

## **THE VIJAYANAGARA EMPIRE — STORY NOTES FOR EXAMS**

### **1. Before Vijayanagara — The Background**

- South India faced decline of Cholas, Hoysalas, Kakatiyas, Pandyas.
- Delhi Sultanate invasions created instability.
- Economy, temples, trade routes collapsed.
- People needed a strong power to protect the South.

### **2. Foundation of Vijayanagara (1336 CE)**

- Founded by Harihara and Bukka under guidance of sage Vidyaranya.
- Aim: Protect dharma, restore order, revive economy.
- Capital: Vijayanagara (Hampi).
- Became safe haven for traders, artists, saints.

### **3. Growth of the Empire (Sangama Dynasty)**

- Built forts, repaired temples, revived agriculture.
- Trade routes restored; foreign traders returned.
- Vijayanagara became a peaceful, prosperous center.

### **4. Golden Age — Krishnadevaraya (1509–1529)**

- Empire reached greatest territorial extent.
- Defeated Gajapatis of Odisha, managed Deccan Sultanates.
- Encouraged irrigation, built tanks and canals.
- Portuguese travellers praised the wealth of the capital.

### **5. Achievements in Art & Architecture**

- Built grand temples with high gopurams.
- Famous structures: Stone Chariot, Vitthala Temple, Hazara Rama Temple.
- Lotus Mahal and Elephant Stables show Indo-Islamic influence.
- Hampi became architectural marvel with planned streets and bazaars.

### **6. Achievements in Literature**

- Court had the famous “Ashtadiggajas”—eight great Telugu poets.
- Allasani Peddana was chief poet (Andhra Kavita Pitamaha).
- Tenali Ramakrishna brought humour and wit.
- Krishnadevaraya wrote Amuktamalyada (Telugu) and Sanskrit works.

### **7. Economy & Administration**

- Active trade with Portuguese, Arabs, and Persians.
- Markets flourished in Hampi; gold coin “Pagoda” circulated.
- Strong military and large cavalry supported by horse trade.

### **8. The Fall — Battle of Talikota (1565)**

- Deccan Sultanates united: Bijapur, Golconda, Ahmadnagar, Berar, Bidar.
- Vijayanagara army defeated; Hampi destroyed.
- Aravidu dynasty ruled later but empire declined steadily.

### **9. Bahmani Kingdom**

- Founded in 1347 by Alauddin Bahman Shah.
- Capitals: Gulbarga → Bidar.
- Known for Indo-Islamic architecture (Mahmud Gawan Madrasa).
- Constant conflicts with Vijayanagara over Raichur Doab.
- Later split into five Deccan Sultanates.

#### **10. Religious Movements — Sufi Orders**

- Chishti: Love, service, music; popular among masses.
- Suhrawardi: More orthodox, focused on law.
- Qadiri: Spread in Punjab, emphasised meditation.
- Naqshbandi: Strict Sharia; influential in Mughal era.

#### **11. Bhakti Movement**

- Reaction against caste rigidities.
- Emphasized personal devotion and equality.
- Saints: Basavanna, Purandaradasa, Kanakadasa, Mirabai, Tulsidas, Kabir.
- Popularised local languages and devotional poetry.

#### **12. After Vijayanagara — Successors**

- Aravidu dynasty ruled from Penukonda and Chandragiri.
- Nayaka kingdoms (Madurai, Tanjavur) rose independently.
- Deccan Sultanates grew stronger; later Mughals and Marathas entered the region.

#### **SUMMARY**

- Vijayanagara emerged to defend the South after earlier dynasties fell.
- Achieved glory under Krishnadevaraya in literature, architecture, and trade.
- Fell in 1565 after Talikota but left a lasting cultural legacy.