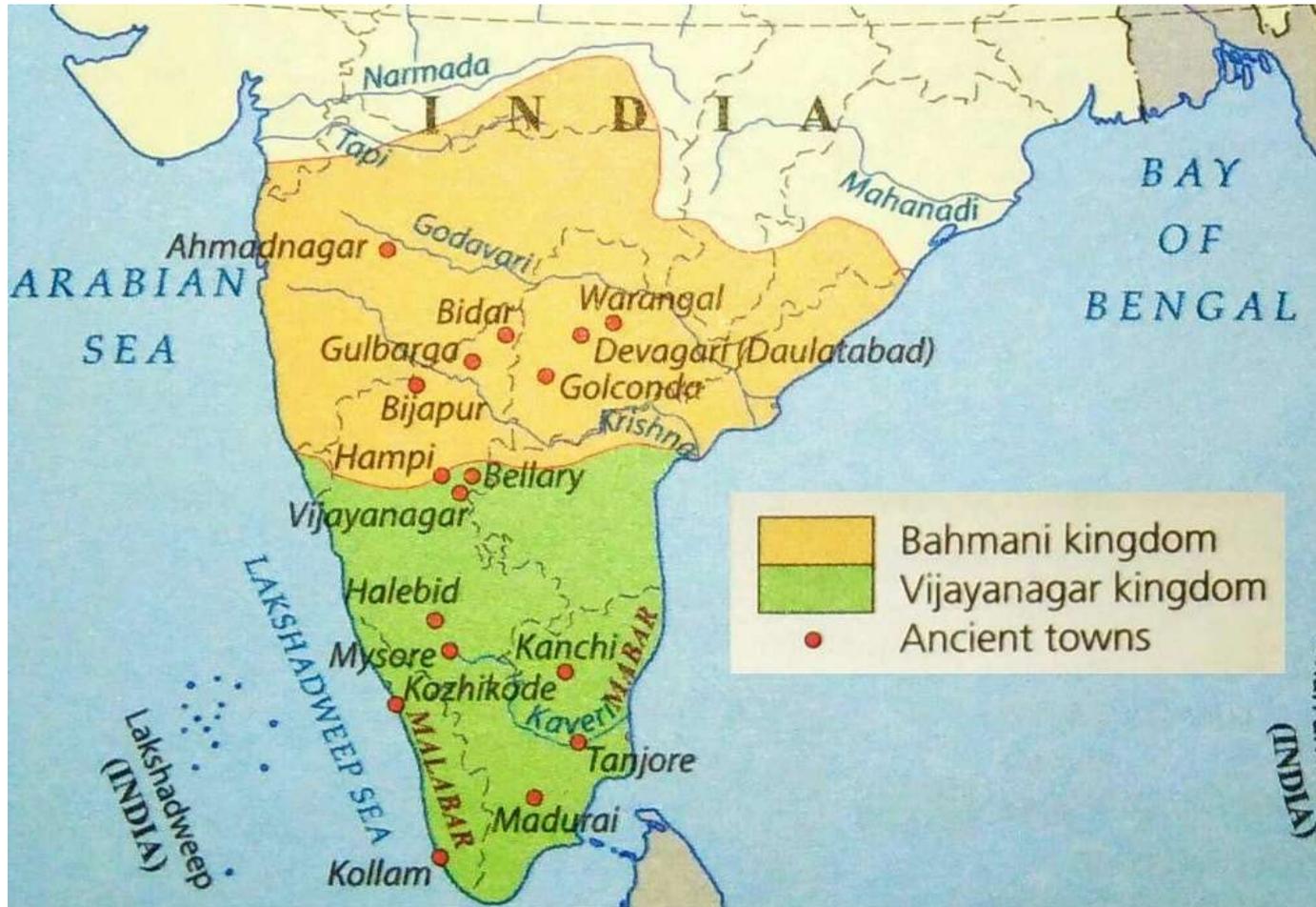


MODULE-2
DELHI SULTANATE, VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE & BHAMINI
KINGDOM
TOPIC- VIJAYANAGARA EMPIRE

PRIYANKA.E.K
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
LITTLE FLOWER COLLEGE, GURUVAYOOR

- Muhammad bin Thughlaq reign witnessed the emergence of two independent states in the south, Vijayanagar(1336 CE) & Bahamani (1347 CE) kingdoms
- Rise of Vijayanagar empire has been attributed to the tremendous reaction to the Turkish foray into south India in the first quarter of 14th C
- Vijayanagar & Bahmani kingdoms dominated India south of Vindhyas for more than 200 years
- Not only built magnificent capitals & cities & beautified them with many splendid buildings & promoted arts & letters but also provided for law & order & the development of commerce & handicrafts





