CHAPTER SEVEN

THE LODIS
(1451-1526)

I. INTRODUCTORY

The Lodi dynasty was the last of the ruling families of the sultanat period. It had a greater life-span than the Khaljis and had better achievements to its credit than the later Tughluqs and the Saiyyids. Its history of seventy-five years is, however, a story of conflicts—conflicts between the crown and the nobility, the petty zamindars and the powerful hakims, the centrifugal tendencies of the age and the centripetal aspirations of the rulers, the monarchical ideals of absolute power and the Afghan concept of partnership in government. In the whole of this struggle the nature of the Afghans, apart from the general trends of the period towards decentralization, played a very significant role. 'The Afghans', remarks Akhund Darweza,

had since ancient times never considered it proper to have a king as their pride and arrogance would not let them bow and prostrate before one of their own kith and kin. Further, if they agreed to call one a king, they feared that they would thereby reduce themselves to the level of servants. They would rather like all of them to be treated as equals and it was, therefore, that all Afghans were addressed as maliks.'

The Afghan king had to struggle against the fissiparous tendencies of the age on one side and against the tribal traits of the Afghan character on the other. The hostile and disruptive powers in the country could be checked only with the help of Afghan soldiers; but these Afghans also, in their turn, were very difficult to deal with. Their vanity had to be pampered and their tribal instincts had to be respected at every stage. The Lodis could not survive without their help, but they had to guard themselves against being swayed by their tribal sentiments.

1 Akhund Darweza, Tazkirtul Abrar wal Ashrar, (Ms. U. L. Cambridge), f. 78a, as cited by Dr. Hameeduddin in his article: 'The Fall of the First Afghan Empire in India', Asiatische Studien, Etudes Asiatiques, XIV, 126-27.
It is true that the Afghans had served under the Khaljis and the Tughluqs and were fully familiar with the monarchical traditions of the autocratic exercise of power; but the situation changed when fresh streams of Afghan emigres entered the country and sought to introduce in the Indian polity the principles characteristic of Afghan tribalism. The traditions of monarchy, as developed in India, had, therefore, to face a new challenge.

The democratic spirit of the Afghan tribes expressed itself in a variety of ways:

(a) In matters of succession, they kept an open mind and were guided by considerations of suitability rather than the principle of heredity or nomination by the deceased monarch. Sultan Shah Lodi, governor of Sirhind, nominated his nephew, Bahul, ignoring the claims of his son, Qutb Khan. On the death of Sultan Sikandar, they partitioned the empire between Ibrahim and Jalal. Some influential nobles persuaded Bahul during his last illness to nominate his grandson, Azam Humayun, as his successor. Again, disgusted with the overbearing attitude of Ibrahim, they invited his uncle, Alam Khan, from Gujarat. At times their ambition to maintain their personal freedom created a number of complications in the administration; they also created rifts and dissensions in order to enhance their bargaining value.

(b) The army of the Delhi sultanat changed its complexion from the ‘king’s army’ to a tribal militia. Since it was not centrally recruited and was not centrally maintained or centrally administered, it lacked that homogeneity and effectiveness which had characterized the armies of the Delhi sultanat. The Afghan armies could overwhelm other Indian armies by sheer weight of numbers, but face to face with a well-organized foreign army—like that of Babur—they could hardly achieve anything. The use of artillery was, no doubt, one of the factors which led to Ibrahim’s defeat at the battle of Panipat, but the Afghan army had certain basic organizational defects.

(c) Some of the privileges and prerogatives of the sultan came to be commonly used by high officers during this period. For instance, elephants were considered a part of the royal paraphernalia and the sultan alone had the privilege of keeping them. During this period, however, we find the nobles maintaining large numbers of elephants and bringing them to the battle-field in times of conflict. Azam Humayun Sarwani alone is reported to have possessed seven hundred elephants.

Notwithstanding all this, there was an inherent vitality—perhaps born of its democratic spirit—which kept the Lodi power intact for
nearly three quarters of a century. ‘In spite of its defects’, remarks Dr. R. P. Tripathi,

‘the experiment of Bahlul Lodi is interesting. Its immediate usefulness was proved by the spirit of loyalty that it awakened among the Afghan tribal leaders who in fighting for him felt to be virtually fighting for their own cause. By toning down the autocratic conception of kingship, Bahlul Lodi had taken a substantial step towards making it amenable to the wishes of his peers. Responsibility to peers and nobles has been an important link between autocracy and constitutional kingship. Here again was a chance for Muslim monarchy to change for the better and take a constitutional form. But lack of appreciation, factions, jealousies, selfishness of the nobility, indifference and ignorance of the people let the opportunity pass away.’

Keeping in view the general level of the Afghan government, it seems probable that had Babur not intruded, the Afghan power would have lasted some time more. The rise of Sher Shah soon after the establishment of Mughal power in India shows that the Afghans were not a spent-up force and could drive out the successor of Babur from India.

The keynote of political life during this period was the presence of a very large number of zamindars all over northern India, from Lahore to Manikpur. Their power and resources are hard to calculate; in fact, their direct contact with the peasantry placed them in a very advantageous position. They could raise large armies without any great effort. Perhaps only on a few occasions during the earlier period were such huge armies brought to the battle-field. An unrest, a search for something indefinite, a spirit of adventure and an insatiable ambition characterize all political activity during this period, but none of the adventurers in the field seems to have ever had the vision of a centralized empire, roughly embracing the frontiers of the Khalji or the Tughluq dominions. Their activities were limited by local, tribal or racial considerations and could not pave the way for the emergence of a centralized empire. The Lodis, in spite of all these limitations, gave a fairly good account of their political abilities and held intact and extended a political structure, all full of cracks and crevices.

During this period the centre of political gravity gradually shifted to Agra, from where the problems of the kingdom could be more effectively tackled. It was easier from there to control the zamindars

2 Some Aspects of Muslim Administration, 84.
and maliks of Etawa, Koil and Badaun. The activities of the people of Mewat could be watched better from Agra and campaigns against the Sharqis could be more efficiently managed from there. Besides, an eye could be kept on Rajputana also from the new capital.

Another important and interesting political development of this period was ‘the principle of truce’, which suddenly brought all hostilities to an end when the combatants found it difficult to inflict a crushing defeat on each other. Twice Bahlul Lodi had to enter into truce with the Sharqi sultan, for four years in the beginning and for three years a second time. The period of truce was spent in making good the losses suffered during the previous engagements and in preparing for a more decisive struggle in the future. Conflicts thus lingered on for decades and the energies of different powers were always directed towards planning and preparing for battles.

THE AFGHANS IN INDIA

It is needless to speculate about the half-mythical and half-legendary accounts of the origin of the Afghans. The researches of Olaf Caroe, Morgenstierne, Bellew, Longworth Dames, Raverty and others have brought to light many interesting aspects of this problem. It is, however, more relevant from our point of view to trace the history of Afghan settlements in India and the ultimate emergence of the Afghans as a ruling dynasty of the sultanate period.

Though individual Afghan settlers must have come to India much earlier, it was during the reign of Sultan Nasiruddin Malmud that they were enrolled in the army in large numbers. In 1260 when Ulugh Khan (future Balban) marched against the Mewatis, he employed three thousand Afghan soldiers. Later on Balban created Afghan military posts in the neighbourhood of Delhi and in Jalali, Kampil, Patiali, Bhojpur, etc. The importance which the Afghans gained during this period helped them considerably in the future extension of their influence and provided an effective base for the growth of their power. Amongst the nobles of Alauddin Khalji were Ikhtiyaruddin Yal Afghan and Malik Makh Afghan, who played an important role during the Khalji and the Tughluq periods. Under Muhammad bin Tughluq the Afghans constituted an important element of the governing class, and in the rebellions organized against him they played a conspicuous role. Malik Shahu Afghan, Qazi Jalal Afghan and Malik Makh Afghan rose in rebellions against him. Malik Makh

3 Tabaqat-i Nasiri, 315.
4 Barani, Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi, 57-59.
5 Ibid., 240.
Afghan established his independent power in Daulatabad as Sultan Nasiruddin, but when Hasan Kangu emerged as a greater force in the Deccan, he voluntarily abdicated in his favour.

It appears that the Afghans constituted an important element of the *sadah* amirs, and it was this control of the administrative base of the sultanat which provided them with an opportunity to consolidate their power. The emergence of a very large number of Afghan zamindars during the latter part of the fourteenth century was, in fact, made possible by the position enjoyed by them as *sadah* amirs. Firuz Shah Tughluq encouraged the development of the hereditary principle when he made all appointments hereditary. On account of their courage and character, Afghan soldiers were recruited in large numbers in the frontier areas. A *muqtə* of Multan employed a number of Afghans, including Malik Bahram, an ancestor of Bahlul Shah Lodi. During the later Tughluq period the Afghans got important appointments in different areas of UP. In 1405 Daulat Khan Lodi was appointed *faujdar* of Miyan-i Doab and Malik Asad Khan Lodi got the *shiq* of Sambhal as a *muqtə*. Their power increased under the Saiyyid rulers. In 1417 Khizr Khan assigned Sirhind to Malik Shah Bahram Lodi. Malik Sulaiman Lodi stabilized his position in Multan. Rapri was under Husain Khan Afghan and his son, Qutb Khan Afghan.

**RISE OF THE LODIS TO POWER**

Many Lodi Afghans used to come to India with trade *caravans*. Once a merchant, Malik Bahram, came to this country and decided to settle here because he was not on good terms with his elder brother and did not want to go back to his homeland. He joined the service of Malik Mardan Daulat, governor of Multan. He had five sons—Malik Sultan Shah, Malik Kala, Malik Firuz, Malik Muhammad and Malik Khwaja; all of them continued to live in Multan even after the death of their father. When Khizr Khan became governor of Multan, Malik Sultan Shah entered his service. On the occasion of Khizr Khan’s conflict with Mallu Iqbal, Malik Sultan Shah displayed great bravery on the battle-field and killed Mallu Iqbal. In recognition of

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6 On the death of Malik Bir Afghan, the *muqtə* of Bihar, his son, Da‘ud Khan, was appointed in his place (*Mubarak Shahi*, 123). After the death of Muhammad Shah Afghan, his sons, Sirbali Khan and Mahmud Khan, got the *təqta* of their father (*Tarikh-i Muhammadi*, f. 412a).

7 Feriha, 1, 173.
9 *Mubarak Shahi*, 178.
his devoted services, he was given the title of Islam Khan and the
governorship of Sirhind. His brothers, who lived with him, also got
assignments and promotions. Malik Kala was assigned the governor-
ship of Daurala. Malik Kala’s wife died of an accident when she was
pregnant, and her child was rescued through a Caesarian operation.
This child was Bahlul, the future founder of the Lodi dynasty in
India. He was brought up with great care and affection by his father,
but when he died in a conflict with the Niyazi Afghans, Bahlul went
to Sirhind to live with his uncle, Islam Khan. Islam Khan discerned
talent in him and gave him his daughter in marriage.

Islam Khan himself was a very dynamic figure. Gradually he
increased his military resources and power and twelve thousand
Afghans, most of whom were his clansmen, joined his service. Ignor-
ing the claims of his grown-up sons, he nominated Bahlul as his
successor. It was a very bold decision but when he died, his servants
were divided into three groups: one group supported Bahlul on the
basis of Islam Khan’s will, the second supported Malik Firuz, brother
of Islam Khan, and the third group joined Qutb Khan, son of Islam
Khan. Bahlul handled the situation with great tact and steered clear
out of the initial difficulties. Qutb Khan, however, came to Delhi,
approached Sultan Saiyyid Muhammad Shah through his officials, and
reported that the Afghans were gathering in huge numbers at Sirhind
and might create confusion in the kingdom. The Sultan despatched
Malik Sikandar Tuhfa with a big force, along with Qutb Khan, with
instructions to send the Afghans to the court; but if they defied him,
he was to drive them out of Sirhind. A farman to the same effect was
sent to Jasrath Khokar.

As soon as the Afghans came to know of this order, they left
Sirhind and sought shelter in the foot-hills of the Siwaliks. Jasrath and
Malik Tuhfa sought to remove their suspicions and sent a message to
them saying that since they had committed no wrong, there was no
reason for their fear or flight. The Afghans, however, demanded a
guarantee of security from them; and when it was given, Malik Firuz
Lodi left Shahin Khan, his eldest son, and Malik Bahlul, his nephew,
with his family, and came to see Malik Sikandar and Jasrath Khokar.
Qutb Khan instigated them to take Malik Firuz Lodi into custody and
and he was arrested; many Afghans were killed and an army was
sent to bring their families also. Bahlul realized the gravity of the
situation and escaped to the Siwalik hills. Jasrath entrusted Sirhind to
Malik Sikandar Tuhfa and sent the prisoners to Delhi.

