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# TELANGANA HISTORY

**REVISED  
EDITION**



FOR ALL COMPETITIVE EXAMS

# TELANGANA HISTORY

*By*

**ACADEMIC TEAM OF BALU PUBLICATIONS**

*UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF*

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## TELANGANA HISTORY

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*Published by*

**BALU PUBLICATIONS**, Dilsukhnagar, Hyderabad.

**2016**

**Price Rs. 150/-**

*For Copies*

All Leading Bookshops in Telangana State and Publications

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**Printed at : BALU PUBLICATIONS**

**Computer Typesetting : G. Pandu Ranga Rao, C : 9642192967**

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To  
My Parents

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# 1. HISTORY OF TELANGANA

Telangana region has been ruled by many great dynasties like Sathavahanas, Chalukyas, Kakatiyas, Mughals, tubshahis, asafjahis. Of which the Kakathiyas impressions on architecture are found more in these days too. Generally Telangana history classified into three periods

## 1. Ancient Period

- Satavahanas
- Eastern Chalukyas

## 2. Medieval Period

- Kakatiyas
- Bahmanis
- Qutb Shahis
- The Mughal Rule

## 3. Modern Period

- Asaf Jahis

## ANCIENT PERIOD

### **Satavahanas**

After the fall of the Mauryan Empire, the history of the Andhras, as a continuous account of political and cultural events, commences with the rise of the Satavahanas as a political power. According to Matsya Purana there were 29 rulers of this dynasty. They ruled over the Andhradesa including Deccan for about 400 years from the 2nd century B.C. to beyond the 2nd century A.D. Satavahanas were also called Salivahanas and Satakarnis. In the 3rd century B.C., Simukha, the founder of the Satavahana dynasty, unified the various Andhra principalities into one kingdom and became its ruler (271 B.C. 248 B.C.). Dharanikota near Amaravati in Guntur district was the

first capital of Simukha, but later he shifted his capital to Pratishtana (Paithan in Aurangabad district).

Satakarni II, the sixth ruler of the dynasty (184 B.C.) was an able ruler who extended his kingdom to the west by conquering Malwa. According to inscriptional evidence, he extended the boundaries of his realm far into central India across the Vindhyas, perhaps up to the river Ganges. He ruled for a long period of 56 years. The long reign of Satakarni II was followed successively by eight rulers of whom none can be credited with any notable achievement. It was the accession of Pulumavi I that brought renewed strength and glory to their kingdom. He struck down the last of the Kanva rulers, Susarman, in 28 B.C. and occupied Magadha. The Satavahanas thus assumed an all-India significance as imperial rulers in succession to the Nandas, Mauryas, Sungas and Kanvas. The kings, who succeeded him, appear to have been driven, by the Sakas, out of Maharashtra back to their home land in Andhra. The only silver lining in that murky atmosphere was the excellent literary work, *Gathasaptasati*, of Hala, the 17th Satavahana king.

It was during the time of Gautamiputra Satakarni, the 23rd ruler of this dynasty, who ascended the throne in A.D.62, their kingdom made a sharp recovery of the lost territories from the western Kshatrapas. A Nasik record describes him as the restorer of the glory of the Satavahanas. His kingdom included the territories of Asika, Assaka, Mulaka, Saurashtra, Kukura, Aparanta, Anupa, Vidarbha, Akara and Avanti, and the mountainous regions of Vindhya, Achavata, Pariyatra, Sahya, Kanhagiri, Siritana, Malaya, Mahendra, Sata and Chakora, and extended as far as seas on either side. Though some of the mountains mentioned in the inscription cannot be identified at present, it is clear that Gautamiputra's kingdom covered not only the peninsular India, but also the southern parts of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. He passed away in A.D.86, and his successors witnessed the dismemberment of their far flung empire.

Pulumavi II succeeded Gautamiputra and ruled for 28 years. In spite of serious efforts put forth by him to safeguard the frontiers of his vast empire, the closing

years of his reign witnessed the decline of the Satavahana authority. Yajnasri Satakarni's accession to the throne in A.D.128 brought matters to a crisis. He came into conflict with the Saka Satrap, Rudradamana, and suffered defeat, and consequently, lost all his western possessions. However, he continued to rule till A.D.157 over a truncated dominion. His ship-marked coins suggest extensive maritime trade during his days. With him passed away the age of the great Satavahanas and by the end of the 2nd century A.D., the rule of the Satavahanas was a matter of past history. There were different opinions about their capital. Some argue that Srikakulam in Krishna district was their capital. Evidences show that Dharanikota in Guntur district, Dharmapuri in Karimnagar district and Paithan in Aurangabad district of Maharashtra State were used as capitals at various periods.

The Deccan, during this period, was an emporium of inland and maritime trade. The region between the rivers of Godavari and Krishna was full of ports and throbbing with activity. There was plentiful currency to facilitate trade and the Telugus entered upon a period of great industrial, commercial and maritime activity.

