

AN IMPERIAL CAPITAL : VIJAYANAGARA

STUDY NOTES

- In the fourteenth century, one of the greatest empire known as the Vijayanagara Empire was established in south India. Its capital was Hampi.
- In 1800, the ruins of Hampi city was brought into focus by Colonel Colin Mackenzie who was an engineer and antiquarian. He is also credited for preparing the first survey map of Hampi site. Initially, he received information about Hampi from the memories of priests of the Virupaksha temple and the Pampadevi shrine.
- From 1856, photographers began to record the monuments of Hampi which encouraged the historians to study them.
- In the early 1836, epigraphists collected dozen of inscriptions from Hampi. These sources and accounts of foreign travellers help the historians in reconstructing the history of the Vijayanagara Empire.
- According to tradition and epigraphic evidences, the Vijayanagara Empire was founded in 1336 by two brothers named Harihara and Bukka.
- The Vijayanagara kings cwompeted with their contemporary rulers which included the Sultan of the Deccan and the Gajapati rulers of Orissa.
- The Vijayanagara rulers called themselves as *rayas*.
- During this period, warfare was depended upon efficient cavalry, hence, the import of horses from Arabia and Central Asia was important for rival kingdoms.
- The horse trade was initially controlled by Arab merchants. Later on, local communities also known as *kudirai chettis* or horse merchants also participated.
- The Vijayanagara Empire was famous for its markets especially dealing with spices, textiles and precious stones. In the cities, trade was regarded as a status symbol. The revenue collected from trade was used for the prosperity of the state.
- The first dynasty which ruled over Vijayanagara Empire was Sangama dynasty which ruled till 1485. This dynasty was overthrown by the Saluvas who were military commanders and they exercised power till 1503.
- The Saluva dynasty was supplanted by the Tuluva dynasty. The most powerful ruler of the Vijayanagara Empire, Krishnadeva Raya belonged to the Tuluva dynasty.
- The last ruling dynasty was Aravidu which remained in power till the end of the seventeenth century.
- During Krishnadeva Raya reign, there was expansion and consolidation of the empire.
- In Krishnadeva Raya's reign, the Vijayanagara Empire acquired the land between the Tungabhadra and Krishna rivers, subdued the rulers of Orissa and inflicted crushing defeat on the Sultan of Bijapur.
- Krishnadeva Raya is attributed for building some fine temples and adding the architectural design of *gopuram* to many important south Indian temples.
- He is also credited for founding a suburban township known as Nagalapuram near Vijayanagara.
- However, with the death of Krishnadeva Raya in 1529, the empire began to decline. As his successors were weak, so they were suppressed by the rebellious *nayakas* or military chiefs.
- Finally, the empire shifted to another ruling lineage, that is, Aravidu dynasty.

