

## 10. HARSHA VARDHAN (AD 606-647)

- Belonged to Pushyabhuti family and son of Prabhakar Vardhan originally the feudatories of the Gupta.
- Originally belonged to Thanewar, but shifted to Kannauj (after Harsha's death Kannauj was won from Harsha's successors by the Pratiharas).
- Pajjyavardhan succeeded Prabhakarvardhan.
- Grahavarman, the Maukhari ruler of Kannauj and husband of Rajyasri (daughter of Prabhakara) was murdered by Devgupta (the ruler of Malwa) who in alliance with Sasanka (ruler of Gauda or Bengal) now occupied Kannauj and imprisoned Pajyasri. Rajyavardhan undertook a campaign against Devgupta and killed him but he was deceived and killed by Sasanka.
- Harsha now succeeded his brother at Thanewar.
- Harsha brought most of north India under his control and assumed the title of "Siladitya".
- In his first expedition, Harsha drawn away Shashanka from Kannauj.
- Pulakesin – II the great Chalukya king. He bestowed the title of "the lord of the entire north" on him.
- Chinese pilgrim Hieun Tsang (Prince of Travelers) visited during his reign. He spent about eight years (635-643) in the dominions of Harsha and earned his friendship.
- Hieun Tsang has left a detailed account of a grand assembly held at Kannauj in 643 attended by representatives of Hinduism and Jainism.
- Harsh was a great patron of learning. He established a large patron of learning. He established a large monastery at Nalanda.
- Banabhatta, who adorned his court, wrote Harshacharita, Parvatiparinay and Kadambari.
- Harsha himself wrote 3 plays Priyadarshika, Ratnavali and Nagananda.
- After the death of Harsha in 647, the empire once again broke up into petty states.
- I-tsing, another Chinese pilgrim, visited in 670 AD.

### THE VAKATAKAS

- The founder of this Brahmin Dynasty was

Vindhyaasakti.

- Most important king was Pravarsen – I who performed 4 Ashvamedha yagyas.
  - Rudrasena II was succeeded by Divakarasena, Damodrasena or Pravarasena, who composed a Prakrit work titled Setubandha in glorification of Rama, though he was a devotee of lord Shiva.
- ### CHALUKYAS OF VATAPI (BADAMI)
- Founder Pulakesin – I.
  - Pulakesin – II was their most famous king, who was a contemporary of Harsha. He sent on embassy to the Persian king, Khushro – II. His court poet, Ravikirti wrote Aihole inscription. Hiuen Tsang visited his kingdom.
  - Much of the painting and sculpture of the Ajanta and Ellora cave were completed during the Chalukyan reign. They built several magnificent temples in Aihole and other places.
  - Aihole is called the cradle of Indian temple architecture.
  - Vengi dynasty was founded by Pulakesin II's brother Kubja-Vishnu-Vardhana.
  - The greatest ruler of Kalyani Chalukyas was Vikramaditya II Tribhuvanmalla. He was Hero of Bilhana's Vikramankadeva Charita. He introduced the Chalukya-Vikrama era (1076 AD).

### THE RASTRAKUTAS

- Founder Dantidurga.
- Their king Krishna – I is remembered for constructing the famous rock-cut Kalasha temple at Ellora.
- Their king Amoghvarsha is compared to Vikramaditya in giving patronage to men of letters.
- He wrote the first Kannada poetry named Kaviraj marg and Prashnottar Malika. He built a city of Manyakheta as his capital.
- Their king Krishna – III set up a pillar of victory and a temple at Rameshwaram after defeating the Cholas.

### THE GANGAS

- Also called Chedagangs of Orissa.
- Their king Narsimhadeva constructed the Sun

temple at Konark.

- Their king Anantvarman Ganga built the famous Jagannath temple at Puri.

### **THE PALLAVAS**

- Founder Simhavishnu. They setup their capital at Kanchi. He bore the title Avanisimha (lion of the earth).
- Narasimhavarman I Mahamalla. He was the greatest king of the dynasty. He defeated and killed Pulakesin II and assumed the title Vatapikonda.

### **THE CHOLAS AD 846-1279**

- Founder Vijayalaya capital was Tanjore.
- Parantaka I captured Madurai but was defeated by Rashtrakuta ruler. Krishan III at the battle of Takkolam. Although the Rashtrakutas were later defeated.
- Rajaraja founded the largest dominion in south India.
- He annexed northern Sri-Lanka and named it Mummadi – Cholamandalam. Also conquered Maldives islands.

- He constructed Rajrajeshwari temple (also called Brihadeshwar Shiva temple) at Thanjavur.

- His son Rajendra – I annexed the whole of Sri Lanka. In the North went as far as Ganga and the dominions of the Pala king Mahipale. He took the title of ‘Gangaikonda’ after that and founded a capital Gangaikonda Cholaapuram.

### **THE PALAS OF BENGAL**

- Founder was Gopala (750 AD) who was elected to the throne as he had proved his valor and capability as a leader.
- Suleimon, an Arab merchant has termed the Pala Empire as Rhuni.
- Gopala was an ardent Buddhist.
- He was succeeded by Devapala. He extended his control over Pragjyotishpur (Assam). He was a Buddhist.
- Ballalasena was written Danasagara and Adbhutsagara.
- Founder Samantasena.