Founding of Vijayanagara Empire

- Founded by Harihara & Bukka-belonged to Sangama dynasty
- Other 3 dynasties- Saluva, Tuluva & Aravidu
- Legend- they were feudatories of Kakatiyas of Warrangal & later became ministers in the kingdom of Kampili in modern Karnataka
- When Kampili was overrun by Muhammad bin Tughlaq for giving refuge to a Muslim rebel, the 2 brothers were imprisoned, converted to Islam, & appointed to deal with the rebellions there
- The Muslim governor of Madurai had already declared himself independent, Hoysala ruler of Mysore & ruler of Warrangal were also trying to assert their independence

- After a short time, Harihara & Bukka forsook their new master & their new faith
- At the instance of their Guru, Vidyaranya, they were readmitted to Hinduism & established their capital at Vijayanagar
- Some modern historians do not accept the tradition of their conversion to Islam, but consider them to be among the nayaks of Karnataka who had rebelled against Turkish rule
- Date of Harihara's coronation is placed at 1336
- At first he had to contend with the Hoysala ruler of Mysore & the Sultan of Madurai

- The sultan of Madurai was ambitious- he had defeated the Hoysala ruler & executed him
- The dissolution of Hoysala kingdom enabled Harihara & Bukka to expand their tiny principality
- By 1346, the whole of the Hoysala kingdom had passed into the hands of the Vijayanagara rulers
- In this struggle, Harihara & Bukka was aided by their brothers & by their relations who took up the administration of the areas conquered by their efforts
- Bukka succeeded his brother to the throne of Vijayanagara in 1356 & ruled till 1377

- Rising powers of the Vijayanagara empire brought it in to clash with many powers both in the south & to the north
- In south its main rivals were the **sultans of Madurai**
- The struggle b/ w them lasted for about 4 decades
- By 1377, the Sultanat of Madurai had been wiped out
- The Vijayanagar empire thus comprised the whole of south India up to Rameshwaram, including the Tamil country as well as that of Cheras
- To the north, Vijayanagar faced powerful enemy in the shape of the Bahmani kingdom

- Bahmani kingdom had come in to existence in **1347**
- Founder **Alauddin Hasan**, an Afghan adventurer
- He had risen in the service of a Brahman, named Gangu, & is therefore known as **Hasan Gangu**
- After coronation he assumed the title **Alauddin Hasan Bahman Shah**
- Conflict b/w Vijayanagara rulers & the Bahmani sultans clashed in 3 separate & distinct areas- **Tungabadra doab, in the Krishna-Godavari delta, in the Marathwada region**
- Tungabadra doab- region b/w the rivers of Krishna & Tungabadra

- Because of its wealth & economic resources It became a bone of contention b/w Western Chalukyas & cholas in the earlier period & between Yadavas & Hoysalas in later period
- Struggle for Krishna-Godavari basin –which was fertile, with its numerous ports, controlled the foreign trade of the region was often linked up with the struggle for the Tungabhadra doab
- In Maratha country, main contention was for the control of the Konkan & the areas which gave access to it
- Konkan was a narrow strip of land b/w western ghats & the sea- extremely fertile & included the port of Goa

- Military conflict b/w Vijayanagar & Bahmani kingdom was regular & lasted for long period
- Resulted in the devastation of contested areas, neighboring territories, loss of life & property
- Having strengthened his position in south India by eliminating the sultanat of Madurai, Vijayanagar empire embarked upon a policy of expansion towards the eastern coast under **Harihara II-1377-1404**
- There were hindu principalities in this region including the Kakatiyas of Warrangal

- Bahmani ruler, had invaded Warangal & fixed Golconda as the boundary of his kingdom & promised that neither he or his successors would encroach against Warangal any further
- This alliance b/w Bahmani & Warangal kingdom lasted for 50 years & became major factor in the inability of Vijayanagara to overrun the Tungabhadra doab
- Harhara II was succeeded by **Deva Raya I-1404-1422**
- Renewed fight for Tungabhadra doab
- Defeated by **Bahmani ruler Firuz Shah** & forced to sue for peace

- Gave his daughter in marriage to the Bahmani sultan in addition to ceding Bankapur & paying a large indemnity
- Followed by a decade of peace
- Deva Raya utilised the opportunity to tackle the Reddis & conquer Chaul, Dabol & the country of Coromandel
- Fresh war with Bahmani kingdom broke out in 1417
- Deva Raya was now able to wean Warrangal from Bahmani kingdom & enter into an agreement with it to partition the Reddi kingdom
- Collapse of Warangal- Bahmani nexus changed the political balance in north in Deccan & contributed the defeat of sultan Firuz Shah Bahmani