Bahlul was so deeply distressed at these developments that he
started waylaying trade caravans and distributed the booty among
his partners in order to prepare them for an encounter with Delhi. In
a short time the Afghans increased their strength and even the Mughals joined their ranks. Later on, when Malik Firuz escaped from Delhi and joined Bahlul, and Qutb Khan also repented of his misdeeds, Bahlul’s position became much more secure and he re-established himself in Sirhind. Sultan Muhammad Shah sent a strong force under Husam Khan, the wazir-i mamalik, to crush him. A battle fought at Kadha (a pargana in Khizrabad and Shahpura) resulted in the defeat of Husam Khan. Bahlul’s power and prestige further increased. Along with Malik Firuz and his other relatives, he occupied the entire area from Sirhind to Panipat. He, however, acted with great prudence in dealing with Sultan Muhammad. A very polite letter was sent to him expressing fealty and loyalty, but submitting at the same time that since Husam Khan had a personal grudge against him, he could not come to the court so long as Husam was there. If Husam Khan was put to death and the wizarat was entrusted to Hamid Khan, Bahlul would only be too ready to serve him. The Sultan, devoid of wisdom and foresight as he was, fell into the trap and killed Husam Khan. Malik Bahlul was confirmed in his possession of Sirhind, which along with other adjoining areas was given to him as his jagir.

The Lodis further consolidated their position in that region and increased their military resources. When Sultan Mahmud Khalji of Malwa invaded Delhi, Sultan Muhammad asked for help from Malik Bahlul, who marched in response from Sirhind with a force comprising of twenty thousand Afghans and Mughals. His performance in the conflict won the approbation of the Sultan, who conferred upon him the title of Khan-i Khanan. After his return to Sirhind, Bahlul brought Lahore, Dipalpur, Sunam and a number of parganas under his jurisdiction without the permission of the Sultan. He was now fully confident of his strength and was anxious to extend his power to Delhi. Soon afterwards he marched against Delhi and besieged the city, but he could not conquer it and had to return to Sirhind disappointed. He, however, did not give up the hope of establishing himself at Delhi and started consolidating his resources with a view to striking again. He assumed the title of sultan at this time but deferred the announcement of his name in the Khutba and the coins till such time as Delhi was brought under control. Fortunately for Bahlul, Sultan Muhammad expired at this time and his son, Sultan Alauddin, succeeded him. Bahlul intensified his efforts for the occupation of Delhi.

The political situation of the country at this time, which considerably facilitated the realization of Bahlul’s political ambitions, was as follows. The central region of northern India was divided into a
number of semi-independent ruling families and all the strategic areas were controlled by tribal chiefs. From Mehrauli to Ladu Sarai (near Delhi) the area was under Ahmad Khan Mewati; Sirhind, Lahore, Samana, Sunam, Hisar-Firuzah and the area up to Panipat were under the Lodis; the country from Samthal to the ford of Khwaja Khizr (near Delhi) was held by Darya Khan Lodi; Koil was under Isa Khan Turk-bacha; Qutb Khan, son of Hasan Khan, controlled Rapri; Bhongaon, Patiali and Kampil were under Rai Pratap, while Bayana was under Da'ud Khan Auhadi. With so many tribal chiefs spread around Delhi, the position of the Sultan of Delhi could be nothing more than that of a senior tribal chief. His authority was confined to Delhi and a few villages around it. Viewed in its proper perspective, Bahlul's real conflict was not with the Sultan of Delhi—though the occupation of Delhi was absolutely vital for the rise of his independent dynasty—but with the other chiefs, who exercised limited but effective authority in their respective areas.

Bahlul collected an army and marched on Delhi a second time. Again he failed to capture the fort and returned to Sirhind frustrated. Sultan Alauddin consulted Qutb Khan, Isa Khan and Rai Pratap and accepted their advice to dismiss and imprison Hamid Khan, who had been appointed at the suggestion of Bahlul, and transfer some forty parganas from his iqta to the khalsa land. Actuated by his animus against Hamid Khan, whose father had plundered his territory, Rai Pratap incited the Sultan to kill Hamid Khan. The Sultan accepted his advice, but before he could act upon it, some brothers of Hamid contrived his escape from his prison. Hamid Khan now made up his mind to retaliate. He forced his way into the Sultan's female apartments and turned out the ladies of the haram from the palace and seized their wealth and property. Sultan Alauddin found himself utterly helpless under the circumstances, and retired to Badaun where he bided his time.

Hamid Khan now started thinking in terms of inviting either Sultan Mahmud of Jaunpur or Sultan Mahmud of Malwa to come and occupy the throne of Delhi. When Malik Bahlul came to know of Hamid Khan's search of a ruler for Delhi, he started for Delhi in full strength. Hamid Khan shut himself in the fort and prevented Bahlul's entry into the city. Bahlul preferred diplomacy to a military engagement, and secured an interview with Hamid Khan after making many false promises and giving many deceptive assurances. Hamid's suspicions were lulled and Bahlul continued to live in Delhi more or less as a subordinate officer of Hamid Khan.

Once Hamid Khan invited some nobles to a convivial party and extended the invitation to Bahlul also. Bahlul thought that this was
a good opportunity to create upon the mind of Hamid Khan an impression that his Afghan followers were a group of simpletons and were incapable of causing any harm to him. At Bahlul's instance they started behaving in a strange and uncouth manner at the party—some of them tied their shoes to their waists, others put them on a shelf above the Khan's head. When asked about this queer behaviour, they replied that they were afraid of thieves. Some of them asked for pieces of carpets to make caps and fillets out of them for their children and send them as presents to Roh. Hamid Khan laughed with scorn and said: 'Yes, I will give you some fine fabrics which you can use as gifts.' When trays of betel-leaves were brought, some Afghans licked the lime and chewed the flowers. The trick worked well and Hamid Khan began to think that the followers of Malik Bahlul were 'country bumpkins' and that there was no danger from them. As soon as Bahlul succeeded in creating this impression, security and other arrangements at the residence of Hamid Khan were relaxed.

Whenever Malik Bahlul went to see Hamid Khan, he took a few men into the court while others remained standing outside the fort. Once Hamid Khan invited Bahlul to a banquet. His Afghan attendants quarrelled with the guards and forced an entry, saying: 'We are also servants of Hamid Khan. Why should we not be allowed to offer our respects to him?' When the matter was reported to Hamid Khan, he ordered them to be admitted to the court. They soon rushed into the hall and wherever they found a single guard of Hamid Khan, two Afghan followers of Bahlul sandwiched him between themselves. At the end of the banquet, when Hamid Khan's men had taken leave, Qutb Khan Lodi drew out a chain from under his armpit and placing it before Hamid Khan said: 'You must remain in custody for some time. I refrain from taking your life because of your past favours.' The coup was a complete success. The empire of Delhi passed into the hands of Malik Bahlul.
II. BAHLUL LODI (1451-89)

Bahlul ascended the throne of Delhi on 17 Rabi I 855/19 April 1451\(^1\) at a propitious hour selected by the astrologers. It appears from Ferishta that he had two coronations: one before and the other after his correspondence with Sultan Alauddin.\(^2\) Bahlul retained the name of Alauddin in the Khutba till the latter had formally abdicated.

Sultan Bahlul had nine sons at this time—Khwaja Bayazid, Nizam Khan (future Sikandar Shah), Mubarak Khan (known as Barbek Shah), Alam Khan (later known as Sultan Alauddin), Jamal Khan, Mian Yaqub, Fath Khan, Miyan Musa and Jalal Khan.\(^3\) The author of the Tabaqat-i Akbari further gives a list of thirty-four nobles and relatives of Bahlul who constituted the core of his government. An analysis of their racial and religious background reveals that they included Lodis, Lohanis, Yusuf Khails, Sarwanis, Mewatis, Jilwanis, Turk-bachas, Farmulis and Hindus like Rai Pratap, Rai Kilan and Rai Karan.

Immediately after his occupation of Delhi, Bahlul wrote a letter to Sultan Alauddin saying: ‘Your Majesty’s father brought me up. I have been acting as your deputy...without expunging your name from the Khutba.’ Alauddin replied: ‘As my father used to address you as his son, I look upon you as my elder brother and resign the kingship to you. I shall live contented at Badaun.’ How far this reply gave Bahlul the satisfaction he needed is not difficult to guess, but for the time being it reduced his worries and he could turn his attention to other pressing problems.

In fact the throne of Delhi to which Bahlul had been raised was no bed of roses. There were a number of baffling problems which had to be tackled with tact and determination. Keeping in view the background of the Lodis and the character and composition of the new governing class, every detail of the new polity had to be placed on firm and generally acceptable foundations. The way in which a mullah, Qadin, had ridiculed the cultural traditions of the Afghans before a Friday congregation in the presence of Bahlul was not a passing episode. It reflected the general reluctance of the people to

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1 Tarikh-i Khan-i Jahani, I, 140.
2 Tarikh-i Da’udi, Aligarh ed., 11-12; Ferishta, I, 174-75.
3 Tarikh-i Da’udi, 12. Nizamuddin (Tabaqat-i Akbari, I, 298) and Ferishta (I, 174) have wrongly mentioned Barbek Shah and Mubarak Khan as two different individuals.
accept the Lodi as rulers of Delhi. In fact the situation was worse than what the Khaljis had to face at the beginning of their rule. A cautious and careful handling of the situation alone could remove these prejudices from the public mind. Besides, Bahlul could not possibly be sure of his position unless he had organized a strong and efficient governing class to shoulder the burden of the empire.

The democratic spirit of Afghan polity, sanctified by its tribal traditions, constituted a serious impediment to the evolution of a strong monarchy; and the linking-up of Afghan socio-political ideals with the monarchical traditions of absolutism, which had determined the tenor of political life in India during the preceding centuries, seemed impossible. Afghan political traditions leaned more towards a diffusion and decentralization of political authority, while the general political climate in the country made it utterly impossible to tolerate any centrifugal tendencies. Political exigency and Afghan traditions thus came into conflict, and Bahlul had to effect a healthy compromise between them so as to take full advantage of both in the consolidation of his power in India.

One of the most disturbing problems for Bahlul was the presence of a ruler of the Saiyyid family. Notwithstanding the fact that Sultan Alauddin had abdicated, Lodi power could not be stabilized so long as he lived at Badaun. There were nobles who still looked upon him as their legitimate sovereign and were not reconciled to the idea of Lodi ascendancy. The situation was further complicated by the fact that the Sharqi ruler of Jaunpur was a son-in-law of the Saiyyid Sultan of Delhi and, consequently, he looked upon the Delhi sultanat as legitimately belonging to him. In the background of the Sharqi-Lodi conflict, this fact assumed serious dimensions and posed a threat which could not be easily averted.

Then there was the party of Hamid Khan, which had to be dealt with. Thus hemmed in on all sides by problems posed by his enemies, both within and outside the kingdom, Bahlul had to proceed very cautiously.

The two immediate problems for him were the control of the treasury and the establishment of peace and order in the capital. He deputed Afghan officers to guard the treasury and manage the royal stores, stables, etc., and posted Afghan soldiers at all strategic places to guard the fort. Peaceful conditions were thus established in and around Delhi; and having made his position secure in Delhi, Bahlul turned his attention towards the Punjab. He marched towards Multan to set its affairs in order.4

4 Tobaqat-i Akbari, 1, 301.
CONFLICT WITH THE SHARQI RULER

When Bahlul proceeded to the Punjab, he left the capital in charge of his eldest son, Khwaja Bayazid, Shah Sikandar Sarwani and Bibi Mattu, widow of Islam Khan. This was an ideal opportunity for Sultan Mahmud Sharqi to strike. Abdulla and Ni'matullah say that some of the nobles of Sultan Alauddin, who were at heart hostile to Bahlul Lodi, invited the Sharqi ruler. Another very important factor in this conflict was the wife of Sultan Mahmud Sharqi. She was the daughter of Sultan Alauddin and used to incite her husband to take vigorous action against Bahlul. 'If you do not march against him,' she used to say, 'I shall tie the quiver and ride against Bahlul.' Bahlul was not ignorant of the intentions of the Sharqi Sultan and had, therefore, pampered his vanity by expressing great humility. But all this failed to have any effect on him. He marched against Delhi in 854/1450 at the head of a huge army comprising of one hundred and seventy thousand soldiers, mounted and footmen, and fourteen hundred war elephants, and besieged the capital. Bahlul was at Sirhind at that time. On receipt of the report about this attack, he turned back to deal with the invader.

