Chapter - IV

Foreign Policy of Sultan Muhammad Bin Tughlug
Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq was a remarkable man on several counts who adopted a foreign policy that had far reaching consequences. He was fully aware of the political developments in the neighbouring countries. The cornerstone of his foreign policy was to acquire effective control over the regions in the North-west of the river Indus for ensuring security to the people in the border areas against the Mongols from Central Asia, create friends among the rulers outside India and promote land and maritime trade between his sultanate and the foreign countries. The Sultan was successful, atleast in the field of foreign affairs. While Indian historians have given very little information about his contacts with foreign powers, the account of the Arab travellers and historians like Ibn Battuta, Al-Qal Qashandi, Shihabuddin Safadi,
Ibn-i Hajar Asqalani, and others throw valuable light on the foreign relations of Sultan Muhammad Bin Tughluq. The relevant evidence available in these miscellaneous sources tends to show that as a result of his policy India's foreign relations expanded and its prestige greatly increased in the outside world.

In the present Chapter on Sultan Muhammad's diplomatic relations, the aim is to analyse the factors that influenced the foreign policy of the Sultan towards the Mongol rulers of the neighbouring countries, identify the regions of strategic importance that had become a bone contention between the Sultan of Delhi and the Chaghtai rulers of Central Asia and then discuss
None of the predecessors of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq seems to have given a serious thought to the problem of insecurity caused by Mongol raids and find out a permanent solution to it. The Mongols had retained their military bases in the vast areas now included in the districts of Gujarat and Jhang in Pakistan and Sargodha in India. They would sneak in bands and take away women and children as captives from the frontier territories from time to time. Ibn-i Battuta states "They (the Mongols) continually make descents in India and carry off (their inhabitants) as captives or kill them. Sometimes they would take captive some of the Muslim women." The Arab

traveller is supported by Isami in this regard. Isami tells us in his account of the events that took place in the first year of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq's reign. He says, "The Mongols crossed the Indus, once every year and carried on inside the Sultanate of Delhi."

Hence Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq seems to have attached greater importance to the defence of the frontier against the Mongols than to other state problems. We do find important references to his frontier and foreign policy both in the foreign and Indo-Persian sources.

The most important outcome of his foreign policy was that the rulers of Central Asia became either his vassals or allies after

they had been impressed both by his power and munificence. First of all he decided to secure scientific frontiers for his Empire. For this purpose he planned to clean the areas of the Indus and the Himalayan kingdom, Qarajil and Kashmir and then seize the region from Mongols upto the Hindu Kush mountains.

The contemporary historian, Isami tells us that after his accession to the throne, the first military campaign was led against the Mongol bases in the North-Western frontier region of his Empire. He moved at the head of a large army, stayed in Lahore from where the commanders first cleaned the region of Kalanaur of the Mongols, pursued the fugitive Mongols across the Indus, occupied the town of Farshaur (modern Peshawar) and took the Mongol women and children
as captives. The khutba was read in every town in the name of the Sultan.

Isami also tells us of the March of the Delhi army towards Ghaznin but owing to lack of fodder for their animals as well as good grains for themselves they retreated and the Sultan after having liberated those territories returned to Delhi. Tarmashirin, the Mongol ruler of Central Asia whose generals were driven away from the Indian territories was not able to retaliate immediately because he was afraid of an invasion of his territories by the Il-khanid ruler Abu Saeed.


Moreover, the presence of the Iranian General Hasan bin Choban in Ghaznin till 1326 seems to have delayed the Chaghtai ruler's retaliation in India. Upon the withdrawal of Hasan bin Choban from Ghaznin as well as taking the transfer of population from Delhi to Daulatabad in 1327 as a golden opportunity Tarmashirin with a large army entered India, carrying sword and fire on his way to Delhi. Isami, our contemporary authority informs that when the invader crossed the river Ravi, the Sultan was informed in Delhi about him. He at once came out from Delhi and encamped outside Siri where large force gathered in no time. Ten thousand sawars were detached and dispatched to Meerut under the command of Ibn Bughra who took the invader by surprise near Meerut and inflicted heavy losses on him. Having suffered setback in the first encounter with the Delhi army the invader started retreating. The Indian
army pursued him beyond the river Indus, sheeding blood of the strugglers.

