

UNIT 124 – UPSC - Indian History - The Chalukyas

India History - The Chalukyas

850: The Chalukyas gained Importance

[600-1200]

The Chalukyas rose to power in the Deccan from the fifth to eighth century and again from the tenth to twelfth century. They ruled over the area between the Vindhyan mountain and the river Krishna. The Chalukyas were sworn enemies of the Pallavas and rose to power in Karnataka. The first great ruler of the Chalukya dynasty was Pulakesin I. He founded Vatapi (modern Badami in Bijapur district) and made it his capital. He is said to have performed *Ashwamedha Yagna* (horse sacrifice). The kingdom was further extended by his sons Kirtivarman and Mangalesa by waging many successful wars against the neighbours including Mauryans of the Konkans.

608-642: Reign of Pulakesin II

Pulakesin II was the son of Kirtivarman. He was the the greatest ruler of the Chalukya dynasty. He ruled for almost 34 years. In this long reign, he consolidated his authority in Maharashtra and conquered large parts of the Deccan from the banks of the Nerbudda to the reign beyond the Kaveri. His greatest achievement was his victory in the defensive war against Harshvardhan in 620. In 641, the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang, visited the kingdom and said that the king was served by his nobles with perfect loyalty.

However the last days of the king were not happy. Pulakesin was defeated and killed by the Pallav king Narasimhavarman in 642. His capital Vatapi was completely destroyed.

End of Chalukya Dynasty

Pulakestin was succeeded by his son Vikramaditya who was also as great a ruler as his father. He renewed the struggle against his southern enemies. He recovered the former glory of the Chalukyas to a great extent. Even his great grandson Vikramaditya II was also a great warrior. He actually entered the Pallava capital. In 753, Vikramaditya and his son were overthrown by a chief named Dantidurga who laid the foundation of the next great empire of Karnataka and Maharashtra, that of Rashtrakutas.