

An emperial capital vijaynagar

Multiple Choice Type Questions

1. Another name of Vijayanagara city was
 - (a) Fatehpur Sikri
 - (b) Hampi
 - (c) Hastinapur
 - (d) Nagalparam
2. When was the Vijayanagara kingdom established?
 - (a) 1336
 - (b) 1340
 - (c) 1346
 - (d) 1350
3. Who established the Vijayanagara Kingdom?
 - (a) Hasan Gangu
 - (b) Prantak I
 - (c) Harihara and Bukka
 - (d) Krishadeva Raya
4. The first dynasty that ruled over Vijayanagara Empire was
 - (a) Suluva dynasty
 - (b) Sangarna dynasty
 - (c) Tuluva dynasty
 - (d) Aravidu dynasty
5. Local Goddess of Vijayanagara was
 - (a) Parvati
 - (b) Durga
 - (c) Pampadevi
 - (d) Laxmi

Answer

1. (b) 2. (a) 3. (c) 4. (b) 5. (c)

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Who were Nayakas and Amara-Nayakas? Describe their role in the administration of Vijayanagara.

Answer: Nayakas and Amara-Nayakas were the military chiefs and military commanders respectively of Vijayanagara kingdom.

Role of Nayakas and Amara-Nayakas in Administration:

- ❖ **Nayaks:** Nayakas generally controlled the forts and had armed supporters with them. They moved from one place to another and were sometimes accompanied by peasants in search of fertile land. They generally spoke Telugu and Kannada languages. Many Nayakas surrendered to the authority of the rulers of Vijayanagara. But they often rebelled and had to be suppressed by military actions.

- ❖ **Amara-Nayakas**: The Amara-Nayakas were military commanders. They were given territories by Rayas to govern. They used to collect taxes and other dues from peasants, craftspersons and traders. They used to keep some portion of the revenue with them for their personal use and for maintaining a fixed number of horses and elephants.

They used to submit the rest of the revenue in the state treasury. Their contingents used to provide military help to Vijayanagara rulers if any need arose. Through their help, rulers controlled the whole of the southern peninsula. Some portion of revenue was spent on temple and maintenance of the means of irrigation.

2. Explain the reasons for the decline of the Vijayanagara Empire.

Answer: The following are the reasons for the decline of the Vijayanagara Empire :

1. All the power of the state was vested in the hands of the king. The people had no role in the administration of the state. So they did not help the king at the time of crisis.
2. The successors of Krishna Deva Raya were troubled by rebellious Nayakas or military chiefs. These rebellions weakened the position of the king.
3. All the successors of Krishna Deva Raya were very weak. They had to fight many wars against the Deccan Sultanates. All these harmed the Vijayanagara Empire.
4. There was an alliance of the Sultanates against Vijayanagara.
5. The central control had shifted to another ruling lineage, that of the Aravidu in the 17th century.
6. In 1565 C.E., Rama Raya, the Chief Minister of Vijayanagara, fought a war against the combined armies of Bijapur, Ahmadnagar and Golconda at Talikota. He lost this war and was also killed. After his defeat, the victorious armies ransacked the whole city of Vijayanagara and the city was totally abandoned within a year.

3. Explain the administration of the rulers of Vijayanagara.

Answer: The main features of the administration of Vijayanagara were as follows :

1. The chief of the central administration in Vijayanagara was the king. He held all the powers of administration. There was also a provision of the council to help the king.
2. The state of Vijayanagara was divided into 200 provinces. The chief of the province was called the Prantpati who belonged to the royal family and at times too powerful and wealthy families.
3. For the convenience of the Prantpatis, every province was divided into districts and the districts were divided into Parganas which were further divided into villages.
4. There was a provision for a powerful army for the protection of the state. It had horses and soldiers.
5. The chief judge of the state was the king himself. In provinces, the Prantpati or subedar delivered justice. The punishments were very severe.
6. The land revenue was the main source of income of the state. The farmers had to pay 1/6 to 1/4th of the produce of the crop as the land revenue. The economic condition of the farmers was good. They enjoyed all the comforts of life

4. Give a brief description of ceremonies and special attractions related to Mahanavami Dibba of the city of Vijayanagara.