Isami's testimony about Tarmashirin's invasion of India is not acceptable to some writers. Agha Mahdi Hussain's view is that Tarmashirin never invaded India because Ibn-i-Battuta found him a friend of the Delhi Sultan in 1333 A.D. Hussain supports his hypothesis on Barani's omission of any kind of reference to this invasion in his Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi. According to him Barani, who served the Sultan for seventeen years as his Nadim (courtier) would not have failed to refer to this invasion, had it ever taken place.

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1 Isami, Futuh-us Salatin, pp. 462-65.
As regards Barani's silence on this invasion in his *Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi*, it is worth noting that the printed text of Barani's *Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi* is a revised version and he failed to refer to Tarmashirin's invasion in it, although he had mentioned it in some detail in the first unrevised version released two years earlier. The first recession of the *Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi* recently discovered comes to an end with the account of fourth regnal year of Sultan Firoz Shah's reign. In this recession Barani writes: "Upon the transfer of the citizens (from Delhi) to Daulatabad the Sultan stayed in Delhi for two years. During this time Tarmashirin marched against India at the head of a huge army. He arrived (without meeting any resistance) in the Mian-i Doab (Meerut), thereupon the Sultan collected his forces. In the meantime, the officers and notables from Lakhnauti (Bengal)
sought to go back to their region and foment trouble there. The Sultan fought a fierce battle against Tarmashirin. The latter having given a good account of fighting retreated to Tirmiz."

It is not difficult to explain the reason for this omission by Barani in the second revised edition to his Tarikh. The fact that in the first edition he has praised Tarmashirin's generalship and has given a good account of the fighting ability of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq as well as his portrait as the dominant mind of his age. This account seems to have antagonized

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1 Barani, _Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi_, p.

the reigning Sultan Firoz Tughluq under whose regime a reaction had already began against the policies of the preceeding regime. So it is likely that Barani may have omitted the mention of Tarmashirin's invasion in his revised version of Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi. That Tarmashirin did invade India during the early years of Muhammad bin Tughluq's reign is mentioned not only by Isami, but also by another contemporary writer, the anonymous author of the Sirat-i Firoz Shahi. Later writers like Yahya Sirhindi have also made statements about the same event. They seem to have based their account on Barani's unrevised first recension. He provides us with some additional information. He says that "In the year 1328, Tarmashirin the King of Khurasan and the brother of Qatlug Khwaja marched into the vilayet of Delhi at the head of a formidable army. He
captured a number of forts on the way. People in Lahore, Samana, Indri (and the region) upto the border of Badaon (territory) were made captives. Having reached the banks of Jumna, he (Tarmashirin) had to withdraw. The Sultan of Delhi who had encamped between the city of (old) Delhi and the Haudi Khass, gathered numerous troops. When Tarmashirin crossed back the Indus vanquished, the Sultan who had reached Kalanaur, the fort of which was found in a dilapidated condition entrusted its charge to Malik Mujir Uddin Abu Rija. Moreover, the Sultan also had deputed a number of veteran generals to chase Tarmashirin (across the Indus). From Kalanaur the Sultan returned to 1 Darul Mulk Delhi."

Besides Yahiya Sirhindi's testimony another writer of the fifteenth century who completed his Tarikh in 1439, Mohammad Bihamad Khani has mentioned Tarmashirin's invasion in these words, "During the reign of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq Shah, Tarmashirin entered India with a large army. But he had to retreat to Tirmiz, his capital, disappointed and defeated. He died there. Afterwards, when Amir Warghan ascended the throne, friendly relations were established between him and Sultan Muhammad Tughluq Shah. They remained friends and had mutual regard."

After the withdrawal of Tarmashirin, Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq took effective measures for strengthening the defence of the

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frontier territories and creating conditions favourable for their economic development. The Mongols used to convert large tracts of arable land into pastures for their war animals, horses and camels. They did not keep the old forts under repair because they loved to live in tents. In India as elsewhere they had turned agricultural tracts into pastures in Kuh-i Jud and Binban territories. The relevant evidence contained in Barani's Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi, if examined along with other sources, particularly, Masalik-ul Absar and Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi, tends to suggest that the vast liberated area near the river Jhelum are separated from the unwieldy Kuh-i Jud tract and then two new administrative cum-fiscal units were formed with

well defined boundaries. These units were named as the vilayet of Gujarat and the vilayet of Kalanaur.

