



## Delhi to Daulatabad in 'Tughlaq'

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### Abstract

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq was second and most remarkable ruler of Tughlaq dynasty. He was the first Sultan to have the vision to see India as a whole country, and not just as a sort of cake for every ambitious aspiration to carve a kingdom out of it. After the tragic death of his father Ghias-ud-din, in 1325, soon declares himself as a sultan of Delhi under the title of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq. Muhammad was, without any doubt, the most educated of all Muslim rulers who ruled in Delhi. Muhammad was a deeply religious man and had learnt *Holy Quran* by heart. He used to quote verse of the *Quran* during his conversation. He was a practicing Muslim who never missed his prayer and fasted regularly. During his regime, it was made compulsory to pray five times a day. He was a keen believer in keeping good relation with the world in general. He sent envoys to China, Egypt and many such places. The rulers before Muhammad had never shown any such inclination, and to be fair to them, they did not have the time to indulge in all of this, Muhammad changed all that. Missionaries poured into India from China, Iran, Iraq and Syria, heralding a new era in cultural and bilateral exchange. He wanted to build up a powerful and united nation. He realized that this could not be done with Hindu - Muslim unity. Daulatabad (in Andhra Pradesh near modern Aurangabad), the city is said to have been founded in C. 1187 by Bhillama-V, a prince who renounced his allegiance to the Chalukyas and established the power of the Yadava dynasty in the west. In 1294 Ala-ud-din Khilji captured the fort. In 1327 Muhammad Bin Tughlaq, after having two year rule in Delhi, determined to make it his capital, changed its name to Daulatabad. History also proves that after two years of making capital in Daulatabad. He shifted back to Delhi. Sultan say there is only one place to go back to now. Delhi.

**Keywords:** Tughlaq, holy quran, Daulatabad, jiziya, prayer

### Introduction

Tughlaq is a well know King in Indian history, who ruled India in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Karnad first read of him in Ishwari Prasad's books and was fascinated by him. Karnad's Tughlaq is known in the Indian history for his wickedness and insane policies than anything else. He has immortalized this character in the play *Tughlaq*. Tughlaq was the extraordinary character to come on the throne of Delhi. In religion, in philosophy, even in calligraphy, in battle, in war field, in anything we talk about, he seems to have anyone who came before him or after him. On turning the page of history we come to know that Ghazi Malik was the real founder of Tughlaq Empire in Delhi 1321 A.D, when he assumed the throne under the title of Ghias-ud-din Tughlaq. Tughlaqs were a Muslim family of Turkish origin. Ghazi Malik was appointed the governor of Punjab by Alauddin Khilji by virtue of his intelligence and faithfulness to his emperor. The last ruler of the Khilji dynasty was so weak that he could not keep up his family rule intact. A slave named Khurni took his place, but he, too, could not rule due to his inefficiency and faithlessness.

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq after the tragic death of his father Ghias-ud-din, in 1325, soon declares himself as a sultan of Delhi under the title of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq. Muhammad Bin Tughlaq originally named Fakhr-ud-din Muhammad Junna Khan. He was second and most remarkable ruler of Tughlaq dynasty. He was the first Sultan to have the vision to see India as a whole country, and not just as a sort of cake for every ambitious aspiration to carve a kingdom out of it. He

was also relatively liberal and he permitted Hindus and Jains to settle in Delhi. Tughlaq was born in 1300 in well-to-do family of Tughlaq nobles. He received the best education available. At a very young age he made an impression on Allaudin Khilji, who gave him the title of Akhur Baig in his court.

Muhammad was, without any doubt, the most educated of all Muslim rulers who ruled in Delhi. He had complete command over Persian, Arabic, Turkish and Sanskrit and could comprehend, speak and write all these languages. He was an authority on the subject like philosophy of medicine. He started a number of hospitals in Delhi, where the patients were hourly looked after. According to one of the critics, the Sultan was highly learned. He had mastered philosophy and logic and was fine calligraphist. He was no mean poet; he appreciated the excellence of poetry and conversed with Persian poets and critics about their production

Muhammad was actually a brilliant man, with great vision and surprising insight. In fact many historical writers are of the view that he was far ahead of his time, though Barani seems to suggest that Muhammad was not so much ahead of time. Muhammad was a deeply religious man and had learnt *Holy Quran* by heart. He used to quote verse of the *Quran* during his conversation. He was a practicing Muslim who never missed his prayer and fasted regularly. During his regime, it was made compulsory to pray five times a day.

