

# Study of the Hindu Period 500AD to 1500 AD

*Economy and Politics*

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# A peek into the previous Period(Golden)

## Economy

- The surplus economy led to a **creative** society, which led to promote various styles and patterns
- **Trade** exposed various styles from different regions. Excess of trade helped import of horses and elephant, which supported the strength of army. Infrastructure widened due to trade expansion

## Political administration

- In this era, the political system began to **decentralize** into various regions and administrative units
- The king was chartered to **serve the people**. The royalty collected **taxes** and took care of the military and infrastructure.
- **Stability** was achieved due to the increased strength in military. Political **peace** was maintained due to economic prosperity

# Summary: The Hindu Period

## Economy

- The economy was still thriving on **taxes** from Agriculture. The main revenue source was still agriculture. The expansion of farming was actively encouraged. Untamed lands were granted to temples, monasteries in the expectation that it would be brought under cultivation
- **Trade** was expanded at a larger scale to various continents
- **Temples** provided largest employment, treasures were stored, served as stages for arts(dance, drama, music..)

## Political administration

- Although King is at the top in the centralized administration, various **decentralized** administrative units increased
- Judicial system gained control in the lower administrative units and the system resolved the local issues
- The states had a **federate structure**, with different areas under hereditary feudatories of the king. The monarchs therefore exercised only loose control over the provinces, and it was the feudatories who exercised full powers over their localities.
- As the local power raised this weakened the central Army

# Agricultural Economy

- Economy was based on *rural* mode of *production*.
- More lands were *encouraged for cultivation*. The agrarian society reveals that collective holding of land slowly gave way to *individual plots*, this led to develop their *own irrigation system*. The growth of individual disposition of farming led to *increase in agriculture produce*.
- The 3 factors of prosperity were based on land *size, location* and *extension*.
- Various practices were introduced in this period for extensive utilization of different lands for cultivation of different crops which include - *estimation of yield* and *assessment of agricultural produce* based on soil type and location

# Agricultural Economy

- Agricultural produce led to ***economic prosperity*** resulting in ***several agricultural laws***.
- Farm products as a source of ***individual income*** led to the development of economic policies relating to farm land, farm tax, agricultural credit system, agricultural prices.
- Revenue was also gained from ***cash crops*** like coconut, arecanut, and betel-leaf. The custom of levying tax on useful trees was in practice.

# Tax System

- Various taxes were associated with ***different occupations*** relating to farming.
- ***Tax assessment*** was calculated based on
  - estimate of production per unit area
  - estimation from the appraisal of standing crop
- ***Tax payment*** was made in different forms: grains, animals, cash, raw materials and manual labor.
- ***Farm tax:*** ( 1/4<sup>th</sup> of produce) was based on the agricultural yield, soil type and crop type (grain crops, vegetable crops).
- ***Land tax*** was based on the productivity of soil, land size and land types, hence rate of taxes varied for rich soil, inferior soil, uplands and lowlands.

# Tax System

- **Irrigation tax:** Collected based on supply of water from state water resources.
  - 1/6<sup>th</sup> of crop for water derived from manual labor
  - 1/4<sup>th</sup> of crop for water derived from animal labor
  - 1/3<sup>th</sup> of crop for water derived from mechanical labor
- **Tree tax:** (1/6<sup>th</sup> of crop) Fruit trees, medicinal herbs, etc.
- **Cattle tax:** (1/6<sup>th</sup> of cattle) Imposed on cattle-breeders
- **Land sales tax :** (1/6<sup>th</sup> of sale price) Income on land sales
- The villages were categorized on the basis of amount of tax paid
- Kings, large land owners, rich merchants donated to temples.

# Trade

- Hindu temples and Buddhist monasteries acted as centers for trade and economic activity. Economic activity consisted of estate management, craftsmanship, trade and entrepreneurship.
- **Surplus** from the **rural production** were exported through trade and commercial activities.
- **Spice trade** involving spices such as cloves, black pepper, cinnamon and black pepper, cardamom gained momentum and India started shipping them to the Mediterranean. Arab trading activities and the expansion of Islam account for the wider usage of **aromatic spices**.
- With the spread of Buddhism, the demand for **aromatic wood** increased.