- In 1565, in the battle at Rakshasi-Tangadi popularly known as Talikota, the chief minister of Vijayanagara Rama Raya faced a crushing defeat from the combined armies of Bijapur, Ahmadnagar and Golconda.
- The *amara-nayaka* system was an important political aspect of the Vijayanagara Empire. Many of its features were taken from *iqta* system of the Delhi Sultanate.
- The *amara-nayakas* were military commanders and they were given territories to govern by the *raya*. Their work was to collect taxes and other dues from peasants, craftspersons and traders in the area.
- The *amara-nayakas* sent tribute to the king annually as well as appeared in the royal court with gifts to show their loyalty.
- During the seventeenth century, these *amara-nayakas* established their independent kingdoms.
- The most noticeable feature of the Vijayanagara Empire was its location. It is the natural basin formed by the river Tungabhadra which flows in a north-easterly direction.
- An important water work seen among the ruins is the Hiriya canal.
- In the fifteenth century, Abdur Razzaq, an ambassador sent by the Persian ruler to Calicut, admired the fortifications of the Vijayanagara city.
- However, there is very little archaeological evidence regarding the houses of ordinary people.
- In the Vijayanagara Empire, the royal centre was located in the south-western part of the settlement which included over 60 temples. About thirty building complexes were identified as palaces.
- One of the most striking buildings is "*mahanavami dibba*" it was located on one of the highest points in the city. It is a massive platform rising from a base of about 11,000 sq. ft to a height of 40 ft.
- Various ceremonies like worship of the image, worship of the state horse, and the sacrifice of buffaloes and other animals were performed in the Vijayanagara.
- Other magnificent buildings of the Vijayanagara included the Lotus Mahal and Hazara Ram temple.
- During the Vijayanagara period, some new features were added to the structure of the temple like *gopuram* or royal gateways, *mandapas* or pavilions and long pillared corridors.
- The dates Virupaksha temple dates back to the ninth-tenth centuries. During the Vijayanagara Empire, this temple was enlarged.
- To mark his accession, Krishnadeva Raya built the hall in front of the main shrine and it was decorated with carved pillars. Krishnadeva also built the eastern *gopuram*.
- Another famous temple was of the Lord Vitthala known as Vitthala temple.
- An important characteristic feature of the temple complexes is the chariot streets which extended from the temple *gopuram* in a straight line. The streets were covered with stone slabs and lined with pillared pavilions where traders set up their shops.
- In 1976, Hampi was acknowledged as a site of national importance.

QUESTION BANK

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. Who founded the Vijayanagara Empire?
 (a) Hasan Gangu (b) Harihara and Bukka (c) Prantaka (d) Krishnadeva Raya
2. Name the first dynasty to rule over the Vijayanagara Empire.
 (a) Suluva dynasty (b) Sangama dynasty (c) Tuluva dynasty (d) Aravidu dynasty
3. The name Hampi is derived from the local mother goddess named
 (a) Pampadevi (b) Parvati (c) Durga (d) Laxmi

4. The ruins at Hampi were brought to light in 1800 by
 (a) Colonel Albert (b) Colonel Colin Mackenzie
 (c) Domingo Peas (d) Abdur Razzaq
5. In the popular traditions of Vijayanagara the Deccan Sultans were termed as
 (a) Lord of elephants (b) Lord of horses (c) Lords of camels (d) Lords of cavalry
6. What is meant by the term *kudirai chettis*?
 (a) Horse merchants (b) Elephant merchants (c) Camel merchants (d) Sea traders
7. Consider the following statements.
 I. Vijayanagara was noted for its markets dealing in spices, textiles and precious stones.
 II. Trade was not regarded as a status symbol.
 III. Wealthy population demanded high-value exotic goods, especially precious stones and jewellery.
 Select the incorrect option.
 (a) Only I (b) Only II (c) Only III (d) Both I and III
8. Arrange the following dynasties in a chronological order.
 1. Sangama dynasty 2. Tuluva dynasty 3. Aravidu dynasty 4. Saluva dynasty
 Options.
 (a) 1,2,3,4 (b) 1,4,2,3 (c) 2,3,1,4 (d) 2,4,1,3
9. To which dynasty Krishnadeva Raya belong?
 (a) Sangama dynasty (b) Tuluva dynasty (c) Aravidu dynasty (d) Saluva dynasty
10. Read the below statements in the context of Krishnadeva Raya.
 I. Krishnadeva Raya's rule was characterised by expansion and consolidation.
 II. He is credited with building some fine temples and adding impressive *mandapas* to many important south Indian temples.
 III. He founded a suburban township near Vijayanagara called Nagalapuram after his mother.
 Choose the incorrect option.
 (a) Only I (b) Only II (c) Only III (d) Both II and III
11. Who composed a work on statecraft in Telugu known as the *Amuktamalyada*?
 (a) Rama Raya (b) Abdur Razzaq (c) Krishnadeva Raya (d) Barbosa
12. The scenes from the *Ramayana* sculpted on the inner walls of the
 (a) Lotus Mahal (b) Hazara Rama Temple (c) Virupaksha Temple (d) Vitthala Temple
13. Which of the following statements in the context of *amara-nayaka* is not true?
 (a) The *amara-nayaka* system was a major political innovation of the Vijayanagara Empire.
 (b) The *amara-nayakas* sent tribute to the king annually.
 (c) During the seventeenth century, many of the *amara-anayakas* established independent kingdoms.
 (d) The *amara-nayakas* were landlords who were given territories to govern by the raya.
14. Name the river which was the major source of water for Vijayanagara.
 (a) Krishna (b) Kaveri (c) Tungabhadra (d) Mahanadi
15. In 1565, the Vijayanagara army fought the battle of Talikota under
 (a) Krishnadeva Raya (b) Rama Raya (c) Harihara (d) Bukka
16. To which dynasty the two brothers, Harihara and Bukka belong?
 (a) Aravidu dynasty (b) Saluva dynasty (c) Sangama dynasty (d) Tuluva dynasty
17. On their northern frontier, the Vijayanagara kings competed with contemporary rulers which included
 (a) Bijapur rulers (b) Sultans of the Deccan
 (c) Gajapati rulers of Orissa (d) Both (b) and (c)

