



# MARKET REGULATIONS OF ALAUDDIN KHALJI

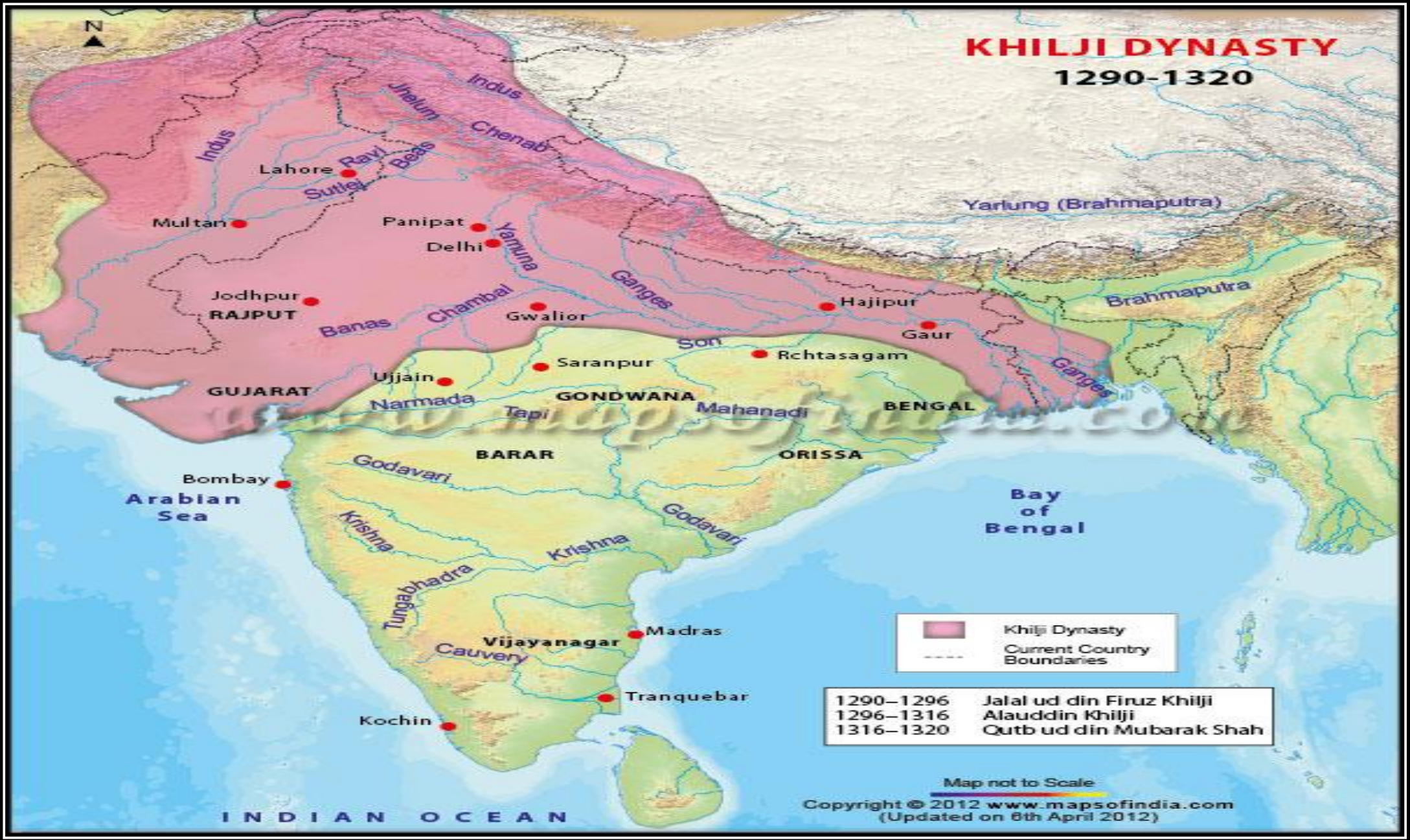
**MUHAMMED KABEER CP**  
Assistant Professor of History

Hajee Karutha Rowther Howdia College, Uthamapalayam

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC HISTORY OF INDIA FROM 1206 TO 1857 AD.**