# Trade

- **Foreign crops** were introduced to India and Indian products soon reached the world via trading networks.
- **Sea trade** with Roman Empire flourished. **Sericulture** from China was adopted. Technology of sugar-refining and **crystallized sugar** during this period spread to China through Buddhist monks.
- Some of the important **centers** of Buddhism and **maritime trade** were Kaveripattinam (Town in TamilNadu), Podouke (Pondicherry), Sopatma (near Mahabalipuram), Puri, Goa, Bombay , Diu
- Improvements of **ship designs** led to Two and Three masted vessels with high narrow sails. This helped in trading large capacity.
- Ajanta frescoes illustrates the technical efficiency of the ships. Two-masted boat and square rigged ship images were found on coins in Andhra.

# Trade

- The connection between ***diet and physical well being*** led to increase in usage ***of herbs and spices*** leading to ***domestication of herbs***. Spices and herbs were used in food for their medicinal purpose and also to enhance flavor promoting medicinal applications of sandalwood for its astringent properties, clove for oral hygiene, nutmeg and mace in tonics.
- Eastern spices reached Persia, Rome, Europe. Spices were typically of low bulk and high value, the price is based on the point of origin and with the number of merchants traded. Profits to shippers were 40 percent to offset against the high risks of robbery.
- Chinese and Indian pottery arrived in Indonesia. Bronze kettle drums were exported.

# List of Empires (500 AD to 1500 AD)

Chalukya dynasty (543–1156)

Shashanka dynasty (600–626)

Harsha dynasty (606–647)

Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty (650–1036 )

Rashtrakutas of Manyaketha (735–982)

Pala dynasty (750–1174)

Paramara dynasty of Malwa (9th century to c. 1305)

Seuna Yadavas of Devagiri (850–1334)

Hoysala dynasty (1000–1346)

Sena dynasty (1070–1230)

Eastern Ganga dynasty (1078–1434)

Kakatiya dynasty (1083–1323 )

Kalachuris of Kalyani (1130–1184)