After having settled the matters in these territorial units and putting them under the charge of Mujiruddin Abu Rija, the Sultan seems to have contemplated on conquering Khurasan and thereby making it the first line of defence of his Sultanate. According to a contemporary source the Sultan wanted to destroy completely

1 Barani, Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi, p. 601.

the non-Muslim Mongols in Khurasan. Mir Khurd, the author of *Siyar-ul Auliya* tells us that when the Sultan decided to shift the population from Delhi to Deogiri, he met the leading citizens of the city (Delhi) in a spacious tent pitched outside the audience hall. In his speech the Sultan emphasized the need to destroy the power of the non-Muslim Mongols across the borders of the Sultanate. On the same day, he said to Shaykh Pakhruddin Zaradi, one of the Sufi saints of Delhi: "We wish to destroy the descendents of Chengiz Khan. Could you extend cooperation to us in this regard?"


Mir Khurd further informs us that the Khurasan Project was formulated in the first two years of his reign but the implementation of the Deccan Project was given priority. The correspondence between Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq and the Il-khanid ruler Abu Saeed also throws valuable light on the motives of the Delhi Sultan in undertaking the Khurasan Project. But before going into the details of the contents of those letters or explaining the Khurasan Project it becomes necessary to discuss the geographical location of the region, which was termed as 'Khurasan' by the Indo-Persian writers. Their Khurasan was certainly not included in Il-khanid Iran as is erroneously considered by some of the Modern Scholars.

1 In 1928, Sir Wolsey Haig identified 'Khurasan' of Barani and other Indo-Persian writers with Persia. Since then (Continued on next page.................
of Medieval Indian History. They seem to identify it with the northern province of Il-Khanid Iran and thus fall into a historiographical error. The discovery of fresh evidence mentions Khurasan as part of the Chaghtai empire of Central Asia. The thirteenth and the fourteenth century writers meant by Khurasan only the region west and north-west of the river Indus, including the northern provinces of modern Afghanistan. For instance, in his account of Sultan Allauddin Khalji's military campaigns against the Mongol invaders from Central Asia, Amir Khusrau refers to Khurasan meaning the area north-west of the Indus. He writes that after their defeat, the

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ey every scholar has accepted his identifi-
cation uncritically and this committed an error. In 1975, Peter Jackson pro-
pounded a hypothesis that the region of Khurasan that Muhammad bin Tughluq in-
tented to conquer meant area west of
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Mongols fled away to the meadows of Khurasan. Similarly Yahiya Sirhindi calls Tarmashirin, the ruler of Khurasan. Another fifteenth century work substantiates the fact that the region lying in the north-west of Binban was called by the Indians Khurasan. Describing the origin of the fifteenth century Binbani Scholars of Gujarat and the geographical location of Binban, the compiler of the Jummat-i Shahiya states: "Binban is the vilayet lying between Multan and Khurasan.

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Indus, i.e. the possessions of Chaghtai rulers of Central Asia. In support to his 'hypothesis he refers to Ibn-i Buttuta and Babur's writing. Ibn-i Buttuta says that in India "all foreigners are called Khurasanis." Babur writes: "Just as Arabs call every place outside Arab Ajam, so Hindustanis call every place outside Hindustan Khurasan."

1 Amir Khusro
The group of people who are known as Binbani in the country of Gujarat have come from the vilayet (Binban). They are descendants of Hadrat Abdullah bin-Abbas." Shaikh Jamali's use of Khurasan for Kabul and the area around under the rule of Babur Certainly establishes the fact that before Akbar's reign (1556-1605) Persian writers called the modern region of Afghanistan by the name of Khurasan.

