Qutbuddin Aibak

Qutbuddin Aibak is known in history as the founder of the slave dynasty and it is believed that the dynasty derives its name from Qutbuddin who was originally a slave.

Muhammad Ghori had no son and, therefore, he had distributed his vast empire among his nephew and faithful lieutenants Qutbuddin-Aibak as he was his most trusted lieutenant got his Indian possessions by his own choice.

Born to a Central Asia Turk family, Qutb-ud-din Aibak was captured and sold as a slave when he was a child. He was lucky to be purchased by the chief Qazi of Nishapur, who treated him like one of his own sons. Aibak received good education and was trained in the field of archery and horsemanship. However, when the master died, his sons, who were jealous of Aibak, sold him to a slave merchant. Fortune once again favored him and Muhammad Ghuri bought him.
Out of Ghuri’s thousands of slaves, Aibak, because of his character and qualities, became one of his master’s favorite. Aibak steadily rose through the ranks and eventually became a General.

Like his owner Ghuri, Aibak performed his greatest deeds while still a subordinate. He was responsible for most of the conquests of Northern India and was appointed as Ghuri’s Viceroy to Delhi. When Ghuri died in 1206, the Turkish Amirs and Generals elected Aibak as the new Sultan. It was he who shifted the capital first from Ghazni to Lahore, and then from Lahore to Delhi, and thus is considered as the first Muslim ruler of South Asia.

**Achievements**

After coming to power, Qutbuddin had to face many challenges, in order to keep his position intact. Turkish officers could not be trusted as they were all jealous of his power. The Rajputs were also a huge threat, who were defeated and the sovereignty of North India was snatched away from their hands by the Turks, so they were fighting against the Turks at different places.

The distant provinces which were captured by Turks, were not under complete control of Qutbuddin, as was the case with Bengal. Qutbuddin faced all these difficulties with determination. He first strengthened his position in Delhi and Lahore and then the most of Turkish nobles were persuaded to accept his subordination.

He stubbornly refused to accept the over lordship of Yildis, turned him out of Punjab and saved his infant kingdom from the politics of Central Asia. Thus, both by diplomacy and force, he succeeded in maintaining separate and independent status of the
Delhi Sultanate. Qutbuddin could not pursue the policy of extension of his kingdom.

He could not pay due attention even towards the Rajputs who succeeded in recovering some of their territories from the Turks. Mostly he remained busy in defending his independent position. That is why he remained mostly at Lahore instead of Delhi. He got very little time as an independent ruler. While playing Chaughan (horse polo), he fell from his horse and soon died in 1210 A.D. he was buried at Lahore and a simple monument was raised over his grave.

Aibak could not rule for long and died in 1210 after falling from a horse while playing polo. He is buried near the Anarkali Bazaar in Lahore, where a new tomb was constructed over his grave around 1970.