# List of Empires (500 AD to 1500 AD)

**Chutiya dynasty ruled over eastern Assam (1187–1524)**

**Bana dynasty rule over Magadaimandalam (1190–1260 )**

**Delhi Sultanate (1206–1526)**

**Bahmani dynasty (1347–1527)**

**Barid Shahi dynasty (1489–1619)**

**Imad Shahi dynasty (1490–1572)**

**Adil Shahi dynasty (1490–1686)**

**Nizam Shahi dynasty (1490–1636)**

**Ahom dynasty ruled over Assam (1228–1826)**

**Musunuri Nayaks (1323–1368)**

**Reddy dynasty (1325–1548 )**

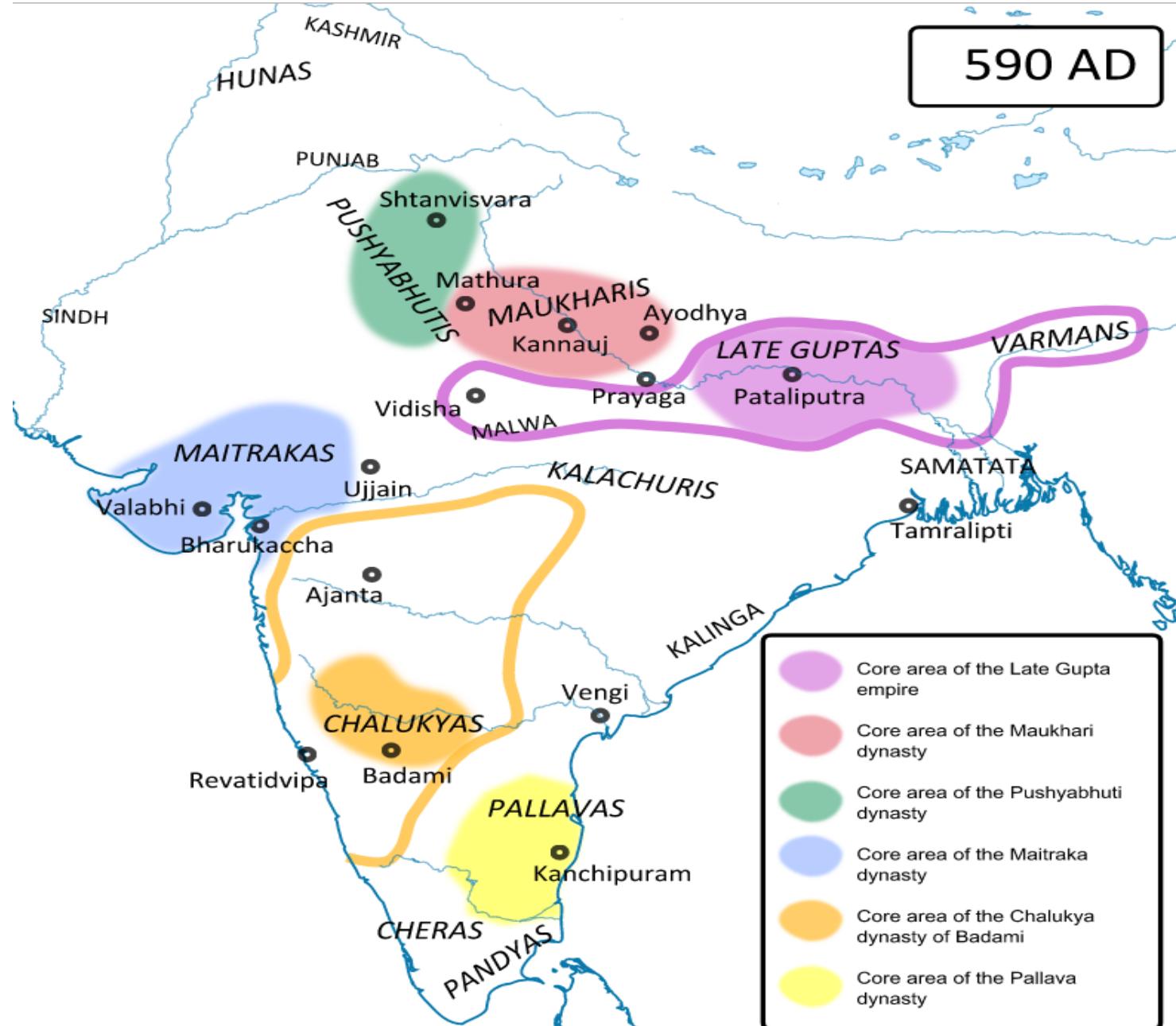
**Vijayanagara Empire (1336–1646)**

**Pemmasani Kamma dynasty (1350–1652)**

# Political changes

During the Hindu Period,

- The Gupta empire declined, weakened by devastating raids by the Huns from central Asia. Rival kingdoms were forced to be reunited under a single ruler. Harshavardhana brought the whole of northern India under his control with Kanauj, as its capital.
- After Harshavardhana's death again northern India became divided into numerous kingdoms. Three kingdoms in particular for regional supremacy: the Gurjara-Pratiharas(northwest); the Palas(northeast); and the Rashtrakutas(Deccan) fought for control of the city Kanauj.
- The coming of the Arabs to the Indian subcontinent, and the regions of Multan and Sindh became provinces of the Islamic empire leading to new faith in Islam.