Answer: Rituals associated with this structure probably coincided with Mahanavami of the ten-day Hindu festival during the months of September and October, known variously as Dusshera in northern India, Durga Pooja in Bengal and Navaratri in peninsular India. The rulers of Vijayanagara displayed their power, prestige and sovereignty on this occasion.

Main ceremonies associated with this occasion were the worship of the image, worship of the State horse, the sacrifice of buffaloes and other animals, etc.

Main attractions of this occasion were

1. Dances,
 2. Wrestling matches,
 3. Procession of caparison horses, elephants and chariots and soldiers,
 4. Ritual presentation by Nayaks and the subordinate kings before the king and his guests to mark the occasion. These ceremonies had great symbolic meaning. King used to inspect his army and armies of the Nayaks in a grand ceremony in an open field on the last day of the festival. Nayaks, on this occasion, used to bring rich gifts and stipulated tribute for the king.
5. Comment on the Lotus Mahal and Hazara Ram Temple of Vijayanagara.

Or

Give a brief description of Lotus Mahal, situated in the Royal Centre in the Vijayanagara Empire. (C.B.S.E. 2010 (O.D.))

Answer: Lotus Mahal: The royal centre of Vijayanagara had a very beautiful building. It was named as the Lotus Mahal by a British traveller in the nineteenth century. It seems to be a romantic name. However, it is still not clear to many historians what the building was used for. Mackenzie considered it to be a council chamber, a place where the king used to meet his advisers.

Hazara Rama Temple: This temple had a spectacular architecture. It was probably used only by the king and his family. No image has been found in this temple. But it had sculpted panels on the walls. These included the scenes from the Ramayana on the inner walls.

LONG ANSWER QUESTION

1. Give a brief description of emergence and destruction of the Vijayanagara Empire.

Answer: Members of ruling lineage and military commanders were among the claimants of power of the Vijayanagara Empire.

Initial Three Dynasties: The first dynasty that ruled over Vijayanagara was Sangama dynasty. This dynasty ruled till 1485 C.E. They were supplanted by the Saluvas, who were the military commanders. They remained in power till 1503 C.E. and were replaced by Tuluvas. Krishna Deva Raya was the most famous ruler of the Tuluva dynasty.

The main feature of the rule of Krishna Deva Raya was his expansion and consolidation. Till 1512 C.E. he took control over the areas between Tungabhadra and Krishna River (Raichur Doab). Then he suppressed the rulers of Orissa. He also defeated the Sultan of Bijapur in 1520 C.E. Although the kingdom always remained in the state of military preparedness still it flourished under the atmosphere of peace and prosperity. Krishna Deva is also credited with the construction of few splendid temples and impressive gopurams in many important temples. He also founded a suburban town of Nagalparam after the name of his mother.

Aravind Dynasty and Decline of Vijayanagara Empire: Strains came in the imperial structure after the death of Krishna Deva Raya in 1529 C.E. His successors had to face the challenge of rebel Nayaks or Commanders. In the end, the centre came under the control of Aravidu dynasty in 1542 C.E. This dynasty remained in power till 17th century. During this period, like earlier one, alignments kept on shifting due to military ambitions of Vijayanagara rulers and Deccan Sultanates.

These ambitions led to an alliance of Deccan Sultanates against the Vijayanagara. In 1565 C.E., the chief minister of Vijayanagara, Rama Raya, led the army against the Sultanates army in the battle of Rakshasi-Tangradi. There his forces were routed by the combined forces of Bijapur, Ahmadnagar and Golconda. Afterwards, the city was plundered by the victorious army. Within a few years, this city was totally abandoned. Now the entire focus of the empire was shifted to the east where the Aravidu dynasty ruled from Penukonda and later from Chandragiri.