Muhammad Tughlaq's political insight also includes diplomacy - he was a keen believer in keeping good relation

with the world in general. He sent envoys to China, Egypt and many such places. The rulers before Muhammad had never shown any such inclination, and to be fair to them, they did not have the time to indulge in all of this, Muhammad changed all that. Missionaries poured into India from China, Iran, Iraq and Syria, heralding a new era in cultural and bilateral exchange. He was also one of the few Sultans of Delhi to patronize Hindu and the Hindustani language. Tughlaq's scholarship made him a visionary. He wanted to build up a powerful and united nation. He realized that this could not be done with Hindu - Muslim unity. He, therefore, exempted the jiziya tax and openly declared that both Hindu and Muslim would be equally treated in the eyes of the law. So the Sultan took the decision to shift the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad Hindu occupied city as a symbol of Hindu - Muslim unity.

### **Delhi to Daulatabad**

Daulatabad ((in Andhra Pradesh near modern Aurangabad), the city is said to have been founded in C. 1187 by Bhellama-V, a prince who renounced his allegiance to the Chalukyas and established the power of the Yadava dynasty in the west. In 1294 Ala-au-din Khilji captured the fort and the Raja, so powerful that he was invited by the Sultan of Delhi to be the rulers of Deccan, and was reduced to pay tribute. The tribute falling into arrear, Devagiri (Daulatabad) was occupied by the Muslim under Malik Kafur, in 1310 and in 1318 the last Raja, Harpal, was flayed alive. In 1327 Muhammad Bin Tughlaq, after having two year rule in Delhi, determined to make it his capital, changed its name to Daulatabad. Karnad's, Muhammad was an ambitious king. Karnad has employed historical evidences about Tughlaq's rash decision to change the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad, Hindu city. Instead of moving just his government offices there, he forcibly moved the entire population of Delhi to the new capital. It was said that Delhi was a ghost town for years after the mass move. Ibn Batuta, the famous North African Traveller who came to Delhi in 1334 says that when he enters Delhi, it was almost like a desert. It is a turning point in his career and it caused suffering to the common people. In the opening scene he announced his decision to change the capital. Such things never happen in his future days. According to the third man, Sultan Muhammad was suspicious of the people of Delhi and by dawning those out to Daulatabad he wanted to curb their power.

The people of Delhi used to write derogatory and vituperative letters to him and they used to throw them into council hall in the cover of darkness. So he made his mind to lay Delhi waste. Amir and Sayyids were not ready to accompany to Muhammad's rash decision. Sayyids say the capital of Delhi doesn't want to go to Daulatabad, but they are weak. They conspired to kill Sultan Muhammad. Because Sultan Muhammad's decision to change his capital as he wanted to weaken their power and to curb the rebellion in the south was right. They decided to kill Sultan Muhammad at prayer.

Muhammad says to Najib, I want Delhi vacated immediately. Every living soul in Delhi will leave to Daulatabad within a fortnight. I was too soft, I can see that now. They'll only understand the whip. Everyone must leave. Not a single light should be seen in the window of Delhi. Not a wisp of smoke

should arise from its chimneys. Nothing but empty graveyard of Delhi will satisfy me now.

The scheme was implemented on the stage by Karnad's keeping in the view that conveniences the people. At every two miles along the road from Delhi to Daulatabad the Sultan constructed halting station and developed the entire uninhabited area into habitation. First of the aristocracy - the Sultan's entire families, Amirs, Malik, etc. shifted to Daulatabad. All the Shayyid, Sheikh, Ulema, etc. were summoned from Delhi. The Sultan was so considerate that before shifting the people of Delhi he had purchased houses for them. Even Barani, who was opposed to Tughlaq's reforms, wrote that the Sultan made liberal gifts to the people both at the time of their departure for, and on their arrival at, Daulatabad.