If we examine the contents of the letters exchanged between Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq and Sultan Abu Saeed of Iran, we will find that the relations of the Delhi Sultan and the Il-khan were more than just cordial. In fact the information contained in these letters

1 Jumaat-i Shahiya (Collection of Utterances of the 15th century Sufi saint; Shah Alam), as quoted by Sajid Bagar Ali Tirmizi in his Urdu article, Maulana Abdul Malik Binbani Muhadith, Ma'arif (Urdu quarterly), Azamgarh, Oct. 1950, pp. 281-82.
cast fresh light on their policy towards the non-Muslim Chaghtai ruler of Central Asia. It also strengthens the fact that the Khurasan expedition was against the Chaghtai Khans of Central Asia and did not mean the 'Khurasan' of the Il-khanid empire. This correspondence started soon after Tarmashirin's invasion. In 1328 A.D., the Sultan of Delhi dispatched his emissaries along with a letter and costly presents to the Court of Abu Saeed. In his letter the Sultan reminds the Il-khanid ruler of the existence of friendship between India and Iran during the times of their predecessors and then he refers the duty of Muslim rulers to serve the cause of Islam. He writes that the infidels had taken possession of Khurasan and penetrated in the vilayet of Sind that formed part of the country of Hindustan. All
this happened because the preceding Sultan of India were incompetent rulers, none of them could try to drive away the infidels. He appealed to Abu Saeed in the name of Islam to join hands with him for destroying the Chaghtai's power in Khurasan and also assured him of the success of their armies. He further suggested that the enemies of Islam should be driven away across the river Oxus, so that the Muslims might enjoy peace and the laws of Islam be reinforced. The letter also contains references to the difficulties faced by Merchant Caravans and the pilgrims to Mecca, owing to the infidel control over the land route (in Khurasan). Lastly the Sultan states that he dispatched the letter by hand of his emissary in all sincerity for the purpose of fostering friendship with him (Abu Saeed). His emissaries
were also directed to communicate other important matters not explained in the letter. The date inscribed on the letter is 1328 A.D.

The reply to the above letter was favourable from Iran. Abu Saeed wrote in 1330 A.D. and assured the Sultan of his friendship. First he describes the conquests made by his ancestors in Iran and Iraq since the time of Hulaqu. That his illustrious ancestor (Hulaqu) having crossed the Oxus led military campaigns into the regions of Iran, the Wilderness of Rum (Anatolia) and the vilayet of Ghaznin. That all the vilayets were conquered with their strong and lofty fortys of

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1 Muhammad bin Tughluq's letter found in the Bayaz-i Tajuddin Ahmad Wazir, ed. Iraj Afshar and Mustaza Timur, Danishgah-i Isfaha, 1351, Shamsi, No. 137, pp. 404-408.
the rulers of his dynasty, he calls Ghazan (his Uncle) and Uljaitu (his father) pious rulers and says that both of them demolished the temples of infidels and turned the entire region into the abode of Islam. Both of them are also credited for having restored the laws of Islam in their dominions. In the end he appreciates the friendly gesture of the Delhi Sultan and also reciprocates the feeling of goodwill and friendship to him. He even calls him Sultan-i Azam (the Great Ruler) and Shahryar-i Mujahid (the warrior of faith). He closes his letter with the words that his emissaries would explain the details and suggested that emissaries and letters be exchanged frequently between the two Courts. All this shows his ardent desire to strengthen his ties with the Delhi Sultan.

Evidence found in the contemporary Arabic and Persian sources, produced in India as well as outside India adds to our information regarding the exchange of diplomatic courtesies between the Il-khanid and the Delhi Court from time to time. The generosity shown by the Delhi Sultan towards these foreign envoys and embassies knew no bounds. The Arab account of Shihabuddin Al-Umari tells us how generous Muhammad bin Tughluq was to the first Iranian envoy who visited his court. He writes that Abu Saeed's first envoy Saiyad Azd-al Din, son of Qadi Yezd in the army of Sultan Abu Saeed whom Sultan Muhammad received very kindly, was given on his return to Iran huge amount of money,
in addition to costly gifts, all worth about 1 about forty eight million dirhams. This is corroborated by our contemporary historian, Barani who criticises the Sultan's open handedness towards the foreigners. Barani tells us that Saiyd Add-ul Daulah was given 2 four hundred thousand tankas.