2. What was the role of Nayakas and Amara-Nayakas in the administration of Vijayanagara?

Or

explain how the Amara-Nayakas system was a major political innovation of the Vijayanagara Empire? (C.B.S.E. 2011 (O.D.)), (2015, (D))

Or

“Arnar Nayakas system was a major political innovation of Vijayanagara empire,” Justify. (C.B.S.E. 2014 (O.D.))

Or

why was Amar Nayakas system considered as a major political innovation of the Vijayanagara Empire? Explain. (C.B.S.E. 2019 (Comp.))

Answer: The Nayakas and the Amara-Nayakas exercised considerable power in the Vijayanagara Empire.

❖ **Nayakas:** They were the military chiefs in the Vijayanagara Empire and usually controlled forts. They had armed supporters and often moved from one area to another. In many cases, they were accompanied by peasants who looked for fertile land for their settlement. They were called Nayakas as their role was quite significant. They usually spoke in Telugu or Kannada language. They were mostly submissive to the authority of the kings of Vijayanagara. But sometimes they also rose in rebellion and had to be controlled by military action.

❖ **Amara-Nayakas:** The Amara-Nayakas were a major political innovation of the rulers of the Vijayanagara Empire. They were the military commanders who governed the territories given by the kings of Vijayanagara. They collected taxes and other dues from

peasants, traders and craft-persons in their areas. A part of the revenue was kept for their personal use and maintaining their horses and elephants. They provided an effective fighting force to the rulers of Vijayanagara. They also kept some of the collected revenue for the maintenance of temples and irrigation works.

❖ **The Royal Control over the Amara-Nayakas:** At times when Nayakas and Amara-Nayakas revolted, the kings asserted their control on them and made them submit to the royal authority. The kings adopted the following means to control them:

- They transferred Amara-Nayakas from one place to another.
- They accepted an annual tribute from the Amara-Nayakas.
- All the Amara-Nayakas had to appear in the royal court personally. They had to present gifts to the king to express their loyalty.

3. Give a brief description of the rule of Krishna Deva Raya.

Or

“Krishna Deva Raya’s rule was characterized by expansion and consolidation.” Justify the statement on the bases of evidence. (C.B.S.E. 2011 (D))

Or

Highlight the contribution of Krishnadeva Raya in the expansion of the Vijayanagara Empire. (C.B.S.E. 2016 (D))

Or

Why the Krishna Deva Raya considered as the greatest ruler of the Vijayanagara Empire? Explain. (C.B.S.E. 2019 (Comp.))

Answer: There prevailed chaos in the Vijayanagara Kingdom after the death of Deva Raya II. Gradually the old Sangam Dynasty came to an end. Under these circumstances, Krishna Deva Raya founded the Tuluva Dynasty and he began to rule over Vijayanagara. He ruled from 1509 till 1529 C.E. Following were his main achievements:

❖ **Expansion of the Kingdom:** Krishna Deva Raya had to compete with old enemies of Vijayanagara, i.e., successors of the Bahmani Kingdom and Orissa. After fighting many battles for seven years, he forced Orissa to return the conquered areas of Vijayanagara up to Krishna River. Then he consolidated his position and began his earlier battle for Tungabhadra Doab. As a result, two of his enemies, Orissa and Bijapur, came in an alliance with each other. Krishna Deva had also made enough preparations and attacked Raipur and Mudhkal.

Sultan of Bijapur lost in the battle in 1520 C.E. Krishna Deva forced him to move back beyond Krishna River. Then his army reached Belgium. He conquered Bijapur and plundered the whole city and also destroyed Gulbarga. In this way, during the reign of Krishna Deva Raya, the Vijayanagara kingdom became one of the strongest kingdoms of Deccan.

❖ **Great Architect and Scholar:** Krishna Deva Raya himself was a great scholar. He built a new suburban town near Vijayanagara and built a large tank which was used for irrigation purposes. He was a very good scholar of Telugu and Sanskrit. Out of a number of texts written by him, only a book on politics in Telugu and a Sanskrit play is available

these days. A new era of Telugu literature began during his reign and scholars started to write in Telugu instead of translating from Sanskrit. He was very fond of poetry and used to patronage Telugu as well as Kannada and Tamil poets.

