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UNIT V POLITICAL POWERS OF SOUTH INDIA IN THE MIDDLE AGES

1. Military expeditions of the Pallava Rulers
2. Military Achievements of the Chola Emperors
3. Military system of Later Pandya's and Vijayanagar rulers -Battle of Talikota

Books Recommended for Reference:

1. **S.T.Das** : Indian Military — Its History and Development
2. **Sarkar J.N** : Military History of India
3. **Subramanian T.G** : Famous Battles of Indian History
4. **Col. Malleson** : Decisive Battles of India
5. **R.C.Majumdar** : The Classic Accounts of India

UNIT-V

TOPIC-1

The Pallavas

- After the decline of the Sangam Age in the Tamil country, the Kalabhra rule lasted for about 250 years.
- Thereafter, the Pallavas established their kingdom in Tondaimandalam with its capital at Kanchipuram. Their rule continued till Tondaimandalam was captured and annexed by the Imperial Cholas in the beginning of the tenth century A.D.

Origin of the Pallavas

- According to one school, they were a branch of Parthians, but there is no evidence for the migration of the Parthians into the south.
- Another school opines that the Pallavas were a branch of the Brahmin royal dynasty of the Vakatakas of the Deccan, but again there is no direct evidence of any connection between the Vakatakas and the Pallavas.
- The third school maintains that it was an indigenous dynasty and rose to power after the dismemberment of the Ikshvaku kingdom. In other words, they were the indigenous Nagas.

Political History

• **Sirnavishnu (560-90)**

- He is considered the first important Pallava ruler, though Pallavas existed even during the time of Samudragupta's invasion of south India.
- He is credited with capturing the territory of the Cholas and humiliating his other southern neighbours including Ceylon.
- He followed Vaishnavism, as is evident from archaeological evidence.

• **Mahendravarman I (590-630)**

- During his reign began the long drawn out struggle between the Pallavas and the Chalukyas.
- He was defeated by Pulakesin II and a part of his kingdom was occupied.

• **Narasimhavarman I (630-68)**

- He is considered the greatest of the Pallava rulers and is credited with repelling the second invasion of Pulakesin II, killing him and capturing the Chalukyan capital, Badami. Hence he assumed the title of 'Vatapikonda' (Conqueror of Vatapi).
- He also defeated the Cholas, the Cheras and the Pandyas, thus becoming supreme in south India.
- He sent two naval expeditions to Ceylon and helped his ally, a Ceylonese prince, to capture the throne of Ceylon.
- He was a great builder having constructed Mamallapuram and the various buildings in it.
- Another significant thing about his reign was the visit of Hiuen Tsang to Kanchi.

- **Mahendravarman II (668-70)**

- He ruled for a very short period, since he was killed by Chalukya king, Vikramaditya I (son of Pulakesin II).

- **Paramesvaravarman I (670-700)**

- He had to face the invading forces of Vikramaditya I, but finally succeeded in defeating and driving them back after repeated efforts.

- **Narasimhavarman II (100-28)**

- His rule is marked by peace and prosperity, literary activity, and the construction of large and beautiful temples like the Shore temple at Mamallapuram and the Kailasanatha temple at Kanchi.
- He is also said to have sent embassies to China; and maritime trade flourished during his reign.

- **Paramesvaravarman II (728-31)**

- The Pallava kingdom again had to face defeat and humiliation during his reign.
- The Chalukya, Vikramaditya II attacked the Pallava capital and Paramesvaravarman had to conclude a humiliating treaty with him.
- When the Pallava ruler tried to retaliate, he was killed by the Ganga ally of the Chalukyas.

- **Nandivarman II (731-96)**

- The Chalukya, Vikramaditya II again invaded and captured the Pallava capital during his reign, but Vikramaditya showed consideration and restraint in treating the vanquished, the only instance of restraint in the whole of the suicidal Chalukya-Pallava conflict, and withdrew from Kanchi without destroying it.

- Nandi soon strengthened himself and defeated the Chalukya ally, the Gangas. But he had to meet defeat at the hands of the Pandyas. And after this defeat, he concentrated on domestic matters.
- He was a worshipper of Vishnu and a great patron of learning.
- During his reign, several old temples were renovated and new ones like the Vaikuntaperumal temple at Kanchi were constructed.
- Successors of Nandivarman II were Dantivarman (796-847), Nandivarman III (847-69), Nripatunga (869-99) and Aparajita (899-903).
- The last nail in the coffin was driven by Aditya Chola by defeating Aparajita Pallava towards the end of the ninth century AD.
- However, the Pallava chiefs continued to exist till the end of the 13th century AD as feudatories.

Administration of the Pallavas

- The Pallavas had a well organized administrative system.
- The Pallava state was divided into Kottams.
- The Kottam was administered by officers appointed by the king.
- The king was at the centre of administration in which he was assisted by able ministers.
- The king was the fountain of justice.
- The king maintained a well-trained army.
- The king provided land-grants to the temples known as Devadhana and also to the Brahmans known as Brahmadeya.
- It was also the responsibility of the central government to provide irrigation facilities to the lands. A number of irrigation tanks were dug by the Pallava kings.
- The irrigation tanks at Mahendravadi and Mamandoor were dug during the reign of Mahendravarman I.
- Detailed information on the tax system could also be traced from the Pallava inscriptions.
- Land tax was the primary source of the government revenue.
- The Brahmadeya and Devadhana lands were exempted from tax.
- Traders and artisans such as carpenters, goldsmiths, washer-men, oil-pressers and weavers paid taxes to the government.
- The Pallava inscriptions throw much light on the village assemblies called sabhas and their committees.
- They maintained records of all village lands, looked after local affairs and managed temples.

Society under the Pallavas

- The Tamil society witnessed a great change during the Pallava period.
- The caste system became rigid.
- The Brahmins occupied a high place in the society. They were given land-grants by the kings and nobles. They were also given the responsibility of looking after the temples.
- The Pallava period also witnessed the rise of Saivism and Vaishnavism and also the decline of Buddhism and Jainism.
- The Saiva Nayanmars and the Vaishnava Alwars contributed to the growth of Saivism and Vaishnavism. This is known as the Bakthi Movement. They composed their hymns in the Tamil language. These hymns revealed the importance of devotion or Bakthi. The construction of temples by the Pallava kings paved the way for the spread of these two religions.

