

# 1 Rajput Age : New Rulers and States



During the period of 500 years, i.e between 700 A.D. to 1200 A.D., Rajput era was established in major parts of North India and South India. They kept the Indian Hindu Culture alive. Let us learn in detail about these small and large yet, significant Rajput Kingdoms, where they were located and how they were.

## Harshvardhana Period

In the 7<sup>th</sup> century, after the death of Harshvardhana, his vast empire was divided into small independent states in North India. Similarly, independent states were formed in South India also after the death of Pulkeshi-II. This period of the middle age is called the Rajput era in the Indian History.



Emperor Harshvardhan

### Know This

The word 'Rajput' means 'Rajputra'. As per description of (Bhat) Bards, there were thirty six clans of Rajputs in the fourteenth century.

Rajput's were brave, so their reign lasted long. They kept their promises even at the cost of their lives. They would rather die than show their back to enemy. They were protectors of Gau Brahmins. They would protect the surrendered at any cost. They never practised unrighteousness even in the battle.



Brave Rajput woman bidding farewell in the battlefield

Rajput women were famous for their valour. They sent their sons and husbands to the war front happily. They didn't even care for their safety and security. If needed, they would go out in the battlefield with sword in their hand. There are many examples of such brave women.

**Think :** Why did the Rajput women study scriptures and learn to use weapon ? Which are the various fields in which today's women should study and for what purpose ?

In the medieval history of India, there are instances of bravery, courage and heroism of Rajputs. The Rajputs defended India from foreign invasion for about 500 years. Let us study about such Rajput dynasties.

India was divided into many small and large provinces in late 7<sup>th</sup> century, with the rise of feudal power. Many Rajput dynasties emerged in the country. This time is called the Middle Age. We will study the states of North and South India, of that time.

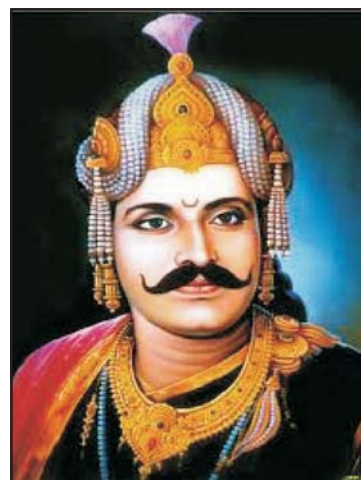


## States of North India

After the decline of Gurjar Pratihara Kingdom, various states were established, which included Gadhwal state of Kannauj, Chandels of Bundelkhand (Jejakabhukti), the Parmar kingdom of Malwa, the Chalukya (Solanki) kingdom of Anhilwad, Chedi kingdom of Dahli, the Chauhan kingdom of Shakambhari, the Gohil kingdom of Southern Rajasthan.

Chandradev founded the Garhwal kingdom. He made Kashi another capital besides Kannauj. Rulers like Madanchandra, Govindchandra were born in this dynasty. Govindchandra was the most majestic and valiant king of the clan. He prevented the invasion of Ghazni and renovated many Buddhist monasteries. Other rulers of North India include Chandel rulers of Bundelkhand. Later this state of Chandels of Bundelkhand region was known as 'Jejakabhukti'. There were great rulers like Yashovarman, Kirtivarman, Paramhirdev (Parmar) in this state. Chandel dynasty holds great importance in Indian history. Khajuraho, Kalinjar and Mahoba were important cities of Chandels. Khajuraho became famous as a place of pilgrimage due to its magnificent temples. Chandels built and decorated great religious buildings and reservoirs in Bundelkhand.

Since ancient times the region of Malwa has been known as Avanti or Ujjaini. Krishnaraj founded Parmar dynasty in 820 A.D. The Parmar dynasty had great rulers like Siyuk, Munj, Bhoj etc. Bhoj was the greatest ruler of Parmar dynasty. He was popular as an ideal king in India. Raja Bhoj established a college in Dharanagri. He established a city named Bhojpal (Present Bhopal), which was surrounded by small hills. Many Rajput chiefs of Chauhan or Chahman dynasty ruled in different parts of Gujarat and Rajasthan. One of the branches of these rulers ruled in Shakambhari in the eighth century. Shakambhari is a place located to the North of Ajmer (near Sambhar lake). Vasudev was the founder of the Chahman or Chauhan dynasty of Shakambhari. In the beginning of the twelfth century, Ajayraj sat on the throne of Shakambhari. He established a town named Ajaymeru, which was later on known as Ajmer.



