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Assignment: History
Registration: BA.LLB/3-20/M005

Topic for Group "B":

Describe the Expeditions of Sultan Muhamud Ghazni, in the light of his conquest and - defeats in Indo-Pak?

1-INTRODUCTION:

Mahmud Ghazni was born in the town of Ghazni in the region of Zabulistan (now present-day Afghanistan) on 2 November 971. His father, Sabuktigin, was a Turkic slave commander who laid foundations to the Ghaznavid dynasty in Ghazni in 977, which he ruled as a subordinate of the Samanids, who ruled Khorasan and Transoxiana. Mahmud's mother was the daughter of an Iranian aristocrat from Zabulistan and is therefore known in some sources as Mahmud-i Zavuli ("Mahmud from Zabulistan"). Though Mahmud was the eldest son of his father, it is said that in his last days, Subuktagin was not happy with Mahmud. So, when Subuktagin died in 997 AD, his younger son Ismail became the king of Ghazni. Ismail reigned only for a little time. Very soon, Mahmud defeated him and became the king.

2-AN OVERVIEW OF THE CAMPAIGNS OF SULTAN MAHMUD:

In 1000 AD, he started his military companies, which were lasted before his death in 1030 AD. Mahmud's campaigns seem to have been motivated by religious zeal against both the Fatimid's Shiites and non-Muslims; Buddhists, Jains and Hindus. Mahmood of Ghazna was one of the undefeatable military commanders of the World. He attacked South Asia seventeen times successfully and went back to Ghazni every time with a great victory. He fought against the forces of Jaipal, Annadpal, Tarnochalpal, Kramta and the joint forces of Hindu Rajas and Maharajas but all of them were forced to flee away from the battlefield due to Mahmood's war strategy as a general.

3-PROMINENT INVASION OF MAHMUD:

A-CAPTURE OF FRONTIER FORTS:

The first expedition of Mahmud which was undertaken in 1000 A.D. against the frontier towns of the Khyber Pass was an important one. During this expedition he captured a few forts and towns of the Khyber Pass.

B-DEFEAT OF JAYPAL OF HINDUSHAHI KINGDOM:

Second expedition of the Mahmud was against his father's enemy, Jaypal, the king of Hindushahi kingdom. A fierce battle was fought at Peshawar in November, 1001 in which the Muslims came out victorious. Jaypal could not tolerate this insult. He after appointing his son Anandpal as the next king, burnt himself to death.

C-CONQUEST OF MULTAN:

The fourth expedition of Mahmud was led against the Muslim ruler of Multan. Abul Fateh Daud the ruler of Multan had friendly relation with Anandpal. In 1006, Mahmud marched across the Punjab, Anandpal was defeated and driven to Kashmir hills. Mahmud than invaded Multan. Daud fled, and Multan was captured. Sukhpal or Nawasa Shah, a grandson of Jaypal was left in charge of Multan.

D-BATTLE OF WAIHIND:

The sixth expedition of Mahmud was led against Anandpal 1008. He organized a confederacy against the Muslims in which the great Hindu Rajas of Ujjain, Gwalior, Kalinjar, Qanauj, Delhi and Ajmer had joined. Mahmud had never met such a vast army organized by the Hindu confederates. The Khokars, a tribe of Punjab also joined the Rajputs in their struggle against the Muslims. It was a challenge to Mahmud. He met the huge Hindu army near Waihind. The bear-footed and bear-headed Khokars fought very bravely against the Muslims. It was a critical moment for the Muslims. but fortunately the elephant of Anandpal got frightened and fled away from the battle-field. This caused a great confusion and panic among the Hindu soldiers who also ran away from the battle-field. Mahmud won victory.

E-CONQUEST OF PUNJAB:

Trilochanpal son of Anandpal, after exile again came to Punjab and established himself in the Sivalik hills. He entered into an alliance with Vidyadhar, the chandela ruler of Bundelkhan. In order to break this alliance, Mahmud again came to Indo-Pakistan, and finally defeated Trilochanpal. The result of this expedition 'was more enduring than those of others'. He annexed the Punjab to his dominions and entrusted a regular Amir with the government of the province.

F-EXPEDITION AGAINST QANAUJ:

The next important expedition of Mahmud was directed against Qanaj, the imperial capital of Hindustan. In 1018. Mahmud at the head of a large army, set out from Ghazni. He captured all the forts on the way. The Raja of Baran or Bulandshahar, offered his submission and embraced Islam along with ten thousand men. Mahmud appeared before the gate of Qanauj in 1019, January, Rajaypal, the Pratihara ruler of Qanauj submitted to Mahmud without any fighting.