Another evidence of his munificence and generosity towards the foreign envoys is found in an early fifteenth century Iranian source, Mujmal-i Fasihi. According to it the Delhi Sultan had showered royal favours on the first Iranian envoy Saiyad Azad Aldin. Then

1 Shihabuddin Al-Umari, A Fourteenth Century Arab Account of India Under Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlug, pp.47-48.
2 Barani, Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi, p.461.
when he (the envoy) wanted to return to his native land, the Sultan ordered Saiyid Add-Uddin to be taken inside the treasury and given whatever he would like to select for himself. He was taken there and told what the Sultan had ordered. This man was very shrewd. When he entered the treasury he did not take any thing but a copy of the Holy Quran. This had a desired effect on the Sultan. Deeply impressed by his action, the Sultan gave him huge treasures besides other gifts for him and for Sultan Abu Saeed.

Besides showering favours on the foreign envoys Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq showed great generosity to all the foreigners.

1 Fasih Ahmad bin Jelaluddin Muhammad Khwafi, Mukmal-i Fasih ed. Muhammad Farrukh, Iran, pp. 35-40 as cf. Aziz Ahmed, "Mongol Pressure on an Alien land", p. 189.
who came to his empire either as visitors or as immigrants. This policy of the Sultan of showering favour on the foreigners and the effect of this policy on the Indian politics will be discussed in a separate chapter. We may now return to his policies towards the rulers of Central Asia and Iran respectively.

Tarmashirin's invasion of India had compelled Muhammad bin Tughluq to raise a large army, make friends with Abu Saeed and fight for securing scientific frontiers for the Sultanate of Delhi. His plan of conquests included the Himalayan Kingdom mentioned by Medieval writers as Qarajil and Kashmir and the region north-west of the Indus referred to as Khurasan. Commenting upon his Qarachil
expedition Barani says that it was designed to facilitate the invasion of Khurasan. "It occurred to Sultan Muhammad that since the preliminaries for the conquest of Khurasan and Mawara-al Nahr had been effected the Qarachil mountains, which lay on the direct route as a boundary and a screen between the empire of India and the empire of China, should be subjected to the banner of Islam, so that the route of entry of horses and of the march of troops should be rendered easy."

This reference to the Qarachil expedition which is to be found in Barani's work misled historian like Ferishta into believing that Muhammad planned the conquest

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1 Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi - Urdu trans. by Dr. S. Muin-ul Haq, p. 650.
of China. Peter Jackson in his article "The Mongols and the Delhi Sultanate" noted two points. First that the mention of China is quite incidental, and serves merely to clarify the location of the mountain range in question, and second that Barānī is speaking no longer of "Khurasan and Iraq" but of Khurasan and Mawara-al-Nahr in other words the Chaghtai Khanate."

But looking at the final clause of Barānī's passage referring to Qarachil Expedition, one point is certain - that since the Central Asia was the major source of trade for the Delhi army, safe-guarding of this trade route may well have been an important

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factor in Muhammad's military operations in the north-west.

Barani also says that the Qarachil expedition was undertaken to facilitate the Khurasan expedition. But we find that here Barani is alone in linking the Qarachil Campaign with the Khurasan project. Not only do Ibn-Battuta and Isami make no reference to this design of Muhammad bin Tughluq, even Yahya b. Ahmed and Badauni, who otherwise follow Barani in narrating the disasters of the reign nowhere mention Khurasan in connection with the Qarachil expedition. Ferishta though writing about the Khurasan expedition fails to link it with the Qarachil expedition.
Ibn Battuta describes Qarachil as "a great range of mountains extending for a distance of three months journey, and ten days journey from Delhi," from which it is clear that the Himalayas are in question. Since it does not appear from Ibn Battuta's account of his stay in India, that he was ever near the Himalayas we may suppose that the details which he gives regarding the Qarachil expedition are derived from the survivors of the expedition. That these details are scanty can be explained on two grounds - First that the Qarachil manoeuvre was over a few years before his arrival in India and secondly that its disastrous nature probably made it a dangerous topic of conversation in an empire whose ruler was well served by spies and

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informants. We have, therefore no exact indication of either the route taken or the to the place to which these expedition was lead. Notwithstanding, a number of factors suggest that the territory in question may have been Kashmir. Karl John supporting this view suggests that in the third quarter of the thirteenth Century, Kashmir had been more closely linked, both culturally and politically, with the Mongols of Iran than with those of China. By the turn of the century the influence of the Il-khans in Kashmir had been replaced by that of the Chaghtai Khans, who had become the Delhi Sultanate's most formidable enemy and therefore it is possible that Kashmir had shared this fate.