18. Consider the following statements with regard to the battle of Rakshasi-Tangadi.

- I. In 1565 Krishnadeva Raya, the chief minister of Vijayanagara, led the army into battle at Rakshasi-Tangadi.
II. The Vijayanagara army was defeated by the combined forces of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golconda.
III. The Vijayanagara city was totally abandoned within a few years

Select the correct option.

- (a) Only I (b) Only II (c) Both I and II (d) Both II and III

19. Read the below clue and identify the structure.

Located on one of the highest points in the city, this structure is a massive platform rising from a base of about 11,000 sq. ft to a height of 40 ft.

- (a) Mahanavami dibba (b) Audience hall (c) Kings palace (d) Lotus Mahal

20. In which year Hampi was recognised as a site of national importance?

- (a) 1976 (b) 1980 (c) 1977 (d) 1981

21. Match the following.

i.	Abdur Razzaq	A.	Persia
ii.	Afanasii Nikitin	B.	England
iii.	Fernao Nuniz	C.	Russia
iv.	Colin Mackenzie	D.	Portugal

- (a) i-A, ii-C, iii-D, iv-B (b) i-B, ii-C, iii-D, iv-A
(c) i-C, ii-B, iii-A, iv-D (d) i-A, ii-C, iii-B, iv-D

22. Choose the correct option.

Assertion (A): Krishnadeva Raya's rule was characterised by expansion and consolidation.

Reason (R): Strain began to show within the imperial structure following Krishnadeva Raya's death in 1535.

- (a) Both (A) and (R) are correct and (R) is the correct explanation of (A).
(b) Both (A) and (R) are correct but (R) is not the correct explanation of (A).
(c) (A) is incorrect but (R) is correct.
(d) (R) is incorrect but (A) is correct.

23. In which language Krishnadeva Raya composed his work named *Amuktamalyada*?

- (a) Sanskrit (b) Kannada (c) Telugu (d) Malayalam

24. Whose adventurous policy tried to play off one Sultan against another that led the Sultans to combine together and decisively defeat him?

- (a) Krishnadeva Raya (b) Rama Raya (c) Harihara (d) Bukka

25. Consider the following statements.

- I. Nayakas of Vijayanagara usually spoke Sanskrit and Kannada.
II. Many nayakas submitted to the authority of the kings of Vijayanagara.
III. Nayakas were responsible for the collapse of the central imperial structure.

Choose the incorrect option.

- (a) Only I (b) Only II (c) Both I and II (d) Both II and III

26. *Amara* is believed to be derived from the Sanskrit word

- (a) samira (b) samara (c) amara (d) samana

27. The most striking feature about the location of Vijayanagara is the natural basin formed by the river

- (a) Mahanadi (b) Kaveri (c) Krishna (d) Tungabhadra

28. Read to the following statements about the fortifications of the Vijayanagara Empire and select the statement which is not true.

