CHAPTER – VI

COINAGE AND METEOROLOGY OF SAIYYADS AND LODIS

1. SAIYYAD DYNASTY

1.1 Khizr/Khizr Khan (AH 817-824/AD1414-1421)

Khizr Khan was the founder of Saiyyads dynasty. Among all the dynasties of the Sultanate period, the Saiyyads had, next to the Khaljis, the shortest span of life – 37 years. The founder of this dynasty was the son of Malik Sultan, an adopted son of Malik Nasirul Mulk Mardan Daulat, an eminent amir of Sultan Firuz Shah Tughlaq. The author of the Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi; the only contemporary source for the Saiyyad dynasty says that Khizr Khan was a Saiyyad. Afif the author of Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi reported that Saiyyad Jalaluddin Bukhari Makhdum-i-Jahanian had once referred Malik Sulaiman (Father of Khizr Khan) as a Saiyyad.

On the death of Sultan Mahmud (October AD 1412) the amirs and maliks paid homage to Daulat Khan. Some maliks like Mubariz Khan and malik Idris left Khizr and joined Daulat Khan’s camp. For some time Khizr watched the situation and in November-December AD 1413, he marched against Delhi. After four months seize, Daulat Khan realized the hopelessness of his situation and surrendered himself. Delhi was now under the control of Khizr Khan. On 6 June, 1414, Khizr Khan entered Siri Fort with his army and took up his residence in the palace of Sultan Mahmud. He did not adopt the title of Shah and for three years had only the name of Shah Rukh, Timur’s successor mentioned in public prayer. The Delhi Sultanate at that time was weak and had very limited territories. Khidr Khan made various raids into neighbouring territory to obtain revenue but was unable to extend his own lands. Moreover, the Turkish elements began to cause problems and various rebellions had to be dealt with. Khidr Khan died in AD 1421. He was a wise and benevolent ruler, but was unable to make his kingdom any better than many of the other independent ones which had arisen after the decline of the Tughlaq realm.
Unfortunately he too, as Daulat Khan Lodi did not issue coins in his name and preferred to continue striking the same types of coins as his predecessors. Again there are posthumous silver coins in the name of Muhammad bin Firuz (Cat No.55, Pl.No.XXI, Fig.No.143) and billon (Cat No.55, Pl.No.XXI, Fig.No.144) and copper (Cat No.56, Pl.No.XXI, Fig.No.145) coins in the name of Muhammad bin Firuz Tughlaq. But the scarcity of silver coins compels us to think that probably they were not the part of every day currency. The coins issued by him dated between AH 817-823. We can summarize the history of coins of his reign saying that he simply preferred to maintain coins that had become popular in the recent past and merely altered the dates on them.

2. MUBARAK SHAH (AH 824-837/AD 1421-1434)

Khizr Khan had assigned the command of the western areas to his son, Malik Mubarak in AD 1415. Before three days of his death, he finally nominated Malik Mubarak as his apparent heir. His nomination had the approval of all the important amirs and maliks. And when Khizr died, Mubarak ascended the throne on 22nd May 1421. After it Mubarak confirmed the amirs and maliks in their former Iqtas and assignments. This adjustment was rendered necessary by the pressure of circumstances. Unlike his father he did not hesitate to adopt the royal title. During his reign, the Delhi Sultanate was threatened on all sides and it is to his credit that Mubarak was able to extend his boundaries. One of the main threats came from Khokhars of the Punjab. Their leader, Jasrath, made various attempts to capture Delhi, but failed on each occasion. More dangerous were Timurid invasions into India, led by the deputy governor of Kabul, Shaikh Ali. These, too, were repelled but with considerable difficulties. At last 9th February AD 1434, when Mubarak Shah was preparing to go for his Friday prayers, he was killed by Sidhipal with his swords and javelin. According to Yahya Sirhindi, he ruled for seventeen years, three months and sixteen-days.

2.1 Coinage

He was the first ruler of Saiyyad dynasty to have issued coins in his name. But he too followed the policy of his father in his first eight years of
reign. He preferred to maintain coins that had become popular in the recent past and merely altered the dates on them.

