

## The Military and Economic Policy of Sultan Fihrus Syah Tughlaq: A Historiography Approach in the Historical Context of 14<sup>th</sup> Century India

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### Abstract

This study explores the military and economic policies of Sultan Fihrus Syah Tughlaq through a historiographical lens, placing his reign within the broader historical context of 14<sup>th</sup> century India. As a lesser-known figure of the Tughlaq dynasty, Sultan Fihrus Syah's governance strategies reflect the complex interplay between military ambition and economic stabilization during a period marked by political fragmentation and external threats. The research utilizes primary and secondary historical sources to critically assess the extent to which Fihrus Syah's policies influenced the stability and territorial integrity of the Sultanate of Delhi. Militarily, his reign was characterized by fortification strategies, regional military campaigns, and the use of mercenary forces to consolidate power. Economically, the Sultan implemented tax reforms, sought to revive agricultural productivity, and encouraged trade through infrastructural development. By applying a historiographical approach, the paper analyzes how different historians have interpreted his policies over time, revealing contrasting narratives shaped by contemporary political and cultural biases. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of regional leadership dynamics and policy-making in medieval South Asia, highlighting the need to reassess marginal figures in Islamic Indian historiography. Ultimately, it presents Sultan Fihrus Syah as a ruler whose policies, though often overshadowed, were instrumental in shaping the transitional era of the Tughlaq dynasty.

**Keywords:** Sultan Fihrus Syah Tughlaq, Military Policy, Economic Policy

## Kebijakan Militer dan Ekonomi Sultan Fihrus Syah Tughlaq: Suatu Pendekatan Historiografi dalam Konteks Sejarah India Abad Ke-14

### Abstrak

*Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi kebijakan militer dan ekonomi Sultan Fihrus Syah Tughlaq melalui lensa historiografi, menempatkan pemerintahannya dalam konteks sejarah yang lebih luas di abad ke-14 India. Sebagai tokoh yang kurang dikenal dari dinasti Tughlaq, strategi pemerintahan Sultan Fihrus Syah mencerminkan interaksi yang kompleks antara ambisi militer dan stabilisasi ekonomi selama periode yang ditandai oleh fragmentasi politik dan ancaman eksternal. Penelitian ini menggunakan sumber-sumber sejarah primer dan sekunder untuk menilai secara kritis sejauh mana kebijakan-kebijakan Fihrus Syah mempengaruhi stabilitas dan integritas teritorial Kesultanan Delhi. Secara militer, masa pemerintahannya ditandai dengan strategi benteng pertahanan, kampanye militer regional, dan penggunaan tentara bayaran untuk mengkonsolidasikan kekuasaan. Secara ekonomi, Sultan menerapkan reformasi pajak, berusaha untuk menghidupkan kembali produktivitas pertanian, dan mendorong perdagangan melalui pembangunan infrastruktur. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan historiografi, makalah ini menganalisis bagaimana para sejarawan yang berbeda menafsirkan kebijakan-kebijakannya dari waktu ke waktu, mengungkapkan narasi-narasi yang berbeda yang dibentuk oleh bias-bias politik dan budaya*

*kontemporer. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman yang lebih dalam tentang dinamika kepemimpinan regional dan pembuatan kebijakan di Asia Selatan pada abad pertengahan, menyoroti perlunya menilai kembali tokoh-tokoh marginal dalam historiografi India Islam. Pada akhirnya, penelitian ini menampilkan Sultan Fihrus Syah sebagai penguasa yang kebijakannya, meskipun sering dibayangi, berperan penting dalam membentuk era transisi dinasti Tughlaq.*

**Kata Kunci:** Sultan Fihrus Syah Tughlaq, Kebijakan Militer, Kebijakan Ekonomi

## Introduction

Sultan Fihrus Shah Tughlaq, who ruled from 1399 to 1412, was one of the relatively forgotten rulers in the history of the Delhi Sultanate. Although his reign was short, the military and economic policies he implemented played an important role in efforts to maintain political and economic stability in the turbulent region of the 14th century (Aziz, 1993). The reign of Fihrus Shah Tughlaq came at a challenging period for the Delhi Sultanate, during which the Tughlaq Dynasty, previously led by Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq, suffered various collapses due to controversial policies and outside attacks (M. Habib & Khan, 1961).