Education and Literature

- The Pallavas were great patrons of learning and their capital Kanchi was an ancient centre of learning.
- The Ghatika at Kanchi was popular and it attracted students from all parts of India and abroad.
- The founder of the Kadamba dynasty, Mayurasarman studied Vedas at Kanchi.
- Dinganaga, a Buddhist writer came to study at Kanchi. Dharmapala, who later became the Head of the Nalanada University, belonged to Kanchi.
- Bharavi, the great Sanskrit scholar lived in the time of Simhavishnu. Dandin, another Sanskrit writer adorned the court of Narasimhavarman II.
- Mahendravarman I composed the Sanskrit play Mattavilasaprahasanam.
- Tamil literature had also developed and the Nayanmars and Alwars composed religious hymns in Tamil.
- The Devaram composed by Nayanmars and the Nalayradivyaprabandam composed by Alwars represent the religious literature of the Pallava period.
- Perundevanar was patronized by Nandivarman II and he translated the Mahabharata as Bharathavenba in Tamil.
- Nandikkalambagam was another important work but the name of the author of this work is not known.
- Music and dance also developed during this period.

Religion

- The Pallavas were orthodox Brahmanical Hindus and their patronage was responsible for the great reformation of the medieval ages.
- Most of the Pallava kings were devotees of Siva, the exceptions being Simhavishnu and Nandivarman who were worshippers of Vishnu.
- Mahendravarman I was the first to be influenced by the famous Saivite saints of the age.
- Besides worshipping Siva, he also showed reverence to other Hindu gods.
- Pallavas were tolerant towards other religions like Buddhism and Jainism. However, some of the sects like Buddhism were losing their former glory to Saivism.
- The Vedic tradition in general bossed over the local tradition. Sankaracharya in fact gave this stimulus to Vedic tradition. Tamil saints of the sixth and seventh centuries AD were the progenitors of the bhakti movement.
- The hymns and sermons of the Nayanars (Saivite saints) and Alvars (Vaishnavite saints) continued the tradition of bhakti.
- Saivite saints were Appar, Sambandar, Sundarar, and others. Most remarkable thing about this age was the presence of women saints such as Andal (an Alvar).

Pallava Art and Architecture

- The Pallavas introduced the art of excavating temples from the rock. In fact, the Dravidian style of temple architecture began with the Pallava rule.
- It was a gradual evolution starting from the cave temples to monolithic rathas and culminated in structural temples.
- The development of temple architecture under the Pallavas can be seen in four stages.
- Mahendravarman I introduced the rock-cut temples. This style of Pallava temples are seen at places like Mandagappattu, Mahendravadi, Mamandur, Dalavanur, Tiruchirappalli, Vallam, Siyamangalam and Tirukalukkunram.
- The second stage of Pallava architecture is represented by the monolithic rathas and Mandapas found at Mamallapuram. Narasimhavarman I took the credit for these wonderful architectural monuments. The five rathas, popularly called as the Panchapanadava rathas, signifies five different styles of temple architecture. The mandapas contain beautiful sculptures on its walls. The most popular of these mandapas are Mahishasuramardhini Mandapa, Tirumurthi Mandapam and Varaha Madapam.
- In the next stage, Rajasimha introduced the structural temples. These temples were

built by using the soft sand rocks. The Kailasanatha temple at Kanchi and the Shore temple at Mamallapuram remain the finest examples of the early structural temples of the Pallavas. The Kailasanatha temple at Kanchi is the greatest architectural master piece of the Pallava art.

- The last stage of the Pallava art is also represented by structural temples built by the later Pallavas. The Vaikundaperumal temple, Muktheeswara temple and Matagenswara temples at Kanchipuram belong to this stage of architecture.
- The Pallavas had also contributed to the development of sculpture.
- Apart from the sculptures found in the temples, the 'Open Art Gallery' at Mamallapuram remains an important monument bearing the sculptural beauty of this period.
- The Descent of the Ganges or the Penance of Arjuna is called a fresco painting in stone.
- The minute details as well as the theme of these sculptures such as the figures of lice-picking monkey, elephants of huge size and the figure of the 'ascetic cat' standing erect show highly evolved sculpture era.

Fine Arts

- Music, dance and painting had also developed under the patronage of the Pallavas.
- The Mamandur inscription contains a note on the notation of vocal music.
- The Kudumianmalai inscription referred to musical notes and instruments.
- The Alwars and Nayanmars composed their hymns in various musical notes.
- Dance and drama also developed during this period.
- The sculptures of this period depict many dancing postures.
- The Sittannavasal paintings belonged to this period.
- The commentary called Dakshinchitra was compiled during the reign of Mahendravarman I, who had the title Chittirakkarapuli.

Spread of Indian Culture

- Pallavas were also instrumental in spreading Indian culture in South-East Asia.
- Till the eighth century AD Pallava influence was predominant in Cambodia. Saivism enjoyed official patronage in these countries.
- The Pallava type of sikhara is to be found in the temples of Java, Cambodia and Annam.

The Chalukyas

- Besides the Pallavas, the Western Chalukyas and the Rashtrakutas in the Deccan constitute important political forces.
- Both these kingdoms had their rivals in the far south, namely the Pallavas and later the Cholas.
- Their period has also been important in the history of India for their cultural contributions.
- According to Bilhana, the author of *Vilawnankacharita* and the court poet of one of the Kayani Chalukyan rulers, their original home of the Chalukyas was Ayodhya.
- Also, the later Chalukyan inscriptions lay claim to Ayodhya as their ancestral home, but all this seems to have been done to claim legitimacy and respectability.
- According to another opinion the Chalukyas were related to Gurjaras, but there is no direct evidence for this opinion also.
- The Chalukyas, according to third opinion, were a local Kanarese people, who improvised into the ruling varna under Brahmanical influence. The third opinion seems to be more probable, though there is no sufficient evidence for this also.
- The Western Chalukyas ruled over an extensive area in the Deccan for about two centuries after which the Rashtrakutas became powerful.
- The family of Western Chalukyas had its offshoots like the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi and the Chalukyas of Kalyani.
- Pulakesin I was the founder of the Chalukya dynasty who established a small kingdom with Vatapi or Badami as its capital.

Political History

• **Kirtivarman I (566-97)**

- The son and successor of Pulakesin I, he expanded the kingdom by wars against the Kadambas of Banavasi and the Nalas of Bastar.

