

BA LLB II SEM
HISTORY PPT LECTURE
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THE DELHI SULTANATE

THE THEORY OF KINGSHIP:

Probable questions-

1. Trace the evolution of kingship theory during muslim rule in india.
2. Describe Balban's theory of kingship.
3. Write a note on afghan theory of kingship.
How far was it responsible for the downfall of Lodhi dynasty?

THE THEORY OF KINGSHIP

The ideal of kingship in the delhi sultanate was derived from the islamic world and the rulers claimed divine origion for themselves.

The turkish rulers of delhi sultanate had faith in divine right theory of kingship and they acted not only as the representative of god on earth but they also believed in absolute monarchy.

Following that, many of the rulers declared themselves as descendants of some mythical lineage or king who, in certain cases, might not even have existed.

For eg. Balban associated himself with Afrasiab dynasty of persia.

Only Alauddin khilji and Mubarak shah were exceptions. They did not give regard to caliph i.e. divine power and freed their subjects from the exploitation of the orthodox muslims or ulema.

Gradual Evolution of kingship theory:-

1. Kingship theory in slave dynasty—
 - During the reign of Iltutmish, the position of the sultan was not considered much higher than that of a noble. He treated the great turkish nobles as his equal.
 - Balban was the first muslim ruler to formulate the theory of kingship similar to the theory of divine right to kings.

He had therefore, placed the monarchy at a higher level than the nobility. Further he proclaimed himself to be the 'shadow of God' (zill-i-elahi). It was the divinity of kingship, propounded first time in peninsular india.

2. Kingship theory in khilji dynasty—

- The same idea was followed by Alauddin khilji. He also put himself to be another profit and kept away ulema from his decision making periphery i.e. the king was supreme in matters of religion.

3. Kingship theory in Tughlaq dynasty—

- This trend was softened by Ghiyasuddin tughlaq and firozshah tughlaq, who strictly worked in guidance of ulema and weakened the monarchy.
- But Muhammad bin tughlaq believed that he became sultan because of the will of god, therefore he believed in absolute powers of the sultan. The sultan did not permit even the ulema class to interfere in his administration.

4. Afghan theory of kingship—

- Under Lodis (afghans), kingship assumed the racial basis. They believed in superiority of their races and thus lowered the dignity of sultan.

Lodi rulers did not regard the sultan superior to his subjects and the theory of divine kingship was absolutely discarded by them. Lodi rulers considered themselves equal to their nobles.

Concluding—

Practically sultan a despot (benevolent despot) and bounded by the islamic law. Only two pressure groups existed with varying impacts in various times viz nobility and ulema.

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THANK YOU

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