

THEME – 7

AN IMPERIAL CAPITAL : VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE

Key concepts in nutshell

- Discovery of Hampi – In 1799 the first British antiquarian Colin Mackenzie, first surveyor general of India, visited the ruins of Hampi, collected some manuscripts and had some water colours painted on monuments and made the first map of the site.
- The Rayas, Nayakas and Sultans – Harihara and Bukka asserted their independence of the Delhi sultanate and established the kingdom of Vijayanagar in AD 1336.
- Kings and trading class – Warfare depended mainly upon powerful cavalry. The Portuguese settled on the west coast of India and attempted to establish their trading and military stations.
- The climax and decline of Vijayanagar empire – Krishnadeva Raya was an able administrator, he built dams for irrigation. He built magnificent places and temples. His ruler Rama Raya was miserably defeated on the battlefield of (Rakshasi – Tangadi) Talikota in A.D. 1565. The victorious armies plundered and destroyed the city of Vijayanagar.
- Vijayanagar Hampi Architecture - The Vijayanagar architecture (Hampi Architecture) of the period (1336-1365) was a unique building style evolved by the imperial Vijayanagar empire.
- Hampi Bazar – Portuguese travellers Paes and Nuntiz visited Hampi in the mid 1500 century. They give an account of Hampi Bazar thus “ in this street lived many merchants and there you will find all sorts of rubies, diamonds, pearls and cloths that you may wish to buy.
- Building and places - we know today about the Vijayanagar palaces and buildings is derived from the archaeological excavations at Hampi as no royal palace structures have survived.

- Kings royal enclosure – Another important building at Hampi is the kings royal enclosure. Paes tells against the gate there were two circles in which there were the dancing women richly arrayed with many jewels of gold and diamonds and many pearls.
- Mahanavami dibba - The Mahanavami dibba is located on one of the highest points in the city. It is a very large platform rising from a base of about 11000 feet to height of a 40 feet. It seems that is supported a wooden structure.
- Forts of Vijay nagar – in the constant struggle for power, fort and fortified settlements were a potent symbol of authority. The rulers of Vijaynagar empire created the cities with the main object of protection against invasions. The city itself was a fortress and designed as such in every manner.

Q.1:- Hampi town is located in the bank of which river? 2

Ans. It is located on the bank of Tungbhadra river.

Q.2 :- Which goddess is called Pampa ? 2

Ans. Goddess Pampa is the name of goddess Parvati.

Q.3 :- Who was Colin Mackenzie ? Mention his importance in Indian history ? 2

Ans. Colin Mackenzie used to work in British East India Company. He took birth in 1754. He is a famous engineer, surveyor and humanist. He became the first Surveyer General of British India in 1815. He died in the year 1821. He began to survey in the traditional culture and historical places of India in order to run administration of Colonial India more smoothly and effectively.

Q.4 :- Mention the silent features of the temple of Hampi. 2

Ans. The temple of Hampi is well articulated with artistic pillars like structure. Magnificent structure with gallery surrounded with pillars around divinity and the place of god is one of the features of the temples. The main temple of Hampi is Vitthal and Hazararam.

Q.5 :- How did the water requirements problems solved in Vijayanagar empire ? 2

Ans. The natural reservoir are providing water for Vijayanagar is Tungbhadra river. This river was situated in the north-east direction of the kingdom. Many rivers from nearby mountain range get merged into this river. Dams were built in almost all tributaries of rivers. Hauz were built in order to cope with the drastic climate in draught situation. This was started in the beginning of the 15th century. This place was called Kamalapuram water reservoir.

Q:-6 What do you think were the advantages and disadvantages of enclosing agricultural land within the fortified area of the city? 5

Ans. There are many advantages and disadvantages of enclosing agricultural land within the fortified area of the Vijayanagara empire.

- Abdur Razzaq noted that "between the first, second and third walls there are cultivated fields, gardens and houses.
- The detailed statements have been corroborated by present day archaeologists, who have also found evidence of an agricultural tract between the sacred centre and the urban core.
- We knew different sources that in Vijayanagara empire and other southern kingdom agricultural tracts were incorporated within the fortified areas. Often, the objective of medieval sieges was to strave the defenders into submission. These sieges could last four several months and sometimes even years.
- Normally rulers tried to be prepared for adverse situations or natural calamities by building large granaries within fortified areas. The rulers of Vijayanagara adopted a more expensive and elaborate strategy of protecting the agricultural belt itself.
- Whenever, Kingdom was attacked by the enemies at the time of reaping harvest they could easily brunt the dry crops of the farmers. But these fields was safe in ordinary situation from wild animals.