The Afghan forces stationed at Delhi tried to meet the situation as best as they could. Bibi Mattu dressed up many women in male attire and posted them as guards all along the ramparts of the fort in order to deceive the enemy about the numerical strength of the Afghan garrison. Sikandar Sarwani, son-in-law of Khan-i Jahan Lodi, who was an excellent archer, shot an arrow at an enemy water-bag. It went through the bag and the ox on which it was being carried and then pierced into the ground. This excellence in archery made the Sharqi forces rather hesitant in approaching the walls of the fort. Mahmud Sharqi, however, resorted to a new device. He threw ignited material into the fort, so that it became impossible for the people even to move in the courtyards of their houses. The garrison was thus forced to negotiate terms of peace and surrender. Saiyyid Shamsuddin came out to settle terms with Darya Khan Lodi, and in a secret interview appealed to Darya’s Afghan sentiments and shrewdly won him over to his side. Darya diverted the attention of

5 Tarikh-i Da’udi, 12-13. Tarikh-i Khan-i Jahani, I, 142. See also Tabaqat-i Akbari, I, 301.
6 Tarikh-i Da’udi, 12-13.
7 Some writers give it as the number of his cavalry, but this was impossible. The author of Tarikh-i Da’udi is more credible when he puts it as the number of both the sevare and piadas.
8 Ibid., 13. Nizamuddin (Tabaqat-i Akbari, I, 301) says that he was at Dipalpur.
9 Tarikh-i Da’udi, 13.
the Sharqis from Delhi to the army of Bahlul, which was quickly returning to Delhi to relieve the pressure of the Sharqi attack.

Mahmud sent Fath Khan Harvi and Darya Khan Lodi at the head of an army consisting of thirty thousand soldiers and thirty elephants to intercept Bahlul west of Panipat. The two armies came face to face at Narela, some seventeen miles from Delhi. Bahlul's army was less than half the Sharqi army, as it comprised of fourteen thousand cavalry only. Here Qutb Khan Lodi employed the same tactics which Saiyyid Shamsuddin had earlier employed with great success. He appealed to the sentiments of Darya Khan in these words: 'Your mother and sisters are besieged in the fort and what sort of a man are you that you fight for the cause of a stranger, without any regard for your own honour?' This speech had the desired effect and it secured the defection of Darya Khan, who wheeled off the field when a promise was given that he would not be chased. Thus deserted, Fath Khan, who had to bear the brunt of the attack, was defeated and caught. Rai Karan, whose brother, Rai Pithaura, had been killed by Fath Khan, slew him.\footnote{Tabaqat-i Akbari, I, 302.}

The news of this disaster disheartened Mahmud Sharqi and he left for Jaunpur. Bahlul chased the retreating army and captured an enormous booty. This victory enhanced Bahlul's prestige and overawed his enemies.

**CHASTISEMENT OF THE NOBLES**

Soon after his victory at Narela, Bahlul turned his attention to the recalcitrant elements in his nobility. Ahmad Khan of Mewat submitted and, as a guarantee for his future good conduct, offered the services of his uncle, Mubarak Khan, as a retainer of the Sultan. Bahlul accepted his apology but curtailed his power by reducing his iqtan by seven parganas.

Darya Khan Lodi, the governor (hakim) of Sambhal, had initially transferred his loyalties to the Sharqi Sultan, and on that account deserved punishment; but on the battle-field he had deserted the Sharqi Sultan and had joined Bahlul, and this defection was instrumental in the victory at Narela. Bahlul reduced his iqtan by seven parganas, but did not remove him from Sambhal.

The Sultan then proceeded towards Koil. Isa Khan, the governor of Koil, professed loyalty and was allowed to continue.

Bahlul's main concern at this time was a thorough scrutiny of the provincial and other local administrators, so that the basic units of his power may be secured. But as soon as these governors made their
submission and accepted his authority, Bahlul did not hesitate in confirming them in their territories. He turned his attention towards Sakit, Kampil, Patiali, Bhongaon, Rapri and Etawah. All the governors except Qutb Khan of Rapri accepted his suzerainty. But after a brief resistance, Qutb Khan also submitted. Bahlul confirmed them in their areas.

CONFLICT WITH THE RULER OF JAUNPUR

Bahlul was busy consolidating his position in his kingdom when he was forced to turn all his resources and energy to dealing with the territorial ambitions of the Sharqis. In fact, throughout his long reign the Sharqi menace constituted one of the most difficult problems for him.

In 856/1452 the conflict went on for some time without any decisive result. Ultimately Raja Pratap and Qutb Khan negotiated a treaty with Sultan Mahmud Sharqi according to which (a) Bahlul was to retain the territories of Sultan Saiyyid Mubarak Shah while Sultan Mahmud Sharqi was confirmed in his possession of the territories of Sultan Ibrahim Sharqi; (b) Shamsabad was to be surrendered to a vassal of Sultan Bahlul; and (c) Bahlul was to return the seven elephants he had captured during the previous struggle. Difficulties, however, arose at the time of implementing the terms of the treaty. Bahlul sent Rai Karan to take possession of Shamsabad, which was under Jauna Khan, a vassal of Sultan Mahmud. Jauna Khan refused to deliver the fort. Thereupon Bahlul marched to Shamsabad, expelled Jauna Khan and installed Rai Karan there. Mahmud Sharqi set out to challenge the Lodi Sultan. The two armies met near Shamsabad. Qutb Khan Lodi and Darya Khan made a night attack and would have succeeded in it, but as bad luck would have it, Qutb Khan fell from his horse and was immediately taken prisoner by the Sharqi forces. He lived as a Sharqi prisoner for seven years.

On Sultan Mahmud’s death (1459) hostilities between Delhi and Jaunpur were suspended for some time and a treaty was made on the basis of the status quo. Shamsabad was restored to Jauna Khan, a Sharqi vassal.

Since Qutb Khan Lodi, who had been taken into custody by the Sharqis, was a brother of Shams Khatun, the wife of Sultan Bahlul, she was not prepared to allow Bahlul to sit in peace unless her brother was released. When she heard about this treaty with the

11 It lies 12 miles S.E. of Etawah town.
12 A pargana village 28 miles N.W. of Fatehgarh.
13 A pargana village in Etah district.
14 A tahsil town in Mainpuri district. Bhongaon was under Rai Pratap whom Ni’matullah calls ‘hakim’ and zamindar of Bhongaon’.
Sharqis, she sent a message to Bahlul saying that it was not proper for him to have any rest or peace while Qutb Khan was in prison. Bahlul took the message to heart and turned back to accomplish his unfinished enterprise. He was encouraged in this course of action by the general atmosphere of Jaunpur at this time. The new Sharqi king, Muhammad Shah, had not been able to consolidate his position and there were nobles hostile to him. When the Sharqi Sultan heard about the movement of the Lodi forces, he advanced from Jaunpur in order to encounter them. He drove out Rai Karan from Shamsabad and placed Jauna Khan in charge of it. Rai Pratap was so overawed by the strength of Sultan Muhammad that he deserted Bahlul and joined him. The Sharqi Sultan reached Barsani.\textsuperscript{15}

The two armies came face to face near Rapri.\textsuperscript{16} What had considerably enhanced the resources and strength of the Sharqis at this time was the fact that Raja Pratap, Mubariz Khan and Qutb Khan, governor of Rapri, had joined Muhammad Sharqi. But Muhammad failed to take full advantage of this situation; and by planning retaliatory action against his brothers, he so weakened his position that he was ultimately killed.\textsuperscript{17} An accident facilitated a temporary truce and the cessation of hostilities. Prince Jalal Khan, a younger brother of Sultan Husain Sharqi, who had succeeded Muhammad on the throne of Jaunpur, had hurriedly marched at night to join his brother and mistaken Bahlul's army for Husain's camp. He had been immediately arrested, and this arrest provided a basis for the exchange of prisoners, including Qutb Khan. A truce for four years, on the basis of the status quo, was agreed upon by the two sultans. The Sharqis retained their control over Shamsabad. Rai Pratap now joined Sultan Bahlul. Sultan Husain summoned Qutb Khan Lodhi from Jaunpur and sent him to Bahlul with great honour; Sultan Bahlul returned Jalal Khan to the Sharqi Sultan.

The tussle between Bahlul and Husain Sharqi was a protracted one. It lasted during the whole life of Husain Sharqi, and for decades the politics of Delhi revolved round the problems posed by the ever-recurring invasions of the Sharqi ruler. Even when Husain was ousted from Jaunpur and the Sharqi kingdom was, to all intents and purposes, extinguished, Husain Shah remained a snake that had been scotched but not killed.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{15} According to Hodivala (Studies, 403), this was Sirsa, near Rapri, 27 miles south of Mainpuri.
\textsuperscript{16} According to Tarikh-i Da'udi the battle was fought at Chandawar, 3 miles from Firuzabad in Agra district.
\textsuperscript{17} For details, see the chapter of the Sharqis of Jaunpur.
\textsuperscript{18} See chapter on the Sharqis for details.
During these four years of truce, developments took place which precipitated a crisis. Bahlul had not reconciled himself to the loss of Shamsabad. He wrested it from Jauna Khan and placed it under Rai Karan. Besides, Bahlul in his anxiety to placate Hindu chieftains and zamindars, gave to Rai Bir Singh Deo (son of Rai Pratap) the standard and the kettle-drums which had been seized from Darya Khan. Darya Khan was naturally very deeply incensed at this action, which he interpreted as an insult to him; he reacted to it sharply and got Bir Singh murdered. Bahlul found the situation beyond his control and returned to Delhi.

THE MULTAN CAMPAIGN

The rise of the Langas in Multan is discussed in the chapter dealing with Multan. Shaikh Yusuf, a descendant of Shaikh Bahauddin Zakariyya, who was supplanted by them, left Multan and sought shelter with Bahlul Lodi, who gave all possible help and protection to him. Bahlul even entered into matrimonial relationship with his family and gave his daughter in marriage to Shaikh Abdulla, a son of Shaikh Yusuf. Anxious to retrieve his position, Shaikh Yusuf very often asked Bahlul to support his cause by attacking the Langas and overthrowing them, but Bahlul realized the limitation to his power and kept Shaikh Yusuf pleased with empty promises. But when Qutbuddin Langa died in 873/1468-69, Bahlul marched towards Multan, leaving Qutb Khan Lodi and Khan-i Jahan as his deputies in Delhi. But in course of his march he heard about the movement of Sultan Husain Sharqi’s forces towards Delhi and immediately turned back to the capital.

It was at this time that Bahlul thought of inviting the Afghans from Roh. The account of the Afghan migrants as given by Abbas Sarwani deserves to be quoted in full:

‘Sultan Bahlul had reached the vicinity of Dipalpur when he heard the disturbing news of the siege of Delhi. He said to the amirs and the dignitaries of the realm: “The kingdom of India is vast and rich; all the kings are not qaumdars (with tribal following). I have a big clan in my homeland (diyar-i khud) which is known for bravery and courage. They are distinguished for their manliness and physical strength, but in their own land they are hard-pressed for livelihood. If they migrate to India, they will get rid of the ignominy of poverty

19 Tabaqat-i Akbari has Nar Singh.
20 Ibid., III, 525.
21 Ferishta, II, 325.
22 Tarikh-i Khan-i Jahan, I, 155.
and I shall gain ascendancy over my enemies and the kingdom of India will come under my control."

"The amirs and the dignitaries of the realm submitted: "All that has occurred to the luminous heart of the world-conquering king is in the interest of the state; it is inspired by considerations of generosity and the welfare of his qaum (people) and his tribe; otherwise the state as well as his prestige, and also the strength of his army, does not stand in need of other's assistance.... But expediency demands that his Majesty be pleased to send farman to the leaders of tribes in Roh saying: God Almighty has bestowed the sovereignty of the empire of Delhi on the Afghans. Other rulers of India want to drive them out of India.... The territory of India is extensive and rich. It can accommodate all our relatives. If our relatives come to this land, the sultanat will nominally be in my name; but every territory and wilayat, which is under my control or will in future be occupied, they can distribute on a brotherly basis (biradar-war) and occupy it. These days Sultan Husain, the hakim of Jaunpur, has besieged Delhi with the help of a large army and numerous zamindars. The Afghan families are in that city (Delhi). If our fellow tribesmen come to our help in large numbers, this is really the proper time for their assistance. Immediately on the receipt of these farman, they should come to India inspired by their self-respect and honour and should take the city out of the control of Sultan Husain. When they see with their own eyes the affluent circumstances of their Indian relatives and also benefit from their wealth, they will not, like ourselves, return to their homeland but will join the army of the Sultan and will bring most of the land of India under the control of the royal servants."

'Sultan Bahlul appreciated this advice and despatched farman to the leaders of the Afghan tribes.

"On receipt of these farman, the Afghans of Roh came like ants and locusts to join the service of Sultan Bahlul."

CONFLICT WITH HUSAIN SHARQI

Bahlul intercepted the Sharqi forces at Chandwar. After seven days of indecisive but sanguinary struggle, a three-year truce was arranged by the nobles of both sides. Both rulers then returned to their respective territories.

During this period, however, the power of Husain Sharqi increased. He organized his army and set his affairs in order. The vassals and nobles of Bahlul, like the governor of Etawah (Ahmad Khan Mewati),

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23 Tarikh-i Sher Shahi, ed. by Imamuddin, Dacca 1904, 4-6.
the governor of Koil (Rustam Khan) and the governor of Bayana (Ahmad Khan Jalwani) joined him one after another.