G-CAUSES OF ATTACK ON SOMNATH:

After the fall of Punjab, the Hindu think tank assembled at Somnath - which was more of a political center than a temple - to plan a big war against Mahmud. He took all the Rajas and Maharajas by surprise when he attacked Somnath and crushed the Hindu headquarter of political intrigue. With the destruction of Somnath he broke the backbone of the Hindus in the region and thus had no need to attack India again.

The most momentous expedition of Sultan Mahmud was indeed the capture of Somnath in Kathiwar. Regarding the cause of this expedition, the famous historian, Ibn-ul-Athis says that, "when Mahmud of Ghazni was gaining victory after victory in India, the Hindu began to say that the success of Mahmud was due to displeasure of the Somnath god with the inhabitants of the defeated territories". At this, Mahmud decided to conquer Somnath in order to prove the futility of their belief. This view is corroborated by Ibn Khaldun, Farishta and Wolseley Haig.

Towards the close of 1025, Mahmud set from Ghazni and passing through Multan and the desert of Rajputana, he stood before the gates of Somnath on the 9th of January 1026. The Hindus offered a stubborn resistance, but were defeated.

"The expedition to Somnath" says Dr. M. Nazim, "is one of the greatest feats of Military adventure in the history of Islam".

H-LAST EXPEDITION:

The last expedition was undertaken against the Jats of Salt Range in 1027 who had molested the Muslim army on its return journey from Somnath. The Jats were defeated and many of them were put to death.

4-ESTIMATE OF SULTAN MAHMUD:

He came to South Asia seventeen times and went back to Ghazni every time with a great victory. He fought against the strong forces of Jaipal, Annadpal, Tarnochalpal, Kramta and the joint forces of Hindu Rajas and Maharajas but all of them were forced to flee away from the battlefield due to Mahmud's war strategy as a general.

According to S. M. Jaffar, "Mahmud was endowed with a genius of war. He was a scientific general, skillful in planning and thorough in execution". His army consisted of heterogeneous elements such as Arabs, Afghans, Turks and Hindus but he showed wonderful ability in welding together these elements into a powerful and invincible unit. As a conqueror, his purpose was to achieve fame and glory and he had achieved it.

5-NATURE OF THE MAHMUD'S INVASIONS:

Sultan Mahmud made seventeen expeditions into Indo-Pakistan and conquered a number of places in the sub-continent. But he didn't establish his rule over them or annex any part of the conquered territories except the Punjab. Various opinions have been expressed by the historians about the motives of Sultan Mahmud's invasions.

6-MAHMUD ONE OF THE GREATEST CONQUEROR:

One of the most controversial personalities in the history of South Asia, Mahmud Ghaznavi is known as one of the greatest conquerors the world has ever seen. He was one of the very few leaders who were never defeated in a battlefield.

Unlike other great conquerors like Alexander and Chengiz Khan, Mahmud did not leave the areas conquered to the mercy of his soldiers. After becoming the first Muslim ruler to conquer Northern Punjab, he consolidated his rule in the area and established his provincial headquarters at Lahore. He established law and order in the areas that he ruled, giving special attention to the people he ruled.

Professor Sharma is of the view that, "Mahmud was a seasoned soldier. Fear did not find any place in his heart. His army won against the rulers of India 'like comb through a poll of hair.'" It was no small achievement to "develop a small mountain principality of Ghazni into a large and prosperous empire by sheer force of arms." He never shrank from war; rather he took delight in it. His military exploits in the east effaced the glories of Alexander's conquest from the minds of many.

14-CONCLUSION:

Mahmud of Ghazna became the sign of respect and bravery for South Asian Muslim and is considered as their Hero. Mahmud weakened the power of the neighboring rulers as they could not attack over the newly established Muslim state. The booty of war was used to consolidate the power of the state. After the conquest of Multan and Lahore, Mahmud made Punjab a part of his empire in 1021.

A large number of Hindus lived in Ghazni, and they enjoyed religious freedom. One of his commanders named Tilak was a Hindu. A number of soldiers in his army were also Hindus. Mahmud attacked the Hindu Temples in India because of political and not religious reasons. Mahmud Ghaznavi died on April 30, 1030AD.