• **Mangalesa (597-609)**

- On the death of Kirtivarman, his brother Mangalesa became the regent, since his son, Pulakesin II was a minor.
- Mangalesa plundered the territories of Gujarat, Khandesh and Malwa.

• **Pulakesin II (608-642 A.D.)**

- The most important ruler of this dynasty was Pulakesin II.
- The Aihole inscription issued by him gives the details of his reign.

- He fought with the Kadambas of Banavasi and the Gangas of Mysore and established his suzerainty.
- Durvinita, the Ganga ruler accepted his overlordship and even gave his daughter in marriage to Pulakesin II.
- Another notable achievement of Pulakesin II was the defeat of Harshavardhana on the banks of the river Narmada. He put a check to the ambition of Harsha to conquer the south.
- In his first expedition against the Pallavas, Pulakesin II emerged victorious. But he suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of Narasimhavarman I near Kanchi.
- Subsequently, the Chalukya capital Vatapi was captured and destroyed by the Pallavas.
- The most important event in the reign of Pulakesin II was the visit of Hiuen Tsang to his kingdom.
- The description given by this Chinese pilgrim of the kingdom of Pulakesin is quite useful in knowing the social and economic conditions under the Chalukya rulers of Badami.
- **Vikramaditya 1 (644-81):** After an occupation of about 12 years, he not only drove out the Pallava forces, but also consolidated the kingdom and plundered the Pallava capital, Kanchi, thus avenging his father's defeat and death at the hands of the Pallavas.
- **Vinayaditya (681-93):** His reign was generally peaceful and prosperous.
- **Vijayaditya (693-733):** It was the longest and also the most prosperous and peaceful reign. It was marked by great increase in temple building.
- **Vikramaditya 11 (733-44):** His reign is significant for the successful invasion of the Pallava kingdom three times, and the repelling of the Arab invasion of south Gujarat.
- **Kirtivarman 11 (744-55):** This last Chalukyan ruler of Badami was defeated by Dantidurga, the founder of the Rashtrakuta dynasty, and thus came an end to the Chalukya dynasty of Badami.

Administration

- The central government under the Chalukyas of Badami exercised a paternalistic control over the village administration, which was unlike the administrative practice of south India.
- The main difference between the Chalukyan administration and that of south Indian rulers like Pallavas and Cholas, was that the south India rulers allowed a great amount of autonomy to the village administration, while the Chalukyas of western Deccan did not.

- The Chalukyas of Badami are said to have been a great maritime power.
- Pulakesin II, with 100 ships, attacked and captured the capital of a hostile country.
- The army of the Chalukyas consisted of a small standing army, but mainly of feudal levies.
- Army officers have been used in civil administration whenever an emergency arose.

Religion

- The Badami Chalukyas were Brahmanical Hindus, but respected other faiths too.
- Great importance came to be attached to Vedic sacrifices and rituals.
- Pulakesin I, the founder of the dynasty, performed the asvamedha sacrifice.
- Quite a few Brahmanical treatises were also composed during this period.
- Apart from the orthodox form of Brahmanism, Puranic religion also grew popular under the Chalukyas. It was, in fact, this popularity that gave momentum to the building of temples in honour of Vishnu, Siva and other gods.
- From the account of Hiuen Tsang, it is clear that Buddhism was on the decline in western Deccan. This decline of Buddhism in western Deccan was in keeping with its general decline throughout India from the fifth and sixth centuries AD.
- But Jainism, on the other hand, was steadily increasing its popularity, and the decline of Buddhism, in fact, helped it.

Art and Architecture

- The Chalukyas were great patrons of art and developed the vesara style in the building of structural temples. However, the vesara style reached its culmination only under the Rashtrakutas and the Hoysalas.
 - The structural temples of the Chalukyas exist at Aihole, Badami and Pattadakal.
 - Cave temple architecture was also famous under the Chalukyas and their cave temples are found in Ajanta, Ellora and Nasik.
 - The best specimens of Chalukya paintings can be seen in the Badami cave temple and in the Ajanta caves.
 - The reception given to a Persian embassy by Pulakesin II is depicted in a painting at Ajanta.
 - The Chalukya temples may be divided into two stages.
 - The first stage is represented by the temples at Aihole and Badami.
- Among the seventy temples found at Aihole, four are important.
1. Ladh Khan temple is a low, flat-roofed structure consisting of a pillared hall.
 2. Durga temple resembles a Buddha Chaitya.

3. Huchimalligudi temple.

4. The Jain temple at Meguti.

– Among the temples at Badami, the Muktheeswara temple and the Melagutti Sivalaya are notable for their architectural beauty.

– A group of four rock-cut temples at Badami are marked by high workmanship. The walls and pillared halls are adorned by beautiful images of gods and human beings.

- The second stage is represented by the temples at Pattadakal.
- There are ten temples here, four in the northern style and the remaining six in the Dravidian style.
- The Papanatha temple is the most notable in the northern style.
- The Sangamesvara temple and the Virupaksha temple are famous for their Dravidian style.
- The Virupaksha temple is built on the model of the Kailasanatha temple at Kanchipuram. It was built by one of the queens of Vikramaditya II. Sculptors brought from Kanchi were employed in its construction.
- The Chalukyan period was marked by frequent invasions and plunder of the neighbouring territories.
- The state income from land seems to have been very limited, since most of the land under the Chalukyas was rocky and not fertile.
- The earnings from the trading activities also were not considerable, since trade and commerce in India during this period was on the general decline. Hence, the Chalukyas resorted to frequent invasions and plunder of the neighbouring territories. The mutually destructive Chalukya-Pallava conflict can be properly understood only in this background.

UNIT-V

TOPIC-2

THE CHOLAS

• After the decline of the Sangam period, the Cholas became feudatories in Uraiyur. They became prominent in the ninth century and established an empire comprising the major portion of South India. Their capital was Tanjore.

• The Cholas also extended their sway in Sri Lanka and the Malay Peninsula. Therefore, they are called as the Imperial Cholas.

• Thousands of inscriptions found in the temples provide detailed information regarding the administration, society, economy and culture of the Chola period.

