Alauddin Khalji became the master of north India after having captured large parts of the Rajputana.
3. **Conquest of Deccan and the far South:** The conquest of Deccan and the far South was the greatest achievement of Alauddin. Yadavas of Devagiri, Kakatiyas of Warangal, Hoysalas of Dwarasamudra and the Pandyas of Madurai ruled this region. Malik Kafur was sent to lead the invasions for Alauddin. When he was successful, he made Malik Kafur Naib Malik of the empire to honour him.
- Despite his illiteracy, Khalji patronized many poets like Amir Hasan and Amir Khusrau. He also built the famous gateway known as Alai Darwaza. He constructed a new capital at Siri. Alauddin took up the title of Sikander-i-Azam and called Amir Khusrau the title of Tuti-i-Hind.

Administration of Alauddin Khalji

Khalji was skilled at running his administration smoothly, he ushered in many reforms to keep a stronghold over such a vast empire.

Military Reforms

- A large permanent standing army was maintained which was paid in cash.
- According to a historian named Ferishta, Khalji recruited 4,75,000 cavalrymen. He also introduced the system of dagh that was used for the branding of horses and prepared huliya, which was a descriptive list of soldiers. A strict review of the army every now and then for the most efficiency.

Market Reforms

- Four separate markets in Delhi were established, mandi (for grain); another one which sold cloth, sugar, dried fruits, oil and butter; a third one for horses, cattle and slaves and the fourth market was for miscellaneous commodities.
- Shahna-i-Mandi was the head who presided over each of these markets. The supply of grain was maintained by government storehouses. Regulations were in place for fixing the prices of all commodities.
- Diwan-i-Riyasat was created, headed by an officer called Naib-i-Riyasat. Every merchant was registered here.
- Munhiyans, secret spies appointed by Khalji, were responsible for sending reports to the Sultan detailing the functioning of these markets.
- He also often sent slave boys to buy various commodities to check the prices. Anyone violating the orders received severe punishment.
- Hoarding wasn't permissible. Even during famines, the prices of the commodities remained the same.

Land Revenue Administration

- He was the first sultan of Delhi who had the land measured. The state officer would measure the land and then accordingly, fix the land revenue.
- The land revenue was accumulated in cash. This allowed the Sultan to pay the soldiers in cash as well.
- His land revenue reforms would provide the foundation for the reforms under Sher Shah and Akbar in the future.

Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah (1316 – 1320)

After the death of Alauddin Khalji in 1316, Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah, his son, ascended to the throne.

- He quickly abolished all of the strict regulations by his father in a bid to make the rule a little less harsh.
- However, he was not the gifted administrator that his father was. While the kingdom struggled, he was murdered by Nasiruddin Khusrau Shah in 1320 who took up the throne.
- His reign came to an end as abruptly as it had started. Ghazi Malik, the governor of Dipalpur, killed Khusrau Shah.
- He took up the title of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq and continued to ascend the throne of Delhi. He was the only ruler of the Delhi Sultanate who had been a Hindu convert.

Tughlaq Dynasty

The Tughlaq dynasty belonged to the Turkish race. The Tughlaq dynasty ruled over the longest period (1320-1414 AD) and conquered most areas. Owing to their Qaraunah Turk origin, the dynasty was also called Qaraunah Turks. The famous rulers under this dynasty are listed in the table below;

Rulers	Period	Events
Ghiyath al-Din (Ghiyasuddin) Tughluq	1320–1325	
Muhammad bin Tughluq	1325–1351	Also called Muhammad Shah II
Mahmud Ibn Muhammad	1351 (March)	
Firoz Shah Tughlaq	1351–1388	Muhammad bin Tughlaq's cousin
Ghiyas-ud-Din Tughluq II	1388–1389	
Abu Bakr Shah	1389–1390	

