

VIJAYANAGARA EMPIRE

Vijayanagara Empire, in the Deccan Plateau region, was established by Harihara I and his brother Bukka Raya I of the Sangama Dynasty in 1336 CE. This empire (1336-1646CE) suffered a major military defeat in 1565 by the Deccan sultanates. After this, its power started declining. This empire had seen the golden period of its time. The capital city of this empire was Vijayanagara. At present, the ruins of the Vijayanagara Empire can be found at Hampi which is a world heritage site in Karnataka (India). The history of the empire can be traced from the local literature as well as from the writings of the European travellers like Domingo Paes, Niccola Da Conti etc. This empire's power and wealth can also be seen from the archaeological excavations at Vijayanagara. Another name which is used in many other inscriptions was the Karnata Empire. Sangama Dynasty (1336-1485), Saluva Dynasty (1485-1491), Tuluva Dynasty (1491-1542) and Aravidu Dynasty (1542-1646) ruled over the Vijayanagara Empire. The empire reached its peak during the rule of Krishna Deva Raya when Vijayanagara armies were consistently victorious. During his period, the empire dominated all of southern India and fought off invasions from the five established Deccan Sultanates. The empire annexed areas formerly under the Sultanates in the northern Deccan and the territories in eastern Deccan including Kalinga, while simultaneously maintaining control over all its subordinates in the South. The empire went into a slow decline regionally, although trade with the Portuguese continued and the British were given a land grant for the establishment of Chennai.

The Empire was finally conquered by the Sultanates of Bijapur and Golkonda. The largest feudatories of the Vijayanagara Empire—the Mysore Kingdom, Keladi Nayaka, Nayakas of Madurai, Nayaks of Tanjore, Nayaks of Chittradrurga declared independence and went on to have an important impact on the history of South India in the coming centuries.

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