The Sultan skillfully and carefully planned the new capital. The contemporary historians laid emphasis on mass exodus, which Girish Karnad also presents in *Tughlaq*, is not correct. In fact, the Upper Class comprising nobles, courtiers, Sheikhs, Ulemas and the elite were shifted to Daulatabad. The general Hindu public remained unaffected by this project. Karnad shows a Hindu man in dire suffering and penury. Five years later in Daulatabad 1332 A.D. the time in night, two watchmen - one young and another past his middle age, talk of this huge fort. The young sentry says "what a fort what a magnificent thing". He met a foreign visitor the other day and he said he has been round the world and not seen any fort as strong as this anywhere. No army could take this. He says what a fantastic fort! He has a good head but even his head goes round when he looks down. And isn't that long white thing the road from Daulatabad to Delhi' asks to the Old man. They say it's the widest road in the world. But it looks no bigger than a thin snake from here says the young man. The old sentry narrates the hardship of people during exodus. He survived. But his family was more fortunate. They all died on the way. The merciful Sultan had made a perfect arrangement. The old man asks 'you can love a city like a woman'? His old father had lived in Delhi all his life. He (old man father) died of a broken heart. Then his son Ismail. He was six year old-would have been ten now. The fine dusts that huge in the air, fine as silks, it covered him like a silken shroud. After him, his mother's. It is a historical fact that no other measures or reforms brought so much of unpopularity and infamy to the Sultan's forced migration of the Delhi people to Daulatabad. The Sultan lost confidence of the people.

The suffering of the people is clearly brought out in scene VII in the camp over which Aziz presides. The poor and the suffering are being exploited and fluked by those like Aziz who are in a position to do so. Pickpockets and other rascals like Aazam made their suffering even worst.

Muhammad Tughlaq shares his youthful aspiration with a young sentry. Muhammad asks, 'How old are you? Suddenly the sentry called from far: Attention! Attention! And to that challenge the half built torch and the half- built gate fell apart. Muhammad tried his best for prosperity and grandeur of his new capital. But he could bring former prosperity and grandeur he had lost. History also proves that after two years of making capital in Daulatabad. He shifted back to Delhi. Sultan say there is only one place to go back to now. Delhi. Back to Delhi, Barani, I have to get back to Delhi with my

people.

### Conclusion

*Tughlaq* is a historical play on the life of Sultan Muhammad Bin Tughlaq of the fourteenth century India. Karnad projects the curious contradictions in the complex personality of the Sultan, who was at once a dreamer and a man of action, benevolent and cruel, devout and godless. His two close associates - Barani the scholarly historian, and Najib, the politician - seem to represent the two opposite selves of Tughlaq, while Aziz the wily time server appears to represent all those who took advantage of Sultan's visionary scheme and fooled him. Karnad himself has suggested that he found Tughlaq's history contemporary. However, *Tughlaq* fails a tragedy, chiefly because the dramatist seems to deny himself the artist's privilege to present an integrated vision of a character full of conflicting tendencies. At every step the play reflects the chaos, disillusionment and corruption that followed the Nehru era, and this is one of the most important dreams of the popularity of the play. Tughlaq ruled in the 14th century and Nehru in the 1950s and 1960s. It also says, of the shattering of ideals after Nehru and the frustration and corruption that followed. Karnad uses history and places facts of history in the midst of imaginary incidents and situations. The Hindus and the Muslims did not trust one another. The Muslims called the Hindu bloody infidels who deserved to be kicked. And the Hindu suspected the Muslims and could hardly believe that a Muslim was going to see them prosper and to exempt them from taxes without having his own benefit in view. Despite the best efforts of Muhammad to bring the Hindu and Muslim together, he fails. The fact of fourteenth century still holds ground. Gandhi, the idealist, made attempts to unite the Hindu and the Muslims. Nehru followed Gandhi's footsteps as a Prime Minister. The contemporary historian's emphasis on mass exodus, which Karnad presents in *Tughlaq*, is not correct. In fact the upper classes comprising nobles, courtiers, Sheikhs, Ulemas and the elites were shifted to Daulatabad. The general Hindu public remained unaffected by this project.

It is also historical fact that no other measure or reform brought so much of unpopularity and infamy to the Sultan as the forced migration of the Delhi people to Daulatabad. The Sultan lost the confidence of the people. However, the change of the capital strengthened the feeling of national integration about which Karnad is quite silent. It is also historical fact that Tughlaq was guilty of patricide and fratricide. His stepmother also believed that he killed his father and brother. Karnad does not present Tughlaq as repentant over their murder as he has not high lightened his heartlessness and wanton acts of cruelty. Historical records prove that Tughlaq was stung with a deep feeling of remorse over his father's murder. He atoned for the crime and immediately after his succession to the throne he caused his father's name to be inscribed on the coin.

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