

Vijayanagar Empire (1336 to 1672)

The **Vijayanagara Empire** (also called **Karnata Empire**, and the Kingdom of **Bisnegar** by the Portuguese) was based in the **Deccan Plateau region in South India**. It was established in **1336** by **Harihara I** and his brother **Bukka Raya I** of **Sangama Dynasty**.

Four Dynasties

1. Sangama
2. Saluva
3. Tuluva
4. Aravidu

The Vijayanagar Empire (1336)

1. Sangama Dynasty: It was the first dynasty of Vijayanagara Empire and Harihara Raya I (1336-1356 AD) was the first ruler of the dynasty. Some of the rulers of the dynasty were: Bukka Raya, Virupaksha Raya, Deva Raya, Ramachandra Raya, Mallikarjuna Raya and Praudha Raya.

2.Saluva Dynasty: It was the first dynasty of Vijayanagara Empire and Narasimhadeva Raya (1485 AD to 1491 AD) first ruler of Saluva Dynasty of Vijayanagara Empire. He was succeeded by his son Thimma Bhupala. Narasimha Raya II was the last ruler of Saluva Dynasty succeeded his father Thimma Bhupala.

3.Tuluva Dynasty: It was the third dynasty of Vijayanagara Empire. The rulers of Tuluva Dynasty were: Narasa Nayaka, Viranarasimha Raya, Krishna deva raya, Achyutadeva Raya and Sadasiva Raya. Krishnadeva raya was a very powerful ruler of Vijayanagara Empire. It is considered that during his reign the empire reached its zenith. He ruled the empire from 1509 AD to 1529 AD. (for more detail about Krishna deva raya, see the individual section.)

4.Aravidu Dynasty: The fourth and last dynasty of Vijayanagara Empire was Aravidu Dynasty. After the Battle of Talikota the empire started to decline and Muslim states of Bijapur became prominent.

Harihara I

In the first two decades after the founding of the empire, **Harihara I** gained control over most of the area south of the **Tungabhadra river** and earned the title of **Purvapashchima Samudradhishavara** ("master of the eastern and western seas").

By 1374 **Bukka Raya I**, successor to **Harihara I**, had defeated the chiefdom of **Arcot**, the Reddys of Kondavidu, and the Sultan of Madurai and had gained control over Goa in the west and the Tungabhadra-Krishna River doab in the north.

Harihara II

Harihara II, the second son of **Bukka Raya I**, further consolidated the kingdom beyond the Krishna River and brought the whole of South India under the Vijayanagara umbrella.

The next ruler, **Deva Raya I**, emerged successful against the Gajapatis of Odisha and undertook important works of fortification and irrigation. Italian traveler Niccolo de Conti wrote of him as the most powerful ruler of India.

Deva Raya II (called **Gajabetekara**) succeeded to the throne in **1424** and was possibly the most capable of the Sangama dynasty rulers. He quelled rebelling feudal lords as well as the Zamorin of Calicut and Quilon in the south. He invaded the island of Lanka and became overlord of the kings of Burma at Pegu and Tanasserim.

Krishna Deva Raya(1509 – 1529)

In 1505, another commander **Tuluva Narasa Nayaka** took over the Vijayanagara rule from the Sulava descendant in a coup. The empire came under the rule of Krishna Deva Raya in **1509**, the son of Tuluva Narasa Nayaka. He strengthened and consolidated the reach of the empire, by hiring both Hindus and Muslims into his army.

Krishna Deva Raya was followed by his younger half-brother **Achyuta Deva Raya** in **1529**. When **Achyuta Deva Raya** died in **1542**, **Sadashiva Raya**, the teenage nephew of Achyuta Raya was appointed king with the caretaker being Aliya Rama Raya, Krishna Deva Raya's son-in-law and someone who had previously served Sultan Quli Qutb al-Mulk from 1512 when al-Mulk was assigned to Golkonda sultanate.

Aliya Rama Raya left the **Golconda Sultanate**, married Deva Raya's daughter, and thus rose to power. When Sadashiva Raya – Deva Raya's son – was old enough, Aliya Rama Raya imprisoned him and allowed his uncle Achyuta Raya to publicly appear once a year. Further Aliya Rama Raya hired Muslim generals in his army from his previous Sultanate connections, and called himself "**Sultan of the World**".

Success in Deccan

In 1509 Krishnadevaraya's armies clashed with the Sultan of Bijapur at Diwani and the Sultan Mahmud was severely injured and defeated. Yusuf Adil Khan was killed and the Raichur Doab was annexed. Taking advantage of the victory and the disunity of the Bahamani Sultans, the

Raya invaded Bidar, Gulbarga and Bijapur and earned the title "establisher of the Yavana kingdom" when he released Sultan Mahmud and made him de facto ruler. The Sultan of Golconda Sultan Quli Qutb Shah was defeated by Timmarusu who was the prime minister of Sri Krishnadevaraya .

“Ashtadiggajas” – Group Of Eight Scholars Lived In Krishna Devaraya’s Court. They Were,

- Allasani Peddanna, Called As Andhrakavita Pitamaga – Wrote Manicharitham And Harikathasaram
- Nandi Thimana
- Tenali Raman
- Bhathu Murthy
- Puna Vira Bhandra
- Dhurjathy
- Mallana
- Pingali Surrana

Krishna Devaraya Himself Wrote, **“Amukthamalyadha”** In Telugu And **“Jambavati Kalyanam”** & **Usha Parinayam In Sanskrit.**

Battle Of Talikota (1565)

The Battle of Talikota (23 January 1565) was a watershed battle fought between the **Vijayanagara Empire and the Deccan sultanates**. The battle took place at **Talikota**, today a town in northern Karnataka, about 80 kilometres (50 mi) to the southeast from the city of Bijapur. The treacherous defeat of Vijayanagara Empire, followed subsequent destruction and looting which became short lived before the successors of Rama Raya.

The Vijayanagara army was winning the battle, state Hermann Kulke and Dietmar Rothermund, but suddenly two Muslim generals of the Vijayanagara army switched sides and turned their loyalty to the united Sultanates. They captured Rama Raya and beheaded him on the spot, with Sultan Hussain on the Sultanates side joining them. Last ruler of Vijayanagara kingdom was Sri ranga III.

Administration

The king of Vijayanagar kingdom was at the top of the administration. He had unlimited power. He was responsible for the overall administration of the state. He was the commander-in-chief of the army, the highest administrator and the chief justice.

Krishnadevaraya 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.

To assist the king in the affairs of administration of Vijayanagar empire, there was a council of ministers which consisted of possibly six or eight ministers. The ministers were chosen from all the three castes of the society: Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vishayas.

Empire divided into **Mandalams Nadus, Sthalas & gramas**. **Governor of Mandalam** was called **Mandaleswar or Nayak**.

Social Life

Brahmanas, held in high esteem by the rulers, exercised a Supreme influence not merely in social and religious matters but also in the political affairs of the State.

Women occupied a high position in the society. They took part in the literary, political and social life of the society. They were educated and worked at various posts in the government departments. They were trained in fine arts like music, dance and painting. They also received training in wrestling and fighting. They were employed body guards as well. Social evils concerning women were also prevalent. These were child marriages, polygamy, dowry system and practice of 'sati'.