- (a) Domingo Paes was greatly impressed by the fortifications of the Vijayanagara.
- (b) The fortifications encircled not only the city but also its agricultural hinterland and forests.
- (c) No mortar or cementing agent was employed anywhere in the construction.
- (d) The outermost wall linked the hills surrounding the city.

29. Name the foreign traveller who noted about the fortification of Vijayanagara that “between the first, second and the third walls there are cultivated fields, gardens and houses”.

- (a) Domingo Paes
- (b) Abdur Razzaq
- (c) Colin Mackenzie
- (d) Fernao Nuniz

30. Which foreign traveller described the houses of ordinary people as “The other houses of the people are thatched, but nonetheless well built and arranged according to occupations, in long streets with many open places.”

- (a) Barbosa
- (b) Colin Mackenzie
- (c) Fernao Nuniz
- (d) Domingo Paes

31. On which occasion the Vijayanagara kings displayed their prestige, power and suzerainty?

- (a) Diwali
- (b) Holi
- (c) Mahanavami
- (d) Ramanavami

32. Observe and identify the below image.



- (a) Vitthala Temple
- (b) Lotus Mahal
- (c) Virupaksha Temple
- (d) Hazara Rama Temple

33. Who was the local goddess of the Vijayanagara?

- (a) Durga
- (b) Shakti
- (c) Goddess Kali
- (d) Pampadevi

34. Consider the following statements and select the correct statement.

- (a) According to local tradition, the Vijayanagara hills never sheltered the monkey kingdom of Vali and Sugriva.
- (b) Rulers very often encouraged temple building but they never associated themselves with the divine.
- (c) Temples functioned as centres of learning.
- (d) The Vijayanagara rulers did not repaired temples.

35. The Vijayanagara kings claimed to rule on behalf of the god

- (a) Virupaksha
- (b) Pampadevi
- (c) Vitthala
- (d) Vishnu

36. In which script usually all the royal orders of the Vijayanagara Empire were signed?

- (a) Malayalam
- (b) Kannada
- (c) Brahmi
- (d) Kharosthi

37. Why did the Vijayanagara rulers used the title “Hindu Suratrana”?

- (a) To show their link with the state.
- (b) To show that they were legitimate rulers.
- (c) To show their close links with the gods.
- (d) None of these