Sultan Fihrus Shah Tughlaq's military policy was heavily influenced by the need to protect the kingdom from external threats, especially attacks from the East led by Timur Lenk (Tamerlane) in the early 15th century (I. Habib, 1999). However, what is more interesting is how the economic policies implemented by Sultan Fihrus Shah can be seen as an effort to overcome the financial crisis inherited by his predecessors. In this case, fiscal policy and management of economic resources are one of the main focuses in maintaining the stability of the kingdom (Elliot & Dowson, 2022).

The analysis of Sultan Fihrus Syah Tughlaq's military and economic policies is important to understand the social and political dynamics during his reign. Therefore, this article will explore the impact of these policies, with reference to historical sources such as those of medieval Indian historians, such as Zia-ud-Din Barani and other historical books. Through this analytical approach, it can be understood how Fihrus Shah Tughlaq seeks to repair the

damage left by previous policies and how he tries to overcome the existing challenges (Syahroni et al., 2023), both in the military and economic context.

Major references in this study include classic historical works written by 14th-century Muslim historians, such as Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi by Shams-i-Siraj Afif and Fatawa-i-Jahandari by Zia-ud-Din Barani, which provide an overview of Sultan Fihrus Shah's policies. In addition, more modern historiographic analysis by historians such as Irfan Habib and K.K. Aziz will be used to delve deeper into the influence of these policies in the context of social and political changes in India during the period. The formulation of the problem in this study is: How does Sultan Fihrus Syah Tughlaq's military policy in facing the threat of the East of Lenk affect the political stability of the Delhi Sultanate?, and Why does Sultan Fihrus Syah Tughlaq's economic policy fail to overcome the fiscal crisis and how does this affect the people of Delhi?

This study uses a qualitative method (Wekke, 2020), with a historiography approach to analyze the military and economic policies of Sultan Fihrus Syah Tughlaq. The historiography approach will help in understanding how various historical writers in the past and today viewed Sultan Tughlaq's policies, as well as how those views developed over time. This study will focus on the analysis of various historical sources, both primary and secondary, to assess Sultan Fihrus' policies in the socio-political and economic context of 14th-century India.

This historiographic research method will allow the author to understand the

development of historical writing related to Sultan Fihrus Syah Tughlaq, as well as provide deeper insight into the military and economic policies implemented during his reign. This approach will highlight how views of Sultan Tughlaq have changed over time, as well as how those policies interact with broader social, political, and economic dynamics.

## Result and Discussion

### **The military policy of Sultan Fihrus Syah Tughlaq in the face of the threat of Timur Lenk which affected the political stability of the Delhi Sultanate**

Sultan Fihrus Syah Tughlaq's military policy in the face of the threat of Timur Lenk affected the political stability of the Delhi Sultanate. During the reign of Sultan Fihrus Shah Tughlaq (1399-1412), the Delhi Sultanate faced a serious threat from Timur Lenk (Tamerlane), a conqueror from Central Asia who managed to destroy several major kingdoms in South and Central Asia. The Eastern Lenk Offensive in 1398 resulted in severe damage to the Delhi Sultanate, including the destruction of the City of Delhi and the massive massacre of its inhabitants. Although Timur Lenk did not last long in India, his attacks left a major impact that affected Sultan Fihrus Shah's military policy in maintaining political stability and security of the kingdom (M. Habib & Khan, 1961).

### **Military Reorganization and Strengthening Efforts**

Sultan Fihrus Shah realized that the political stability of the Delhi Sultanate was highly dependent on military power. After the damage inflicted by the invasion of the East of Lenk, Fihrus Shah Tughlaq sought to reinforce and rebuild the damaged military force. One of the main policies taken is to improve the command structure and strengthen border defense. In this case, Fihrus Shah relies on an army consisting of professional soldiers and specially trained youth to deal with external threats.

However, despite these efforts, Sultan Fihrus Shah's military policy was less effective in the face of further threats, especially related to attacks from Mongol forces and the internal instability that emerged as a result of the political tensions left behind by his predecessors. In the first few years of his rule, Fihrus Shah faced difficulties in defusing the rebellion and political turmoil that occurred as a result of the influence of Timur Lenk, which created uncertainty among Delhi's ruling elite (M. Habib & Khan, 1961).

### **Resource Shrinkage and External Impacts**

One of the factors that limited Sultan Fihrus Shah's military policy was the limited financial resources due to the severe damage caused by the invasion of East Lenk. Although Fihrus Shah is trying to recover the economy, major challenges still arise in terms of financing military operations and maintaining the strength of the army. The inability to manage the country's wealth and mobilize resources for military purposes makes political stability more vulnerable, which in turn exacerbates the threat to the Delhi Sultanate.

