

7th Social Science Lesson 9 Notes in English

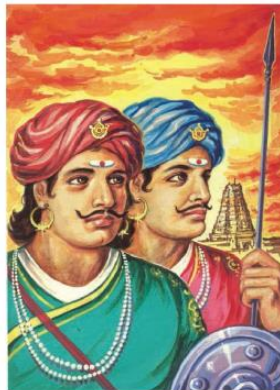
9] Vijayanagar And Bahmani Kingdoms

Introduction:

The political condition of India in the fourteenth century provided great opportunities for the rise of new kingdoms in the south. The repressive measures of the temperamental Muslim king Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq led to the rise of many new independent states. In the south, Vijayanagar and Gulbarga or Bahmani emerged as two great kingdoms. The Bahmani kingdom spread all over the Maharashtra region and partly over Karnataka. Ruled by 18 monarchs, it lasted for nearly 180 years. Early in the sixteenth century, it collapsed and split into five sultanates – Bijapur, Ahmednagar, Golconda, Bidar and Berar. The state of Vijayanagar continued to flourish for nearly 200 years. Ultimately Vijayanagar's wealth and prosperity induced the Muslim Deccan kingdoms to launch a combined war against it. In 1565, the Battle of Talikota, finally they could succeed in crushing Vijayanagar Empire.

Foundation of Vijayanagar Empire:

Vijayanagara, the 'city of victory', was established in southern Karnataka by two brothers named Harihara and Bukka. According to one tradition, Vidyaranya, head of the Saivite Sringeri mutt, instructed them to abandon their service to the Tughluqs and rescue the country from Muslim authority. The new kingdom was called Vidyanagara for a time in honour of the spiritual teacher Vidyaranya, before it came to be called Vijayanagara. Four dynasties, namely Sangama (1336–1485), Saluva (1485–1505), Tuluva (1505–1570) and Aravidu (1570–1646), ruled this kingdom.



Harihara and Bukka

The fertile regions between the rivers Krishna and Tungabhadra and the Krishna-Godavari delta were the zones of conflict among the rulers of Vijayanagar, Bahmani and Odisha. The valour of the first two brothers, Harihara and Bukka, of the Sangama dynasty protected the new kingdom from the superior forces of the Bahmani sultanate, which had been established about a decade after the foundation of Vijayanagara.

End of Sangama Dynasty:

When King Bukka died, he had left behind a large territory to his son Harihara II to rule. Harihara II's impressive achievement was securing Belgaum and Goa from the Bahmani kingdom. Harihara's son Devaraya I defeated Gajapati kings of Odisha. His successor Devaraya II was the greatest ruler of the Sangama dynasty. He began the practice of recruiting Muslim fighters to serve him and to train him in the new methods of warfare.

Rise of Saluva Dynasty:

After Devaraya II, the Vijayanagar Empire went through a crisis. The able commander of the Vijayanagar army, Saluva Narasimha, making use of the situation declared himself the emperor, after murdering the last ruler of Sangama dynasty, Virupaksha Raya II. But the Saluva dynasty founded by Saluva Narasimha came to an end with his death. When Naras Nayaka, his able general, seized power, it ushered in the Tuluva dynasty.

Krishnadevaraya:

Krishnadevaraya who reigned for 20 years was the most illustrious rulers of the Tuluva dynasty. His first step after ascending the throne was to bring under control the independent chieftains in the Tungabhadra river basin. After succeeding in this effort, his next main target was Gulbarga. The Bahmani sultan, Mahmud Shah, had been over thrown and kept in imprisonment by his Minister. Krishnadevaraya freed the Sultan and restored him to the throne. Similarly, he forced a war on Prataparudra, the Gajapati ruler of Odisha. Prataparudra negotiated for peace and offered to marry off his daughter to him. Accepting the offer, Krishnadevaraya returned the territory he had conquered from Prataparudra. Krishnadevaraya, with the assistance of the Portuguese gunners, could easily defeat the Sultan of Golconda and subsequently take over Raichur from the ruler of Bijapur.