Buddhism flourished throughout the period and at the same time the rulers were devoted to Vedic ritualism. They constructed several Buddhist Stupas, Chaityas and Viharas. The Stupa at Amaravati is known for its architecture par excellence. Satavahanas were not only the able rulers but were also lovers of literacy and architecture. The 17th ruler of this dynasty, Hala was himself a great poet and his "Gathasaptasati" in Prakrit was well received by all. Gunadhya, the minister of Hala was the author of "Brihatkadha". The decline and fall of the Satavahana empire left the Andhra country in a political chaos. Local rulers as well as invaders tried to carve out small kingdoms for themselves and to establish dynasties. During the period from A.D.180 to A.D.624, Ikshvakus, Brihatphalayanans, Salankayanas, Vishnukundins, Vakatakas, Pallavas, Anandagotras, Kalingas and others ruled over the Andhra area with their small kingdoms. Such instability continued to prevail until the rise of the Eastern Chalukyas.

Important among them were the Ikshvakus. The Puranas mention them as the Sriparvatiyas. The present Nagarjunakonda was then known as Sriparvata and Vijayapuri, near it, was their capital. They patronised Buddhism, though they followed the vedic ritualism. After the Ikshvakus, a part of the Andhra region north of the river Krishna was ruled over by Jayavarma of Brihatphalayana gotra. Salankayanas ruled over a part of the East Coast with Vengi as their capital. Next to rule were the Vishnukundins who occupied the territory between the Krishna and Godavari. It is believed that their capital was Indrapura, which can be identified with the modern Indrapalagutta in Ramannapet taluk of Nalgonda district. By A.D.514, the land north of the Godavari, known, as Kalinga became independent. The area south of the Krishna fell to the share of the Pallavas, who ruled from Kanchi. The Vakatakas occupied the present Telangana. This state of affairs continued with few changes up to the beginning of the 7th century A.D.

Buddhism continued, though in a decadent form during this period. Mahayanism gave wide currency to the belief that the installation and worship of Buddha and Bodhisattva images, and the erection of stupas conferred great merit. The Madhyamika School of thought in Mahayana was propounded by Nagarjuna. Sanskrit came to occupy the place of Prakrit as the language of inscriptions. The Vishnukundins extended patronage to architecture and sculpture. The cave temples at Mogalrajapuram and Undavalli near Vijayawada bear testimony to their artistic taste.

The period of Andhra history, between A.D. 624 and A.D.1323, spanning over seven centuries, is significant for the sea-change it brought in all spheres of the human activity; social, religious, linguistic and literary. During this period, Desi, the indigenous Telugu language, emerged as a literary medium overthrowing the domination of Prakrit and Sanskrit. As a result, Andhradesa achieved an identity and a distinction of its own as an important constituent of Indian Cultural set-up.

This change was brought by strong historical forces, namely, the Eastern and Western Chalukyas, the Rashtrakutas and the early Cholas. Kakatiyas came to power during the later half of this period and extended their rule over the entire Telugu

land with the exception of a small land in the northeast. Arts, crafts, language and literature flourished under their benevolent patronage.

### **Eastern Chalukyas**

This dynasty was a branch of the Chalukyas of Badami. Pulakesin II, the renowned ruler of Chalukyas conquered Vengi (near Eluru) in A.D.624 and installed his brother Kubja Vishnuvardhana (A.D.624--641) as its ruler. His dynasty, known as the Eastern Chalukyas, ruled for nearly four centuries. Vishnuvardhana extended his dominions up to Srikakulam in the north and Nellore in the south. He was succeeded by his son Jayasimha I (A.D.641--673). Between A.D.641 and A.D.705 some kings, except Jayasimha I and Mangi Yuvaraju, (A.D.681--705) ruled for short duration. Then followed a period of unrest characterised by family feuds and weak rulers. In the meanwhile, the Rashtrakutas of Malkhed ousted Chalukyas of Badami. The weak rulers of Vengi had to meet the challenge of the Rashtrakutas, who overran their kingdom more than once. There was no Eastern Chalukya ruler who could check them until Gunaga Vijayaditya came to power in A.D.848. He also failed to face the Rashtrakutas, and the then Rashtrakuta ruler Amoghavarsha treated him as his ally. After Amoghavarsha's death, Vijayaditya proclaimed independence. He started on a campaign to the south and achieved some notable success. He ruled for 44 years and passed away in A.D.892. He was succeeded by his brother's son, Chalukya Bhima (A.D.892--921). Rashtrakutas again attacked the Vengi kingdom during this period but were repulsed effectively by Vengi and came to an understanding with Rashtrakutas and treated them as his allies. They were able to maintain their independence till the Chalukyas of Kalyani in A.D.973 overthrew the Rashtrakutas.

Contemporaries to the Eastern Chalukyas were the Eastern Gangas in the northeast and the Pallavas in the south.

