

# Medieval History



Sample topic · The Vijayanagar Empire

# Vijaynagar Empire

## Introduction

- The Vijayanagar Kingdom and Bahmani Kingdoms were formed by the officers who rebelled against sultanate.
- Both arose when the control of sultanate became weak over the Deccan.
- By the early 16th century the Sultanate given away a series of kingdoms viz. Gujarat, Malwa, Jaunpur, Delhi and Bengal.
- In the Deccan and Peninsular India, the existing sultanate incursion had slackened, opening the way for new kingdoms to emerge.

## Vijaynagar Empire

- Founded in 1336 AD- contemporary to Mohammad Bin Tughlaq
- Founded by Harhara & Bukka- officers under Kaktiyas (Warangal)
- Guided by Guru Vidyaranya
- Existed for over 3 centuries, ruling over large part of Southern India
- Named after capital city- Vijayanagar (Present day- Hampi in Karnataka)

# Vijaynagar Empire

## Vijaynagar Empire

- Vijayanagar was ruled by 4 major dynasties
  - a. Sangam Dynasty - Shaivaites
  - b. Saluva Dynasty - Vaishnavites
  - c. Tuluva- Dynasty - Vaishnavites
  - d. Aravidu Dynasty - Vaishnavites

## Krishna Deva Raya

- Greatest ruler belonged to Tuluva Dynasty
- Defeated Bijapur Sultan and Gajapati kings of Orissa
- Good relationship with Portuguese
- Also known as Andra Bhoja
- Patronised 8 eminent poets and scholars (Astadiggaj)
- Tenalirama was a part of Astadiggaja
- Greatest of them was Peddana (Also known as Andhra Kavita Pitamah)

# Vijaynagar Empire

## Literature- Golden age of Telugu Literature

- Pedanna wrote:
  - a. Manucharitam (Telegu)
  - b. Harikatha saram (Telegu) Krishnadeva Raya wrote
  - c. Amukhamaldaya (Telegu)
  - d. Jambavti kalyanam (Sanskrit)

## Administration

- Absolute Monarchy
- Provinces were called **Mandalam**- Mandaleshwara/nayaks
- Empire-->Mandalams-->Nadus-->Sthalas-->Grama
- Land tax was known as, '**Sist**' was 1/6th of the produce
- Gold Coin- **Varaha**
- Army was strong and well organised- constant war with Bahmani

# Vijaynagar Empire

## Nayak System- Top Grade Army Officers

- Also known as Poligars
- Granted land in Lieu of service- amaram
- Later when the kings became weak Nayaks took over rule in Madurai, Tanjore etc, in 17th and 18th century

## Economy

- Many foreign travellers visited Vijayanagar and wrote good things like:
- Wealthy society
- Advance agriculture reforms - tanks, irrigation canal, dams across Tungabhadra
- Well-developed crafts and metallurgy
- Trade with Arabia, Persia, Portuguese, China etc, brought a lot of prosperity plus taxes for kingdom

# Vijaynagar Empire

## Foreign Traveller

- Ibn Batuta → Morocco
- Nicolo-de-Conti → Venice (Italy)
- Abdul Razzak → Persia
- Barossa → Portugal
- Domingos Paes → Portugal
- Nuniz → Portugal

## Cultural Contributions

- Popularized vernacular languages like Telegu, Kannada, Tamil and Sanskrit
- Vijayanagar Style of Temple architecture have features like: tall Gopurams, kalyanmandapam with large number of pillars
- Varadhraja & Ekambaranathar temple at Kanchipuram
- Elephant chariot at Vithala temple - Hampi
- The Vijayanagar capital was destroyed after Battle of Talikota ,1565
- Although the capital was abandoned and Vijayanagar empire lost all its power and glory but the kingdom continued to exist till 1670s