Nasir ud din Muhammad Shah III	1390–1393	
Ala ud-din Sikandar Shah I	1393	
Mahmud Nasir ud din	1393–1394	Also known as Sultan Mahmud II
Nasir-ud-din Nusrat Shah Tughluq	1394–1399	Firoz Shah Tughlaq's grandson
Nasir ud din Mahmud	1399–1412	Mahmud Nasir-ud- din's

Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq/Ghazi Malik (c. 1320 – 1325 CE)

- Ghazi Malik founded this dynasty. He introduced the postal and batai systems, which means sharing crops, making the city of Tughlaqabad his capital.
- He died in 1325. An elephant thrashed him after falling from a pavilion. He was in power from 1320 AD to 1325 AD. Ibn Batuta said that the son of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq Jauna Khan arranged sabotage to kill him.

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq/Jauna Khan (c. 1325 – 1351 CE)

- He is considered as most enlightened of all sultans.
- He was an interesting character in the history who introduced many reforms that were very ambitious and brave for the time. Some of them have been listed below;
 - **Transfer of Capital** – He shifted his capital from Delhi to Devagiri in the hopes of controlling the south of India better. He moved the entire population forcibly to the new capital, Devagiri. The capital was renamed as Daulatabad. However, within two years, he abandoned Daulatabad to shift back to Delhi as there was water scarcity in the capital of Daulatabad. The distance between the two cities was more than 1500 kilometres and during the journey, many people died.
 - **Token Currency** – In 1329, Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq came up with a token currency which replaced gold and silver coins with copper coins. This model was based on the Chinese example of Kublai Khan who issued paper currency in China. However, this scheme failed as only a few people exchanged the gold/silver coins for copper ones. The copper currency was also easy to forge which induced heavy losses to the treasury. This made Tughlaq repeal the earlier verdict and the currency returned back to gold and silver which emptied the treasury.
 - **Taxation in Doab** – Due to the failures of copper currency and the shift to Daulatabad, there were huge losses incurred by the royal treasury. To combat this, Muhammad bin Tughlaq upped the land revenue induced on the farmers of the doab land, present between the rivers Ganga and Yamuna. When a severe famine came upon the region, the farmers revolted. Harsh steps were taken by Muhammad bin Tughlaq to crush the revolt.

- **Agricultural Reforms** – A plan to distribute takkavi loans (loans for cultivation) among the farmers for the purchase of seeds and extension of cultivation was set out. Diwan-i-amir-Kohi was set up, as a division to handle agriculture. The state built a model farm that sprawled in an area of 64 square miles. This step was further continued by Firoz Tughlaq.
- He was a well-read ruler and was religiously tolerant.
- His reign ended in 1351 when he dies from his worsening health condition. According to Barani, Muhammad bin Tughlaq was a paradoxical mixture of opposites. However, his death marked the beginning of the Tughlaq Dynasty's decline.

Firoz Shah Tughlaq (c. 1351 – 1388 CE)

Firoz Shah Tughlaq was chosen as the Sultan by the nobles after the death of Muhammad bin Tughlaq.

- He successfully annexed regions in the south and Deccan India. During his campaign to Nagarkot, he took 1300 Sanskrit manuscripts from the Jwalamukhi temple library which were later, translated by Arizuddin Khan into the Persian language.
- He took the advice of the ulemas for his administration. To please the nobles, he allowed hereditary succession to their properties. This revived the Iqta system which was now made hereditary.
- The taxes were levied as per the Islamic teachings. Jizya was collected from non-Muslims. There were 28 items that had a special tax levied on them. These were discarded as they went against the laws of Islam.
- There was intolerance towards Shia Muslims and Sufis. Since he regarded Hindus as second-grade citizens, he served to be the precursor of Sikander Lodi and Aurangzeb.
- He was the first sultan to impose an irrigation tax. He built several canals.
- There were around 1200 fruit gardens in and around Delhi under his reign that generated a lot of revenue. There were also karkhanas (workshops) that were run by slave manpower.
- Firoz was also popular for patronising scholars like Barani who composed Tarikh-i-Firoz Shah, and Fatawa-i-Jahandari. He also patronised Khwaja Abdul Malik Islami who composed the Futah-us- Sulatin. He himself wrote the book, Futuh-at-e-Firozshahi.