Before the expiry of the three-year truce, Husain Sharqi marched against Delhi at the head of an army consisting of a hundred thousand horsemen and a thousand elephants. It was a moment of grave concern for Bahlul. He sent Shaikh Muhammad Farmuli and Kapur Chand (son of the Rai of Gwalior) to appeal to Mahmud Khalji of Malwa for his help in the crisis, and agreed to offer 6,000 horses to him if he came to his support. Sultan Mahmud promised to help him, but before he could move the Sharqi Sultan had already marched forward. Bahlul left his capital and met him at Bhatwarah. But Bahlul was not in a position to fight. Khan-i Jahan mediated and Bahlul consented to submit to the most humiliating terms. Excepting the city of Delhi and an area within a radius of 18 karoths from it, all territory of the Delhi kingdom was to be the Sharqi dominion, and Bahlul was to remain at Delhi virtually as a vassal of Jaunpur. But Husain Sharqi spurned even this offer. Bahlul was desperate now and he made up his mind to defend himself with whatever resources he had at his disposal.

Husain’s impolitic action in sending his troops to plunder the neighbouring regions provided Bahlul with the opportunity of making a surprise attack on his camp, which was on the other side of the Jumna. Bahlul struck hard at the Sharqis and inflicted a crushing defeat on them. Husain Shah fled from the field and even his haram was captured by Bahlul.

Bahlul had won a great and unexpected victory against Husain Shah. He was, however, anxious to conciliate the Sharqi ruler. When Husain’s mother, Bibi Raji, died at Etawah in 883/1478, Bahlul conveyed his condolences to him through Quth Khan Lodi and Kalayan Mal (son of Rai Kirat Singh of Gwalior). In the same year Husain visited Badanum to offer condolences on the death of Sultan Alaaddin. He, however, decided to seize the fort and later occupied Sambhal and then marched against Delhi in Zil Hij A.H. 883/February-March 1479.

Bahlul was upset by this invasion. In extreme despair and distress he went to the tomb of Shaikh Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki and prayed there throughout the whole night, standing on foot. In the small hours of the morning he felt as if somebody was giving him a staff and asking him to drive away the cattle which had strayed there. It was a happy omen and Bahlul was convinced that he would emerge victorious from the conflict.

Next morning Bahlul directed an attack against the Sharqi forces.

24 See details in chapter on the Sharqis.
with great confidence. Sultan Husain’s attempt to storm the fort having failed, an atmosphere was created for negotiations of peace. Qutb Khan Lodi mediated and sent a message to Sultan Husain, saying, ‘I am a favourite servant of Bibi Raji, who treated me with great kindness during my imprisonment at Jaunpur, and because of that I advise you to go back to your capital after concluding peace with Sultan Bahlul. The territory east of the Ganges should be under your control; that on the west should belong to Sultan Bahlul.’ This message formed the basis of a treaty and hostilities were suspended. Putting his trust in the treaty, Sultan Husain returned to Jaunpur and left considerable equipment and stores to follow him. Bahlul went back on his plighted word; and as soon as Husain was away, he started plundering his baggage. He even pursued the Sharqi army and captured the Malika-i Jahan along with a number of important nobles, including the wazir, Qutlugh Khan (Qazi Samauddin), and Buddhu, the naib-i arz. Shamsabad, Kampil, Patiali, Koil, Sakit and Jalali were annexed to the sultanat of Delhi. Husain turned back and challenged the Delhi forces at a place near Rapri, but was defeated. Under the circumstances he had no alternative but to recognize Bahlul’s authority over the parganas he had occupied after the treaty.

Husain could not reconcile himself to the loss of these parganas, and he marched again in 884/1479. In a battle fought near Sonhar, Bahlul defeated him again. Sultan Husain retreated to Rapri, but he was chased by Bahlul and another defeat was inflicted upon him. While crossing the Jumna, he suffered great losses.

Bahlul then turned his attention towards Etawah and expelled Ibrahim Khan, brother of Husain Sharqi, from there. He assigned Etawah to a son of Mubarak Khan Nuhani. Later on, the Lodi Sultan marched to Kalpi. Since the Jumna prevented the two armies from coming into direct conflict, skirmishes went on for a long time. The help of Rai Tilokechand of Baksar facilitated Bahlul’s task. He showed him a ford by which Bahlul’s army crossed the river, and made a surprise attack on the Sharqi forces. Sultan Husain was defeated and his army was scattered. Bahlul pursued him up to Jaunpur, from where he fled to Kanauj. On being chased by Bahlul, he left Kanauj and reached the banks of the river Ramganga. Here Bahlul inflicted another defeat upon him.

Bahlul’s victories emboldened him and he made up his mind to annex Jaunpur and liquidate the Sharqi kingdom. Husain had to seek

25 Tabaqat-i Akbari gives this place as Arammabjor.
26 A village in Etah district, see District Gaz. UP, XII, 222-23.
27 It stands on the left bank of the river Ganges and is 34 miles south-east of Unao.
shelter in Bihar. Bahlul put Barbek Shah in charge of Jaunpur and allowed him the use of the canopy and *durbash*.28

Sultan Husain refused to accept any defeat as final. He marched at the head of an army against the Lodi governor of Jaunpur. The nobles failed to put up a defence against him, and on assurance of safe conduct Barbek retreated to Mijhanli.29 Bahlul marched again to Jaunpur and recaptured it and reinstated Barbek Shah. To consolidate the position of Barbek, Bahlul fully garrisoned and fortified Jaunpur.

Bahlul then turned his attention to annexing and garrisoning the areas of Sharqi influence. He captured Kalpi and assigned it to his grandson, Azam Humayun. Next he marched to Dholpur. The Rai submitted and presented a few *mans* of gold. The governor of Bari,30 Iqbal Khan, also submitted.

**ATTACK ON MALWA**

These victories came in such quick succession that Bahlul's ambition of extending his authority further became sharper and he turned to Malwa, where Ghivasuddin Khalji (873-906/1469-1501) was sunk in debauchery and pleasures. Bahlul ravaged Alhanpur31 in the territory of Malwa. The Khalji Sultan ordered the governor of Chanderi to march against Bahlul with the armies of Bhilsa and Saranpur. Bahlul found himself outnumbered and beat a hasty retreat to Delhi. The army of Malwa chased him and obliged him to purchase peace by sending gifts, etc. Sher Khan, the governor of Chanderi, rebuilt the city of Alhanpur.32

**DIVISION OF KINGDOM**

Some time after the overthrow of Tatar Khan in 1485, Bahlul divided his kingdom among his sons and his Afghan kinsmen. Barbek Shah got Jaunpur; Kara and Manikpur were assigned to Mubarak Khan Nuhani. Shaikh Muhammad Qurban Farmuli (Kala Pahar) got Bahrain; Azam Humayun got Lucknow and Kalpi, while Khan-i Jahan Lodi was given Badaun. Nizam Khan got the Punjab and portions of the Doab. It is difficult to determine whether this division

28 Yadgar, 16.
29 It lies on the left bank of the Little Gandak in district Gorakhpur. *District Gaz. UP*, XXXI, 297.
30 Headquarters of the district of the same name, 19 miles west of Dholpur, and 45 miles south-west of Agra.
31 Headquarters of a pargana of the same name in Ranthambhor sarkar. See *A’in-i Akbari*.
32 *Tabaqat-i Akbari*, III, 352.
was inspired by respect for Afghan tribal traditions or was the outcome of his political experience, which pointed to consolidation of power in small units.

Conflict with Kashmir

In the struggle for succession between Sultan Hasan (1472-84) of Kashmir and his uncle, Bahram Khan, Bahlul had probably instructed the governor of the Punjab to help the latter. Bahram was, however, defeated at Dulipura and was soon afterwards blinded and killed. Sultan Hasan then sent an army under Malik Tazi Bhatt to invade the Punjab. Tatar Khan Lodi, the governor of the Punjab, inflicted a defeat on him and recaptured Sialkot also.

On Hasan Shah's death, his son, Muhammad Shah, who was a minor, was raised to the throne. During his minority some nobles assassinated the regent, Saiyyid Hasan. A son of Saiyyid Hasan, Saiyyid Muhammad, prepared himself for retaliatory action but circumstances did not favour him. He sought the help of Tatar Khan Lodi, who sent a big army to attack Srinagar in 1484. This army was defeated and dispersed by Rai Hans, the chief of Bhimbar.

Nizam Khan sent against Tatar Khan

Sometime in 1485 Bahlul sent Nizam Khan (future Sultan Sikandar Lodi) against Tatar Khan Yusuf Khail, the muqta of all the sarkars to the west of Delhi—Sirhind, Hisar-Firuzah, Samana, Lahore and Dipalpur. Tatar's military strength was considerable; he had fifteen thousand mounted soldiers in his army. Military strength and financial resources bred a seditious attitude in him and he not only occupied some parganas of the khalsa land but also dismissed the officers appointed by Bahlul. Bahlul sent Nizam Khan along with Umar Khan Sarwani, Mian Sa'id Farnuli, Nasir Khan Nuhani, Darya Khan Nuhani and other distinguished nobles of the period to chastise Tatar Khan. In a battle fought near Ambala, Tatar Khan, despite his brave resistance, was defeated and slain.

Death of Bahlul, his character and achievements

In 1488 Sultan Bahlul marched to Hisar-Firuzah, Gwalior and Etawah. The Raja of Gwalior, Man Singh Tonwar, made a present of eighty lakhs of tankas. Bahlul removed from Etawah the Chauhan

33 *Ibid.*, II. 448. But see also the chapter on Kashmir in this volume (Sect. I. passage on Sultan Hasan Shah).

34 *Waqf al-i Mushaqt*, ff 9b-10a.
chief, Sakta Singh, who had been in charge of the town since its capture from Husain Shah Sharqi and assigned it to Raf Dadu. While on his way back to Delhi, Sultan Bahlul fell ill on account of a heat-stroke, and died on 13 Sha'ban 894/12 July 1489 at Milauli, where he had encamped during his illness.

A posthumous child, brought up under the protection of his uncle, Bahlul was destined to carve out his future by sheer dint of merit. He started his career as governor of Sirhind and ended it at the ripe old age of eighty as the Sultan of Delhi, whose authority extended from the Punjab to the frontiers of Bihar and embraced important cities like Delhi, Badaun, Baran, Samhhal, Rapri, Kampil and Patiali. A part of Rajasthan was also under him and the rulers of Gwalior, Dholpur and Bari paid tribute to him. It was a great achievement in an age when centrifugal tendencies were the order of the day, and a mad race for political power had created widespread political confusion and chaos.

Bahlul had the clear vision of a political realist and a dogged tenacity of purpose which guided his activities all through. For him the end justified the means and he never hesitated to have recourse to chicanery, treachery or fraud, if it suited his purpose. In his dealings with Husain Sharqi, the rulers of Malwa and Hamid Khan, he employed foul means to realize his objectives. He did not hesitate in bribing Darya Khan Lodi on the battle-field of Narela. He was, however, not devoid of chivalrous sentiments. He displayed typical Afghan chivalry when he sent the wife of the defeated Sharqi ruler back to her husband with all dignity and respect.

Bahlul ruled for more than thirty-eight years—the longest period during which any Sultan had held the sceptre of Delhi. This was, in itself, a great achievement considering the general political climate of the country. From the time of the later Tughluqs there had been a persistent tendency towards decentralization; and from the provincial governors down to the local zamindars everyone was eager to grab at power and to defy the centre. Bahlul handled the situation with great tact. Afghan military strength was exploited by him to the full in dealing with his adversaries, but he did not surrender his royal authority to them, though he made a display of profound respect for Afghan sentiments.

Two major problems confronted Bahlul—the Sharqis of Jaunpur and the Rajput chiefs of the Doab—and he succeeded in dealing effectively with both of them. The Sharqi power was completely shattered by him while the Rajput chieftains were also humbled. The effacement of the Rajput dynasties which had raised
their head in the last quarter of the 14th century in the middle and lower Doab was primarily the work of Bahlul, achieved by his generalship and fraternization with the Afghans.35

Since his energies were mostly devoted to military affairs, Bahlul could not make any experiments in the sphere of civil administration. Nothing original emanated from his mind. He simply continued the administrative institutions of the Delhi sultanat as he had inherited them from his Saiyyid predecessors. His only contribution, as the author of the Tabaqat-i Akbari has pointed out, was to appoint his own officers36 where he found the administration in the hands of undesirable officers of the previous regimes. One very important measure of Bahlul, which has perpetuated his name in the numismatic history of the Delhi sultanat, was the introduction of the coin, named Bahluli, which remained the medium of exchange for commodities till the time of Akbar.