17PHIC22

# KHILJI DYNASTY 1290-1320



■ Khilji Dynasty  
- - - Current Country Boundaries

1290-1296 Jalal ud din Firuz Khilji  
1296-1316 Alauddin Khilji  
1316-1320 Qutb ud din Mubarak Shah

Map not to Scale  
Copyright © 2012 www.mapsofindia.com  
(Updated on 8th April 2012)

## MARKET REGULATIONS OF ALAUDDIN KHALJI

- The market reforms of **Alauddin Khalji(1296-1316)** were oriented towards *administrative and military necessities*.
- *Medieval rulers believed that necessities of life, especially food grains, should be available to the city folk at reasonable prices.* But few rulers had been able to control the prices for any length of time.
- Alauddin Khalji was more or less the first ruler who looked at the problem of price control, in a systematic manner and was able to maintain stable prices for a considerable period.
- It has been pointed out that *Alauddin Khalji instituted the market control because after the Mongol siege of Delhi, he wanted to recruit a large army.*
- All his treasures would have soon exhausted if he was to spend huge resources on army. *With low prices the sultan could recruit large army with low expenses.*

- Alauddin Khalji's measures did not remain confined to rural economy but extended to urban market as well.
- He is credited for issuing a set of seven regulations which came to be known as market-control measures.
- *Barani, who is our main source on this aspect, is the only authority who gives these regulations in detail.*
- The Sultan fixed the prices of all commodities from *grain to cloth, slaves, cattle, etc.* (**Regulation 1**).
- These prices were really to be enforced since the Sultan carefully made all arrangements for making the measure a success.

- A controller of market (*shahna-i-mandi*), intelligence officers (*barids*) and secret spies (*munhiyan*) were appointed (**Regulation. 2**).
- The grain merchants were placed under the *shahna-i-mandi* and sureties were taken from them (**Regulation. 4**).
- The Sultan himself was to receive daily reports separately from these three sources (**Regulation. 7**).
- Hoarding (*practice of purchasing essential commodities*)(*ihthikar*) was prohibited (**Regulation. 5**).
- While ensuring strict control in the market, the Sultan did not overlook the more essential requirement, namely the regular supply of grains.

- Obviously, the grain merchants could bring supplies to the market only if they could get the grains and that, too, at sufficiently low prices.
- It was apparently for this reason that the Sultan decreed such a rigour in realization of land revenue in the **Doab** that the peasants should be forced to sell the grain to the *carvanian* (**the grain merchants**) at the side of the field (**Regulation. 6**).
- The Sultan established granaries in Delhi and in Chhain in Rajasthan.
- The land tax from the *khalisa* in the doab was realised in kind. The grain went to the state granaries (**Regulation. 3**).
- The *Multanis* who were cloth merchants were given **20 lakhs** of *tankas* as advance to purchase and bring cloth to the market.

- *The Sultan succeeded in maintaining low prices and ample supplies in the market as reported by all our authorities.*
- But there are varying reasons mentioned for why the Sultan introduced the market control and in what region it was enforced.
- The poet courtier *Amir Khusrau* considers the measure to be of immense generosity taken for the welfare and comfort of all, the elite as well as the public at large.
- The Chishti divine *Nasiruddin Mahmud (Chiragh Delhi)* attributes it to the Sultan's effort to do good to all the people.
- But the historian *Barani's* view was totally different. *He did not credit it to Sultan's benevolent intentions but gives a hard financial reason.*

- *The Sultan was anxious to have a large army and to take other precautions such as building of forts at strategic places, fortification wall around Delhi, etc. against the Mongol invasions.*
- *If numerous additional cavalrymen and troops were to be employed at the prevailing salaries, the drain from the state treasury was to exhaust it totally.*
- *The salaries could be reduced only if the prices were kept at a sufficiently low level.*



- *Barani's* reasoning appears of course more valid.
- Since the main army encampment was in Delhi and most of the royal troops were to be stationed in or around Delhi, the main area of price control was Delhi itself.
- However, since the supplies of cheap grain were to be made available to the grain merchants in the surrounding districts of the doab the low prices ought to be prevalent there as well.