- The founder of the Imperial Chola line was Vijayalaya. He captured Tanjore from Muttaraiyars in 815 A.D. and built a temple for Durga.
- Vijayalaya son Aditya put an end to the Pallava kingdom by defeating Aparajita and annexed Tondaimandalam.
- Parantaka I was one of the important early Chola rulers. He defeated the Pandyas and the ruler of Ceylon. But he suffered a defeat at the hands of the Rashtrakutas in the famous battle of Takkolam.
- Parantaka I was a great builder of temples. He also provided the vimana of the famous Nataraja temple at Chidambaram with a golden roof.
- The two famous Uttiramerur inscriptions that give a detailed account of the village administration under the Cholas belong to his reign.
- After a gap of thirty years, the Cholas regained their supremacy under Rajaraja I.

Political History

Rajaraja I (985 – 1014 A.D.)

- Under Rajaraja I and his son Rajendra I the Chola power reached its highest point of glory.
- His military conquests were:
 - The defeat of the Chera ruler Bhaskaravivarman in the naval battle of Kandalursalai and the destruction of the Chera navy.
 - The defeat of the Pandya ruler, Amarabhujanga and establishment of Chola authority in the Pandya country.
 - The conquest of Gangavadi, Tadigaipadi and Nolambapadi located in the Mysore region.
 - The invasion of Sri Lanka which was entrusted to his son Rajendra I. As the Sri Lankan king Mahinda V fled away from his country, the Cholas annexed the northern Sri Lanka. The capital was shifted from Anuradhapura to Polanaruva where a Shiva temple was built
 - The Chola victory over the growing power of the Western Chalukyas of Kalyani. Satyasraya was defeated and Rajaraja I captured the Raichur Doab, Banavasi and other places. Hence the Chola power extended up to the river Tungabhadra.
 - The restoration of Vengi throne to its rulers Saktivarman and Vimaladitya by defeating the Telugu Chodas. Rajaraja gave his daughter Kundavai in marriage to Vimaladitya.
 - Rajaraja's last military achievement was a naval expedition against the Maldiv Islands which were conquered.
- By these conquests, the extent of the Chola empire under Rajaraja I included the Pandya, Chera and the Tondaimandalam regions of Tamil Nadu and the Gangavadi, Nolambapadi and the Telugu Choda territories in the Deccan and the northern part of Ceylon and the Maldiv Islands beyond India.
- Rajaraja assumed a number of titles like Mummidi Chola, Jayankonda and Sivapadasekara.

- Rajaraja was a devout follower of Saivism.
- Rajaraja completed the construction of the famous Rajarajeswara temple or Brihadeeswara temple at Tanjore in 1010 A.D.
- Rajaraja also helped in the construction of a Buddhist monastery at Nagapattinam.

Rajendra I (1012-1044 A.D.)

- Rajendra demonstrated his military ability by participating in his father's campaigns and continued his father's policy of aggressive conquests and expansion.
- His important wars were:

- Mahinda V, the king of Sri Lanka attempted to recover from the Cholas the northern part of Ceylon. Rajendra defeated him and seized the southern Sri Lanka. Thus the whole of Sri Lanka was made part of the Chola Empire.
- He reasserted the Chola authority over the Chera and Pandya countries.
- He defeated Jayasimha II, the Western Chalukya king and the river Tungabhadra was recognised as the boundary between the Cholas and Chalukyas.
- His most famous military enterprise was his expedition to north India. The Chola army crossed the Ganges by defeating a number of rulers on its way. Rajendra defeated Mahipala I of Bengal. To commemorate this successful north-Indian campaign Rajendra founded the city of Gangaikondacholapuram and constructed the famous Rajesvaram temple in that city. He also excavated a large irrigation tank called Cholagangam on the western side of the city.
- Another famous venture of Rajendra was his naval expedition to Kadaram or Sri Vijaya. It is difficult to pin point the real object of the expedition. Whatever its objects were, the naval expedition was a complete success. A number of places were occupied by Chola forces. But it was only temporary and no permanent annexation of these places was contemplated. He assumed the title Kadaramkondan.

- Rajendra I had put down all rebellions and kept his empire intact and at the death of Rajendra I the extent of the Chola Empire was at its peak.
- The river Tungabhadra was the northern boundary. The Pandya, Kerala and Mysore regions and also Sri Lanka formed part of the empire.
- He gave his daughter Ammangadevi to the Vengi Chalukya prince and further continued the matrimonial alliance initiated by his father.
- Rajendra I assumed a number of titles, the most famous being Mudikondan, Gangaikondan, Kadaram Kondan and Pandita Cholan.
- Like his father he was also a devout Saiva and built a temple for that god at the new capital Gangaikondacholapuram.
- He made liberal endowments to this temple and to the Lord Nataraja temple at Chidambaram.
- He was also tolerant towards the Vaishnava and Buddhist sects.
- After Rajendra I, the greatness of the Chola power was preserved by rulers like Kulottunga I and Kulottunga III.
- Kulottunga I was the grandson of Rajendra I through his daughter Ammangadevi.
- Kulottunga I succeeded the Chola throne and thus united the Vengi kingdom with the Chola Empire.

- During Kulottunga I reign Sri Lanka became independent. Subsequently, Vengi and the Mysore region were captured by the western Chalukyas.
- Kulottunga I sent a large embassy of 72 merchants to China and maintained cordial relations with the kingdom of Sri Vijaya.
- Under Kulottunga III the central authority became weak.
- The rise of the feudatories like the Kadavarayas and the emergence of the Pandya power as a challenge to Chola supremacy contributed to the ultimate downfall of the Chola Empire.
- Rajendra III was the last Chola king who was defeated by Jatavarman Sundarapandya II.
- The Chola country was absorbed into the Pandya Empire.

Chola Administration

Central Government

- The Cholas had an excellent system of administration.
- The emperor or king was at the top of the administration.
- The extent and resources of the Chola Empire increased the power and prestige of monarchy.
- The big capital cities like Tanjore and Gangaikondacholapuram, the large royal courts and extensive grants to the temples reveal the authority of the king.
- They undertook royal tours to increase the efficiency of the administration.
- There was elaborate administrative machinery comprising various officials called perundanam and sirudanam.

Revenue

- The land revenue department was known as puravubarithinaikkalam.
- All lands were carefully surveyed and classified for assessment of revenue.
- The residential portion of the village was called ur nattam. These and other lands such as the lands belonging to temples were exempted from tax.
- Besides land revenue, there were tolls and customs on goods taken from one place to another, various kinds of professional taxes, dues levied on ceremonial occasions like marriages and judicial fines.
- During the hard times, there were remission of taxes and Kulottunga I became famous by abolishing tolls and earned the title – Sungam Tavirtta Cholan.
- The main items of government expenditure were the king and his court, army and navy, roads, irrigation tanks and canals.