Krishnadevaraya

A Great Builder:

Krishnadevaraya built huge irrigation tanks and reservoirs for harvesting rainwater. He built the famous temples of Krishnaswamy, Hazara Ramaswamy and Vithalaswamy in the capital city of Hampi. He distributed the wealth he gained in wars to all major temples of South India for the purpose of constructing temple gateways (gopura), called 'Rayagopuram,' in his honor.



Vithalaswamy Temple

He recruited a large army and built many strong forts. He imported large number of horses from Arabia and Iran, which came in ships to Vijayanagar ports on the west coast. He had good friendly relationship with the Portuguese and Arabian traders, which increased the Empire's income through customs.

Patron of Literature, Art and Architecture:

Krishna Devaraya patronised art and literature. Eight eminent luminaries in literature known as astadiggajas adorned his court. Alasani Peddana was the greatest of them all. Another notable figure was Tenali Ramakrishna.

Battle of Talikota and the Decline of Vijayanagar:

Krishnadevaraya was succeeded by his younger brother Achtyuda Deva Raya. After the uneventful reigns of Achtyuda Deva Raya and his successor Venkata I, Sadasiva Raya, a minor, ascended the throne. His regent Rama Raya, the able general of the kingdom, continued as a de facto ruler, even after Sadasiva Raya attained the age for becoming the king. He relegated Sadasiva Raya to a nominal king. In the meantime, the sultans of Deccan kingdoms succeeded in forming a league to fight the Vijayanagar Empire. The combined forces of the enemies met at Talikota in 1565. In the ensuing battle, known as Rakasa Tangadi (Battle of Talikota), Vijayanagar was defeated. There was terrible human slaughter and pillaging the capital city of Hampi. All the buildings, palaces and temples were destroyed. The beautiful carvings and sculptures were desecrated. The glorious Vijayanagar Empire had ceased to exist.



Hampi Virupaksha Temple

Aravidu Dynasty:

Rama Raya was killed on the battle field and his brother Tirumaladeva Raya managed to escape along with the king Sadasiva Raya. Tirumaladeva Raya moved to Chandragiri carrying all the treasures and wealth that could be salvaged. There he began the rule of Aravidu dynasty.

The Aravidu dynasty built a new capital at Penukonda and kept the empire intact for a time. Internal dissensions and the intrigues of the sultans of Bijapur and Golconda, however, led to the final collapse of the empire about 1646.

Vijayanagar Administration:

State:

Kingship was hereditary, based on the principle of primo geniture. But in some instances, the reigning rulers, in order to ensure peaceful succession, nominated their successors. There were also instances of usurpation. Saluva Narasimha usurped the throne and it led to the replacement of Sangama dynasty with Saluva dynasty. The practice of appointing a regent to look after the administration, when a minor succeeded the throne, was also prevalent.

Structure of Governance:

The empire was divided into different mandalams (provinces), nadus (districts), sthalas (taluks) and finally into gramas (villages). Each province was administered by a governor called Mandalesvara. The lowest unit of the administration was the village. Each village had a grama sabha. Gauda, village headman, looked after the affairs of the village.

The army consisted of the infantry, cavalry and elephant corps. The army was modernized and Vijayanagar army began using firearms. The combination of firearm and cavalry made them one of the most feared armies in India.

Economic Condition:

The Vijayanagar Empire was one of the richest states then known to the world. Several foreign travelers, who visited the empire during the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, left behind glowing accounts of its splendour and wealth. The emperors issued a large number of gold coins called Varahas.



Gold Coins of Vijayanagar Empire

Agriculture :

It was the policy of its rulers to encourage agriculture in different parts of the empire by following a wise irrigation policy. Apart from the state, there were wealthy landholders and temples that invested in irrigation to promote agriculture. Abdur Razzaq, the visiting Persian emissary to Krishnadevaraya's Court, records the huge tank built with the help of Portuguese masons. Channels were constructed to supply water from the tank to different parts of the city. The city was well stocked with variety of agricultural goods.