- Entire territory up to the mouth of Krishna river was annexed by Deva Raya
- Deva Raya remembered for his public welfare projects- construction of dams across the Tungabhadra & Haridra for irrigation
- Made grants to temples & priests
- Nicolo de Conti-Italian traveller- 'more powerful than all the other kings of India'
- last great ruler of sangama dynasty was **Deva Raya II** ascended throne in 1425-1446

- He crossed Tungabhadra river 1443 & fought 3 battles with the Bahmani sultans
- At the end both sides agreed to maintain the existing frontiers
- Deva Raya II-greatest ruler of Sangama dynasty
- Maintain territorial integrity of Vijayanagar
- Nuniz, Portuguese traveller- kings of Quilon, Srilanka, Pulicat, Pegu & Tenasserim(in Burma & Malaya) paid tribute to him
- Sri Lanka have been invaded a number of times- could not have been attained without a strong navy

- Persian traveller- Abdul Razzaq consider Vijayanagara to be one of the most splendid cities any where I the world
- Kings of Vijayanagara were reputed to be very wealthy

Decline of Vijayanagar

- Following the death of Deva Raya II, Vijayanagar was thrown into confusion as various contenders battled for the throne
- Finally a new dynasty, **Saluvas**, came to power
- Ruled for a brief while & replaced by **Tuluva** dynasty, whose greatest ruler was **Krishna Deva Raya 1509-1530**
- Krishna Deva Raya not only contend with the successor states of Bahmani Kingdom & Orissa but also with the rising power of the Portuguese
- Portuguese were using their control of the seas to intimidate vassal states of Vijayanagar in the coastal areas to extract concessions from them

- After occupying all territories upto the Krishna river from the rulers of Orissa, Krishna Deva Raya relaunched the struggle to control the Tungabhadra doab
- Vijayanagar armies overran Raichur & Mudgal, reached Belgam, sacked Bijapur & ravaged Gulbarga
- Krishna Deva Raya, the ablest of Vijayanagar rulers & towered over all his contemporaries
- He was talented in Telungu & Sanskrit & extended patronage to Telungu, Kannada & Tamil scholars
- Extremely solicitous of the welfare of his subjects & constructed several tanks near the capital for irrigation

- He was also a great philanthropist
- Gave religious freedom for his subjects
- After the death of Krishna Deva1530 , there was a struggle for power since his all sons were minors
- 1543 Sadashiva Raya ascended the throne & reigned till1567
- Real power was in the hands of triumvirate headed by Rama Raya
- He was able to play off various muslim powers each other
- Entered a commercial treaty with Portuguese whereby supply of horses to Bijapur stopped

- He completely defeated Bijapur sultan & inflicted heavy losses on Golconda & Ahmadnagar
- Ultimately the Deccani states combined together to inflict a grievous defeat on Vijayanagar in 1565 at Bannihatti, near Talikotta
- This battle also known as battle of Talikotta or battle of Rakshasa-Tangadi
- Vijayanagar forces were completely hampered
- Battle of Bannihatti is considered to mark the end of great Vijayanagara
- Although the kingdom lasted for 100 more years it lost its territories & power

Contribution of the Vijayanagara empire :

- **Polity :**
- The Rayas of Vijayanagara established an administrative system which was suitable to the needs of those times by respecting the traditional system.
- It is characterized by strong centre with a scheme of decentralization.
- In theory and practice monarchy was the main characteristic of the Vijayanagara polity.
- Emperor was the head of the administration. He enjoyed immense civil, military and judicial powers.
- The kings had an enlightened conception of their duties and responsibilities as the head of the Government.

- The fundamental duty of the Vijayanagara king was to provide security to all his subjects and redress their grievance. Krishnadevaraya in his *Amuktamalyada* clearly defines the duties of the king.
- The Vijayanagara rulers were aided and advised in the discharge of Royal functions by a council of Ministers, governors, military warriors, Brahmin priests, scholars and artists.
- The Vijayanagara emperors maintained council of Ministers.
- The office of the minister was sometimes hereditary.

- The empire was divided into several administrative units. The biggest unit was the rajyas or mandalams (province).
- The provinces were in turn divided into Nadu (district), Sthala(sub-district) and Grama(village).
- The Grama (Village) was the basic unit of administration.
- The Reddi was in charge of the law and order whereas the Karanam had to keep detailed account of the village land.

- **Revenue Administration:**
- **Land revenue** was the main source of income of the Vijayanagara state.
- It had an efficient system of land revenue administration under the department called **Athavan**.
- The Vijayanagara rulers took considerable interest in the development of agriculture and in improving irrigational facilities.
- In addition to the land revenue the state used to collect various taxes like grazing tax, marriage tax, tax on gardens and mines, professional taxes, customs duties, tolls on roads etc.