Military Administration

- The Cholas maintained a regular standing army consisting of elephants, cavalry, infantry and navy.
- About seventy regiments were mentioned in the inscriptions.
- The royal troops were called Kaikkolaperumpadai.
- Within this there was a personal troop to defend the king known as Velaikkarar.

- Attention was given to the training of the army and military cantonments called kadagams existed.
- The Cholas paid special attention to their navy.
- The naval achievements of the Tamils reached its climax under the Cholas.
- They controlled the Malabar and Coromandal coasts. In fact, the Bay of Bengal became a Chola lake for sometime.

Provincial Administration

- The Chola Empire was divided into mandalams and each mandalam into valanadus and nadus.
- In each nadu there were a number of autonomous villages.
- The royal princes or officers were in charge of mandalams.
- The valanadu was under periyannattar and nadu under nattar.
- The town was known as nagaram and it was under the administration of a council called nagarattar.

Village Assemblies

- The system of village autonomy with sabhas and their committees developed through the ages and reached its culmination during the Chola rule.
- Two inscriptions belonging to the period of Parantaka I found at Uttiramerur provide details of the formation and functions of village councils. According to them village was divided into thirty wards and each was to nominate its members to the village council.
- The qualifications to become a ward member were:
 - a. Ownership of at least one fourth veli of land.
 - b. Own residence.
 - c. Above thirty years and below seventy years of age.
 - d. Knowledge of Vedas.
- However, certain norms of disqualification were also mentioned in the inscriptions. They were:
 - a. Those who had been members of the committees for the past three years.
 - b. Those who had failed to submit accounts as committee members.
 - c. Those who had committed sins.
 - d. Those who had stolen the property of others.
- From the persons duly nominated, one was to be chosen for each ward by kudavolai system for a year.
- The names of eligible persons were written on palm-leaves and put into a pot.
- A young boy or girl would take out thirty names each for one ward.
- They were divided into six variyams such as samvatsaravariyam, erivariyam, thotta variyam, pancha variyam, pon variyam and puravuvvari variyam to take up six different functions of the village administration.
- The committee members were called variyapperumakkal.
- They usually met in the temple or under a tree and passed resolutions.

- The number of committees and ward members varied from village to village.

Socio-economic Life

- Caste system was widely prevalent during the Chola period.
- Brahmins and Kshatriyas enjoyed special privileges.
- The inscriptions of the later period of the Chola rule mention about two major divisions among the castes – Valangai and Idangai castes.
- However, there was cooperation among various castes and sub-castes in social and religious life.
- The position of women did not improve. The practice of ‘sati’ was prevalent among the royal families. The devadasi system or dancing girls attached to temples emerged during this period.
- Both Saivism and Vaishnavism continued to flourish during the Chola period.
- A number of temples were built with the patronage of Chola kings and queens.
- The temples remained centres of economic activity during this period.
- The mathas had great influence during this period.
- Both agriculture and industry flourished.
- Reclamation of forest lands and the construction and maintenance of irrigation tanks led to agricultural prosperity.
- The weaving industry, particularly the silk-weaving at Kanchi flourished.
- The metal works developed owing to great demand of images for temples and utensils.
- Commerce and trade were brisk with trunk roads or peruvazhis and merchant guilds.
- Gold, silver and copper coins were issued in plenty at various denominations. Commercial contacts between the Chola Empire and China, Sumatra, Java and Arabia were extensively prevalent.
- Arabian horses were imported in large numbers to strengthen the cavalry.

Education and Literature

- Education was also given importance.
- Besides the temples and mathas as educational centres, several educational institutions also flourished.
- The inscription at Ennayiram, Thirumukkudal and Thirubhuvanai provide details of the colleges existed in these places.
- Apart from the Vedas and Epics, subjects like mathematics and medicine were taught in these institutions. Endowment of lands was made to run these institutions.
- The development of Tamil literature reached its peak during the Chola period.
- Sivakasintamani written by Thiruthakkadevar and Kundalakesi belonged to 10th century.
- The Ramayana composed by Kamban and the Periyapuram or Tiruttondarpuranam by Sekkilar are the two master-pieces of this age.
- Jayankondar’s Kalingattupparani describes the Kalinga war fought by Kulotunga I.
- The Moovarula written by Ottakuthar depicts the life of three Chola kings.
- The Nalavenba was written by Pugalendi.
- The works on Tamil grammar like Kalladam by Kalladanar, Yapperungalam by Amirthasagarar, a Jain, Nannul by Pavanandhi and Virasoliyam by Buddhmitra were the products of the Chola age.

Art and Architecture

- The Dravidian style of art and architecture reached its perfection under the Cholas.
- The chief feature of the Chola temple is the vimana.
- The early Chola temples were found at Narthamalai and Kodumbalur in Pudukottai district and at Srinivasanallur in Tiruchirappalli district.
- The Big Temple at Tanjore built by Rajaraja I is a master-piece of South Indian art and architecture. It consists of the vimana, ardhmandapa, mahamandapa and a large pavilion in the front known as the Nandimandapa.
- Another notable contribution made by the Cholas to temple architecture is the Siva temple at Gangaikondacholapuram built by Rajendra I.
- The Airavathesvara temple at Darasuram in Tanjore District and the Kampaharesvara temple at Tribhuvanam are examples of later Chola temples.
- The Cholas also made rich contributions to the art of scus. The bronze statues of Nataraja or dancing Siva are master pieces.
- The Chola paintings were found on the walls of Narthamalai and Tanjore temples. The walls of the Chola temples such as the Tanjore and Gangaikondacholapuram temples contain numerous icons of large size with fine execution.
- The bronzes of the Chola period are world-famous.

UNIT-V

TOPIC-3

MILITARY SYSTEM OF PANDYA'S

Pandyan Empire

Pandyan Kingdom was located in Tamil Nadu, South India. It started around 6th century BC and ended around the 15th century AD.

Pandyan kingdom extended during the Sangam age comprised the present districts of Madurai, Tirunelveli, Ramnad in Tamil Nadu. **Madurai was the capital city** and **Korkai** the chief Port of the kingdom, which became the great centres of trade and commerce. The Sangam literature provides a long list of Pandyan kings out of which some of them became most popular. **Madhukudumi Peruvazhthi** performed many sacrifices to celebrate his victories. Therefore, he was given a title Palyagasalai.