When Firoz Shah Tughlaq died in 1388, the struggle for power had begun again. This caused the Sultanate to break into many provinces. The invasion of Timur, a Mongol leader of Central Asia and the head of Chagatai Turks, in 1398 resulted in further losses. He left India in 1399 after which the Tughlaq dynasty crumbled.

Sayyid Dynasty

The Sayyid Dynasty was relatively smaller and ruled over Delhi in quick succession. The names of the rulers have been listed in the table below;

Rulers	Period

Khizr Khan	1414–1421
Mubarak Shah	1421–1433
Muhammad Shah	1434–1445
Alam Shah	1445–1451

- The Sayyids were of the Arabic race and followed Prophet Mohammad. Khizr Khan was the founder of the Sayyid dynasty.
- Sayyid dynasty reigned from 1414 AD to 1450 AD.
- The three successors of Khizr Khan were incapable of ruling. They were Muhammad Shah, Mubarak Shah, and Allam Shah.
- Allam Shah was the last ruler. His P.M. Hamid Khan invited Bahlol Lodhi to attack the Sultan, marking the end of the dynasty in 1451 AD

Lodhi Dynasty

It is the first Afghan dynasty. Bahlol Lodhi was the founder of the dynasty. He reigned from AD 1451-1489. The names of the rulers have been listed in the table below;

Rulers	Period	Important points
Bahlul/Bahlol Lodi	1451–1489	Founder of the Lodi Dynasty
Sikander Lodi	1489–1517	The most prominent ruler of the Lodi Dynasty who also founded Agra city
Ibrahim Lodi	1517–1526	Defeated by Babur in the First Battle of Panipat (in 1526) and thus ended the Delhi Sultanate

The Lodhis/Lodis were the last ruling dynasty of the Delhi Sultanate period.

Bahlol Lodhi (1451 – 1489)

- He founded the Lodhi dynasty.

- In 1476, he annexed several regions and the Sharqui dynasty.
- He also introduced copper coins.
- When he died in 1489, he was succeeded by his son, Sikander Lodhi.

Sikander Lodhi (1489 – 1517)

After Bahlol Lodhi, Sikandar Lodhi, his son, became the Sultan. Nizam Khan was his real name. He also took up a penname of Gulrukhi.

- Considerably, the greatest of the three Lodhi sovereigns, he annexed Bihar while also defeating many Rajput chiefs.
- Sikandar Lodhi founded Agra in 1504 and made it his capital.
- Sikandar Lodhi encouraged agricultural practices, so he introduced a system for measuring land known as Gaz-i-Sikandar.
- He was a good administrator, he built roads and many irrigation facilities were provided for the benefit of the peasantry.
- However, he was also a bigot and was intolerant towards other religions. He tortured the great Indian poet Kabirdas. He also reimposed Jizya on non-Muslims.
- Sikandar Lodhi ruled from AD 1489 to 1517.

Ibrahim Lodhi (1517 – 1526)

Ibrahim Lodhi succeeded Sikandar Lodhi and was in power from 1517 to 1526 AD.

- Ibrahim Lodhi wasn't efficient like his father Sikandar Lodhi, which created internal differences in the Sultanate.
- Daulat Khan Lodhi, governor of Punjab, Mahmud Lodhi, his brother, and Rana Sangha, a Rajput, invited Babur to invade India in 1523.
- Babur defeated Ibrahim Lodhi in the first battle of Panipat.

Hence, Ibrahim Lodhi was the last Sultan of the Delhi Sultanate. After ruling for over 320 years, Delhi Sultanate ended and started the great era of the Mughals.