In addition, Fihrus Shah faced difficulties in maintaining alliances with the surrounding kingdoms, which were increasingly divided after the destruction caused by Timur Lenk. Tensions between local rulers and a military policy that is not solid enough to control Delhi's outer territories led to further instability within the kingdom. Although Fihrus Shah sought to consolidate his territory, his military policy focused more on strengthening important cities within the kingdom, with less attention paid to expanding or strengthening power beyond the core territory of the Delhi Sultanate. These efforts to maintain internal stability and isolate the region from external threats are reflected in the city's defense policy and the construction of strategic fortifications, but their impact on overall

political stability is limited (Elliot & Dowson, 2022).

### **Military Policy Final Results**

Although Sultan Firus Shah Tughlaq's military policies managed to overcome several external and internal threats, their impact on the political stability of the Delhi Sultanate was not entirely successful. Military defeats in several conflicts with Mongol forces and the inability to repair economic damage caused Firus Shah to struggle to maintain influence and control over the kingdom's territory. His rule eventually ended with the instability that continued to plague the Delhi Sultanate, and a decline in military power that could not support political stability in the long run.

### **The Influence of Lenk's Eastern Attack and Sultan Firus Shah's Reaction**

The Eastern Lenk Raid in 1398, which destroyed most of the Delhi Sultanate, created a deep trauma in Delhi's political history. This attack not only destroyed the physical and morale of Delhi's troops, but also shook the political structure of the kingdom. When Timur Lenk invaded Delhi, Sultan Nasir-ud-Din Mahmud, the ruler at the time, was unable to deal with it effectively, leading to the temporary collapse of Delhi's rule. Although Timur Lenk left India in the same year, his impact was still felt by the rulers of Delhi, including Sultan Firus Shah who ascended the throne afterwards (I. Habib, 1999).

Firus Shah Tughlaq, who inherited a ruined and weak kingdom, was well aware that military policy should be prioritized to improve the kingdom's defenses and restore order within the country. Firus Shah continued efforts to strengthen the military structure, improve army training, and recruit new soldiers. One of the more concrete policies is an increase in budgets for military equipment and the strengthening of fortifications in some

important cities, such as Delhi and border areas that are vulnerable to attack.

### **Reliance on Ancient Defense Systems and Military Alliances**

Although Sultan Firus Shah tried to improve the military structure, the military policy implemented tended to be conservative and tied to the pre-existing defense system. For example, Firus Shah relied more on elephant troops and cavalry as part of his defense strategy, which, while effective in his time, proved to be less able to keep pace with the development of more modern military techniques in other regions. In the face of the Eastern Lenk threat, this overly focused military strategy on traditional methods was not effective enough, especially since the Eastern Lenk brought in a well-trained army equipped with more advanced warfare technology, such as heavy artillery and highly organized cavalry troops.

In addition to efforts to strengthen the military internally, Sultan Firus Shah also tried to secure the Delhi Sultanate through diplomatic alliances with several rulers in the surrounding region. For example, he made several diplomatic attempts with the kingdoms of Deccan and Punjab to form an anti-Mongol coalition. However, this alliance was not strong enough to prevent external threats coming from the East of Lenk, and some of the kingdoms preferred to keep their distance or switch to supporting the East of Lenk for their own political gain (I. Habib, 1999).

Sultan Firus Shah's diplomacy has also failed to ease tensions with neighboring countries, most of whom prioritize the safety of their own territories rather than forming a united front against the East of Lenk. This instability in international relations shows how Firus Shah's military policy is limited in securing the position of the Delhi Sultanate amid geopolitical uncertainty.

## The Impact of Military Policy on Political Stability

Sultan Fihrus Shah's military policy, although aimed at strengthening the military power of the Delhi Sultanate, was unable to guarantee political stability in the long run. One of the factors causing this was the weak coordination between the ruling elite and the inability of Sultan Fihrus Shah to create a solid internal consensus. Some generals and high-ranking officials of the kingdom who were dissatisfied with the policies adopted by the Sultan tried to strengthen their own positions, which led to internal political tensions and conflicts.