As Tughlaq ruler's his coins are of purely Islamic type. Interestingly like earlier Sultans of Delhi his coins do not bear the name of Caliph. Instead, Mubarak Shah calls himself naib-i-amir-ul momenin (deputy of commander of faithful, i.e. the caliph) on copper coins, while the gold and the silver coins bear the legend faihad as-sultan al-ghazi...... Like his father he too maintained the same types of coins of earlier Sultan such as billon tanka and copper Jital of Firuz Shah Tughlaq, (Cat No.55, Pl.No.XXI, Fig.No.146) gold coins of Muhammad bin Firuz (Cat No.56, Pl.No.XXII, Fig.No.147) and Mahmud.

In the year AH 832, Mubarak Shah initiated a coinage of his own name. His silver coins retained the similar weight of Mahmud, that is of 174 grains, but the small coins are not common and those which are available, are not in good condition. Till now only one gold coin is available to us which bears his name and of 164 grains. Generally the silver and gold which he issued with his name bear the legend fiyahd al-sultan al-ghazi al-mutawakkil ala rahman mubarak shah sultan on its obverse.

But the main feature of Mubarak Shah's coins are revision of the weights of copper coins. On the place of normal 40 rati falus which was continued since the days of Iltutmish and its double the 80 rati coin which Firuz Shah Tughlaq. Struck first he introduced 48 rati (86.4 grains) and 96 rati pieces. He also struck a half falus of 24 rati, which is much rare. The gold and silver coins continued to weigh around 11 gm. Delhi is the only mint represented on the coins of Mubarak Shah. He issued no coins made of billon.

3. MUHAMMAD SHAH (AH 837-849/AD 1434-1445)

After the assassination of Mubarak Shah, Muhammad Shah, who had been adopted as son by martyred Sultan became the king on 19th February 1434 with the assent of the amirs, malikhs, imams, saiyyads, ulama and the gazis. On 14th August 1434 Muhammad killed the main culprit of his father Sarwarul Mulk, who was creating problems for this new
king too. In the book of history Muhammad Shah is also known as Muhammad V and Muhammad Bin Farid*. He unfortunately was more interested in pleasure than government and the nobles invited Mahmud Shah of Malwa to come. He encamped at a place some ten miles from Delhi. Muhammad in turn summoned Bahlul Lodi, incharge of Sirhind, to assist him. An inconclusive battle was fought and on the next day Muhammad without consulting anyone sent emissaries for peace. Finally Mahmud Shah of Malwa was happy to agree terms and withdrew. Bahlul Lodi returned to the Punjab where he soon built up an important power-base. The Delhi kingdom meanwhile weakened. Multan became independent. Jaunpur added some Delhi territory and various local rulers asserted their independence. He breathed his last in AH 849 after an inglorious reign of ten years.

3.1 Coinage

His reintroduction of billon coins on the name of the ruling Sultan is very significant feature of his reign. The absence of billon coins, so useful as fractions of the tanka had evidently caused inconvenience and it is no surprise to find Muhammad resuming coinage in the traditional mixed metal. Other important feature of his coins in that he slightly increased the weight standard of the coins of the metals that is gold, silver, copper and billon. Similarly during his time weight of the larger coins of billon exceeds the maximum of 80 rati (144 grains). Rodges7 in his catalogue documented several such coins which weights vary between 144-147 grains. In the same way even the smaller ones sometimes exceeded 57.6 grains. The time honoured 32 rati coins also reappears.