Q:-7 What do you think was the significance of the ritual's associated with the Mahanavami dibba ? 5

Ans. The importance of the rituals associated with the Mahanawami dibba. Located on one of the highest points in the city, the "Mahanawami dibba" is a massive platform rising from a base of about 11000 sq.ft. to a height of 40 feet. Rituals

associated with the structure probably coincided with Mahanawami (Literally the great ninth day) of the ten-day Hindu festival during the autumn months of September and October, known variously as Dushehra (northern India), Durga Puja (in Bengal) and Navaratri or Mahanawami (in Peninsular India). The Vijayanagara kings displayed their prestige, power and suzerainty on this occasion.

- The ceremonies performed on the occasion included worship of the image, worship of the state horse, and the sacrifice of buffaloes and other animals.
- Dancer, wrestling matches, and processions of caparisoned horses, elephants and chariots and soldiers, as well as ritual presentations before the king and his guests by the chief nayakas and subordinate kings marked the occasion.
- These ceremonies were imbued with deep symbolic meanings on the last day of the festival the king inspected his army and the armies of the nayakas in a grand ceremony in an open field. On this occasion the nayakas brought rich gifts for the king as well as the stipulated tribute.

Q8:- What impression of the lives of the ordinary people of Vijayanagara can you cull from the various descriptions in Vijayanagara empire. 5

Ans. Ordinary people of this empire spoke different languages and followed different religious tradition.

- There were small traders and local merchant used to live in cities, trade centre, port town and villages.
- Peasants, workers, slaves etc. were included in ordinary people. These were ordinary Brahmans, trader and women also.
- In the society there were a few low class people, who were non-influential. They were Dombar, Mana, Jogi, Paraiyan, Boi, Kallar etc. Some low caste people were converted to christianity due to the influence of the Portuguese. The evils of caste system and untouchability were practiced in the society.
- The ordinary people of the Vijayanagar empire lived in ordinary houses. This is how the sixteenth century portuguese traveller Barbosa described the houses of ordinary people existed in the society. The men were sold and purchased. There were some special rules for the slaves.

Q.9:- Evaluate the importance of Amar Nayaka System in emergence of Vijayanagara Empire. 10

Ans.

There is an important role of this system to emerging the Vijayanagara empire. That shows in the following points:

- The amara-nayaka system was a major political innovation of the Vijayanagara Empire.
- It is likely that many features of this system were derived from the Iqta system of the Delhi Sultanate.
- The amara-nayakas were military commanders who were given territories to govern by the raya.
- They collected taxes and other dues from peasants.
- A share of revenue was spent for the maintenance of irrigation works and temples.
- The amar nayak retained part of the revenue for personal use and for maintaining a stipulated contingent of horses and elephants.
- These contingents provided the Vijayanagara Kings with an effective fighting force with which they brought the entire southern peninsula under their control.
- The amara-nayakas sent tribute to the King annually and personally appeared in the royal court with gifts to express their loyalty.
- Kings occasionally asserted their control over them by transferring them from one place to another.
- Many of these nayakas established independent kingdoms in the 17th century.

Passage based Question:-

Q. 10 Colin Meckenzie

Born in 1754, Colin Meckenzie became a famous engineer, surveyer and cartographer. In 1815 he was appointed the first surveyor General of India. A post he held till his death in 1821. He embarked on collecting local histories and surveying historic sites in order to better understand India's past and make governance of the colony easier. He says that "It

struggled long under the miseries of dead management.... Before the south came under the benign influence of the British government". By standing Vijayanagar, Meckenzie believed that the east India company would gain " much useful information on many of these institutions, laws and customs whose influence still prevails. Among the various tribes of natives forming the general mass of the population to this date.

(i) Who was Colin Meckenzie ? 2

Ans. Colin Mackenzie used to work in British East India Company. He took birth in 1754. He is a famous engineer, surveyor and humanist.

(ii) Which ancient city was founded by Colin Meckenzie ? 1

Ans. Hampi

(iii) Why did he start the surveys? 2

Ans. He started the surveys in order to better understand India's past and make governance of the colony easier.

(iv) In which stages Colin Meckenzie completed his work? 3

Ans. First of all he prepared the maps. He collected the information's about the local traditions from the priest of Virupaksha and Pampadevi temple.