Bahlul had a very affable personality, just and generous, simple and unostentatious. He got up early in the morning and attended to the business of the state till about midday. According to Abdulla, he personally heard the petitions of the people and did not leave this work to his amirs or wazirs.37 From noon till the night-prayer (isha) he either remained in the company of the ulama, or spent his time in reading the Quran or offering congregational prayers. After offering the night-prayers, he went to his haram and remained there for some time. Then he retired to his khilwat khana (private chamber). He was very punctilious in performing his religious duties and had considerable regard for the ulama and the divines; but he was singularly free from the fanaticism which characterized the activities of his son, Sikandar Lodi. He enjoyed the confidence of a very large number of Rajput and other Hindu zamindars and entrusted responsible posts to them. Rai Karan, Rai Pratap, Rai Bir Singh, Rai Tilokchand and Rai Dhandhu were some of his trusted chiefs.

Bahlul’s despotism was tempered by Afghan traditions of tribal equality. The author of the Tarikh-i Da’udi remarks about him:

‘He was a simple and unostentatious king. He removed the darhans from the gate when he took his meals; whoever came to him (at that time) took his meal with him. He did not sit on the throne in the majlis and forbade the amirs from standing. In the Darbar-i ‘Am (Public Audience) also he did not sit on a throne. He used a small carpet. In his farmans he addressed the amirs as masnad-i

35 Nirad Chandra Roy, Nematullah’s History of the Afghans, 56.
36 Tabaqat-i Akbari, I, 310-12.
37 Tarikh-i Da’udi, 10.
†. If by chance any amir was offended, he tried his best to placate him. He would go to his house, take off his sword from his waist-belt and place it before him and apologize saying: “If you do not consider me worthy of kingship, you appoint some one else to this job and give me some other assignment”.

The following practices of his particularly struck the imagination of contemporaries as well as posterity:

1. When he captured the treasures of the kings of Delhi, he distributed the spoils among his soldiers and took for himself only a proportionate share. Whether this principle of distribution was applied to all booties that fell to his lot in his long military career is not clear. Dr. Halim’s observation that ‘he distributed the booties of war among his soldiers, and like the “Pious Caliphs”, preferred to take an equal share with them’ lacks confirmation by early authorities and seems to be a generalization only from the measures adopted with reference to the treasures of Delhi. Maybe that he resorted to this equal distribution to win the confidence of the soldiery soon after his occupation of the throne of Delhi.

2. He did not maintain any personal guards. While this could have been in conformity with Afghan traditions, it shows his confidence in himself and his popularity. Sikandar had to appoint a special guard for his protection at night.

3. His food was not prepared in his palace but was sent, in rotation, by the nobles. Ferishta says: ‘His food was not prepared at home nor did he ride a horse from the royal stables. Every day one of the nobles sent him his meal and similarly at the time of riding, one of them supplied him with a mount’. If he actually followed this practice, it must have been intended to give a sense of participation in the administration to his Afghan nobles. Abdulla says that he used to remark: ‘It is enough if my name is associated with the kingdom.’

4. Mushtaqi says: ‘He did not sit on the throne in the presence

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38 Ibid., 11.
39 Ferishta, 1179. The author of the Tarikh-i Da’ud says (11) that whatever came to him—wealth, property or new parganas—he distributed amongst the soldiers and did not retain anything for himself. He did not accumulate any treasures.
40 A. Halim, History of the Lodis, 52.
41 Waqfat-i Mushtaqi.
42 Only in a palace without a guard could the following incident, as recorded by Mushtaqi, take place: ‘A mulla went to Bahlul’s private chamber. The Sultan was just proceeding to the bath-room; the mulla caught hold of the Sultan’s loin cloth and asked him to listen to his request and grant it’. Waqfat-i Mushtaqi.
43 Ferishta, 1.
of the nobles and forbade them to stand. All used to sit together on fine carpets and (the Sultan) called everyone masnad-i ʿalī. He held the darbar every day and sat on the carpet. Some of the nobles were ordered to stand. All did not sit in the assembly.\textsuperscript{44}

The government of Bahlul was based and carried on in the spirit of a biradari (clan). Sikandar Lodi was correct when he told the nobles in 1494 on the eve of his struggle with the Sharqi Sultan: ‘You discharged during the reign of the late Sultan Bahlul what was haqq-i biradari (obligations of the clan).\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{44} Wagfot-i Muḥtasī, f. 9a-b.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., f. 12b.
III. SULTAN SIKANDAR LODI (1489-1517)

ACCESSION

Soon after the death of Sultan Bahlul Lodi, the nobles met at Milauli, a village 15 miles north of Sakti, in order to discuss the question of his successor. There were three groups among them supporting the three princes in the field—Nizam Khan, Barbeek Shah and Azam Humayun. Nizam Khan’s mother, who was the daughter of a Hindu goldsmith, vigorously pleaded the case of her son and held out the promise of good treatment to the nobles.\(^1\) Isa Khan Lodi, who was backing up the candidature of Barbeek Shah, rebutted her, declaring that the grandson of a goldsmith had nothing to do with the throne. This direct insult of a wife of the deceased Sultan provided Khan-i Khanan Farmuli with an excuse to question the propriety of such remarks. Isa Khan snubbed him saying: ‘You are a servant and have nothing to do with the affairs of royal relations. Khan-i Khanan Farmuli felt insulted and in great anger he declared his allegiance to Nizam Khan and left the meeting. He collected together his supporters and carried the bier of Sultan Bahlul to Delhi. The two other groups remained quarrelling without arriving at any decision.

In the meantime Nizam Khan had been summoned to the camp by his mother and Umar Khan Sarwani, the wazir. Before leaving Delhi, Nizam Khan visited Shaikh Samauddin, a distinguished Suhrwardi saint of Delhi, and sought his blessings in an interesting manner. He submitted to the Shaikh: ‘O Shaikh! I desire to study orthography and prosody with you!’ The Shaikh replied: ‘Recite: May God render thee fortunate in both the worlds.’ Nizam Khan requested the Shaikh to repeat the formulae three times, and then taking it as a happy omen and a blessing from the Shaikh, he went to assume the reins of government.\(^2\) He joined the funeral procession of Sultan Bahlul at Jalali, sent the bier to Delhi\(^3\) and crowned himself on Friday, 17 Sha’ban 894/ 16 July 1489. The coronation took place on the bank of the Kali Nadi, on a mound which was once a hunting pavilion of Firuz Shah Tughluq and was known as Kaushak-i Firuz.\(^4\) Soon after his accession, Sultan Sikandar proceeded to Delhi. The

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1 Ferishta, I, 179.
2 Tarikh-i Da’udi, 34; Yadgar, Tarikh-i Shahi, 34.
3 Tabaqat-i Akbari, I, 314.
4 Ibid., I, 314; Ferishta, I, 179.
most formidable task before him was to induce the Afghan nobles to accept his authority and to force his relations to submit.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST ALAM KHAN LODI, ISA KHAN LODI AND BARBEK SHAH

Sikandar first marched towards Rapri, where his brother, Alam Khan Lodi, had joined Azam Humayun. He besieged the forts of Rapri and Chandwar. Alam Khan fled to Patiali and sought the protection of Isa Khan Lodi. Rapri could not stand a siege and had to surrender. It was assigned to Khan-i Khanan Lodi. The Sultan then marched towards Etawah, where it took him several months to finally subjugate the area. Alam Khan surrendered and Sikandar not only pardoned him but placed Etawah also in his charge.

The next important noble to be dealt with was Isa Khan Lodi, who was living at Patiali. Isa Khan Lodi was defeated in battle and died soon afterwards of a wound which he had received in the engagement. Sikandar entrusted Patiali to Rai Ganesh, who had deserted Barbek Shah and joined him.

Sikandar next deputed Ismail Khan Nuhani to contact his brother, Barbek, and demand from him the acceptance of Sikandar's suzerainty and the recitation of the Khutba in his name. Barbek declined and Sikandar marched in person against him. The two armies came face to face at Kanauj. Shaikh Muhammad Qurban, better known as Kala Pahar, who was the commander of Barbek's forces, was captured. Sikandar was, however, not inclined towards a stern policy at this stage. He forgave Kala Pahar and showed him kindness and consideration. Kala Pahar then threw about his weight in favour of Sikandar and fought Barbek and defeated him. Barbek fled to Badaun but he was chased and had ultimately to surrender. Sikandar, who was eager to win over rather than crush his rivals and enemies, extended the same benevolent treatment to Barbek and placed him again on the throne of Jaunpur. It was a wise and diplomatic step, calculated to satisfy the ambition of his rival-brother and also to create a situation in which Husain Sharqi's return to power would become difficult, if not impossible. To ensure that Barbek did not throw off the yoke of Delhi, Sikandar took steps to consolidate his position in Jaunpur. He assigned a number of parganas there to his trusted nobles,5 thus creating an effective check on the ambitions of Barbek.

The only important member of the royal family who was now opposed to his authority was Azam Humayun Lodi. Sikandar marched against him, and having defeated and overthrown him, entrusted Kalpi

to Mahmud Khan Lodi. This was probably the first occasion on which Sikandar did not confirm a rebel in his territory. Probably he did not consider Azam Humayun Lodi fit enough to hold Kalpi, one of the sensitive areas of his empire.

CAMPAIGNS AGAINST TATAR KHAN LODI AND SULTAN ASHRAF

Having consolidated his position at Kalpi, Sikandar proceeded against Tatar Khan Lodi, the governor of Jaithra. The governor submitted and the Sultan confirmed him in his area.

The Sultan next turned his attention towards Bayana. Sultan Ashraf, its chief, exercised independent authority over his territory. His father, Sultan Ahmad Jilwani, had owed allegiance to Sultan Husain of Jaunpur, but when the kingdom of Jaunpur passed through a period of crisis and Sultan Husain suffered one defeat after another at the hands of Bahlul, Sultan Ahmad Jilwani became independent to all intents and purposes. Sikandar deemed it an essential part of his scheme of integrating the Sharqi kingdom to the empire of Delhi to liquidate all such former vassals of the Sharqis. He made a proposal to Ahmad Jilwani that he would assign Jalesar, Chandwar, Marahra and Sakit to him, if he surrendered Bayana. Jilwani at first accepted the proposal and expressed his willingness to deliver the keys of the fort to Umar Khan Sarwani, but on second thoughts he decided to resist. Sikandar ordered the siege of Agra, which was under Haibat Khan Jilwani, who owed allegiance to Sultan Ashraf, and then proceeded towards Bayana. Sultan Ashraf was forced to capitulate and Bayana was annexed to the kingdom of Delhi in 897/1491. Sikandar assigned Bayana to Khan-i Khanan Farmuli and returned to Delhi.

ATTACK ON JAUNPUR BY THE BACHGOTI RAJPUTS

A couple of days after his arrival in Delhi, Sikandar was going out to play chaugan when he received reports about the attack of the Bachgoti Rajputs, under Juga, on Jaunpur. A huge army of one hundred thousand soldiers, both mounted and footmen, had marched against Jaunpur. Mubarak Khan Nuhani was captured by the invaders while trying to cross the Ganges and was put in the custody of Rai Bhid of Bhattah (Rewa). Sher Khan, brother of Mubarak Khan

6 Jaithra is a village in Aligarh tehsil of Etah, 3 miles from Etah. UP Dist. Gazetteer, XII, 174.

7 Originally a tribe of the Mainpuri Chauhans, the Bachgotis lived on the borders of Jaunpur and Gorakhpur and were known for their contumacy and turbulence. See Elliot, Memoirs of the Races of the North-West Provinces, I, 47.
(Nuhani), was killed in battle. Finding the situation beyond control, Barbek Shah fled to Daryabad and joined Kala Pahar.

On receipt of this report, Sikandar ordered immediate mobilization. He did not visit his palace but took his meals in the camp and spent all his time in military preparations. In 897/1491 he marched towards Jaunpur. Barbek Shah joined him at Dalmau. Rai Bhid was alarmed at the approach of the Sultan and he set free Mubarak Khan Nuhani. The Sultan pushed ahead and at Kathgarh he pounced upon the army of Juga. According to Abdulla and Ahmad Yadgar, the Sultan's main army was coming behind him and he had only five hundred mounted soldiers with him. The army of Juga comprised of 15,000 cavalry and 200,000 infantry. Juga fled from the battlefield without risking an encounter. Sikandar carried fire and sword into the army of Juga and caused heavy losses in men and material. Juga first went to the fort of Jaund and then sought shelter with Sultan Husain Sharqi. Sikandar wrote a polite and conciliatory letter to Sultan Husain and asked him to surrender Juga. The Sharqi ruler replied in an extremely contemptuous and arrogant strain and Sikandar was left with no alternative but to strike. Sultan Husain came out of the fort and took the initiative himself. Sikandar personally led the army and defeated Husain, who fled to Bihar.