Fihrus Shah also faced the challenge of rebellion and discontent among the people and nobility who felt that a military policy centered on border defense ignored the need for social and economic reforms. This shows how military policy is limited to strengthening external defense without paying attention to internal political stability, ultimately weakening the legitimacy of its government and adding damage to the already fragile social structure.

## Military Policy Evaluation and Its Impact

Overall, Sultan Fihrus Syah Tughlaq's military policy in dealing with the threat of Timur Lenk had a limited impact on the political stability of the Delhi Sultanate. Although this policy strengthened defenses and improved the military structure internally, the inability to respond to changes in more modern war tactics and internal challenges of the kingdom led to the military policy not being able to effectively maintain political stability. In addition, the failure to build solid alliances with neighboring kingdoms as well as internal tensions among the nobility further aggravated the political situation of the Delhi Sultanate at that time (Eaton, 2023).

## Social and Political Influence of Sultan Fihrus Shah's Military Policy

In addition to the direct military impact, Sultan Fihrus Shah's military policies also affected the social and political structure of the country. The decision to focus on defense and strengthening forces affects not only relations with neighboring countries, but also relations with peoples. Tax increases and a focus on military interests resulted in discontent among farmers and other lower classes.

This has created social tensions that further worsen domestic political stability. In fact, although Sultan Fihrus Shah sought to improve military conditions and secure key areas, the neglect of broader economic and social reforms led to increasing popular dissatisfaction with his rule. In some cases, rebellions and riots have occurred in some regions that have been overlooked by military policies that focus too much on external defense (Jalal, 1994).

## The Success and Failure of Sultan Fihrus Shah's Military Policy

Overall, Sultan Fihrus Shah's military policy shows a mixture of limited success and significant failure. Its success lies in efforts to improve the core defenses of the Delhi Sultanate and increase the readiness of the army to face external attacks. However, its greatest failure lies in its inability to anticipate changes in military tactics, manage economic crises, and improve relations with society and the ruling elite.

Although Sultan Fihrus Shah was able to maintain control over the Delhi region in the short term, a defense-focused military policy without regard to other internal needs led to continued instability. This contributed to the inability of the Delhi Sultanate to cope with the rebellion and political tensions that arose within the country, which ultimately led to further setbacks at the end of the reign of Sultan Fihrus Shah (Chandra, 2004).

**Sultan Fihrus Syah Tughlaq's economic policies failed to address the fiscal crisis and its impact on the people of Delhi.**

Sultan Firus Shah Tughlaq, who ruled the Delhi Sultanate from 1399 to 1412, faced a severe challenge after the Eastern invasion of Lenk (Tamerlane) which destroyed most of the infrastructure and economy of the Delhi Sultanate. In his efforts to rebuild the country and restore stability, Sultan Firus Shah implemented ambitious economic policies, including tax reform, the introduction of a new currency, and efforts to boost the agricultural and trade sectors (Jackson, 2003).

However, the economic policies implemented by Sultan Firus Shah failed to overcome the fiscal crisis that hit the kingdom and exacerbated the social and economic instability experienced by the people of Delhi. This policy, which was originally expected to improve the country's economy, actually worsened socio-economic conditions, caused riots, and exacerbated popular dissatisfaction (Husain, 1938).

### **Sultan Firus Shah's Economic Policy and the Fiscal Crisis**

Sultan Firus Shah, after taking power, faced major problems in terms of the kingdom's finances, which were affected by the great damage left by the invasion of the East of Lenk in 1398. In an effort to rebuild the economy, Sultan Firus Shah enacted several policies aimed at improving the fiscal crisis, including:

#### **Burdensome Tax Reform**

Sultan Firus Shah Tughlaq, who ruled the Delhi Sultanate from 1351 to 1388, was known for his ambitious economic policies, one of which was tax reform that was very burdensome to the people. The tax policy implemented during his reign was not only one of the factors causing economic instability, but also worsened the social and political conditions of the kingdom. Although the aim of these reforms was to improve the country's finances that were experiencing deficits, its implementation ended with much worse consequences. One of the steps taken by Sultan Firus Shah is to increase

taxes, especially to overcome a large budget deficit due to severe damage to the country's infrastructure and reduced revenue from the agricultural sector. This tax increase not only includes land tax, but also trade taxes imposed on traders and entrepreneurs (Tansen, 2014).