Another Pandyan king Bootha Pandiyan was a great warrior and also the patron of Tamil poets. Ariyappadaikadantha Nedunjelivan was also a famous Pandyan ruler. He

gave death sentence to the hero of Silappathigaram (epic), Kovalan, by mistake for which he gave his own life when he came to know the truth. Another important ruler was **Thalaiyalanganathu Nedunjelivan** who was believed to have ruled around 210

A.D, defeated the combined forces of Chera, Chola and five other minor states at a place called Thalaiyalanganam, which is mentioned in a 10th century inscription. He also patronized a number of Tamil poets including Mangudi Maruthanar. The Pandyan kingdom was having trade with Roman Empire which profited traders and made kingdom wealthy and prosperous. Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan ruled Pandyan Empire from 1251-61 A.D was known as 'Second Rama' for plundering the islands of Sri Lanka. The Pandyan rule started declining from the early 14th century when dispute arose between the claimants for succession of throne and one of claimant ask for a help from Delhi sultan, Alauddin Khilji, which resulted in an invasion by sultan under the leadership of Malik Kafur. The Muslim invasion led to the disappearance of the Pandyans.

Battle of Talikota

The Apocalyptic Battle of Talikota is an Eternal Warning

The Renaissance in Europe witnessed the revival, restoration and resurgence of the ancient, classical traditions of the Greeks and the Romans chiefly in the spheres of art, literature, and other cultural elements. This revival found brilliant expression in the syllabi of various centres of higher learning throughout Europe. For over three centuries, these educational institutions made classical studies mandatory even for those students and aspiring scholars who later pursued the pure sciences. Indeed, it is not coincidental that Greek and Latin names are assigned to the elements found in the Periodic Table, and the fact that biological taxonomy is replete with Greek and Latin terms.

However, these classical traditions were entirely pre-Christian in spirit, character and expression. And it makes sense that they were revived during the **Renaissance** period because this period was singularly characterised by a rejection of and rebellion against the stranglehold of the Church that had pushed Europe into the Heart of Darkness for at least a thousand years.

What we today know as the finer aspects of modern Western civilisation are therefore the combined appropriations of this pre-Christian heritage. Indeed, right from the names of behemoth corporations of today like Oracle, Amazon, and Nike, the influence of ancient Greece and Rome have been indelibly, subconsciously implanted in the DNA of the modern West and westernised Indians as well.

The Guardian Tower of Sanatana Dharma

This cultural phenomenon applies in equal measure to one of the world's greatest empires: the Vijayanagara Empire. If Abhijata (pristine) Hinduism continues to survive in whatever form in South India today, the entire credit for it still rests on the shoulders of this Empire for building such a sturdy foundation way back in the mid 14th century CE.

One can still witness the numerous evidences of this grandeur in the temples built during that era (some of which continue to flourish even today), in Dharmic rituals, endowments, holdovers of administrative concepts, in the arts, in the way festivals are celebrated (**Mysore Dussera** being the greatest and world-renowned example) and so on.

The period during which the foundations for the Vijayanagara Empire were laid by the intrepid Harihara and Bukkaraya (known as the Sangama Brothers) under the spiritual guidance of **Maharshi Vidyaranya** was truly happening and exciting. Not only did they lead from the front but inspired countless others to do the same.

Bukkaraya's son, Kumara Kampana had distinguished himself as a warrior of repute early on. However, it is the extremely gifted Queen of Kumara Kampana, poetess extraordinaire, **Gangadevi** who gives us a valuable account of the condition of the period. She laments thus in the classic epic poem, Madhura Vijayam (The Victory over Madhura). Numbers in square brackets indicate the verse number below.

O King! The city, which is called Madhurapuri for its honeyed loveliness, has now become the city of cruel beasts; it now lives up to its earlier name of Vyaghrapuri, the city of tigers because humans don't dwell there (anymore). [1]

Those temples of Gods, which used to reverberate with the sacred melody of the mridangam, now echo the dreadful howls of jackals. [5]

In the Brahmin Quarters [Agraharams] of our city, huge columns of smoke emanating from the scared Yagnas used to rise up and reach the skies amid the sacred Vedic chants but alas! today those selfsame Quarters send up wretched stench of meat roasted by the Turushkas; the Vedic chants are today replaced by the beastly cacophonies of drunken hoodlums. [7]

During the days of Pandyas, our women used to bathe in [river] Taamraparni, whose waters turned white from the sandal-paste applied to their breasts. My lord! Now she's coloured only in red from the currents of blood flowing into her from all the cows slaughtered by its wicked occupiers all over the country. [13]

O King! I cannot bear to look at the countenance of those Dravida ladies who were bounteously endowed with beauty. Ravished horribly by the scourging Turushkas, these delicate women now sport lifeless lips and exhale hot breaths, and their abundant tresses that have come undone are painful to the eyes. I don't have the words to describe the suffering and dishonour painted on their faces, which know neither redemption nor protection. [15]

Gangadevi's lament did not fall on deaf ears. By 1370 CE, a determined Kumara Kampana had succeeded in annihilating the sputtering vestiges of the infamous **Madurai Sultanate** by routing Nasir-ud-din, the so-called Sultan who ruled Madurai.

This period also witnessed swift conquests and the beginning of the consolidation of all territories in South India and eventually paved the way for making Vijayanagara the most unassailable and prosperous empire in South India for the next two hundred-odd years. The Vijayanagara Empire thus stood as the sweeping and

insurmountable political Vindhya shielding all of South India from the relentless and barbaric depredations of Muslim armies.

Yet, as the poet says, when fate summons, monarchs must obey. And so is it with empires. As with the downfall of the Roman Empire, so with the downfall of the Vijayanagara Empire.

From Kumara Kampana's heroic and victorious exploits to Proudha Devaraya's glorious regime, the Vijayanagara Empire reached its apex under **Sri Krishnadevaraya**. But in just 36 years after his death in 1529, the collapse of this mighty empire was swift, sudden and total. And its story is not pretty.

It occurred on **January 23, 1565** in that fateful **Battle of Talikota**, or what I call the Sunset Battle of the Hindus.

