

# CLASS- VII

## SOCIAL STUDIES (History)

### CHAPTER-1 The Medieval Period In India (AD 700- AD 1700)

#### **Introduction**

The term medieval has been derived from the Latin words '**medius**' and '**aevum**' which means **middle** age. Thus it is that period of Indian history which falls between the Ancient period and the Modern Period .

The medieval period is again divided into two parts:

**1 The Early medieval period ( AD 700- AD 1200).**

**2 The Late medieval period (AD 1200- AD 1700).**

The long rule of the Mughals in the late medieval period stabilized the Indian society

and helped in uniting the people from different regions of India.

## **Society**

Spread of agriculture led to the clearing of forests. The forest dwellers migrated to other areas. This gave rise to many peasant societies. The society was now divided into sub-castes or jatis instead of varnas.

## **Religion**

Major changes took place in **Hinduism** during this period. Many new temples were constructed. People began worshipping many new deities. **Islam**, a new religion was introduced in India. Guru Nanak led the foundation of **Sikhism**.

## **Trade**

Due to greater interaction of India with other countries trade flourished. This in turn led to the rise of new towns and cities.

## **How geography shaped our history**

Turks, Afghans, Mongols, and other invaders entered India through the passes in the Himalayas. Southern India is cut off from the northern India by Satpura and Vindhya ranges. The long coast line in south India encouraged the southern rulers to establish trade relations with other countries.

## **Main features of Medieval period**

- Many foreign powers were attracted to India because of its wealth.
- This was the period of new technologies.
- Many languages spoken in India today, developed during this period.
- Many social customs, beliefs and traditions in India today have their origin in the medieval period.
- Intermingling from different parts of the world brought new ideas and ways of life.

## **Sources of medieval period**

Historians have gathered the information from various sources such as inscriptions, coins, sculpture and buildings, paintings, historical writings, etc.

**Inscriptions** are writings engraved on hard surfaces like stones, pillars, rocks etc. which gave us glimpse of history of the period.

**Coins** give us the names of kings and queens who issued those coins .They help the historian to verify the dates about the rule of the king.

**Sculpture and buildings:** Monuments and ancient buildings including temples tell us about the religious practices, social and economic conditions etc. of the period.

**Paintings** tell us about food habits, dresses, jewellery, customs, festivals and celebrations of the important event of the period.

## **Historical writings or literary evidence**

Literary sources includes plays, novels, epics, biographies and scrolls in archives, museums and libraries.

Literary sources of the period are of two types

**Indigenous sources** include manuscripts written in birch bark, palm leaf, bamboo leaf, cloth and paper.

**Important biographies** tells us many important facts about rulers. It give us a detailed and vivid picture of life during the period.

**Chronicles:** recorded text in which events are described in the order in which they occurred is called Chronicle.

**Biographies** describe the lives and achievements of the kings.

**Folk Tales** are stories that were handed down verbally over generations before being written down.

**Foreign sources:** during the medieval period several foreigners travelled to India as travellers, pilgrims or as students. The accounts of these foreign travellers gave us an objective picture of the places and the rulers they visited in India. For example **Al-Masudi** an Arab traveller, **Al-Beruni** the Persian traveller, **Ibn-Batuta** the Moroccan traveller etc.

## **ASSESSMENT ZONE**

**A Explain the following terms:**

- a) Medieval Period:** The term medieval has been derived from the Latin words 'medius' and 'aevum' which means middle age.
- b) Inscriptions:** Inscriptions are writings engraved on hard surfaces like stones,

pillars, rocks, or on metals like coins or copper plates.

- c) **Prashasti:** It is a long poem in praise of a king written by poets appointed by the king.
- d) **Miniature Paintings:** Many manuscripts had beautiful paintings in water colours to illustrate the text . Since these paintings are very small in size they are called miniature paintings.
- e) **Archives:** The places where the historical records are kept are known as archives.
- f) **Manuscripts:** Manuscripts were handwritten books.
- g) **Biography:** A detailed description of a person's life.
- h) **Autobiography:** The life story of a person written by the person himself.
- i) **Chronical:** Recorded text in which events are described in the order in which they

occurred.

- j) Folk tales:** Folk tales are stories that were handed down verbally over generations before being written down.

### **B Fill in the blanks:**

**1** The medieval period in India began after the death of Harshavardhana .

**2** The study of coins is called Numismatics.

**3** William Hawkins was an ambassador of king James I in the court of Jahangir.

**4** Alberuni , a Persian traveller visited India with Mahmud of Ghazni.

**5** Akbarnama was written by Abul Fazal.

**6** Turks, Afghans and Mongols entered India through passes in the Himalayas.

**7** Islam was the new religion introduced in India by Muslim traders and merchants.



**8** Padshahnama written by Abdul Hamid Lahori describes the rule of Shah Jahan.

**9** Some of the new crops introduced in India during this period were Potatoes, Corn, Chilly.

**10** Raja Tarangini written by Kalhan is a history of Kashmir.

**C Answer the following:**

**Ques1 How has India's geography shaped its history?**

**Ans.1.** Turks, Afghans, Mongols, and other invaders entered India through the passes in the Himalayas.

2. Northern India faced many foreign invaders.

3. Southern India is cut off from the Northern India by the Satpura and Vindhya ranges.

4. The long coast line encouraged the southern rulers to establish the trade relations with other countries .

**Ques.2 Describe the main features of Medieval period.**

**Ans.** Main features of Medieval period are

1.Many foreign powers attracted to India because of its wealth.

2.This was the period of new technologies.

3.Many languages spoken in India today, like Hindi and Urdu,developed during this period.

4.Many social customs, beliefs and traditions in India today have there origin in the medieval period.

5.Intermingling with people from different parts of the world brought new ideas and ways of life.

**Ques3.List some of the technological changes associated with medieval period.**

**Ans.** The medieval period was the period of new technologies like -the fire arms, Persian wheel for irrigation, and spinning wheel for

weaving cloth.

**Ques4. What were some of the major religious developments during this period?**

**Ans.** The major religious developments of this period are-

- 1.Many new temples were constructed by the rulers .
- 2.People began worshipping many new deities.
- 3.Brahmans or priests became an important social group.
- 4.Islam,a new religion was introduced.
- 5.The intermingling of Hindu and Muslim culture led to the development of a unique culture known as the Indian culture.
- 6.Guru Nanak laid the foundation of Sikhism.
- 7.The period saw the emergence of Bhakti and Sufi saints who preached equality of all.

**Ques.5 Describe with suitable examples,how do the following help in reconstructing history :**

- a) Inscriptions-** Inscriptions recorded proclamations by kings and gifts to temples and learned men. Medieval inscriptions on copper plates have been found around many south Indian temples.
- b) Coins-** Coins give us the names of kings and queens who issued those coins.The coins of a particular kingdom found in other places help us to know the extent of his kingdom or indicate that the kingdom had trade relations with the place.
- c) Monuments-** Monuments including temples tell us about the religious practices, social and economic conditions, etc.of their period. Some of

these monuments are ,for eg. Red Fort, Agra Fort, Amer Fort.

**d) Paintings-** Paintings tell us about food habits, dresses, jewellery, customs, festivals and celebrations of important events of the period. They gave us very clear picture of the society of their time. Many manuscripts have beautiful paintings in water colours to illustrate the text for eg. Miniature paintings.

Note:Students are requested to note down the above exercises in their note book .

