
Chapter – 2 History

New Kings and Kingdoms

- Several major ruling dynasties emerged in different parts of the subcontinent between the seventh and twelfth centuries.
 - **The Emergence of New Dynasties:**
 - (i) By the 7th century there were big landlords or warrior chiefs in different regions of the subcontinent.
 - (ii) Existing kings often acknowledged them as their samantas or subordinates.
 - (iii) They were expected to bring gifts for their kings or overlords and provide them with military support.
 - (iv) Some such kingdoms were those of Rashtrakutas, Chalukyas, Gurjaras-Pratiharas, etc.
 - **Administration in the Kingdoms:**
 - (i) The kings at apex adopted big titles like Maharaja-adhiraja.
 - (ii) The kings shared power with their samantas, and with association of peasants, traders and Brahmanas.
 - (iii) Resources were obtained from the producers who were persuaded to surrender part of what they produced.
 - (iv) These resources were used to finance the king's establishment and construct temples and forts.
 - (v) Functionaries for collecting revenue were recruited from influential families.
 - **Prashastis and Land Grants:**
 - (i) Prashastis tell us how rulers wanted to depict themselves as valiant and victorious warriors.
 - (ii) The kings often rewarded Brahmanas by grants of land. These were recorded on copper plates, which were given to those who received the land.
 - **Warfare for Wealth:**
 - (i) For centuries Gurjara-Pratihara, Rashtrakuta and Pala dynasties fought for control over Kannauj.
 - (ii) The long drawn conflict is known as tripartite struggle as three parties were involved in it.
 - (iii) Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni raided the subcontinent almost every year and looted temples like Somnath, Gujarat, Mahmud entrusted a scholar named al-Biruni to write an account of the subcontinent.
 - (iv) Other kings engaged in warfare were Chauhans, who ruled over the region around Delhi and Ajmer.
 - (v) Chauhans were engaged in conflict with Chalukyas of Gujarat and the Gahadavalas of western UP.
 - (vi) Prithviraj III was a popular Chauhan ruler who defeated Afghan ruler Ghoris in 1191, but lost to him in 1192.
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- **The Cholas:**

- (i) Cholas were from a small family of Uraiyyur. The successors of Vijayalaya conquered neighbouring regions and the kingdom grew in size and power.
 - (ii) Rajaraja I was considered the most powerful Chola ruler and expanded control over most of these areas.
 - (iii) His son Rajendra I, conquered Sri Lanka and countries of Southeast Asia.
 - (iv) Cholas were big temple builders. Two famous temples were in Thanjavur and Gangai kondacholapuram.
 - (v) Agriculture was well developed along with various methods of irrigation.
 - (vi) Settlements of peasants called ur became prosperous with the spread of irrigation in agriculture. The village council and the nadu performed several administrative functions
 - (vii) Association of traders known as nagarams also performed administrative functions in town.
 - (viii) Inscriptions also mention about sabha. The sabha had separate committees to look after irrigation works, gardens, temples, etc.
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