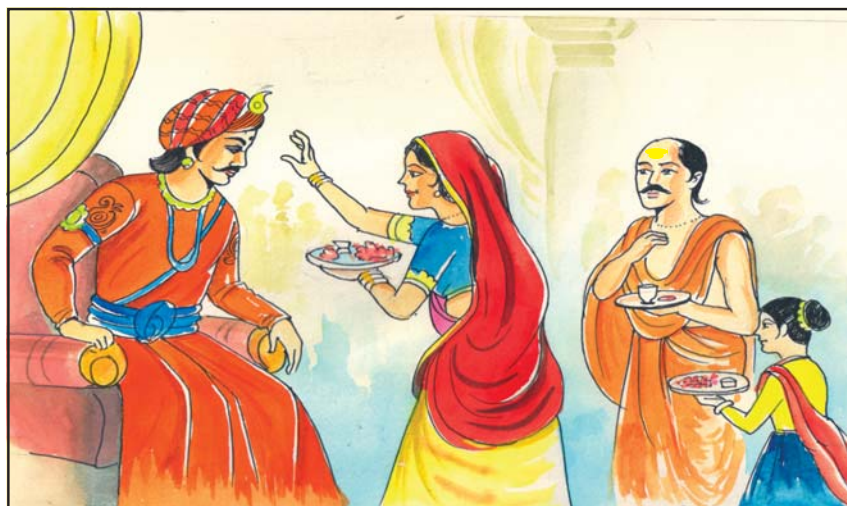
**King Bhoj**

The princess of Solanki King of Gujarat, Siddhraj Jaisinh was married to Arnoraj of Chauhan dynasty. After him, his son Someshwar Chauhan came to the throne. He was succeeded by his son Prithviraj III. Prithviraj III holds a unique place in the history of India. Prithviraj Chauhan defeated Shihabuddin Ghoris in the Tarai plain between Thaneshwar and Karnal in 1191 A.D. After this Prithviraj Chauhan was defeated in 1192 A.D. and Muslim power rose to the throne of Delhi. Hence the battle of Tarai is considered a landmark in Indian history.

The rulers of Gujarat have a significant place in the Rajput era. Gurjar was a kingdom of Pratiharas in the eighth century. Around the middle of the eighth century, Vanraj Chavda founded Anhilwad Patan on the banks of the river Saraswati in 756 A.D. It is a common belief that Vanraj Chavda named the



new town Anhilwad Patan after his childhood friend Anhil Bharwad. At this time, Saurashtra and Kutch were ruled by Chavda dynasty.



**Coronation of Vanraj and Establishment of Anhilwad Patan**

- Think :**
- (1) Discuss examples of true friendship from history, in the classroom.
  - (2) Discuss references related to establishment of new villages and towns.

They included Vadhvan, Diu, Okhamandal, Paatgarh (Lakhpata), Bhadrawati (Kutch) etc. Among all these rulers the rule of Solanki (Chalukya dynasty) kings are considered to be the golden age of Rajput regime. Powerful rulers of this clan include Mulraj, Bhimdev-1, Siddhraj Jaysinh, Kumarpal, Bhimdev-II etc. During the rule of Solanki (Chalukya) kings Gujarat was economically and culturally prosperous. Udaymati, daughter of the ruler of Junagadh, Ra-Khengar was married to Bhimdev-I Solanki. Rani Udaymati built the world famous stepwell, 'Rani-ki Vav' in Patan which has been declared as World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Siddhraj Jaysinh's mother, Minaldevi (Mayanalladevi) was the ideal queen mother. She did lot of things to give justice to the people. It was her decision to stop pilgrimage tax at Somnath as well as construct Malav lake in Dholka. During the reign of Siddhraj Jaysinh 'Kalikalsarvagna' Hemchandracharya composed a grammar book named 'Siddhahemshabdanushasan'. When the procession of this scripture was carried out on an elephant in the town, the King of Patan walked along with the people. Kumarpal also worked for the public welfare. He was highly influenced by Acharya Hemchandracharya. Being inspired by him, Kumarpal banned gambling, animal slaughter in the state and issued strict instructions for non-violence. Hemchandracharya has enhanced the prestige of the king by writing the book 'Kumarpalcharitra'.