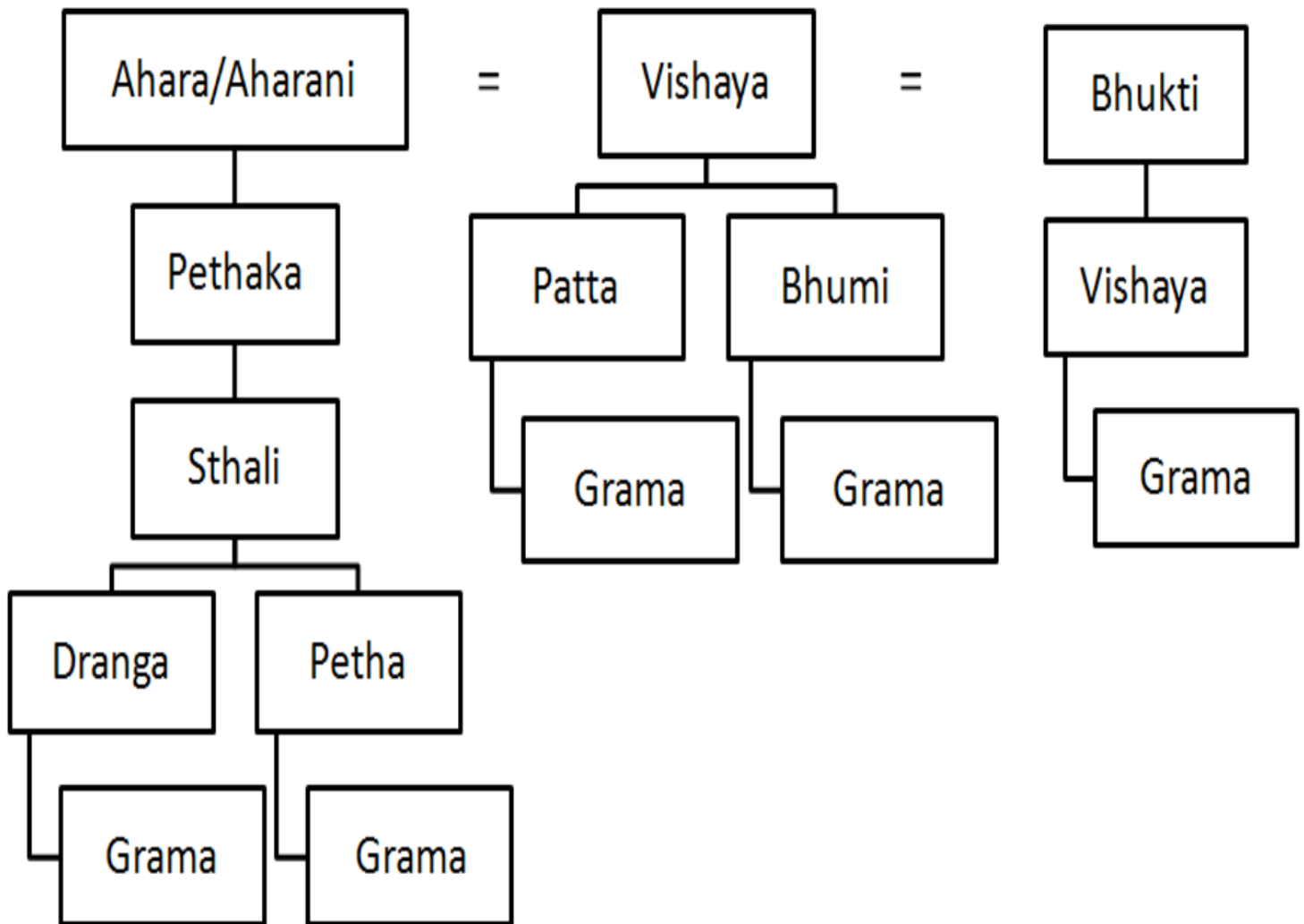


Political map  
Maitraka and  
their  
contemporaries

## Administrative Divisions (Maitraka kingdom)

**Sri Bhatarka** was the founder of the Maitraka dynasty

Maitraka's provided **security and stability** to the western portion of India for 300 years





# VIJAYANAGARA EMPIRE

1446 – 1520

# Vijayanagara empire



# Administration (Vijayanagara Empire)

- Just like in any empire, the king of Vijayanagar kingdom was responsible for the overall administration of the state and **focus on welfare of the people**. He was the commander-in-chief of the army and the chief justice. Krishna Deva Raya was the most important king of Vijayanagar Empire. He believed in the principle that **a crowned king should always rule with an eye towards dharma**.
- **Council of ministers:** To assist the king in the affairs of administration, there was a council of ministers appointed by the king, who were chosen from the three castes of the society: Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vishayas.
- The office of the ministers was hereditary although it was not followed.