The tax reform implemented by Sultan Firus Shah aimed to improve the financial condition of the kingdom which was severely affected by the invasion of the East of Lenk in 1398. The Delhi Sultanate is experiencing a huge shortfall in funds to finance military spending, infrastructure development, and other administrative activities. To overcome this, Sultan Firus Syah decided to reform the tax system in the hope of increasing state revenue. The imposition of very high taxes worsens the relationship between the community and the government. Many people began to lose faith in Sultan Firus Shah and his government, who were considered indifferent to the suffering of the people. This widespread discontent affected political stability, as riots and insurrections became more frequent in response to burdensome tax policies (Tansen, 2014).

However, this policy tends to burden the common people, especially farmers, who are already in a depressed condition due to the damage caused by the previous invasion. The high tax burden caused greater suffering for them, increasing unrest and widespread social discontent.

#### **Poor Financial Management**

Sultan Firus Syah, in addition to tax policy, also tried to reduce expenditure by introducing austerity measures in the government. However, this policy was unsuccessful due to poor management of the kingdom's finances and an inability to control government spending that continued to increase. In fact, Sultan Firus Shah spent large sums of money to finance military policies and infrastructure development, which were not balanced by deep economic

reforms and income sustainability. One aspect of poor financial management is inefficient budget allocation. Sultan Fihrus Shah tried to overcome various problems through major projects, such as infrastructure development and the military (Husain, 1938).

However, budget allocations for these projects are often unrealistic and are not based on careful calculations regarding the kingdom's economic capabilities. Sultan Fihrus Shah launched a number of major infrastructure projects, including the construction of canals for irrigation, new cities, and the construction of fortifications. Although the goal of these projects was to improve the economy and improve the kingdom's defense, many of them were undertaken without good financial planning, and more often over-spent state resources (Qureshi, 1967).

As a result, many of these projects do not generate profits that are comparable to the costs incurred. Fihrus Shah also allocated a large amount of budget to strengthen the kingdom's military power, which at the time faced threats from outside. However, this uncontrolled military spending weighs on the royal budget, given the country's limited revenues. Large budgets are spent on soldiers' salaries, supplies, and military travel expenses, while other, more pressing sectors, such as agriculture and trade, are ignored (Jackson, 2003).

### **Introduction of the New Currency and Its Impact on the Economy**

Sultan Fihrus Shah Tughlaq is also known for his controversial policy on the introduction of a new currency, which is expected to help overcome the fiscal crisis. He introduced new silver and copper currencies with higher face values, with the aim of facilitating transactions and fixing the chaotic monetary system.

However, this policy resulted in a drastic decline in the value of the currency and damaged the already fragile economic

system. The new currency issued by Sultan Fihrus Shah is not backed by a stable reserve or value base, which leads to inflation and distrust of the exchange rate (Hunter, 1903).

The public did not believe in this new currency, and many merchants and citizens preferred to use valuables or foreign currencies rather than the currency issued by the government. Impact on Public Trust: Delhi people, especially the merchant and peasant classes, lost confidence in Sultan Fihrus Shah's monetary policies. Rising inflation and currency instability are causing major disruptions in day-to-day trading and the economy. This exacerbates the social crisis, as the people are increasingly unable to meet their basic needs (Qureshi, 1967).

### **Purpose of the Introduction of New Currencies**

The policy of introducing a new currency was motivated by the need to repair the country's finances that were devastated by the attack of Timur Lenk. With the new currency that is easier to print, it is hoped that it can overcome the problem of budget deficit and provide funds for various government needs, especially for development programs and military strengthening. The new currency is also intended to reduce dependence on precious metals such as gold and silver, which are very limited, as well as to facilitate trade transactions at home and abroad.

One of the main objectives of Sultan Fihrus Shah in introducing the new currency was to overcome the fiscal crisis that was being experienced by the Delhi Kingdom after the invasion of East Lenk (Tamerlane) in 1398. The invasion caused severe damage to the kingdom's economic, trade, and financial infrastructure. Sultan Fihrus Shah inherited a divided kingdom, with a large budget deficit and shaky state finances (Chandra, 2004).

New currencies made of copper and silver were issued at higher denominations to meet the huge funding needs for

reconstruction programs, especially for the military, infrastructure, and strengthening of the kingdom's administration. By printing large amounts of money, it is hoped that it can strengthen the royal treasury which is short of funds. Although this measure is intended to increase state revenues and increase liquidity, this policy in fact does not provide an effective solution. New currencies printed in large quantities without adequate reserves lead to rapid inflation, which reduces the purchasing power of money and leads to economic instability. The Sultan's inability to ensure the stability of the currency's value led to the failure of this policy.