Ajaypal became the ruler of Patan after Kumarpal. After reign of about four years, his son Mulraj-II became the ruler of Gujarat. Mulraj-II defeated Shihabuddin Ghori at a young age when he invaded Gujarat around 1178 A.D. Nadol's Chahman ruler Kalhan and his brother Kirtipal helped him in this fight.



As the power of the Solanki rulers weakened, the Vaghela dynasty came to power on the throne of Gujarat. Vaghela's were loyal nobles of Solanki Kings. Solanki Kings gave village named Vyaghrapalli (Vaghel) to Arnoraj in return of their services. His descendants were called Vaghela after the name of the village. Originally they were of the Chalukya clan. Rulers like Viradhaval, Visaldev, Arjundev, Sarangdev of Vaghela dynasty ruled well in Gujarat. During the reign of Viradhaval, Gujarat had efficient and skilled ministers like Vastupal and Tejpal. Because of the proficiency of these ministers, Gujarat could face the battle against the Muslims. Delhi Sultanate was established in Gujarat at the time of Karandev Vaghela, the last ruler of Vaghela dynasty around 1304 A.D.

Bengal was ruled by Pala dynasty in the middle of the eighth century. This dynasty was called 'Palvansh' of Bengal since the word 'Pala' came after the name of the founder of the dynasty and his descendants. This dynasty was founded by a king named Gopal (750 A.D.-770 A.D.) After the downfall of Pala dynasty, Sen dynasty was founded in 1095 A.D. Vijaysen was the first eminent king of this dynasty. His son Ballal Sen composed 'Dansagar' and 'Adbhutsagar' texts.

After conquering Gujarat from Karandev Vaghela, Sultan of Delhi appointed Nazim (Subas). These governors carried out the administration of the state. In 1407 A.D. Zafar Khan changed his name to Muzaffar Shah and became the Sultan. There were fourteen sultans in this dynasty including sultans like Ahmed Shah, Mahmood Begda, Bahadur Shah. The Sultanate period came to an end in the 16<sup>th</sup> century with the beginning of Mughal rule in Gujarat.

#### Know This

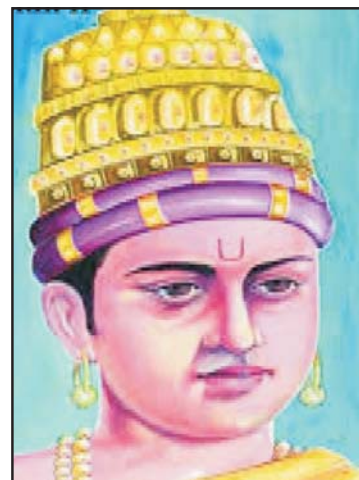
Vanraj Chavda established Anhilwad Patan and Ahmed Shah established Ahmedabad. Collect some informations associated with the establishment of the new towns by these two rulers.

### States of South India

The states located in the South of river Narmada are called Southern States. In the eighth century many small and large dynasties became independent in South India as well as North India. Let's obtain some information about the dynasties like Chalukya, Rashtrakuta, Pallav, Chola, Pandya and Chera.

The first King of Chalukya dynasty was King Jay Sinh. In 540 A.D. Vatapi was made the capital and a separate independent state was established by Pulkeshi-I. This dynasty is known as Chalukya dynasty of Vatapi (Present day Badami). In this dynasty there were important rulers like Kirtiverman, Pulkeshi-I and Pulkeshi-II. When the power of Vatapi Chalukyas was weakened, one of their branches was established in the region between Krishna and Godavari rivers. This branch was established by Vishnuvardhan. As these Chalukya rulers of East made Vengi their capital, they were known as Vengi Chalukyas. Like Vatapi and Vengi, Kalyani also had a branch of the Chalukya dynasty. These Chalukyas were known as Chalukyas of Kalyani.

The power of the Rashtrakuta dynasty rose when the Chalukya dynasty declined in the South. Indra-I is considered to be the first king of this dynasty. Govind-III was the most powerful ruler of Rashtrakuta dynasty.



Pulkeshi II



Two states of the Yadav dynasty existed around this time in Gujarat : (1) Devagiri (2) Dwarsamudra. The Hoysal dynasty ruled in Dwarsamudra and Devgiri was ruled by the Yadavas. Dwarsamudra was the capital of Hoysals and Devgiri (Present Daultabad) was the capital of the Yadavas.