Sikandar then proceeded to Jaunpur and again placed Barbek Shah on the throne of Jaunpur. But soon afterwards he came to know about Barbek's expulsion by the zamindars of the area. Sikandar sent Kala Pahar and Azam Humayun Sarwani to Jaunpur and ordered them to seize Barbek Shah, as he had proved his utter incompetence in dealing with the situation. Sikandar himself attacked Chunar. The nobles of Husain Sharqi shut themselves up in the fort. Sikandar did not press the siege as he knew that the fort was almost impregnable.

From Chunar Sikandar proceeded to Kantat, included in the territory of Rewa (Bhattah). Rai Bhid hastened to surrender and submit. Sikandar then marched towards Arai and from there to Dalmau. At Dalmau he married the widow of Sher Khan Nuhani, who had been killed in the Bachgoti revolt. She was a very charming and accomplished lady.

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8 A town on the banks of the Ganges in the Rae Bareli district.
9 A small village in the Dalmau pargana, UP District Gazetteer, XXXIX, 137.
10 In Mirzapur district, UP, on the right bank of the Ganges.
11 Situated at the confluence of the Ujla and the Ganges and within the municipal limits of Mirzapur. See NWP District Gazetteer. 1884, XIV, 195.
12 Opposite the Allahabad fort, on the right bank of the Jumna at its confluence with the Ganges. Imperial Gazetteer, X, 332-33.
13 Nisamutullah, I, 180.
CAMPAIGN AGAINST RAI BHID

Though Rai Bhid had submitted to Sikandar, yet he was so nervous that he fled to Rewa, leaving behind all his valuables at Kantat. Sikandar sent all this property to him, but later on, when he was convinced that the Rai had definitely pro-Sharqi feelings, he marched against him in 900/1494. The Rai's son, Bir Singh, was defeated in battle. The Rai himself fled towards Sarkutch. Sikandar chased him but the Rai died in the way.

Sikandar then proceeded to Phapund, but famine and inundations destroyed his considerable army and he found himself in an extremely difficult position. He returned to Jaunpur in order to reorganize and replenish his troops.

INVASION OF HUSAIN SHARQI

This was an ideal opportunity for Husain Sharqi to strike at the Lodi Sultan. The Hindu zamindars of the locality, who still had sympathy with the displaced ruler of Jaunpur, persuaded him to come out of his refuge in Bihar. Husain collected an army and moved forward to strike at Sikandar. Sikandar reacted to it immediately by crossing the Kantat ford of the Ganges and reaching Banaras. The two armies clashed at a place some 36 miles from Banaras. Husain Sharqi met a disastrous defeat and hastily fled to Bihar.

Sikandar pursued his defeated adversary, who fled from pillar to post in search of shelter. Leaving Malik Kandu in Bihar, he went to Colgong in the Bhagalpur district of Bihar, which was then under the ruler of Bengal.

Sikandar left Mahabat Khan Lodi in Bihar and proceeded to Durweshpur. The Raja of Tirhut also submitted and the Sultan entrusted the collection of revenues from the Raja to Mubarak Khan. During his stay at Durweshpur, the Sultan went to visit the tomb of Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri. Later he marched against Sultan Alauddin of Bengal, because he had given protection to Husain Sharqi. Further, the ruler of Bengal had also sent a reconnaissance party under his son, Daniyal, in order to watch the activities of Sikandar, who was throwing his tentacles towards Bengal after having established himself in Bihar.

It was at Barh, a town in the Patna district of Bihar, that the forces of Sultan Alauddin of Bengal, under the command of Daniyal, met the forces of Sikandar Lodi, under the command of Mahmud Khan Lodi and Mubarak Khan Nuhani. Ultimately terms of peace were negotiated.

14 Khairuddin, Jaunpur Nama.
15 In Sherpur tehsil of Patna district.
between them and it was agreed that—(a) Sultan Alauddin would not give asylum to the enemies of Sikandar Lodi; (b) no encroachment would be made by either ruler on the territory of the other; and (c) Sultan Alauddin would recognize Sultan Sikandar’s authority over Bihar, Tirhut, Saran sarkars and other territories conquered by him.

On his return from the Bengal campaign, Sikandar gave Saran to his soldiers in jagirs and came to Jaunpur. During his stay of six months at Jaunpur Sikandar applied himself to destroying all Sharqi monuments, palaces, gardens, etc. He would have even demolished the mosques built by the Sharqi sultans, but the ulama dissuaded him from this vandalism.16

INVASION OF REWA AND ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS AT JAUNPUR

In 904/1498 Sikandar Lodi attacked Rewa (Bhattah) a second time. He was bitterly incensed at the invitation sent by the ruler of Rewa to Sultan Husain Sharqi to attack Lodi territory. Sikandar besieged the fort of Bandhogarh.17 He, however, could not capture it and, irritated at his failure, devastated the region he passed through.

From Bandhogarh Sikandar proceeded to Jaunpur and looked after its administrative arrangements, particularly its financial affairs. Mubarak Khan Lodi Mochi Khail, the governor of Jaunpur, was taken to task for embezzlement and mismanagement of funds. The Sultan showed such strictness in dealing with him that some of the nobles resented it.

COUP AGAINST THE SULTAN

Having set the affairs of Jaunpur in order, Sikandar proceeded to Sambhal and stayed there for four years (905-909/1499-1503). During this period some discontented elements joined hands to organize a coup. Twenty-two nobles, operating in different parts of the kingdom, planned to depose him and raise Fath Khan to the throne. The prince, however, divulged the secret to his mother and to his spiritual master, Shaikh Tahir, who insisted on the matter being brought to the knowledge of the Sultan. Asghar Khan, the governor of Delhi, Sa’id Khan Sarwani, Tatar Khan, Mahmud Shah and others were either executed or deported for complicity in the conspiracy. Some of the disgruntled nobles went to Gwalior and from there proceeded to Gujarat.

16 This story of the Sultan’s vandalism in Jaunpur is based on traditions, which the compilers of the District Gazetteers found floating down the stream of time.
17 An old fort 60 miles south of Rewa town, Imperial Gazett., VI, 359.
CAMPAIGNS AGAINST GWALIOR, DHOLPUR AND MANDRIL

In 907/1501 Raja Man Singh of Gwalior sent a eunuch, Nihal, to Sultan Sikandar with presents and professions of friendship. The eunuch failed in his mission, and the relations between Delhi and Gwalior became further strained.

The Rai of Dholpur was suspected of having incited the rebels who had dislodged Imadul Mulk, the governor of Bayana. Sikandar assigned Bayana to Khwaja Khan, and ordered Alam Khan, governor of Mewat, and Khan-i Khanan Lohari, governor of Rapri, to join Khwaja Khan in his operations against Dholpur. Rai Manik Deva put up a determined defence and killed Khwaja Babban, a veteran soldier. Thereupon Sikandar marched in person against Manik Deva. He reached Dholpur on 6 Ramazan 906/25 March 1501. The Rai grew panicky and fled to Gwalior. Dholpur was occupied and the Lodi army not only pillaged and plundered it but even uprooted the gardens. Adam Khan was put in charge of the fort of Dholpur.

Sikandar next marched against Gwalior. Apart from the failure of Nihal’s mission, the protection given by the Rai of Gwalior to certain rebels and also to Rai Manik Deva had irritated the Sultan. For two months he encamped on the bank of the Asi (Asan), a lake near Gwalior. Ultimately the Rai sued for peace (909/1503). He expelled Sa’id Khan, Babu Khan, Rai Ganesh (the Chauhan chief of Patiali) and sent his son, Bikramajit, as a hostage. The Sultan was pleased at this gesture; he honoured the prince and later on even returned Dholpur to Manik Deva.

In 910/1504 Sikandar marched against Mandril, and besieged it. The garrison, however, surrendered the fort. Sikandar destroyed the temples of Mandril, built mosques in their place and plundered the land. The fort was entrusted to Mian Makan and Mujahid Khan.

FOUNDATION OF THE CITY OF AGRA

In 911/1506 Sikandar Lodi founded the city of Agra. The site for the new city was selected after considerable search and deliberation. A commission of several sagacious and experienced men sailed on boats from Delhi and examined the area on both sides of the banks of the Jumna. The Sultan then himself went on a boat to see the site. ‘He embarked on a boat’, writes Ni‘matullah, ‘and sailed, enjoying fully the journey and hunting on the way, until he reached the place (selected by the commission) and liked the elevation of the area for

18 Tabaqat-i Akbari, I, 324.
19 A tehsil town 62 miles west of Gwalior on the right bank of the Parbati river.
purposes of habitation. He asked the captain of the crew, Nayak, who piloted his boat: “Which of these two elevations is better suited for (our purposes)?” Nayak replied: “That one in the foreground (ag-rah) is better.” The Sultan smiled and said: “The name of this city will also be Agra.” The site selected by the Sultan was in the villages of Bashi and Poiya in the pargana of Deoli, and 9 parganas out of a total of 52 from the sarkar of Bayana were included in it.

THE GWAJALOR CAMPAIGN

In 911/1506 Sikandar Lodi again marched towards Gwalior. The commissariat arrangements having broken down, the advance-guard of the Delhi forces was attacked at Chatawar. The heroism of Awadh Khan and Ahmad Khan saved the situation, but Sikandar abandoned the idea of marching further and returned to Agra. Next year (in 912/1506) Imad Khan Farnuli and Mujahid Khan were sent to effect the conquest of the fort of Untgarh, which was regarded as the key to Gwalior. Later on Sikandar himself joined the advance-party and attacked the fort from all sides. The garrison put up a heroic defence, and when a breach was made in the wall of the fort, they desperately fought hand-to-hand and their resistance continued even after the fort had been occupied. Mujahid was put in charge of the fort but was removed soon afterwards, when Sikandar came to know that he had accepted a bribe from the Rai of Untgarh for removing Muslims from the fort. The Sultan returned to Agra on 27 Muharram 913/8 June 1507. The march of the army from Untgarh was made extremely difficult due to scarcity of water and a very large number of soldiers died of thirst.

On 10 Muharram 915/30 April 1509 the Sultan marched upon Hatkant, a stronghold of the Bhadaria Rajputs. Police stations (thanas) were established at different strategic places in order to keep a watch over the activities of the inhabitants of that area.

In 916/1510 Shahzada Shihabuddin rebelled against his father, Sultan Nasiruddin of Malwa and fled to Sipri. Nasiruddin deprived his erring son of his right to succeed and nominated his third son, Azam Humayun, as his heir. Shihabuddin approached Sikandar Lodi for protection and support. The Lodi ruler expressed his willingness to help him provided he ceded Chanderi to Sikandar. In Zil Hij 916/March 1511 Sikandar Lodi sent his envoys with presents to

20 Ni'matullah, I, 195.
21 Ibid., I, 195-96.
22 Abul Fazl mentions it as a town in the Gwalior sarkar.
23 Untgarh or Utgar is a tehsil in Karnauli.
24 In Chanderi.
Sultan Mahmud of Gujarat in order to placate him and ensure his neutrality in the event of conflict with Malwa. It was also the recognition of the independent status of Gujarat by the Sultan of Delhi—something which had been withheld by the Lodi Sultan so long.

But before any concerted action could be planned by Sikandar and Shihabuddin, Sultan Nasiruddin of Malwa expired. The rebel-prince immediately altered his plan of action; he gave up the idea of going to Delhi and marched straight to Mandu. In his struggle with his brother he was, however, defeated.

Azam Humayun who had ascended the throne of Malwa as Sultan Mahmud II was not destined to rule in peace. In 917/1510 his brother, Sahib Khan, effected a coup and ascended the throne as Sultan Muhammad. Sultan Mahmud II reached Chanderi and sought the help of its governor, Bahjat Khan, but Bahjat firmly replied that his loyalty was to the person who held Mandu. Mahmud II then turned to Sikandar for help. The latter demanded Chanderi in return for his help. Not waiting for this political bargain to mature, Mahmud II secured the help of Medini Rai and his powerful Rajput contingent, and occupied Mandu on 16 Shawwal 917/16 January 1512.

Medini Rai's ascendancy in Malwa led to the rebellions of Bahjat Khan, governor of Chanderi, of Sikandar Khan, governor of Siwas and Hindia, and of Mansur Khan in 918/1512. Medini Rai defeated Sikandar Khan but Bahjat appealed to Agra for help. 'If you send an army', he said, 'to place Sahib Khan on the throne, I will recite the Khutba and issue the coins in your name.' Sikandar was quick to respond and Sahib Khan was placed on the throne. But Bahjat went back on his promise and refused to recite the Khutba or issue the coins in the name of Sultan Sikandar Lodi. Sikandar avoided a conflict and his army returned to Delhi in 919/1513. Unfavourable developments at Mandu, however, brought Sahib Khan to Sikandar Lodi. Disgusted with the overweening ambition of Medini Rai, Mahmud Khalji first planned his assassination, and when he failed in that attempt, he fled to Muzaffar Shah of Gujarat in 920/1514. Sikandar Lodi decided to act and sent an army for the conquest of Chanderi. It was occupied and Sahib Khan was installed there. Sikandar Lodi, however, appointed his own officers to carry on the administration of Chanderi.