Cottage Industries:

Vijayanagar's agricultural production was supplemented by numerous cottage-scale industries. The most important of them were textile, mining and metallurgy. Crafts and industries were regulated by guilds. Abdur Razzaq, the makes a reference to separate guildfor each group of tradesmen and craftsmen.

Trade:

During the Vijayanagar Empire, inland, coastal and overseas trade flourished in goods such as silks from China, spices from the Malabar region and precious stones from Burma (Myanmar). Vijayanagar traded with Persia, South Africa, Portugal, Arabia, China, Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka.

Contribution to Literature:

Under the patronage of Vijayanagar rulers, religious as well as secular books were written in different languages such as Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada and Tamil. Krishnadeva Raya wrote Amuktamalyada, an epic in Telugu and also a Sanskrit drama Jambavati Kalyanam. Tenali Ramakrishna authored Pandurangamahatyam. Scholars like Srinatha, Pothana, Jakkama and Duggana translated Sanskrit and Prakrit works into Telugu.

Contribution to Architecture:

The temple building activity of the Vijayanagar rulers produced a new style called the Vijayanagara style. Prominence of pillarsand piers, in large numbers, and the manner in which they were sculptured are hallmarks of the Vijayanagara style. Horse was the most common animal to be depicted on the pillars. The structures have a mandapam (open pavilion) with a raised platform, generally meant for seating the deity on special occasions. These temples also have a marriage hall with elaborately carved pillars.

Bahmani Kingdom:**Foundation and Consolidation of the Bahmani Kingdom:**

Ala-ud-din Hasan, also known as Hasan Gangu, seized Daulatabad and declared himself sultan under the title of Bahman Shah in 1347. In his effort, this Turkish officer of Daulatabad (Devagiri) was supported by other military leaders in rebellion against the sultan of Delhi,



Muhammad bin Tughluq. In two years, Alaud-din Hasan Bahman Shah shifted his capital to Gulbarga. His successors found it difficult to organize a stable kingdom even around Gulbarga. So the capital was again shifted to Bidar in 1429. There were 18 monarchs of the Bahmani dynasty.

Ala-ud-din Hasan Bahman Shah(1347–1358):

Ala-ud-din Hasan ruled for 11 years. His attempt to exact an annual tribute from the state of Warangal, the Reddi kingdoms of Rajahmundry and Kondavidu, led to frequent wars. Ala-ud-din Bahman Shah divided the kingdom into four territorial divisions called tarafs. A governor was appointed for each province. He commanded an army, was solely responsible for its administration and for the collection of the revenue. The system worked well under a powerful king, but its dangers became apparent during the reign of a weak ruler.

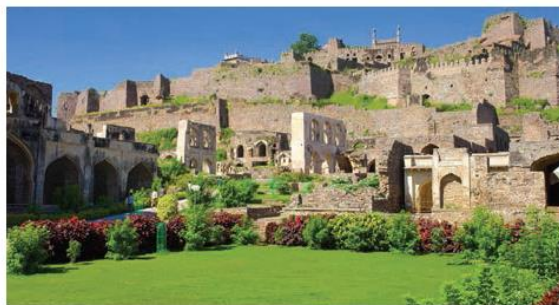


Ala-ud-din Hasan Bahman Shah

Muhammad Shah I (1358–1375):

Muhammad shah I succeeded Bahman Shah. He waged two wars with Vijayanagar but couldn't gain from it. But his attack on Warangalin 1363 earned him a large property and wealth, including the important fortress of Golconda and his treasured turquoise throne, which thereafter became the throne of the Bahmani kings.

Muhammad Shah laid a solid foundation for the kingdom. His system of government continued even after the Bahmani kingdom disintegrated into five sultanates. He built two mosques at Gulbarga. One, the great mosque, completed in 1367, measures 216 by 16 feet and has a roofed courtyard. A large number of Arabs, Turks and notably Persians began to immigrate to the Deccan, many of them at the invitation of Sultan Muhammad I and there they had a strong influence on the development of Muslim culture during subsequent generations.