# Provincial Administration

## (Vijayanagara Empire)

The Vijayanagar Empire was divided into six provinces, administration of each province was under a governor.

- **Governor:** The governor was the key authority for the province and can exercise civil, military and judicial powers. Although he had absolute power in the province, he was under the authority of the king and controlled by the king.
- **Districts :** The provinces were further divided into districts.
- **Self-sufficient villages :** Districts were again divided into smaller units (*villages* - lowest unit of administration). Villages were self-sufficient and the village assembly carried on the administration of the village. The village officers were ***paid by grants of land*** or a ***portion of agricultural produce***. The central administration maintained contact with the village via a ***special officer***.

# Revenue, Taxes, Military

## (Vijayanagara Empire)

- **Revenue** : The land revenue was the main source of income. There was a separate land revenue department to assess accurate revenue based on the type of land ( wet land, dry land, the orchards and the woods).
- **Taxes** :  $1/6^{\text{th}}$  one sixth of the produce was taxed. Other taxes levied were: the grazing tax, marriage tax, and tax on gardening. The rate of taxation was rather high, but the taxes were never extorted. Revenue from taxes was used to maintain a huge army to protect the Empire from enemies.
- **Military Administration**: The king had to maintain a huge army. The strength of this army often varied, the state army during Krishnadevaraya, consisted of 3600 horses, seven lakhs foot soldiers and 651 elephants. There was also an artillery department.

# Judicial System (Vijayanagara Empire)

- **Judicial Administration** : The king was at the head of judiciary. All cases were judged by him. King appointed judges to his court.
- The villages had their own village Assembly(***Panchayats***) which adjudicated the cases of village people. At times, judges would seek help from local bodies to settle disputes.
- ***Punishment*** was simple for ***ordinary offences*** – either fine or confiscation of property. The punishment for ***severe crimes*** like theft, adultery or treason to the state were punished with death sentences or mutilation.
- The provincial governors enjoyed too much power which led to the ***disintegration*** of the empire. The rulers also failed to develop a sustained commercial economy.

# Delhi Sultanate Administration

The policy of the rulers of Delhi Sultanate was largely influenced by Islam religion. The duty of the Sultans is to observe the laws of the Shariat (highest of law per Islam)

- ***The Sultan:*** Sultan is the head of the state, highest commander of the army. All legislative, executive and judicial powers are vested in him. Apart from maintenance of peace and order within the empire and its protection from foreign invasions, one important duty of the Sultan was to extend its territories.
- ***Ministers and Other Officers:*** Different ministers and other officials assisted in administering the state.

## Administrative officers (Delhi Sultanate)

### Naib:

Authority to execute all the powers of State

### Vazir:

Head of the finance department

### Ariz-i-Mumalik:

Controller-general of the military department

### Davir-i-Khas:

Head of the department of communications

## Administrative officers (Delhi Sultanate)

### Diwan-i-Risalat:

Minister of foreign affairs

### Sadr-us-Sudur:

Head of the religious department, controls the finances of religious tax (zakat) on Muslims

### Qazi-ul-Quzat:

Highest judicial officer in the state after the Sultan

### Barid-i-Mumalika:

Head of the intelligence and postal department

## Local Government (Delhi Sultanate)

***Iqtas:* (*Walis* => incharge)**

*Empire* divided into number of provinces(*iqtas*)

***Shiqs:* (*Shiqqdar* => incharge)**

*Provinces* are divided into smaller units (*shiqs*)

***Praganas:* (*Amil* => incharge)**

*Shiqs* are divided into smaller units (*Villages*)

***Villages:* (*Panchayat* => incharge)**



# Local Government (Delhi Sultanate)

## Local Government:

- The **Empire** was divided into a number of **provinces** called ***iqtas***.
  - The governors incharge of the province were called ***walis***, they collected ***revenue***, maintained ***law and order***, organized army and exercised **judicial** function in their provinces.
  - The high officials at the center had their corresponding subordinates at the provinces.
- The ***Provinces*** were further divided into smaller units called ***Shiqs***.
  - The officer incharge of a Shiq was called ***Shiqqdar***.