Muhammad maintained the old tradition that the standard weight of the principal in which silver and gold coins should be a tolah. In copper coins suggest us that the division of the tanka into 40 parts, which was introduced by Mubarak was continued. Interestingly in respect of legend of the coins Muhammad Bin Farid followed the obverse type of Tughlaq Muhammad IV. But the obverse side of his gold and silver coins bear the

* He was the son of Farid Shah as reported by Yahya Sirhindi (p. 236)
name of his grand father (Khizr Khan) along the name of his own name and that of his father, such as, \textit{al-sultan al-azam abul muhamid muhammed shah bin farid shah hadrat shah al-sultan}. (Cat No.57, Pl.No.XXII, Fig.No.148) His copper coins bear short legend as it was practised by Tughlaq rulers such as \textit{Muhammad Shah Sultan}, on obverse, while, the date of issue and the name of the mint. But only one mint that is \textit{dar ul-mulk} Delhi is minted over it. (Cat No.57&58, Pl.No.XXII, Fig.No.149ABCD)

4. ALAUDDIN ALAM SHAH (AH 849-855/AD 1445-1451)

Shortly before the death in AD 1445 Muhammad Shah summoned his son Alauddin from Badaun and nominated him as his successor. On this occasion Alauddin adopted the title of Alam Shah. His realm had become tiny and insignificant.

Alam Shah the last king of Saiyyad dynasty became ruler in AD 1445. But the governor of Lahore and Sirhind, Bahlul Lodi did not recognize this new Sultan. In order to escape from the pressure of Bahlul, the new Sultan moved his capital to Badaun in modern western Uttar Paradesh. But when Bahlul occupied Delhi after that Alauddin resigned his throne in favour of his governor in AD 1451. Finally Bahlul allowed him to reside in Badaun till his death AD 1478.

4.1 Coinage

He mainly issued coins of copper and \textit{billon} weighing 9 gm. Some smaller denominations in \textit{billon} and copper were also issued by him, they are of 3.5 gm and 4.5 gm respectively. But no gold coin of Alauddin Alam Shah is known to us and few coins of his silver \textit{tanka} are recorded. They are of 11.5 gm in weight\textsuperscript{8}. But Nelson Wright\textsuperscript{9} recorded only one coin of silver. Copper coins have the legend \textit{naib amir ul-momenin} on one side and \textit{alam shah} on the other (Cat No.58&59, Pl.No.XXII, Fig.No.150AB) and while the \textit{Billon} coins are with the legend \textit{khalifa amir ul-momenin khulidat khilfatuhu} and the date on the obverse and \textit{sultan alam shah bin muhammad shah ba-hazrat Delhi} on the reverse.\textsuperscript{10} (Cat No.59, Pl.No.XXIII, Fig.No.151).
5. LODI'S DYNASTY

5.1 Bahlul Shah Lodi (AH 855-894/AD 1451-1489)

Bahlul Shah ascended the throne of Delhi on 19th April 1451 at a propitious hour selected by the astrologers. According to Ferishta that he had two coronations: one before and the other after his correspondence with Sultan Alauddin. Alauddin was the last ruler of Saiyyid dynasty after AD 1451 he finally settled at Badaun till his death in AD 1476. In fact the throne of Delhi to which Bahlul had been raised was not the bed of roses. The situation was worse than what the Khaljis had to face at the beginning of their rule. A caution and careful handling of the situation alone could remove these prejudices from the public mind. 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. So Bahlul's initial task was to recreate the Delhi sultanate and to extend its territories. He fought a lengthy war with the Jaunpur Sultanate, which he finally succeeded in annexing, driving the last of the Sharqi rulers, Husain into exile. His placed his son Barbak, on the throne of Jaunpur. He also led various campaign into neighbouring districts to conquer or gain the allegiance of the rulers concerned. During his lengthy rule, he succeeded in reviving the Delhi sultanate and in rehabilitating its prestige. His constant military campaigns, however, left him little time for reorganising the administration.

5.2 Coinage

As we have seen after Taimur's invasion in AD 1398, the issue of gold and silver dwindle to markedly small proportions. Because of this Bahlul discontinued coins of gold and silver altogether and rely more on a currency of billon and copper. Because according to a historian of Lodi dynasty that gold and silver were only procurable with the greatest difficulty.

