

Emergence of new kingdoms

Many invaders from beyond the frontiers of India had invaded the subcontinent, because of its wealth. Among the invaders were Mahmud of Ghazni and Mohammed Ghori. Prithviraj Chauhan, of the Chahamanu dynasty was ruling the Delhi and Ajmer areas at that time. He defeated Mahmud of Ghazni in a fierce battle. Later, he was defeated by Mahmud of Ghazni and his slaves laid the foundation of the Delhi sultanate. Eventually the Delhi sultanate was replaced by the Mughals.

Not only beyond the frontiers of India, but also kingdoms emerged from within the frontiers of India; Pratihara, Rastrakutas, Palas, Cholas etc.

They were frequently in conflicts with one another for increasing their area of influence. One well-known struggle was the Tripartite Struggle between the Palas, Pratiharas and Rashtrakutas for the fertile land of Kanauj.

The Cholas emerged as powerful in the South. They established trading contacts with countries in Southeast Asia and China.

Economic changes

Extension of agriculture was marked by the gradual clearing of forests, this led to migration of forest dwellers to other areas. Regional markets, chieftains, rulers and religion influenced the peasants. They became part of complex societies and were required to pay taxes. The peasants gave goods and did services to the local lords. Some peasants were rich, some were poor, some others were artisans and farmers as well.

As people from other places came to India they bought things such as spices, tea, coffee, potatoes and etc.

Religious changes

The period witnessed developments in religious traditions and important changes took place in Hinduism. A major development that took place was the emergence of the idea of bhakti and the Bhakti movement. This was also the period when a new religion called Islam appeared in India. Apart from Islam, another tradition that came from West Asia was the Sufi tradition. The Bhakti and Sufi saints took up the cause of the socio-reforms and preached the gospel of equality to all mankind.



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