38. Choose the correct option.
Assertion (A): Temple building in the region had a long history, going back to dynasties such as the Pallavas, Chalukyas, Hoysalas and Cholas.
Reason (R): Rulers very often encouraged temple building as a means of associating themselves with the divine.
- (a) Both (A) and (R) are correct and (R) is the correct explanation of (A).
 (b) Both (A) and (R) are correct but (R) is not the correct explanation of (A).
 (c) (A) is incorrect but (R) is correct.
 (d) (R) is incorrect but (A) is correct.
39. Which of the below statements regarding the Virupaksha temple is not correct?
 (a) Krishnadeva is credited for the construction of the eastern *gopuram*.
 (b) In the Virupaksha temple, the hall in front of the main shrine was built by Rama Raya to mark his accession.
 (c) The halls were decorated with delicately carved pillars.
 (d) The halls of the temple were used for programmes of music, dance and drama.
40. Some of the most spectacular *gopurams* were also built by the
 (a) local nayakas (b) amara-nayakas (c) kings (d) ordinary people
41. Consider the following statements in the context of the Vitthala temple.
 I. In this temple the principal deity was Vitthala, a form of Shiva.
 II. A characteristic feature of the temple complexes is the chariot streets.
 III. This temple has several halls and a unique shrine designed as a chariot.
 Select the correct option.
 (a) Only II (b) Only III (c) Both I and II (d) Both II and III
42. While historians use the term Vijayanagara Empire, contemporaries described it as the
 (a) karnataka samrajyamu (b) rajyamu (c) rashtra (d) saurashtra
43. In which year, the Vijayanagara city was sacked and deserted?
 (a) 1568 (b) 1570 (c) 1565 (d) 1575
44. Hampi name is derived from the local goddess named as
 (a) Durga (b) Kali (c) Saraswati (d) Pampadevi
45. The Vijayanagara Empire was founded in
 (a) 1333 (b) 1336 (c) 1340 (d) 1338
46. Name the Sanskrit word which is used for the Greeks and other people who entered the subcontinent from the north west.
 (a) Yavana (b) Mlechchha (c) Yava (d) firangi
47. The main features of the *amara-nayaka* system were derived from the iqta system of the
 (a) Mughal Empire (b) Delhi Sultanate (c) Deccan Sultanate (d) Rajputs
48. Which dynasty supplanted the Tuluva dynasty?
 (a) Aravidu (b) Saluva (c) Sangama (d) None of these
49. The Vijayanagara Empire included with its fluctuating frontiers people who spoke different _____ and followed different _____ traditions.
 (a) languages, religious (b) languages, social (c) languages, economic (d) languages, political
50. The rulers of Vijayanagar called themselves as
 (a) Samantas (b) Rayas (c) Kings (d) God's representatives
51. Name the dynasty which ruled over Vijayanagara till 1485.
 (a) Saluva (b) Tuluva (c) Sangama (d) Aravidu
52. Which ruler of Vijayanagara added impressive gopurams to many important south Indian temples?
 (a) Raja Raya (b) Krishnadeva Raya (c) Rama Raya (d) None of these

53. From which year strain began to be shown within the imperial structure of the Vijayanagara Empire?
 (a) 1530 (b) 1528 (c) 1529 (d) 1565
54. In which year the last ruling lineage, the Aravidu came to power in Vijayanagar?
 (a) 1542 (b) 1544 (c) 1565 (d) 1540
55. Who took pride in the title “establisher of the Yavana kingdom”.
 (a) Rama Raya (b) Krishnadeva Raya (c) Deva Raya (d) None of these
56. The _____ system was a major political innovation of the Vijayanagara Empire.
 (a) nayakas (b) amara-nayaka (c) iqta (d) amara
57. Name the foreign traveller according to whom “ between the first, second and the third walls there are cultivated fields, gardens and houses”.
 (a) Abdur Razzaq (b) Duarte Barbosa (c) Domingo Paes (d) Fernao Nuniz
58. Name the Persian ambassador who visited Vijayanagara Empire.
 (a) Domingo Paes (b) Nicolo de Conti (c) Abdur Razzaq (d) Duarte Barbosa
59. Which traveller called the ‘Mahanavami Dibba’ as the ‘House of Victory’?
 (a) Nicolo de Conti (b) Abdur Razzaq (c) Duarte Barbosa (d) Domingo Paes
60. In the Vijayanagara Empire, all royal orders were signed as
 (a) Shri Virupaksha (b) Shri Vitthala (c) Shri Pampadevi (d) Shri Shiva
61. Name the architectural structure which often dwarfed the towers on the central shrines, and signalled the presence of the temple from a great distance.
 (a) mandapas (b) gopurams (c) central gateways (d) girbhagraha
62. Local nayakas of Vijayanagara are credited to built some of the spectacular
 (a) mandapas (b) gopurams (c) shrines (d) temples
63. Observe the below image and identify it.



- (a) Rama Raya (b) A nayaka (c) Krishnadeva Raya (d) Lord Vitthala

Input Text Based MCQ's

Read the below source carefully and answer the following questions (64 to 65):

Krishnadeva Raya, the most famous ruler of Vijayanagara, composed a work on statecraft in Telugu known as the Amuktamalyada. About traders he wrote:

A king should improve the harbours of his country and so encourage its commerce that horses, elephants, precious gems, sandalwood, pearls and other articles are freely imported ... He should arrange that the foreign sailors who land in his country on account of storms, illness and exhaustion are looked after in a suitable manner ... Make the merchants of

distant foreign countries who import elephants and good horses be attached to yourself by providing them with daily audience, presents and allowing decent profits. Then those articles will never go to your enemies.