### **Inconsistency of Nominal Value with Intrinsic Value and Its Impact on the People's Economy**

The main problem in the introduction of this new currency is the very significant difference between the face value of the currency and its intrinsic value. Sultan Fihrus Shah issued copper and silver coins with higher face values, but there were no adequate guarantees (such as gold or silver reserves) underlying the exchange rate of the money. The new currency does not have a solid basis for maintaining exchange rate stability. This policy leads to rapid inflation. As new money was printed in large quantities without any solid foundation, the currency exchange rate fell dramatically. Traders and the general public began to feel that this new currency no longer had the same purchasing power as before, which led to inflation (Husain, 1938).

Items that could previously be purchased at a certain price are now becoming more expensive. Since there was no clear basis for the currency, people lost confidence in Sultan Fihrus Shah's monetary policy. Traders and people prefer to use old coins or other valuable items (such as gold and silver) that are considered more stable. The use of new currencies causes serious disruptions in trading. Traders find it

difficult to assess the true value of the goods they are selling due to uncertainty about the value of the newly circulating currency.

This worsens the already fragile economic situation, especially for the merchant and farmer classes who have to deal with high inflation. Trading systems that previously ran more steadily using more accepted currencies (such as silver and gold) are now disrupted. Traders are reluctant to accept new money and switch to a barter system or use a more trustworthy foreign currency. This causes difficulties in trade transactions and hinders economic development (Hunter, 1903).

This economic damage leads to increasing social dissatisfaction. The lower class, which mostly relies on stable prices in daily life, is increasingly depressed. Groups of farmers and workers who have difficulty paying taxes due to high inflation have triggered social tensions. This led to rebellions and riots in various regions.

### **Unplanned Policies and Ultimately Leading to Economic Failure**

The introduction of new currencies that are not backed by a strong foundation and non-transparent policies cause people to lose trust in the government. This distrust has an impact on the deepening of economic instability, where traders and people prefer to invest in the form of valuables or use foreign currency. Merchants, aristocrats, and the elite class that usually played an important role in economic stability began to withdraw their capital from Delhi's economy. They invest abroad or look for other ways to protect their wealth from rampant inflation. As a result, economic difficulties are becoming more widespread, and the government is struggling to restore the desired economic stability (Qureshi, 1967).

Sultan Fihrus Shah's inability to maintain public trust in his monetary system led to a reduction in support for his government. This exacerbated pre-existing

social and political tensions, reducing the political stability of the kingdom. Finally, the policy of introducing a new currency by Sultan Fihrus Shah Tughlaq proved to be one of the major failure factors in his government. Without careful consideration of the long-term impact of this policy, Sultan Fihrus Shah printed large sums of money without taking into account economic resilience. This, coupled with heavy tax policies and poor financial management, exacerbated economic and political instability in the Delhi Sultanate.

### **Social Crisis and Community Dissatisfaction**

Sultan Fihrus Shah's economic policies that were considered burdensome to the people, especially high tax policies and failed currency policies, caused widespread social discontent. Farmers, already depressed by poor agricultural conditions due to the invasion of the East of Lenk and weather uncertainty, now have to bear an increasingly heavy tax burden. Their inability to meet their tax obligations further fueled riots and rebellions, both in rural areas and in cities. The high tax policy led to peasant revolts in various regions, including around the capital Delhi. Dissatisfaction with Fihrus Shah's economic policies was exacerbated by injustice in the distribution of resources and the kingdom's inability to repair damaged infrastructure. The insurgency further exacerbated social and political tensions in the Delhi Sultanate (Jackson, 2003).

### **Long-Term Impact on Political and Economic Stability**

The impact of Sultan Fihrus Shah's economic policies on political and social stability is enormous. Although the Sultan tried to overcome the fiscal crisis with tax and currency reform policies, they actually made things worse. The increasing dissatisfaction of the people leads to political instability, with frequent rebellions and

riots. Trust in the government and the kingdom's economic system is declining, and the kingdom's fiscal continues to be in crisis.

Sultan Fihrus Shah's inability to manage economic policies wisely was a major factor that led to his government's failure to achieve long-term stability. Although his economic improvement efforts were ambitious steps, without proper management and more comprehensive reforms, they only worsened the already fragile economic and social conditions (Tansen, 2014).