Partial picture of an Empire in Decline

We can reasonably trace the seeds of this Sunset Battle to "Aliya" (literally: son-in-law) Rama Raya, the son-in-law of Krishnadevaraya. Rama Raya was a valiant commander, a tactful and fearsome warrior who had led several successful campaigns under Krishnadevaraya. He was also an able administrator and a skilful diplomat.

Rama Raya was also endowed with a fatal flaw: an unquenchable thirst for power, haughtiness and overconfidence in his own abilities. He was also given to excessive sensual indulgence.

After Krishnadevaraya's death, the throne passed on to his younger brother, Achyuta Raya who died in 1542 CE. His nephew, Sadashiva Raya was then a minor. Rama Raya seized this opportunity and eventually put Sadashiva Raya under virtual house arrest.

Acting as regent, he quickly took control of state power and replaced officers in important positions with people personally loyal to him. However, till the end, he could not become king because he had not descended from the royal lineage of the Rayas of Vijayanagara.

Front View of a Temple Complex in Hampi. Pic shot by Sandeep Balakrishna
To his credit, Rama Raya was a shrewd political operative. Surrounded by the five hostile Bahamani Kings, he constantly pitted one Sultan against the other and in the process ensured two things: one, he extended the borders of the Vijayanagara Empire occupying territories north of the Krishna river and two, he kept Vijayanagara secure by capitalising on the incessant enmity between the Bahamani Sultans.

However, his luck did eventually run out when the Sultans realised that they had a common foe in Rama Raya.

Germination of the Battle of Talikota

It could be reasonably said that Muslim sources give us a fairly accurate picture of the Talikota Battle compared to their Hindu counterparts, comprising

(historical-narrative) vachanas, bakhairs, kaifiyats, the “Keladi Nripavijayam,” etc. These narratives in Kannada were composed several decades after the battle.

In 1589 CE, **Qasim Ferishta** took up a position with the Sultan of Bijapur and then wrote the history of the Talikota Battle, 24 years after the incident. Some historians do not consider this as an eyewitness or accurate account because a quarter of a century is long enough for several legends and cooked-up historical tales to emerge.

Around 1560 CE, Rafiuddin Shirazi joined the services of the Bijapur ruler Ali Adil Shah and was eventually promoted to the post of prime minister. He lived for 24 years after the Talikota Battle and left behind eyewitness accounts of the battle.

This is also corroborated by Mirza Ibrahim Zubairi, who invokes his account of the battle in his *Busateenus-Salateen*.

Upon the request of Ali Adil Shah, Rama Raya marched against the Ahmednagar kingdom and successfully raided it. Equally, on occasion, the Nizam of Ahmednagar and Qutub Shah of Golconda had sought Rama Raya’s assistance to teach Ali Adil Shah a lesson.

In the foregoing instance, Rama Raya successfully wrested the Raichur doab on behalf of these two kings, angering Ali Adil Shah who then sought the advice of his close aides. Two of these aides, Kishwar Khan Lary and Abu Turab Shirazi recommended an alliance of all the Bahamani kings temporarily forgetting mutual hostilities. And further that this grand alliance should march against Rama Raya. As we’ve seen, Qutub Shah of Golconda and Hussain Nizam Shah of Ahmednagar had tasted bitter defeat at the hands of Rama Raya on several occasions. Indeed, after Rama Raya’s successful campaign against him on behalf of Ali Adil Shah of Bijapur, Nizam Shah was so stricken with mortal fear that he abandoned even the thought of marching against Adil Shah.

And so, the Sultans of Bijapur, Ahmednagar and Golconda entered into a joint pact. Accordingly, Chand Bibi (popularly known for her defence of Ahmednagar against the forces of the Mughal emperor, Akbar), daughter of Hussain Nizam Shah was married to Ali Adil Shah I of Bijapur, a marriage of political expediency. Likewise, Murtajabiz the son of the Sultan of Ahmednagar, was married to Adil Shah’s sister.

All parties of this alliance agreed to wage war against Vijayanagara after the marriage celebrations were over.

That done, Adil Shah sent an emissary to Rama Raya’s court with a message: give up the key forts of Raichur and Mudgal. Rama Raya sent the emissary back with a contemptuous refusal. The same contempt was reserved for the emissaries that followed.

The stage was now set.

The combined forces of Bijapur, Ahmednagar and Golconda began to march towards Vijayanagara. Because Bidar’s Sultan, Burhan Imadul Mulk was a sworn enemy of Hussain Nizam Shah, he refused to join the coalition. The coalition army eventually reached and pitched camp at a spot near Talikota, which fell under the domain of the Bijapur Sultan.

The battle that followed occurred at Tavarekere (today's Tangadi or Rakkasatangadi), southwest of Talikota.

A Battle of Overconfidence, Stealth and Treachery

The Sultans assembled at Talikota didn't immediately start war preparations. They indulged in merry-making for several days as a mark of more firmly cementing their circumstance-forged, superficial unity, and resealed their alliance against their common but far superior enemy.

And then they began their march.

Meanwhile, a supremely overconfident Rama Raya continued to remain unperturbed. He didn't perceive this as a threat of any consequence and began to make his own preparations.

It is estimated that he sent a contingent of twenty thousand horseback soldiers and a lakh and fifty thousand elephants as advance force under the leadership of his brother Tirumala Raya.

He followed this up with another force of sizeable strength and numbers. Historians peg the total strength of the Vijayanagara military force as comprising one lakh horsemen and five lakh infantry.

The task of the advance contingent was to prevent the Bahamani forces from crossing the Krishna river. The force had massive canons forming the leading front. Additionally, sturdy forts at strategic points along the Krishna river were designed to impede the enemy's attempts at crossing it.

Spies of the Bahamani army reported that there were some places situated about two-three miles along the river line that were unguarded and could help the army cross the river.

Adil Shah conferred with his allies and sought their permission to conduct the war by stealth because whatever Rama Raya's other faults, the Vijayanagara army was a formidable fighting machine, and all of his adversaries had tasted humiliating defeats at his hands in the past.

Accordingly, Adil Shah ordered his men to adopt this strategy: pretend to attempt crossing the river at a few points and then turn back and then actually try to cross the river from a different place.

When the Vijayanagara army witnessed this, they realised that the enemy's attempts were futile and abandoned their existing positions, thereby falling neatly into the enemy's trap. Adil Shah's strategy proved hugely successful.