His basic currency of billon was the tanka of 80 rati as Muhammad Tughlaq had done before him when he replaced silver by billon tanka. The
subordinate of this above billon coins is of 32 rati. Analysis of the same of the tanka revealed the fact that it content silver around 16%. Because of some special feature the billon tanka issued by him is known as bahlulis. A contemporary source Zubdatu-i-Tawarikh based on a history, whose author derived his information from personal experience of the reigns of the second and third Lodis, refers both of bahlulis and tanka as standard coins of Ibrahim Lodi's time.

As we have already mentioned about 32 rati of tanka, which were based on the standard of higher rati was first introduced by Muhammad V of Tughlaq dynasty. This denomination was later continued by Alam Shah which are found during the reign of Bahlul in vogue. Like the predecessors, Bahlul too gave importance to the caliph and his coins bear the legend fi zaman amir-ul-muminin khulidat khilafatuhu and date on obverse side of his coins. On reverse side of his billon tanka, Bahlul styles himself as al-mutawakkil al-rahman bahlul shah sultan and bear the mint name. (Cat No.60, Pl.No.XXIII, Fig.No.152.)

Bahlul's coins of copper had several denomination, which started at 48 ratis and then reduced to 40. But in the year AH 890, the double falus of 80 rati reduced to 64 rati. Bahlul issued only double falus of 64 rati which bear the name of the mint dar-ul-mulk, Delhi Till AH 888. After his conquest of Jaunpur, their place was taken by falus struck at the city of Jaunpur (Jaunpur Shahar).

Coins struck at Jaunpur markedly lower than, those of Delhi falus copper coins issued by him are with brief legends as earlier such as Bahlul Shah and naib-Amir-ul-momenin (Cat No.60, Pl.No.XXIII, Fig.No153) on the obverse and reverse side respectively.

6. SULTAN SIKANDAR LODI (AH 894-923/AD 1489-1517)

Before Bahlul died, he distributed his territories among his relatives and amirs and nominated his son, Nizam Khan as his heir. But after the death of Bahlul Lodi, the nobles met at Miianli, a village 15 miles north of Sakti, in order to discuss the question of his successor. Finally among the three princes, Nizam Khan, Barbek Khan and Azam Humayun, kingship
was decided in the favour of Nizam Khan. The coronation took place on the bank of the Kali Nadi, on a mound which was once a hunting pavilion of Firuz Shah Tughlaq as was known as **Kaushak-i-Firuz**. Soon after it, Sultan Sikandar (Earlier Nizam Khan) proceeded to Delhi. The most formidable task before him was to induce the Afghan nobles to accept his authority and force his relations to submit. He gained full control of Bihar when he drove the former Sharqi ruler from his exile there into Bengal with whose ruler he concluded a peace treaty. He became involved in the affairs of the Malwa Sultanate during the civil war period around AD 1510-1513 and gained temporary control of Chanderi. He also gained some limited success against neighbouring Rajput states. In AD 1499, he moved his residence to Sambhal for few years, before transferring his capital to Agra, where he built a new town. He died in AD 1515 from disease. Sikandar took steps to reorganise the government of the Sultanate and slowly managed to centralise the administration. Trade and agriculture flourished and there was much literary activity during his reign.

### 6.2 Coinage

Sikander Lodi went one step further in comparison to his father in confining his currency exclusively to **billon**. On the early stage of his reign, the weight of **billon tanka** and its fractions keeps well to the standard (80 *rati*). Now he reduced its value to that of the 32 *rati billon* of Bahlul and its value to that of the 32 *rati billon* of Bahlul and its shape become irregular. There are two series of these **billon coins**. The first one issued from AH 900 issued from Delhi and the second one is without any mint name with more angular writing. According to Wright the second one is probably as camp issue. His coins bear the name **Sikandar Shah** along with the father **bahlul shah sultan** on the obverse and **fi-zaman amir-ul-momenin** on the obverse side of the coins. In recent years, a gold coin dated AH 919 weighing 11.2 gm has been reported as being extremely rare. (Cat No.60, Pl.No.XXIII, Fig.No154).
7. SULTAN IBRAHIM LODI (AH 923-932/AD 1517-1526)

After the death of Sultan Sikander his eldest son, Ibrahim was raised to the throne on 22nd 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 Sikander. So the nobles arranged for the division of the empire into two units. One under the Ibrahim and other under his younger brother Jalal Khan. The country up to the border of the former kingdoms of Jaunpur was to be under Ibrahim, while, Jalal Khan was to govern the territory ruled over by Shariqis.