Golconda Fort



Gulbarga Mosque

Successors of Muhammad Shah I:

Mujahid, the son of Muhammad Shah, ascended the throne. However, on his return to Gulbarga from the expedition against Vijayanagar, he was assassinated and the nephew of the conspirator, Daud, the uncle of Muhammad, was enthroned in 1378 as Muhammad II. Muhammad II's reign was peaceful, and the sultan spent much of his time building his court as a centre of culture and learning.

There were constant wars between the Bahmani and Vijayanagar rulers over the fertile Tungabhadra-Krishna region. The threat also came from the north, especially from Malwa and Gujarat. The noteworthy ruler after eight and a half decades (1377 to 1463) was Muhammad III (1463-1482). Muhammad III reigned for 19 years. For most of these years, the lieutenant of the kingdom was Mahmud Gawan, the most notable personality of the time.

Mahmud Gawan:

A Persian by birth, Mahmud Gawan was well-versed in Islamic theory, Persian and Mathematics. He was also a poet and a prose writer. The Bahmani king Ala-ud-din Hasan Bahman Shah greatly impressed by his wisdom and military genius, recruited him. He served with great distinction as the Prime Minister under Muhammad III and contributed extensively to the development of the Bahmani kingdom.

Gawan was known for his military campaigns as well as administrative reforms. He used Persian chemists to teach the Bahmani army about the preparation and the use of gunpowder. In his war against the Vijayanagar kings in Belgaum, he used gunpowder. In order to tighten the administration and to curb the power of provincial governors, who often functioned as virtual kings, Gawan divided the existing four provinces of the Bahmani Sultanate into eight provinces so as to limit the area under the rule of each governor and to make the provincial administration more manageable.

He also placed some districts in the provinces directly under the central administration. Gawan sought to curtail the military powers of the governors by allowing them to occupy only one fort in their territory. The sultan kept the other forts under his direct control. The royal officers who were given land assignments as pay were made accountable to the sultan for their income and expenditure.

The administrative reforms introduced by Gawan improved the efficiency of the government, but curtailed the powers of the provincial chiefs, who were mostly Deccanis. So the already existing rivalry among nobles such as Deccanis and Pradesis (foreigners) further intensified and conflicts broke out. Gawan became a victim of this tussle for power. The Deccani nobles grew jealous of his success and considered him as an obstacle to their rise. They manipulated by forging a letter to implicate Gawan in a conspiracy against the sultan. Sultan, who himself was not happy with Gawan's dominance, ordered his execution.

Decline of Bahmani Kingdom:

Gawan's execution prompted several of the foreign nobles who were considered the backbone of the state to leave for their provinces. After Sultan Muhammad III's death, Mahmud or Shihab-ud-din Mahmud reigned as the sultan until his death in 1518. His long rule is noted for the beginnings of the process of disintegration. After him, four of his successors on the throne were kings only in name. During this period, the Sultanate gradually broke up into five independent Deccan kingdoms: Bidar, Bijapur, Ahmednagar, Berar and Golconda.

Contribution of Bahmani Sultans:**Architecture:**

The contribution of Bahmani kings to architecture is evident in Gulbarga. Archaeological excavations done in the site of the kingdom has helped to unearth palaces, halls of public audience, ambassadors' residences, arches, domes, walls and citadels. These finds are illustrative of their architectural skill.

Education:

The founder of the Bahmani kingdom Alaud-din Hasan Shah was educated at Multan at the initiative of Zabar Khan, a general of Alaud-din Khalji. On his accession, he took special care in founding a school to educate his sons. His son Muhammad I was a patron of learning. He opened institutions for the purpose of educating the children of noble families in the art of soldiery. Sultan Firoz, the eighth Bahmani king was a linguist and a poet. Later his successors founded schools in Gulbarga, Bidar, Daulatabad and Kandahar. Boarding and lodging at the king's expenses were provided in these schools. Mahmud Gawan's world famous Madrasa in Bidar, with a large library, containing a collection of 3000 manuscripts, is illustrative of the importance given to scholarship and education by Gawan.