The Bahamani army quickly tied up the canons with strong chains. In his cocksure certainty that this was a minor battle, Rama Raya had not even made a Plan B, forget a contingency plan.

Neither did he learn any lesson when he saw that he was outwitted. He led from the front and ordered his army to randomly attack the Bahamani force. There was no strategy, no discipline.

Even worse, he didn't heed the advice of his ministers who had pleaded with him to mount a horse. Instead Rama Raya sat in his throne on the elephant. He bombastically motivated his soldiers with the war cry, "We are not cowards to be scared of this insignificant war! Go on, fight!"

As blood-curdling as the cry was, it simply didn't work. The scattered and indisciplined manner in which his soldiers fought began to take its toll. Rama Raya quickly realised this, dismounted, and spread out a heap of enormous quantities of gold, precious stones, and coins and declared that the one who displays the maximum valour would be rewarded with untold wealth and would be royally honoured.

This motivation helped breathe fresh zest into the soldiers who began hacking their way into the Bahamani force. The left flank of the Bahamani force was decimated and what was left of it began to retreat.

This turn of events greatly worried Nizam Shah, Qutub Shah and Ali Barid.

The Fall of Rama Raya

Nizam Shah put up the Rahtaanat sign in front of his tent. This sign signifies a holy Islamic oath that the Muslim soldier would die in jihad and attain jannat (heaven). It also meant that no matter what would happen, no Muslim soldier should run away from this Jihad.

As was customary, Nizam Shah's personal entourage was accompanied by hundreds of women of his harem. The chief guard of the harem, a eunuch bearing the title of Khwajasara was given strict instructions: in the event that the Khwajasara anticipated danger to his own life, he was to first slaughter all the women in the harem before taking any other action.

And so, the combined forces of Nizam Shah, Qutub Shah, Ali Adil Shah and Ali Barid attacked the "Hindu army which was continually gaining an upper hand".

Ali Adil Shah managed to chase away Rama Raya's brother, Tirumala Raya all the way up to Kanauj [it is unclear which place this refers to but it is definitely not the famed Kanauj in Uttar Pradesh]. He then turned his attention to Rama Raya. He attacked Rama Raya from the rear while Qutub Shah and Nizam Shah faced him head on.

Even as the battle raged on, an enormous chunk of Muslim soldiers in Rama Raya's army either defected to the enemy camp or became deserters by refusing to fight on the side of the "infidel" army.

This was apparently motivated by the treacherous Gilani Brothers who were among Rama Raya's trusted commanders. There are varying versions of this slice of the battle but constraints of space don't permit discussing this aspect in any detail.

Faced with this kind of multi-pronged assault, panic struck Rama Raya when he realised that there was no force defending his right flank. Some historians aver that this was because he was unaware of Tirumala Raya's flight away from the battle.

Meanwhile, a lowly officer (havaladar) named Rumi Khan fired two canons at the Vijayanagar force, taking a heavy toll and scattering the soldiers. He then climbed up his elephant and charged at Rama Raya's elephant. In the ensuing fight, Rama Raya's bodyguard was killed and the 90-year old head of the Empire fell down from his palanquin, wounded. He was surrounded by enemy soldiers who didn't know who he was including Rumi Khan who had toppled Rama Raya's elephant.

But the game was given away when the Brahmin Dalapatiraya yelled, "Stop! Don't you dare harm Rama Raya!"

And just like that, Rumi Khan realised that his hour of triumph was etched in these words. With all the contempt he could muster, Rumi Khan had Rama Raya lifted by the trunk of his elephant and presented him before Nizam Shah. The Sultan, in a bid to humiliate Rama Raya, offered him a seat and mocked, "All well?"

The nonagenarian said nothing; he merely touched his forehead (indicating that fate had reduced him to this). At this point, the court physician Hakim Kasim Baig stormed into the tent and said, "What are you doing! Exchanging pleasantries with a captured prisoner? Kill him now! If the Bijapur Sultan comes here, he will spare him."

Nizam Shah immediately chopped off Rama Raya's head, affixed it to the tip of a spear and had it paraded outside. It is said that Rama Raya's severed head was thrown in a gutter in Bijapur; other accounts hold that it was sent to Kashi.

The sight of the slain Raya's head propelled a full-blown retreat of the Vijayanagara army. However, they were unable to flee very far. The morale of the Muslim army which had redoubled after Rama Raya's death now reached a feverish heat of murderous passion when it spotted the Hindu army retreating.

The warriors of Islam chased them and slaughtered everyone in sight. An area spanning about twenty miles was littered with dead bodies, the earth bloody. The victorious soldiers of Islam took untold riches in the form of coins, jewellery and slaves: both male and female.

One account says that it took twelve days to count the dead bodies that lay in the region from "Ali Kandi" to Vijayanagara and estimates the number of people killed as Ten Lakh.

Hampi becomes a Wasteland

The Sultans thanked **Allah** for this grand victory and remained at the scene of the battle for twenty days. Once the battle wounds had healed, they marched to **Hampi** vowing vengeance. They decimated the tall, grand buildings, temples, expansive houses with their equally vast private gardens that housed animals and exquisite birds, and burned everything in sight and plundered Vijayanagara's wealth with unimpeded abandon. Perhaps for the first time in its history, South India witnessed the savage and thorough extent of the practice and ultimate success of Jihad.

In the six months that the Bahamani coalition was camped in Vijayanagara, every single house, temple, building and habitation "in a radius spanning twenty leagues was burned down."

Rear View of a Random Temple at Hampi. Pic shot by Sandeep Balakrishna
The grand Hampi was reduced to a wasteland. Even today, it is known by the tragic Kannada moniker, Haalu Hampi (Ruined Hampi). And this is how Hampi was reduced from being the global centre of awesome wealth and refined culture to merely becoming a tourist spot.

The Hindus of South India never recovered from this mortal blow.

The glory that was scripted by the Tapas of Maharshi Vidyaranya and ably executed by the intrepid gallantry of Harihara, Bukka and Kumara Kampana's exploits culminated more than two hundred years later in the sweeping desolation of Hampi. The cataclysm of Hampi is the eternal warning of the deep and fundamental values of culture and civilisation, of history, of reason, of common sense, and of the stupor induced by prosperity.

And this is the warning that Hampi will tell every "tourist" who will pause and listen to that cautionary voice behind this desolation.