- **Judicial Administration :**

- Abdur Razzack the Persian envoy, gives some interesting information regarding the judicial administration of the Vijayanagara.
- The king was the highest court of appeal. In all important cases his word was final.
- The administration of criminal law was very severe. Regarding punishments, theft, adultery and treason were punished with death and the mutilation of limbs.
- The Nayaks and Gaundas were empowered to settle the cases in their respective jurisdiction.
- Sometimes the disputes were settled by the state officials with cooperation of the local bodies like the village panchayats and guilds.

- **Army :**
- The military organization of the Vijayanagara period was under the department called “**Kandachari**”.
- It was kept under the control of **Dandanayaka or the commander-in-chief**.
- The Vijayanagara emperors took sufficient care in maintaining very strong and efficient army because they were very often attacked by the Sultans of Deccan, the Gajapati kings of Orissa and also troubled by their refractory nobles.
- The Vijayanagara army consisted of infantry, cavalry, elephantry, camels and artillery.

- High-breed horses were procured from foreign traders. The Army of Vijayanagara was trained by the Arabs, Portuguese and the Italians.
- Fortress played a large part in the defense organization and the Arts of seize were well known and exclusively practiced. Another important aspect of the Vijayanagara military organization was the nayankara system.
- In centrally controlled area, the king granted amaram or territory with a fixed revenue to military chiefs
- These chiefs called palaiyagar or nayaks- had to maintain fixed number of foot soldiers, horses & elephants for the service of state
- They also had to pay sum of money to central exchequer

- **Society :**

- Hindus constituted the bulk of the population under the Vijayanagara rule although a fairly large number of Muslims and Jews besides some European traders and businessmen also enjoyed happy and comfortable lives under the benevolent rule of the Hindu monarchs.
- The traditional four-fold division of the society into Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras continued without any changes in the Vijayanagara age.
- The kings of the age tried their best to preserve the varna system.

- Foreign travelers left vivid accounts on the splendor of the buildings and luxurious social life in the city of Vijayanagara.
- **Paes** mentions of the beautiful houses of the rich and the large number of their household servants.
- Perfumes, flowers and ornaments were available plenty and used by the people.
- One of the most important features of the social life was spending their peaceful time in the celebration of festivals and amusements.
- Dancing, Music, Wrestling, gambling and cock fights were some of their amusements.
- It appears that during the Vijayanagara period women occupied high position in the society.

- They took leading part in the social, political and religious life of the period. Some of the women were learned.
- According to **Nuniz**, a large number of women were employed in Royal palaces as dancers and domestic servants.
- Devadasi system was an important social institution existed during the Vijayanagara empire.
- The sati system was in vogue and it was sanctioned by the Brahmanas.
- The Vijayanagara kings followed the policy of religious toleration.
- The Sangama rulers were Saivites and Virupaksha was their family deity.
- But the other dynasties were Vaishnavites.

- Srivaishnavism of Ramanuja was very popular.
- **Barbosa** states that Krishnadevaraya treated Saivites, Vaishnavites, Jains, Christians, Jews and Moors with kindness compassion and affection.
- Muslims were employed in the administration and they were freely allowed to build Mosques and worship.

- **Literature :**

- The monarchs of Vijayanagara were great patrons of education and learning.
- It witnessed tremendous growth and development of Dravidian languages – Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam besides Sanskrit.
- The reign of Krishnadevaraya was a glorious epoch in the literary activity of the Vijayanagara period.
- Krishnadevaraya's court was adorned by eight literary luminaries known as **Ashtadiggajas**.

- **Architecture, Art and Painting :**

- The Vijayanagara age witnessed remarkable development in architecture, art and painting.
- The ruins of the old capital of the empire, Hampi proclaim to the world that the Vijayanagara emperors were great builders.
- The Vijayanagara temples are generally sumptuous, lofty, imposing and grand in layout, design and conception.
- They are provided with several architectural adjuncts like pillared mandapas, Kalayanamandapas, prakara walls with pillared corridors, separate shrines for gods and goddess, subsidiary shrines for the Parivara devatas and lofty gopura-dwaras.

- The most important temples of the Vijayanagara style were found in the Hampi.
- **Vittalaswamy and Hazara Rama temples** were the best examples of this style.
- The **Varadaraja and Ekambaranatha temples at Kanchi** stand as examples for the magnificence of the Vijayanagara style of temple architecture.
- The **metal images of Srikrishnadevaraya and his queens at Tirumala** are examples of costing of metal images.
- The art of painting also received due recognition and patronage at the hands of the Vijayanagara emperors.
- The best preserved paintings are found in the **Virabhadraswmi temple at Lepakshi.**