Taking full advantage of the situation prevailing in Malwa, Sikandar sought to extend his authority in that region. He occupied Sui Sopar 25 and assigned it to Abu Bakr Khan, brother of the

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25 Abul Fazl mentions Sui Sopar in the sarkar of Ranthambhor.
displaced governor, Ali Khan. In 923/1517 he marched towards Ranthambhor but could not conquer the fort. The governor of Ranthambhor, however, accepted his overlordship.

DEATH AND ESTIMATE

Sikandar Lodi died of diphtheria or throat-cancer on 7 Ziga'd 923/21 November 1517.

Endowed with a rare physical charm and gift of the gab, fond of poetry, music and good cheer, Sikandar Lodi was in certain respects a very striking figure of medieval India. He gave a new orientation to Afghan polity in India and considerably raised the stature and dignity of the office of the sultan. The Afghan nobility, despite its attachment to Afghan democratic traditions, was made to recognize the superior status of the monarch. He adopted several measures to emphasize the dignity and authority of the king:

(1) While Bahlul used to sit on a carpet, Sikandar started sitting on a throne. There was no question of any noble sharing the seat with him. The Sultan was no longer primus inter pares.

(2) In order to impress the superior position of the sultan on the minds of the nobles and the people, he laid down elaborate rules for the reception of royal farmans in the distant parts of the kingdom. The governors were required to meet the courier from the court at a distance of about six miles from their headquarters. The royal messenger sat in a specially constructed pavilion and delivered the farman to the governor, who held it with great respect on his head and took it to the mosque to be read out from the pulpit.

(3) The nobles were made to realize that they were servants of the sultan and that their position and power depended entirely on his good will and pleasure. Those who held jagirs were required to submit accounts regularly to the diwan-i wizarat. All cases of malversation, mismanagement, misbehaviour or corruption were sternly dealt with.

(4) A highly efficient spy-system kept the sultan informed of all the developments in the kingdom and particularly of the activities of

26 A mystic eccentric of Rapri, Shaikh Hasan Majzub (for whom see, Abdul Haq Muhaddis, Akhbarul Akhyar, 281), had fallen in love with him. See Waqfat-i Mustaqi f. 23b-24a.
27 Tarikh-i Shahi, 49; Tarikh-i Da'udi, 36-39. Mushtaqi says that he took wine also secretly, Waqfat, f. 36a.
28 Waqfat-i Mustaqi, f. 19a; Tabaqat-i Akbari, I, 338.
29 Mubarak Khan Lodi, governor of Jaunpur, was strictly dealt with in connection with a charge of malversation. Tabaqat-i Akbari, I, 321. Asghar, a governor of Delhi, Mujahid Khan, Shams Khan and others were punished for corruption and misconduct.
the nobles. The Sultan himself went out *incognito* to have direct and intimate knowledge of the affairs of the kingdom. Surprised at his knowledge of even the clandestine activities of the people, the public, in its credulity, thought that some mysterious supernatural power kept him informed of all that happened in his territory.

Sikandar was an able administrator, clear-headed in his analysis of situations and vigorous in the enforcement of his orders. He displayed a great sense of responsibility in discharging the functions of his kingly office. It is reported that he worked from morning till late in the night. It was his daily routine that after the morning prayer and recitation of the Quran, he plunged into administrative affairs. His private audience began at night and it was at that time that he usually sent his orders to governors and communications to rulers. His meal was served at midnight. Some *ulama*, who were his close companions, sat by his side but were not permitted to eat anything in his presence. They took their share of the royal dinner to their homes.

Sikandar’s vigorous administration ensured peace and prosperity and guaranteed justice to the common man. All the highways of the empire were safe from bandits and robbers, and steps were taken to create a sense of security among the people.

His judicial system was very efficiently organized under Mian Bhu’a. The Sultan himself considered and decided cases which were brought to him. Darya Khan Nuhani had to be present at the court from early morning till late in the night to receive petitions and inquire into grievances.

All chroniclers refer to the prosperous and affluent condition of the kingdom during the time of Sikandar. Every morning the price schedule of the market was reported to him. The prices of essential commodities were generally cheap. ‘But we cannot shut our eyes’, writes Dr. S. A. Halim, ‘to the grim fact that cheapness was caused by the dearth of bullion and the absence of movement of goods and exchange of commodities, for no part of the kingdom touched the sea; and, secondly, corruption in the revenue department still persisted as is evidenced by the record of a conversation between Mian Bhu’a and the Sultan as to how to check corruption.’

Barring 1496, when there was failure of crops, the agricultural produce was generally good. The Sultan himself used to take keen personal interest in the development of agriculture. He abolished

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30 Even the private life of the nobles was reported to him. He knew how a noble, Bhikan Khan, had carried his bed into his room when it had started raining at night. *Waqiat-i Mushitaqi*, 15b.

31 According to *Tarikh-i Shaht* (49) he recited three parts (*paras*) of the Quran standing after midnight prayers.
zakat (import duty) on grain, and introduced a measurement-standard known as gazz-i sikandari, which continued to prevail till the Mughal period. The rent-rolls prepared during his reign proved of immense value to his successors. 'The statistical returns of Babur's time', remarks Edward Thomas, 'were clearly based upon the old rent-rolls of that unacknowledged contributor to the efficiency of all later Indian revenue systems, Sikandar bin Bahlol. A single subdued confession in Babur's table suffices to prove this.'

Sikandar Lodi appreciated fully the necessity of organizing the army on the traditions of the early sultans of Delhi. He kept close contact with his soldiers, and it is said that he used to send two farmans every day to his army when it was on the march. The morning farman directed the army about the journey it had to cover during the day and the evening farman told them about the place they had to encamp at night.

Some of the philanthropic and charitable works of the Sultan particularly elicited the praise of the people. He had arrangements for the daily distribution of cooked and uncooked food to poor people in the capital. Biannual, weekly and daily allowances and stipends were fixed for the poor and the destitute in his kingdom. When he changed his clothes and beddings, they were sold and the money obtained was given away as dowry to orphan girls.

Sikandar Lodi undertook some measures with a view to checking immoral trends in society. He prohibited the Bahrai processions, which were taken out in the month of Jeth (May-June) in memory of Salar Mas'ud Ghazi, but had become an occasion for immoral practices. He forbade also the visit of women to the shrines of saints—an interdict originally issued by Firuz Shah Tughluq in view of the corruption that usually tarnished such gatherings, but which must have been disregarded after his death and needed fresh promulgation. Sikandar also checked the worship of Sitala, credulously believed to be the goddess of small-pox.

Sikandar's contribution to art and culture was not negligible. He patronized men of letters, artists, poets, etc., and himself composed poetry under the nom de plume of Gulrukh. His munificence attracted
scholars from Arabia and Persia. It was at his invitation that two eminent philosophers—Shaikh Abdullah and Shaikh Azizullah—came to Delhi from Tulamba and strove to change the pattern of Muslim education by introducing a greater portion of rational subjects in the curriculum of the day.

It must, however, be mentioned that Sikandar Lodi was narrow-minded and fanatical in religious matters, and that his otherwise successful reign was marred by an intolerant religious attitude towards the non-Muslims. In his early years, when he was a prince, he was irritated at Maulana Abdullah Ajudhani, who had objected to his interference with a religious practice of the Hindus at Thaneswar, telling him boldly that Islam did not permit such interference. But when he ascended the throne, his iconoclastic zeal found an expression in the destruction of the idols of the temple of Nagarkot, which he gave to butchers for weighing meat. While determining his motivations in following this religious policy, one cannot afford to ignore the fact that tradition holds him responsible for also destroying edifices of the Sharqi rulers at Jaunpur. Besides, it is a significant fact that during his regime the Hindus took to learning Persian and were recruited in large numbers to different posts—a fact to which Shaikh Abdul Qaddus Gangohi drew the attention of Babur.

40 Akhbarul Akhyar, 220; Tarikh-i Da’udi, 36.
41 Waqiat-i Mushaqi, ff. 49a-b.
42 For Sikandar’s respectful visits to Shaikh Abdullah, see Badauni, Muntakhabat Tawarikh, I, 324.
43 Ferishta, I, 187.
44 Maktubat-i Quddusi, 337.
IV. SULTAN IBRAHIM LODI (923-32/1517-28)

ACCESSION

After the death of Sultan Sikandar Lodi, his eldest son, Ibrahim, was raised to the throne on 8 Ziqā‘d 923/22 November 1517. The nobles, however, did not like political power to be concentrated in the hands of one person, as had happened during the reign of Sikandar, and so they arranged for the division of the empire into two units: one under Ibrahim and the other under his younger brother, Jalal Khan. The country up to the border of the former kingdom of Jaunpur was to be under Ibrahim, while Jalal Khan was to govern the territory ruled over by the Sharqis. A covenant was arrived at and the empire was accordingly divided.

Jalal Khan then set off for Jaunpur to take charge of his share of the patrimony, but he stayed at Kalpi for a few days and wasted his time in pleasures and hunting. He appointed Fath Khan, son of Azam Humayun Sarwani, as his wazir.

The division of the kingdom had been agreed to solemnly by the two brothers and, given the will to honour it, the plan would have worked well. But the arrival of Khan-i Jahan Lodi, the jagirdar of Rapri, at the court upset the arrangement. He told Sultan Ibrahim and the amirs that the division of the empire was ill-advised, and that the sooner it was abrogated, the better it would be in the interest of the Afghans. Notwithstanding the political wisdom of Khan-i Jahan Lodi’s advice, it was Machiavellian in spirit and was a flagrant breach of trust. Ibrahim was quick to respond to Khan-i Jahan Lodi’s advice as it was in consonance with his own ambitions.

Once the abrogation of the treaty was decided upon, ways and means were explored to undo it. It was suggested that action was necessary before Jalal Khan had established himself at Jaunpur. A farman was, therefore, sent to Jalal, couched in extremely polite and persuasive language, asking him to return quickly to the court as his advice was urgently needed on an important matter. Haibat Khan Gurgandaz, a shrewd man with considerable plausibility and power of persuasion, was sent to allure him into the net. But before Haibat could reach his destination, reports of the conspiracy had reached Jalal. Cautioned in time, he refused to be the victim of the treacherous game of the nobles. Ibrahim then sent a deputation consisting of nobles like Shaikhzada Sultan Muhammad (son of Shaikh Sa‘īd Farmuli), Malik Ismail (son of Malik Alauddin Jilwani) and
Qazi Hamilduddin Hajib to undertake the mission in which Haibat Khan had failed. This deputation also could not persuade Jalal Khan to visit Agra. Ibrahim then decided to take some positive action against Jalal and paralyse him before he had consolidated his position at Jaunpur.

In order to alienate the nobles of Jalal from him and to win them over to his side, Ibrahim sent a number of *farmans* to them with big presents and promises of future rewards. Each *farman* was sent through a confidential officer. Some of the eminent maliks of Jalal Khan, who had thirty to forty thousand soldiers under their commands—like Darya Khan Nuhani, *hakim* of the *wilayat* of Bihar, Nasir Khan, jagirdar of Ghazipur, and Shaikhzada, the *zabit* of Awadh and Lucknow—deserted their master and joined Ibrahim.

A second coronation was then celebrated by Ibrahim on 15 Zil Hij 923/29 December 1517. Jagirs, robes of honour, posts and assignments were bestowed on nobles and officers on this occasion. This second coronation was, in fact, a public declaration of the abrogation of the earlier arrangement and of Ibrahim’s claim to have sovereign rights over the areas formerly assigned to Jalal.

**CONFLICT WITH JALAL**

Jalal could hardly accept this position, which was a brazen-faced departure from the covenant arrived at between him and his brother. He started consolidating his position at Kalpi by increasing his military strength and by conciliating the local zamindars. He assumed the title of Sultan Jalaluddin and caused his name to be read in the *Khutba* and inscribed on the coins. As soon as he had stabilized his position, he marched towards Gwalior, where Azam Humayun Sarwani was besieging the fort and sent a message to him, saying: ‘I regard you (Azam Humayun) as my father and my uncle. You know that the fault is not mine. The treaty has been violated by Sultan Ibrahim... It is your duty, as an honest Musalman, to uphold and support the just cause.’ Azam Humayun was moved by this message and decided to join Jalal. It was agreed upon between them that they would first reduce the *wilayat* of Jaunpur and clear it of all hostile nobles. So they attacked the governor of Awadh, Sa’id Khan, who fled towards Lucknow and wrote to Ibrahim about the attack.

Ibrahim had to act now. As a safeguard against any emergency, he sent his imprisoned brothers—Ismail Khan, Husain Khan and Shaikh Daulat Khan—to the Hansi fort, but provided all normal conveniences for them. On 24 Zil Hij 923/6 January 1518 he

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reached Bhongaon by forced marches and planned to attack Kanauj. On the way he received a report that Azam Humayun Sarwani and his son, Fath Khan, had deserted Jalal Khan and were coming to join him. Ibrahim sent his distinguished nobles to receive them and bestowed on each of them a special robe of honour and a dagger studded with jewels.

