

HISTORY OF INDIA

(FROM 200 BCE TO 1200 CE)

HISTORY OF INDIA (200 BCE – 500 CE)

- 1) After Mauryan's collapse, power shifted to south of Vindhya. Satavahanas were the dominant rulers in Deccan, who ruled for around 4 to 5 centuries.
- 2) Agriculture spread; farming practices improved. Monsoon was discovered; ships could go straight, without hugging the coast. International trade ensued; wealth multiplied as cotton textiles, spices & iron were exported. Other civilizations like Persia, Greeks and Romans came in contact.
- 3) The guilds system came up. Craftsmen, traders and professionals got organized. Even priests, thieves and prostitutes had their guilds. That regulated production methods, prices and service conditions which included the remunerations of labour, craftsmen and professionals.
- 4) Monetization of economy took place. Promissory notes, letters of credit and pledges facilitated capital formation. Literacy and numeracy spread. Quite a number of urban centres like Patliputra and Gandhara prospered. A brisk trade provided life line to urban growth.

THE ROMAN EMPIRE COLLAPSES – TRADE WITH INDIA DECLINES

- 1) The rise and fall of Roman Empire was the dominant phenomena during the interregnum. Caesar & Cleopatra's love story is well known to all. But the excision of Nile delta removed the food security. The Empire weakened and split into Roman & Byzantium components.
- 2) The rise of Christianity collided with the Roman Imperium. Emperor Constantine himself embraced the Christian faith. The Huns from the east and barbarians from the south and west weakened and eventually sacked Rome. By 565 CE, the Empire ceased to exist. The collapse had an adverse impact upon Indian economy.
- 3) North Indian power structure after Mauryans had already fragmented. Subsequently, Guptas ruled from Patliputra for around 2 centuries. Construction of China wall diverted the fury of Huns towards west. Huns were a tribe from northern China, who accompanied by their animal herd, travelled long distances and lived a tented life.
- 4) Their repeated depredations of Huns took a toll upon Gupta empire along with the supporting kingdoms of Vakataks and Vishnu kundis. The political cracks in the Indian polity became prominent from the 6th century CE onwards.

HISTORY OF INDIA (500 CE – 1200 CE)

- 1) After Sathavahanas, the Deccan polity split into Chalukyas, Cholas, Pandyas and others. After Guptas, the north Indian polity fragmented even further. Harsha Vardhana controlled for some time. By 1200 CE, several dynasties who ruled and followed were Gahadavalas of Kannauj, Parmars of Malwa, Chandellas of Khajuraho, Chauhans of Ajmer, Kalchuris of Tripuris, Chalukyas of Deccan, Tomars of Delhi, Shahis of Punjab, Senas of Bengal, Ahoms of Assam and Kesaris followed by Gangas of Orissa.
- 2) Temple architecture bloomed across India. Thanjavur, Madurai, Kailashnath at Ajanta and Ellora, Dilwara and Vimalavashi in Rajasthan, Nalanda, Vikramshila, Khajuraho and Konark are living examples of the glory of those days. Spirituality wrapped in erotica was a dominant theme.
- 3) Medicine, surgery, astronomy and mathematics was well developed. Aryabhata, Varahimihira and Shushruta are well known names. The concepts of zero, decimal numerals, square root, cube root and quadratic equations were known.
- 4) Land grants to Brahmins became the order of the day. Tanks and temples became the fulcrum of the economy & society. Some historians believe that caste discriminations sprouted and status of women fell. Sati came to be practiced from 6th century onwards.
- 5) Towns declined. Huein Tsang in 7th century reports that Patliputra looks like a village and Gandhara, the erstwhile cultural centre has few inhabitants. Even Vaishali, the town of Ambapali has become a jungle

ISLAM ARRIVES IN INDIA

- 1) The rise and rapid expansion of Islam was the most important phenomena in the world. The Holy Prophet was born in 570 CE. He died in 632 CE. By 750 CE, Islamic rule controlled lands from Spain to Sind; from Mediterranean to Indus. In 750 CE, the Islamic power shifted from Damascus to Baghdad.
- 2) They learnt paper making; discovered new substances like potash, nitrates of silver, nitric acid and sulphuric acid. Al Hassan discovered that light emanated from objects; and not human eyes. Baghdad, the capital city had a thousand bookshops.
- 3) Camel as a desert ship and Arab horse as the swift weapon broke up the arms of Iran, Egypt, Byzantine, Spain & India. They led in navigation & reached as far as Canton in China. The word Admiral has Arab origins.
- 4) In 712 CE, Muhammad bin Qasim captured Sindh. In 1000 CE, Mahmud was ruling from Ghazni. He died in 1030. He invaded India annually, totaling 17 times in all. His plunders are well known.
- 5) In 1187 CE, arrived Muhammad Ghor and defeated Pritviraj Chauhan. Thereafter, Islamic expansion in India was rapid.

THANK YOU