The Qarachil disaster represents Muhammad bin Tughluq's last attempt to take the offensive against the Mongols. That he had learned at least one lesson from this campaign is clear from the Indian sources who unanimously say that his troops had hardships and that efforts were now being made to establish supply lines and garrisons designed to secure communications.¹ Similarly the reason for undertaking the Khurasan expedition may have been to secure natural barrier against the invaders of India. But the army recruited for the conquest of Khurasan was also disbanded after one year.

¹ Gibbs tr. p. 758.
The historian of Central Asia, Sharafuddin Ali Yezdi calls Tarmashirin the first ruler of the Chaghtai dynasty of Central Asia who embraced Islam and restored Islamic laws in his dominions. Ibn Battuta who met Tarmashirin on his way to India in 1333 A.D. describes him as a zealous Muslim who was favourably disposed towards the Sultan of Delhi. He writes describing Tarmashirin's fall, "when Bazun became King, the son of Sultan (Alauddin) Tarmashirin, who was Bashay Ughli fled, together with his sister and her husband Nauroz to the King of India. He (Muhammad bin Tughluq) received them as distinguished guests, and lodged them magnificently, on account of the friendship and exchange of letters and gifts which had

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existed between himself and Tarmashirin, who he used to address (in his letters) as brother. Barani corroborates Ibn Battuta while referring to Tarmashirin’s son-in-law (mentioned by him as Nauroz Khaqan) in the service of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq.

In short, it seems that a change had come in the policy of the Delhi Sultan towards Central Asia and the Khurasan Project was abandoned. With this change the age old conflict of arms between the two rulers came to an end. Ibn Battutah also furnishes useful information about the exchange of gifts and embassies between the Delhi Sultan and the rulers of Central Asia. His testimony is of immense significance

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2 Barani, p. 533.
because he had personal contacts with them. According to him the Sultan was respected by the rulers of Central Asia and they regularly exchanged gifts from him.

As regards Sultan Muhammad's relations with the Muslim Mongol ruler of Khwarizm (Golden Horde) Barani incidentally refers to the exchange of diplomatic courtesies and gifts between them. Ibn Battuta who had served the Khwarizm ruler Amir Qutbud-Dumur also tells us that the Amir and his wife regularly sent gifts along with emissaries to Delhi and got in return what is said to have been many times the value of their own presents. He writes, "The Khatun Turabak, wife of Amir Qutbud-dumur the ruler of Khwarizm had sent this (Abdullah) as bearer of gift to the King of India ............ (The latter) .
accepted the gift and gave in return one many times its' value, which he sent to her. But the envoy of her chose to remain at his court and the King enrolled him among his familiars.¹

After the fall of Tarmashirin and his subsequent murder in 1335 A.D. Ibn Battuta informs us that the King Hussain Kurt of Herat paid allegiance to Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq and the Khutba read in the latter's name in his Vilayet.

¹The King of India exchanged gifts from him and gave him the city of Bakar (Bhakkar) in Sind whose taxes yield in 50,000 silver Dinars a

The contemporary official documents not only corroborate but also supplement Ibn Battuta's statement. We come across two letters contained in the Faraid-i Ghiyath, a fifteenth century collection of epistles. One of the letter was written by Muin Uddin Jami, to Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq on behalf of the successor of Sultan Hussain Kurt. In this the Delhi Sultan had been informed about the chaotic conditions in Iran and the accession of Muiz Uddin bin Abul Hussain Kurt in Herat in 1349. The Sultan is also requested to send a farman along with his seal confirming the new ruler of Herat.