The zamindars of Jartoli, a dependency of Koil, who were notorious for their contumacious activities, rebelled at this time and killed Umar Khan (son of Sikandar Khan Sur) in an encounter. Malik Qasim, the governor of Sambhal, marched against them and killed their ringleader. The rebellion was crushed.

Many nobles of Jaunpur, like Sa'id Khan and Shaikhzada Farnuli, abandoned Jalal and joined Ibrahim Lodi. This considerably strengthened his position. A huge army led by eminent Afghan nobles, like Azam Humayun Sarwani, Azam Humayun Lodi and Nasir Khan Nuhani, was then sent to deal with Jalal, who was encamped at Kalpi at that time. But before this force could reach Kalpi, Jalal marched at the head of an army comprising of thirty thousand cavalry and a number of elephants for an attack on Agra. Ni'amat Khatun, the family of Qutb Khan Lodi Imadul Mulk, Malik Badruddin Jilwani, and those connected with Jalal's haram were left in the fort of Kalpi. The army of Delhi besieged Kalpi and there was exchange of fire for some days. Eventually the fort of Kalpi was reduced and the city was plundered. An enormous booty fell into the hands of the forces of Delhi.

Sultan Ibrahim sent an army under Malik Adam Kakar for the defence of Agra. When Jalal reached near Agra, he thought of ravaging the town in retaliation for the destruction of Kalpi by the forces of Ibrahim. Malik Adam Kakar handled the situation with tact and succeeded in delaying Jalal's onslaught against Agra. Then reinforcements arrived under Malik Ismail Jilwani, Kabir Khan Lodi and Bahadur Khan Nuhani. Malik Adam Kakar then decided upon firm action, but he preferred to make an overture for peace before adopting a tough line. He sent a message to Jalal saying that if he surrendered his chair, aftab-gir, naubat, drums, sikka and other insignia of royalty and agreed to live as an ordinary malik, he would request Sultan Ibrahim to restore the jagir of Kalpi to him. Jalal agreed to these humiliating terms and surrendered these insignia to Malik Adam Kakar, who took them to Sultan Ibrahim at Etawah. Ibrahim spurned the offer and decided to march personally against Jalal and liquidate him. When Jalal heard about the intention of Ibrahim, he escaped to Gwalior and sought shelter with its raja. Ibrahim stayed at Agra for some time and set its affairs in order. He
sent Haibat Khan Gurgandaz, Karimdad and Daulat Khan Inder for the protection of Delhi, appointed Shaikhzada Manjhu to the governorship (wilayat) of Chanderi, and also summoned Sultan Muhammad, the maternal grandson of Sultan Nasiruddin Khalji of Malwa.

Ibrahim then made up his mind to invade Gwalior and chastise Jalal. An army comprising of thirty thousand horsemen and three hundred and fifty elephants was sent to reduce Gwalior. Sultan Ibrahim, further, sent reinforcements to Gwalior under Bhikan Khan Lodi, Jalal Khan Lodi, Sulaiman Farmuli, Bahadur Khan Nuhani, Ismail, Malik Firuz Ikhwan, Bahadur Khan Sarwani, Khizir Khan Lodi, Khizr Khan Nuhani and Khan-i Jahan Lodi. As luck would have it, Raja Man of Gwalior died at this time. Azam Humayun Sarwani besieged the fort and succeeded in reducing it. Jalal first escaped to Malwa, but when he did not like the treatment meted to him by Mahmud Khalji, he turned to Kara Katanga. On the way he fell into the hands of the Bhils and the Gonds, who took him into custody and sent him to Sultan Ibrahim. He was interned in the fort of Hansi along with his other brothers, but was killed later, on the advice of some supporters of Ibrahim.

RELATIONS WITH HIS NOBLES

Ibrahim could not maintain good relations with his nobles and maliks. His overbearing attitude alienated them and created a suspicion in their minds concerning his intentions.

Miyan Bhu’a was an old and eminent noble of the Lodi kingdom. He had been held in great respect by Sikandar Lodi and had acted as head of the judiciary. On account of old age, he could not perform his duties as efficiently as before. The Sultan threw him into prison and put him in the charge of Malik Adam Kakar. His duties—his jagir as well as his honours—were transferred to his son. Miyan Bhu’a’s death in prison created a deep resentment in his family and offended the old Afghan nobles also.

Ibrahim gradually lost faith in his old nobles, and one by one he threw many of them into prison. Azam Humayun Sarwani, who was besieging the Gwalior fort and had nearly reduced it, was recalled to Agra all of a sudden and thrown into prison. When Azam Humayun’s son, Islam Khan, came to know of this, he rose in rebellion at Kara-Manikpur. He took all the property of his father under his own control and did not permit Ahmad Khan to take charge of his jagir. Ahmad Khan challenged him but was defeated. The Sultan thought of sending an army to chastise him. But at this time Azam Humayun Lodi and Sa’id Khan Lodi escaped to their jagirs in Lucknow. They started
correspondence with Islam Khan and planned joint action against the Sultan. Ibrahim sent a large army under Ahmad Khan (brother of Azam Humayun Lodi), the sons of Husain Farmuli, Majlis-i A’li Shaikhzada Mahmud Farmuli, Ali Khan, Ali Khan-i Khanan Farmuli, Masnad-i A’li Bukhari Khan Farmuli, Dilawar Khan Sarang Khani, Qutb Khan (son of Ghazi Khan Bulotii), Bhikan Khan Nuhani, Sikandar Khan (son of Malik Adam Kakar) and others to deal with Islam Khan and the recalcitrant nobles. But when this army reached near Bangarmau, Iqbal Khan, the khasa-khail of Azam Humayun Lodi, came out of an ambush with five thousand horsemen and some elephants, attacked the imperial forces and scattered them.

The news of this defeat upset Ibrahim, and he declared that the nobles, who had come back defeated at the hands of the rebels, would remain condemned unless they redeemed their honour by defeating the rebellious maliks headed by Islam Khan. He sent more forces to strengthen their ranks. The rebel army comprised of nearly forty thousand mounted men and five hundred elephants. But before these forces could come into clash, Shaikh Raju Bukhari, an eminent saint, intervened, and it was agreed that if Sultan Ibrahim set free Azam Humayun Sarwani, they would not persist in their opposition to him and would move to some other territory. Both the armies separated when this agreement was arrived at. But the Sultan did not ratify this agreement. He issued orders to Darya Khan Nuhani, governor of Bihar, Nasir Khan Nuhani and Shaikhzada Farmuli to march against the rebels and bring them to book. Consequently a sanguinary battle was fought and many soldiers were killed on both sides. Ultimately the imperial forces emerged victorious. Islam Khan was killed on the battle-field; Sa’id Khan Lodi was arrested by the servants of Darya Khan Nuhani. An enormous booty fell into the hands of the forces of Delhi. The Sultan rejoiced at this victory and distributed considerable money in alms and charity. It was a major victory against the nobles.

It was at this time that Azam Humayun Sarwani and Miyan Bhu’a died in prison; and Darya Khan Nuhani, governor of Bihar, and the amir-ul umara Khan-i Jahan Lodi and Husain Farmuli rose in rebellion. Husain Farmuli, the governor of Chanderi, was assassinated at the instigation of the Sultan. This further antagonized the amirs, because they realized that the Sultan was bent upon liquidating them by every means.

Darya Khan Nuhani died soon afterwards and his son, Bahadur Khan, became the rallying point of all rebels. Bahadur Khan incited rebellious tendencies on a large scale in Bihar and nearly a hundred thousand horsemen gathered round him. He assumed independence
and proclaimed himself as Sultan Muhammad. The Khutba was read and coins were issued in his name. After being defeated by the army of Sultan Ibrahim, Nasir Khan Nuhani, the governor of Ghazipur, also joined Bahadur Khan of Bihar. Thus the position of Bahadur was further stabilized. Ibrahim sent a huge force to deal with him.

The Sultan had excited the suspicions of his nobles and they had no alternative but to rebel in self-protection. A son of Daulat Khan Lodi, governor of Lahore, who happened to visit Ibrahim at this time, was alarmed to find that the Sultan was contemplating action against all the distinguished nobles of the kingdom. Afraid of being thrown into prison, he escaped to his father and reported the situation to him. Daulat Khan started organizing a movement against Ibrahim and obtained the cooperation of all the nobles and jagirdars of the Punjab.

INVITATION TO BABUR AND THE BATTLE OF PANIPAT

Disgusted with Ibrahim, the nobles of the Punjab wrote letters to Babur in Kabul and invited him to invade India. Alam Khan, brother of Sikandar Lodi, personally went to Kabul for this purpose. Babur sent some of his nobles with Alam Khan in order to assess the situation. These nobles conquered Sialkot, Lahore and many other areas and reported the situation to Babur, who started for the conquest of India on 1 Rabi I 932/16 December 1525. When Alam Khan reached Lahore, he insisted that since the Mughals had come at his invitation, they were to assign Delhi to him after conquering it. Alam Khan and the Mughals disagreed, and Alam Khan marched with an army of forty thousand mounted men to Delhi and besieged the city. When Ibrahim heard about this, he moved from Agra at the head of an army consisting of eighty thousand soldiers. Alam Khan left the siege of Delhi and prepared to give battle to Ibrahim. He made a surprise attack at night and dispersed the forces of Ibrahim. But Ibrahim, who had stayed out of the camp with a body of five or six thousand soldiers, mounted an attack on the forces of Alam Khan in the morning. Alam Khan was defeated and fled away. Many of his men were killed.

In the meantime Babur had reached Lahore. Daulat Khan and Ghazi Khan did not stick to their pledges and went over to Milwat. Mir Khalifa persuaded Alam Khan to join him. He was received well by Babur. Later Daulat Khan and Dilawar Khan also joined. After occupying Lahore, Babur proceeded to Sunam and Samana and sent Tardi Beg towards Delhi as an advance-guard at the head of four thousand horsemen. Ibrahim sent Da'ud Khan with ten thousand
horsemen and some elephants to challenge Tardi Beg, who made a surprise night assault on the army of Da'ud Khan. Many of Da'ud's men were killed and Da'ud Khan himself was arrested.

When Ibrahim received the news of Da'ud Khan's defeat, he decided to march in person. An army of one lakh mounted soldiers and five thousand elephants, besides a large number of infantry, firearms, etc., marched under him. Babur's army of effectives comprised of about 8,000 soldiers. He soon realized that the overwhelming numerical superiority of the Lodi forces could be rendered ineffective only by fighting the battle at some strategic place and through an effective combination of cavalry and artillery. Babur successfully achieved both objects. The forces of Ibrahim were lying just south of Panipat; the Mughal army could easily reach the town in two marches and use the houses and buildings of Panipat as a shelter for its right wing.2

Babur carefully planned the disposition of his forces. He protected his weak front against superior numbers by employing some seven hundred waggons fastened together by ropes of raw hide. After every six or seven waggons there was a small breastwork, where musketeers and artillery-men were stationed under the over-all supervision of two distinguished artillery officers—Ustad Ali and Mustafa. Having made all these preparations, Babur advanced two marches and reached the town of Panipat on 12 April 1526. The city protected his right wing. The left wing was protected by digging a ditch and constructing an abatis of felled trees. The centre was strengthened with a line of breastworks and waggons, but the line had gaps wide enough for fifty or a hundred horsemen to charge through abreast. 'The waggon-line', remarks Rushbrook Williams, 'was the stratagem of aggression rather than of defence; it was intended to hold the enemy along an extended front, so that his flanks might be open to attack. Certainly it provided shelter for the artillery-men and musketeers, but it was in no sense of the word a laager or a fortress.'3

For about a week after 12 April the Mughal and Afghan forces stood on the field without starting the actual combat. On 19 April Babur made an abortive attempt to provoke an attack. A few days later, however, the conflict began. 'Jammed together in a solid mass, Sultan Ibrahim's men could neither advance nor retreat.' The engagement began at about 6 a.m. and by midday the Afghan army was routed. Thousands of Afghan corpses, with the body of Ibrahim in

2 Rushbrook Williams (An Empire Builder of the 16th Century, 128-38) has given a very interesting and detailed account of the battle.
3 Ibid., 130.
their midst, covered the battle-field of Panipat. 'No sultan of India except Sultan Ibrahim', remarks Ni‘matullah, 'has been killed on the battle-field.' The sultanat of Delhi, which had its birth on the battle-field of Tarain in 1192, breathed its last in 1526, a few miles away on the battle-field of Panipat.

4 Tarikh-i Khan-i Juhani, I, 259.

Yadgar says (Tarikh-i Shahi, 98) that Babur was deeply moved when he saw Ibrahim amongst the dead. He picked up his head from the dust and got the body buried with great respect and distributed qand, halwa (sweetmeats) to bless his soul.