MahumadGawan Madrasa

Summary:

- ❖ The foundation of Vijayanagar kingdom by two brothers Harihara and Bukka and its consolidation by their successors notably Devaraya II are described.
- ❖ The most illustrious ruler Krishnadeva Raya's career and achievements are highlighted.

- ❖ Defeat of Vijayanagar at the hands of combined forces of Deccan Sultanates is narrated.
- ❖ Vijayanagar's system of governance and economy are explored.
- ❖ Contributions of Vijayanagar to literature, art and architecture are also dealt with.
- ❖ Establishment of Bahmani kingdom by Ala-ud-din Hasan Bahman Shah and its consolidation by his able successor Muhammad I are detailed.
- ❖ The administrative system introduced by Bahman Shah and measures adopted by Muhammad I and later by Mahmud Gawan during the kingship of Muhammad III are analyzed.
- ❖ Bahmani kings' contribution to architecture and education are also examined.

Glossary:

1.	Conflict	A serious disagreement	முரண்பாடு / மோதல்
2.	Ascending	Leading upwards	ஏறுவரிசையில்
3.	Subsequently	After a particular thing	நிகழ்ச்சிக்குப்பிறகு
4.	Adorned	Decorated	அலங்கரிக்கப்பட்ட
5.	Pillaging	Robbing, using violence, especially in wartime	கொள்ளையடிப்பு
6.	Intrigue	Conspire, plot	சதி திட்டம் / சூழ்ச்சி
7.	Primogeniture	The right of succession belonging to the first child	முதல் குழந்தைக்கு வாரிசுரிமை
8.	Splendour	Magnificent	கம்பீரம் / சிறப்பு வாய்ந்த
9.	Flourishing	Growing successfully	செழிக்கும்
10.	Prominence	The state of being important	முக்கியத்துவம்
11.	Indemnity	Guarantee, surety	உத்திரவாதம்

Do You Know?

Bukka I's son Kumara Kampana ended the sultanate in Madurai and succeeded in establishing Nayak kingdom there. The conquest of the Madurai Sultanate by the Vijayanagara empire is described in detail in the poem Madura Vijayam composed by Kumara Kampana's wife Gangadevi.

The site of the city of Vijayanagar on the bank of the river Tungabhadra in eastern Karnataka is now called Hampi. Hampi is in ruins and the UNESCO has declared it a heritage site.

Amuktamalyada is considered a masterpiece in Telugu literature. It relates the story of the daughter of Periazavar, Goda Devi (Andal), who used to wear the garlands intended for Lord Ranganatha before they were offered to the deity, and hence the name Amuktamalyada who wears and gives away garlands.

Turquoise is a semi-precious stone sky blue in colour. Turquoise throne is one of the bejewelled royal seats of Persian kings described in Firdausi's Shah Nama.

The Golconda Fort is located about 11 kilometres from Hyderabad on a hill 120 meters height. The fort is popular for its acoustic architecture. The highest point of the fort is Bala Hissar. It is believed that there is a secret underground tunnel, which leads from the Durbar Hall to one of the palaces at the foot of the hills.

Eight ministers of the Bahmanistate:

1. Vakil-us-saltana or lieutenant of the kingdom, who was the immediate subordinate authority of the sovereign.
2. Peshwa who was associated with the lieutenant of the kingdom.
3. Waziri-kull who supervised the work of all other ministers.
4. Amir-i-jumla, minister of finance.
5. Nazir, assistant minister for finance.
6. Wasir-i-ashraf, minister of foreign affairs.
7. Kotwal or chief of police and city magistrate in the capital.
8. Sadr-i-jahan or chief justice and minister of religious affairs and endowments.