# Local Government (Delhi Sultanate)

## Local Government:

- ***Shiq*** was further divided into still smaller units called ***praganas***.
  - The officers of a ***pragana*** were the ***Amil***(revenue collector), the ***Mushrif***(Accountant), the ***Khazandar***(treasury) and the ***Qazi***(judicial).
- Every ***pragana*** was divided into ***villages*** (smallest unit), administered by the village panchayat.
  - The ***panchayat*** of the villages acted as a judicial body, looked after education and sanitation.

## Taxes ( Delhi Sultanate )

The Sultan mainly collected these taxes:

- **Ushr:** Land tax on Muslims
- **Kharaj:** Land tax on non-Muslims( 1/3 of the produce)
- **Khams:** Tax on buried treasure found(1/5 of treasure found)
- **Jizya:** Religious tax on non-Muslims. Those who had no source of income were exempted from this tax.
- **Zakat:** Religious tax on rich Muslims(2% of their income)

Besides the above taxes.. **Trade** tax, **sales** tax on horses, **house** tax, **irrigation** tax were also collected.

# Revenue ( Delhi Sultanate )

**Land Revenue: The land was of four kinds, namely:**

- Land ***gifted to charity*** is free of tax;
- Lands of ***provincial governors***, collected land revenue from this land and after defraying the cost of their administration deposited the surplus in the treasury;
- Land of the ***feudatory Hindu chiefs*** who paid fixed annual tribute to the Sultan; and
- Land administered by the ***Central government***.
- The Central government appointed revenue-collector (***patwaris***) in each sub-division to collect the revenue.
- The revenue-system during the period of the Delhi Sultanate suffered due to the ***numerous tax burden on people***.

# Expenditure ( Delhi Sultanate )

The main items of *expenditure* were expenses on the army, salaries of civil officers and the personal expenditure of the Sultan and his palace

## Army ( Delhi Sultanate )

- The power of the Sultan depended on the army. Maintaining a large army was necessary.
- There were **conflicts** of power between the Muslims and the Hindus, when Sultans desired to **extend their power**, the Hindu kings resisted them.
- The **local** Muslim governors also attempted to establish independent kingdoms and fought against the center.
- The Sultans also faced the invasions of the **Mongols**.
- The army employed of **4 types of soldiers**:
  - Soldiers recruited by the **Center**
  - Soldiers employed **locally**
  - Muslim soldiers who are **volunteers** at times of war against the Hindus and
  - Soldiers on **temporary** basis

# Army ( Delhi Sultanate )

- The army consisted primarily of cavalry, infantry and elephants. Army was divided into **4 parts during war: Centre, Left, Right** and **Reserve**
- The Sultan kept **permanent armies** in every **fort** and at all strategic points within his kingdom. The forts were regarded as the main line of defense and every care was taken of their safety.
- The Sultan also maintained a large number of **boats** for transportation and fighting.

# Judicial System ( Delhi Sultanate )

- The Sultan was the ***highest judicial authority***.
- Judicial court was held twice a week and dealt all types of cases.
- The Sultans did ***not establish a separate police*** department. The duties of police officials were carried on by ***military*** officers.
- The village-assemblies (***Panchayats***) decided cases of their respective villages.
- The ***law was severe*** during the period of the Sultanate. Punishments involved in capture of their wealth, mutilation or death.
- Islamic laws were enforced in ***criminal*** and ***civil*** cases too.
- Constant fights and serious defects the system suffered as Sultan attempted to enforce justice based on ***secular principles led to its downfall***.



**Thank You!**