2. This is an important collection of Persian epistles. It contains more than eight hundred letters and royal documents written by two hundred important persons from 8th century to the region of Shah Rukh. The Compiler, Jalaluddin Yusuf Ahljami dedicated it to Shah Rukh's wazir Ghyathuddin Pir Ahmad in 1433 A.D. The last volume contains letters dispatched by Shah Rukh to Indian Sultans of North India.

The Second letter has been drafted by another officer of Herat Malik Jamaluddin Iktisan on behalf of Hussain Kurt, the new ruler of Herat. In it the ruler informs Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq that the saints, Ulema, sayyids and nobles placed him on the throne and restored peace and order in Khurasan (Herat) In the end he requests the sultan to confirm him as his vassal by granting the farman. The envoy who brought this letter from Herat to Delhi is also referred to as Rasul.¹

After the death of Sultan Abu Saeed in 1335 A.D., we find that the diplomatic courtesies between Iran and India are disrupted. One of the cousins of Abu Saeed, Haji Kawun arrived in Delhi as the representative of his brother Musa who had been accepted Sultan of Iran by a section of the nobility there. The Haji was extended royal hospitality and also loaded with costly gifts. He returned to Iran after his brother

2. Ibid, letter No. 41- P. 183-84.
had been killed in 1337 A.D. On the fall of the Il-khanid dynasty, Iran suffered from anarchy and diplomatic relations with the neighbouring countries could not be maintained.

Similarly the disruption of the exchange of diplomatic courtesies between the Sultan of Delhi and the Chaghtai ruler of Central Asia was brief. After the fall of Qazan (the murderer of Tarmashirin) Amir Qazaghan had emerged all powerful in Transoxiana. He maintained friendly relations with Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq. He sent a strong military contingent under the command of Altan Bahadur to India in the service of the Sultan. Barani does not tell us when and why he had sent his contingent but his reference to his presence

in the royal army camp near Thatta suggests that it must have been dispatched sometime after the year 1346 after Amir Qazaghan coming to power. On Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq's death in 1351 A.D. the relations between Firuz Shah of Delhi and Qazaghan became strained. Though Sultan Firuz Shah was able to drive away Altun Bahadur, Barani's account of the early years of his reign shows how the Mongol raids on the frontier region again caused loss of life and property. In a separate section entitled 'Cessation of the In Roads by Chengiz Khani Mongols, Barani tells us that the new Sultan neither encouraged the Mongols to pay visit to Delhi and get away wealth nor he neglected the defence of the north western frontier region. The Mongols invaded India twice but in the first six years of Firuz Shah's reign was each time they were defeated. One of Ain-ul Mulk letters

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1 Barani, *Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi*, p. 601.
supplements our information that the Chief of Sind got into alliance with the Mongol governor of Ghaznin and collaborated with him against Sultan Firuz Shah. But their combined forces were not able to achieve success against the governor of Multan.

In fact, the Mongol power in Central Asia was in decline and did not constitute a serious threat to the Sultanate of Delhi till Firuz Shah's death in 1368 A.D.

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However, the fact that the relations of the Kurt rulers of Herat were friendly with the Delhi court even after the death of Muhammad bin Tughluq is borne out by letters found in Faraid-i Ghiyasi. Although a number of letters were written by the dignitaries of Herat to Piruz Shah (1351–1388) and his Wazir Khan-i Jahan, a few of them are important in so far as they cast light on the relations between Delhi and Herat. In one of the letters Sheikh-ul Islam of Herat Yahya Nishapuri thanks Sultan Piruz Shah for the money he had sent for distribution among the people of Khurasan. In another letter the dignitary of Herat Muinuddin Jami congratulates Sultan Piruz Shah over his victories achieved in Bengal and Jajnagar. Allusions are

also made therein to the elephants and treasures acquired in those territories. The letter addressed by Muinuddin Jami to Sayyid-ul Hujab Jalaluddin of Delhi contains news of the passing away of Sultan Hussain Kurt and the accession of Sultan Ghiyasuddin Kurt.

In the final analysis, it may be emphasized that the phenomenal prestige and grandeur in the diplomatic circles, acquired by the city of Delhi during the time of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, helped it continue to be a place of considerable importance even after the dissolution of the Delhi Sultanate in 1398 A.D. The Sultan of Delhi was still considered outside India the most respectable of the rulers.