After the coronation, Ibrahim in order to alienate the nobles of Jalal from him and to win them over to his side. Some of the important maliks of Jalal, who had thirty to forty thousands 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. After consolidating the power finally, a second coronation was then celebrated by Ibrahim on 29 December 1517. Jagirs, robes of honour, posts and assignments were bestowed on nobles and officer on this occasion. This second coronation was in fact a public declaration of the abrogation of the earlier arrangement of Ibrahim’s claim to have sovereign rights over the areas formerly assigned to Jalal.

7.1 Coinage

Ibrahim followed the currency system of his father. In his Delhi realms he struck only billon coins and even there, he issued only half and quarter tanka apparently based on 96 rati tanka standard. The quality of these coinage are poor. His coins are noticed with a lower weight as compared to his father’s coins. They weigh about 5.2 gm and 2.6 gm. After the conquest of Chanderi in Malwa he also struck copper and silver coins in his name in the Malwa style. It bears the legend ibrahim shah lodi bin sikandar shah on one side and as-sultan bin as sultan on the other this coin weighs about 7.4gm.

We have also come a cross two strange coins with the names of the Kangra rulers Prayaga chandra and Ram Chandra, who ruled c. AD 1517-1527. These coins weighs about 2 gm. Their legends are in
Devangiri. Prayaga Chandra (Cat No.61, Pl.No.XXIII, Fig.No.155) and Rama Chandra (Cat No.61, Pl.No.XXIII, Fig.No.156) who were ruling in Kangra probably accepted the suzerainty of Ibrahim and issued the coins with Ibrahim titles and their names. These coins are made of copper.

8. SULTAN MAHMUD LODI (AH 935/ AD 1528)

The first battle of Panipat in 1526, which resulted in the defeat and death of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi gave the possession of Agra, Delhi and Punjab to Babar. Mahmud Lodi brother of Ibrahim Lodi was the prisoner of his brother in AH 923/ AD 1517. After the battle of Panipat released himself from prison and sought shelter with Rana Sanga of Mewar. Pathan soldiers under Mahmud along with the help of Rana Sanga were intent on recovering Delhi and Agra. But in the battle of Khanwa on March 17, 1527 they were defeated by Babur’s army again Mahmud Lodi fled to Chittor. After the death of Sultan Muhammad Lodi in 1528, there was confusion in Bihar. To prevent the disaster, the Pathan had invested Mahmud. He came and ascended the throne of Bihar by ousting its young ruler Jalal Khan, son of Sultan Muhammad. After that the defeat at Ghazipur and at Buxar, Mahmud fled away and sought asylum with Nashrat Shah, king of Bengal with his family. Nushrat Shah married the daughter of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi and fixed a pension for his uncle-in-law i.e., Mahmud Lodi. Finally Mahmud died in exile in Orissa in AD 1542.

8.1 Coinage

A single billon tanka in his name is known to us. This coin which for some time lay unnoticed. Because his sovereignty was short-lived and little more than nominal. This solitary coins is of considerable interest. This solitary coin is of considerable interest as confirming the testimony of written history such as Tarikh-i-Shershahi. This coin weighs about 9.1 gm and the legend on obverse in mahmud shah bin sikandar shah bin bahlul and fi-zaman amir-al-muminin khulidal khilfatuhu on reverse side.

One of the most important features of the coins of Lodi Sultans in the calligraphy used on their coins, which not resemble that of any other sultanate of Delhi, rather, it resembles the calligraphy used on the coins of Jaunpur Sultans.
CHAPTER VI

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References:


12. *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, written by Abdullah, Aligarh (written at the time of Jahangir), I, pp. 175-175.


23. Wright, Nelson, H., 1974, *The Coinage and Metrology of the Sultans of Delhi*, Delhi, s. no. 1030B.