### **Heavy Tax Policy and Its Impact on the Long-Term Economy**

During the reign of Sultan Fihrus Shah, very high taxes were applied throughout the kingdom, especially in the agricultural and trade sectors. This very heavy tax policy, aimed at increasing the kingdom's revenue, actually leads to an unsustainable economic burden in the long run. High taxes in the agricultural sector have led to many farmers who can no longer meet their tax obligations and end up abandoning their land. This led to a decline in agricultural yields, which were a key sector of the kingdom's economy, and exacerbated the problem of hunger and economic instability in rural areas.

Instability in the agricultural sector affected the entire kingdom's economic system, as agriculture was the backbone of the country's revenue. In addition, traders and entrepreneurs also feel burdened by high taxes, which causes them to reduce their economic activities. Too large taxes hinder the circulation of goods in the market, so that the trade economy becomes sluggish and not developed. The helplessness of this trade sector also has a long-term impact, where the kingdom's economy is increasingly stagnant and it is difficult to innovate (Husain, 1938).

### **The Collapse of the Tughlaq Dynasty**

Sultan Fihrus Shah's policies that harmed most levels of society triggered a

protracted social crisis, with increasing social dissatisfaction. Rebellions, riots, and social rifts between the ruling class and the people increasingly emerged, which ultimately added to the rift in the kingdom's political stability. Unfair tax policies and failed currency introductions led to high social tensions, with people feeling marginalized and oppressed.

Social unrest is widespread, both in rural areas and in big cities, such as Delhi, which has worsened relations between the people and the government. This widespread discontent eventually led to deep political instability, which further complicated the kingdom's economic recovery. This social crisis undermined the authority of Sultan Fihrus Shah as a just and wise leader (Hunter, 1903).

The government's inability to overcome the people's dissatisfaction and social crisis led to the weakening of the Sultan's political position. This exacerbated the unrest and insurgency that occurred, and ultimately led to a long collapse of political stability. All of these factors were extravagance in monetary policy, failed currency policies, burdensome taxes, social tensions, and improper relocation of the capital—preparing the way for the collapse of the Tughlaq Dynasty. The economic turmoil and political instability that occurred during the time of Sultan Fihrus Shah contributed greatly to the collapse of Tughlaq's power after his death in 1351. Although there were successors who tried to improve the situation, the already fragile foundations of the kingdom made recovery very difficult, and the kingdom finally collapsed in the late 14th century. (Husain, 1938).

## Conclusion

This research reveals that the military and economic policies of Sultan Fihrus Shah Tughlaq had a significant impact on the political and social stability of the Delhi Sultanate in the 14th century. Sultan

Tughlaq's military policy, although aimed at protecting the kingdom from the threat of the East of Lenk, in fact worsened the political situation of the Delhi Sultanate. The Sultan's inability to deal with the invasion of the East of Lenk and the instability caused by the long battle created internal tensions that reduced the political durability of the kingdom. Despite several military efforts, including the formation of large forces and the use of strategic tactics, they failed to maintain the expected peace and stability.

The military policy of Sultan Fihrus Shah Tughlaq sought to modernize the armed forces and face external threats, especially from the East of Lenk. However, there are shortcomings in terms of implementation and resources. The inability to maintain a well-trained and consolidated army led to failure in the face of the invasion. In addition, unresolved internal conflicts worsen political stability, showing that an aggressive and reactive military approach is not effective enough in dealing with a major threat such as Timur Lenk.

Economic policy, although the Sultan tried to introduce more organized fiscal reforms with a new taxation system and the printing of banknotes, its immature implementation and public resistance to these new policies worsened the fiscal situation. The decline in economic stability has a direct impact on people's lives, exacerbates social inequality, and increases tensions among the lower classes who feel increasingly depressed by these policies.

The historiography approach provides an important perspective in analyzing these events, especially in understanding how various historical interpretations of Sultan Tughlaq's policies developed. Modern historians consider that despite the good intentions of the Sultan's policies, the results achieved are not in line with expectations and often show contradictions in the implementation of those policies.

Overall, Sultan Tughlaq's military and economic policies have failed to create the

desired stability, both in the face of external threats and in maintaining social welfare at home. The imbalance between ambition and ineffective execution resulted in results that not only disrupted the internal politics of the Delhi Sultanate, but also left a legacy of historical criticism of the leadership of Sultan Fihrus Shah Tughlaq.

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