- ❖ **Good Administrator:** Many foreign travellers like Barbosa, Paes and Fernao Nuniz wrote about his good administration and prosperity of the kingdom during his reign. One of the major achievements of Krishna Deva Raya was the emergence of a sense of tolerance as everyone was free to move anywhere. No one was asked about his religion and was free to adopt one's religious practices. Barbosa also praised Krishna Deva Raya for his justice and equality in the kingdom.

In the end, it is clear that Krishna Deva Raya was the greatest of all the rulers of the Vijayanagara Kingdom.

4. Describe the administrative system of the Vijayanagara Kingdom.

Answer: The administrative system of the Vijayanagara Kingdom is given below :

1. **King:** Head of the central administration in Vijayanagara was himself the king. He had unlimited powers and rights. He had made a system of the council of ministers for his help. But its only function was to provide advice to the king.
2. **Council of Ministers:** A system of the council of ministers was made to give help and advice to the king. It included the ministers, purohita, military commander, etc. All of these were appointed by the king himself.
3. **Provincial Administration:** Vijayanagara was divided into 200 provinces. Every province was administered by a Prantpati (Governor) and these were either related with the royal family or were powerful nobles. They were also appointed by the king himself.
4. **Local Administration:** While keeping in mind the convenience of administration, every province was divided into districts. The district was further divided into Parganas and it was further divided into villages. Administration of the village was given to gram Panchayati. Major Officer of all these institutions was known as Iyengar.
5. **Military Organization:** Vijayanagara was engaged in constant conflict with Bahmani Sultans. As a result, local rulers had to give special attention to their military organization. Military of Vijayanagara kingdom was of two types-provincial military and central army. The army included elephants, horses and infantry. Cavalry was a major part of the army.
6. **Judicial System:** King himself used to perform the function of Chief Justice in the Vijayanagara kingdom. Iyengar in villages, prantpati in provinces used to perform this work. Very strict punishments were there. Punishment of amputating the limb of the body was given for serious crimes but people were only fined for minor crimes.
7. **Land Revenue System:** King himself was the owner of the whole of the land in the Vijayanagara kingdom. He used to divide this land to the landlord who used to further divide among farmers. Farmers had to pay 1/6th or 1/4th of produce to the

landlord as land revenue. The economic condition of farmers was the very good and they had every available comfort in life.

5. Explain the social and economic conditions of Vijayanagara.

Answer: The social and economic condition of Vijayanagara is as follows:

Social Condition:

1. **Respect for Brahmins:** The Brahmins were greatly respected in the state of Vijayanagara. They attained a supreme position in the state. Even when they committed a crime, they were not given the punishment of death. They led a pious life and were vegetarians. They never touched meat and wine. They were an ideal and role model for others.

2. **Place of Women:** The women were given a lot of respect in Vijayanagara. They could even get higher education. They had no purdah system. They were also educated in warfare and fine arts.

3. **Malpractices:** The society of Vijayanagara had many malpractices. The animals were sacrificed to please gods and goddesses. The practice of Sati was very popular in society. Even the Telugu women were buried alive after the deaths of their husbands. Besides, there was an evil of prostitution. Deva Raya II had twelve thousand queens. He had married three thousand queens on the condition that they would perform Sati after his death.

Economic Condition: The economic condition of Vijayanagara was prosperous. Its land was fertile and there was enough trading activity. The rulers of Vijayanagara had good relations with the Portuguese. There was trading of Arabian horses. The sea coasts of Vijayanagara had many ports. Calicut was a famous sea-port during those days. It was used to trade with Burma, China, Iran, Arabia, Portugal and South Africa.

It was used to export cloth, rice, sugar, iron and spices and import horses, elephants, copper, and silk and diamond jewellery. The merchants had established their trade centres. There was a currency of gold and silver. It facilitated the exchange of goods. Besides the trade, there was great progress in industry and agriculture. The main occupation of the people was weaving cloth, mining of minerals and to prepare metal goods.