64. Name a suburban township founded by Krishnadeva Raya near Vijayanagara.

- (a) Nagalapuram (b) Nagala (c) Nagarapuram (d) Nalorapuram

65. Which structure was added by Krishnadeva Raya in the south Indian temples?

- (a) mandapas (b) gopurams (c) pillars (d) chariot

Read the below source carefully and answer the following questions (66 to 67):

About a tank constructed by Krishnadeva Raya, Paes wrote:

The king made a tank ... at the mouth of two hills so that all the water which comes from either one side or the other collects there; and, besides this, water comes to it from more than three leagues (approximately 15 kilometres) by pipes which run along the lower parts of the range outside. This water is brought from a lake which itself overflows into a little river. The tank has three large pillars handsomely carved with figures; these connect above with certain pipes by which they get water when they have to irrigate their gardens and rice-fields. In order to make this tank the said king broke down a hill ... In the tank I saw so many people at work that there must have been fifteen or twenty thousand men, looking like ants ...

66. The most important tank that was built in the early years of the fifteenth century is now called

- (a) Kamalapuram tank (b) Royal tank (c) Hiriya tank (d) None of these

67. One of the most prominent waterworks to be seen among the ruins of the Vijayanagara city is the

- (a) Tungabhadra river (b) Hiriya canal (c) Krishna river (d) Kaveri river

Read the below source carefully and answer the following questions (68 to 69):

Born in 1754, Colin Mackenzie became famous as an engineer, surveyor and cartographer. In 1815 he was appointed the first Surveyor General of India, a post he held till his death in 1821. He embarked on collecting local histories and surveying historic sites in order to better understand India's past and make governance of the colony easier. He says that "it struggled long under the miseries of bad management ... before the South came under the benign influence of the British government". By studying Vijayanagara, Mackenzie believed that the East India Company could gain "much useful information on many of these institutions, laws and customs whose influence still prevails among the various Tribes of Natives forming the general mass of the population to this day".

68. Who prepared the first survey map of the Hampi site?

- (a) Colin Mackenzie (b) Domingo Paes (c) Abdur Razzaq (d) Fernao Nuniz

69. In which year epigraphists began collecting several dozen inscriptions found at this and other temples at Hampi?

- (a) 1840 (b) 1855 (c) 1833 (d) 1836

ANSWERS

Multiple Choice Questions

- | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. (b) | 2. (b) | 3. (a) | 4. (b) | 5. (b) | 6. (a) | 7. (b) | 8. (b) | 9. (b) | 10. (b) |
| 11. (c) | 12. (b) | 13. (d) | 14. (c) | 15. (b) | 16. (c) | 17. (d) | 18. (d) | 19. (a) | 20. (a) |
| 21. (a) | 22. (d) | 23. (c) | 24. (b) | 25. (a) | 26. (b) | 27. (d) | 28. (a) | 29. (b) | 30. (a) |
| 31. (c) | 32. (b) | 33. (d) | 34. (c) | 35. (a) | 36. (b) | 37. (c) | 38. (a) | 39. (b) | 40. (a) |
| 41. (d) | 42. (a) | 43. (c) | 44. (d) | 45. (b) | 46. (a) | 47. (b) | 48. (a) | 49. (a) | 50. (b) |
| 51. (c) | 52. (b) | 53. (c) | 54. (a) | 55. (b) | 56. (b) | 57. (a) | 58. (c) | 59. (d) | 60. (a) |
| 61. (b) | 62. (b) | 63. (c) | | | | | | | |

Input Text Based MCQ's

64. (a) 65. (b) 66. (a) 67. (a) 68. (a) 69. (d)