After the decline of Kalyani Chalukaya's empire in the South, new kingdoms emerged there. These included Kakatiya of Warangal also. They ruled over the land between Krishna and Kaveri rivers. Warangal was their capital. One more such important dynasty was the Pallava dynasty. This dynasty was founded by Bappdev. Their capital was at Kanchipuram. Mahendravarman-I, Narasimhavarman-I, Narasimhavarman-II were the important rulers of this dynasty. The region where Tanjore, Tiruchirappalli and Pudukottai are located, Chola mandal ruled there during the medieval period. Tanjore was their capital. Rajaraja-I, Rajadhiraja-I and Rajendra-I were the important rulers of the Chola dynasty. One more such ancient South Indian dynasty was Pandya. The Pandya kingdom was small but it was a large centre of trade. At that time one of the regions which got separated from Tamil, was ruled by Chera dynasty. Another name of Chera is Kerala or Malyalam. Ayan was the first ruler of Chera dynasty and Setungvan was the best Chera ruler.

### Administration of Rajput Era

During Rajput era various Rajput dynasties ruled. At that time there were changes in the ruling dynasties but there were no change in the situation in the political dynasties.

In the Rajput era, position of the king was hereditary. It was not necessary that only the eldest son of the king could become the ruler. King used to make any one of his sons as the 'Yuvraj' or his successor who later on became the king. There are instances which show that people or courtiers used to elect or select the King of their choice. Like King Yashaskar of Kashmir was chosen by a committee of Brahmins. Ministers were of two types at that time : (1) Amatya (ministers) (2) Secretaries. Amatya's job was to negotiate and do politics and the Secretaries' job was to fight and make peace. The final decision on every policy was taken by the King. At that time the bureaucrats of the regime were holding positions like Maha Pratihara and Dandanayak. The head of the town council was called the mayor (Nagarpati).

Village institutions occupied a very important place during the Rajput rule. These institutions had developed so well that Gram Panchayat remained important even at the time of the Mughals. Just like North, Gram Panchayat occupied an important place in South also. Its head was called Mukhi or Sarpanch. Although Gram Panchayat used to give judgement in many matters, yet the king was the supreme authority in judicial system of the state.

**Think :** Panch is considered as the God of justice. Why is an oath taken in the court ?

**Trade-Commerce :** There was a separate department for taking care of commerce related matters, in the Rajput era. This department used to make arrangement for collection of tax over the foreign trade, decide the value of things and purchase essential commodities required in the state. Main source of tax collection was land revenue, which was one-sixth part of the production. In Rajput era land tax was known as 'Bhag'. It is levied on land even today also. Revenue was also collected from ports, check-posts and irrigation. Stambhirth (Khambhat) and Bhargukutch (Bharuch) ports of Gujarat were famous for foreign trade at that time.

### Foreign Attacks on India

Muslim invaders invaded India between the eighth and the twelfth century. In the 8<sup>th</sup> century Mohammad-Ibn-Kasim attacked North-Western part of India in order to extend boundaries of the Arab kingdom. The army of Sabuktigin also invaded from North-West part, but these invasions did not help the invaders to establish their power in India. After that, seeing abundant wealth Sultan Mohammad Ghazni





(3) Which of the following rulers is not among the rulers of the Parmar dynasty of Malwa ?

- (A) Kumarpal
- (B) Bhoj
- (C) Siyuk
- (D) Munj

(4) Which dynasty ruled Bengal in the 8<sup>th</sup> century ?

- (A) Chandel dynasty
- (B) Parmar dynasty
- (C) Pala dynasty
- (D) Pratihars

(5) 'Rani ni Vav' was constructed during the reign of which dynasty ?

- (A) Chavda dynasty
- (B) Solanki dynasty
- (C) Vaghela dynasty
- (D) Maitrak dynasty

**(B) Match the appropriate pairs :**

**(A) States**

- (1) Sen dynasty
- (2) Solanki dynasty
- (3) Pala dynasty
- (4) Rashtrakuta dynasty
- (5) Pallava dynasty

**(B) Rulers**

- (A) Narsinhverman-II
- (B) Govind-III
- (C) Vijaysen-I
- (D) Gopal
- (E) Kumarpal
- (F) Bhoj