The Eastern Gangas appeared in the political scene towards the close of the 5th century A.D. as rulers of Orissa. The first known ruler of this dynasty was Indravarma (6th century A.D.). He had his capital at Dantapura, but later shifted to Kalinganagara

(Mukhalingam in Srikakulam district). The Gangas ruled with their capital in Andhra for nearly five centuries, until it was shifted to Cuttack at the end of the 11th century A.D. The early Eastern Gangas were ruling a small territory in Srikakulam district in the Telugu land.

The Pallava rule, which was earlier eclipsed by the onslaught of the Kalabhras, was revived during the last quarter of the 6th century A.D. by Simhavishnu, a scion of the Pallava ruling family and was firmly established at Kanchi. This new dynasty of the Pallavas is known as the 'Greater Pallavas' or the 'Later Pallavas' dynasty. The earliest Pallava ruler was Virakurcha and the most famous of them was Trilochana Pallava. An inscription noticed at Manchikallu, near Macherla in Guntur district is the earliest epigraphical record of the Pallava family. The entire territory south of the Krishna held sway over by Mahendravarman (A.D.600--630), son of Simhavishnu of the Later Pallavas. From the 7th century A.D. onwards, the Pallavas has to face the expanding Chalukya power. The conflict continued for a long time with varying degrees of success. But the extermination of the Chalukyas of Badami by the Rashtrakutas gave respite to the Pallavas to consolidate their power. The Pallavas continued till the end of the 9th century A.D., when a new power, the Cholas of Tanjore, displaced them and occupied Kanchipuram.

Among the minor Chalukya families that ruled parts of Andhra, those of Vemulavada (presently in Karimnagar district) are the most important. Their rule extended over the present-day Karimnagar and Nizamabad districts. As subordinate rulers loyal to the Rashtrakutas, they ruled with semi-independent status for about two centuries (A.D.755--968). The rule of the Vemulavada Chalukyas coincided with that of the Rashtrakutas. One peculiarity with this family is that it traced its descent from the Sun, while many other Chalukya families considered themselves as of lunar descent.

The Cholas attained the status of a major power in south India under the valiant leadership of Rajaraja I (A.D.985--1016). Two rebel princes of the Eastern Chalukya family sought refuge in his court. Rajaraja I utilised the claim of one of these princes, Saktivarma, as a pretext for intervening in the affairs of Vengi. He was successful

in seating Saktivarma on the throne of Vengi and, from that time, the Eastern Chalukyas played a role subservient to the Cholas. But the Telugu country became a cockpit of battles between the Cholas and the Chalukyas of Kalyani who supported a rival claimant to the throne of the Vengi each time. An Eastern Chalukya Prince, Rajendra, occupied the Chola throne in A.D. 1070 under the name of Kulottunga I. Nevertheless, Vijayaditya VII, a cousin of Rajaraja, continued to rule over Vengi till his death in A.D.1076 when the Eastern Chalukya dynasty came to an end.

The Eastern Chalukyas occupied a prominent place in the history of Andhra Pradesh. Though they were originally of Kannada stock, they patronised Telugu and gave fillip to it. Since the time of Gunaga Vijayaditya, inscriptions show Telugu stanzas, culminating in the production of literary works. Later on, in the 11th century under the patronage of the then Eastern Chalukya king, Rajaraja, the great epic, 'Mahabharata' was translated partly by his court poet, Nannaya.

At the time of Chalukya conquest three religions, Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism, were prevalent. Of these, Buddhism was on the wane. The Buddhist Aramas were transformed into pilgrim centres by the resurgent Hinduism. Jainism lingered on, and an appreciable section of the people paid homage to the Tirthankaras. Hinduism enjoyed the status of a national religion throughout the kingdom. Temples were built which played an important role in the religious life of the people and the temples of Siva at Chalukya Bhimavaram and Draksharama are among them.

The 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D. was a period of chaos. The Western Chalukyas of Kalyani, who were at first successful in overthrowing the Eastern Chalukyas, were driven out after 17 years by the Imperial Cholas with the help of local chiefs. But the latter did not rule directly and thought it prudent to leave the kingdom to the feudatories themselves in lieu of nominal allegiance. The Velanati Cholas of Tsandavolu (Guntur district) were the foremost among the feudatories. Between A.D. 1135 and 1206, several minor dynasties ruled over parts of Andhra Pradesh recognising the authority of the Velanati Cholas nominally. The chiefs of these dynasties fought amongst themselves, and one such struggle among them was the 'Palnati Yuddham'.

**MEDIEVAL PERIOD**

- Kakatiyas
- Bahmanis
- Qutb Shahis
- The Mughal Rule

**Kakatiyas**

The 12th and the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries saw the emergence of the Kakatiyas. They were at first the feudatories of the Western Chalukyas of Kalyana, ruling over a small territory near Warangal. A ruler of this dynasty, Prola II, who ruled from A.D.1110 to 1158, extended his sway to the south and declared his independence. His successor Rudra (A.D.1158--1195) pushed the kingdom to the north up to the Godavari delta. He built a fort at Warangal to serve as a second capital and faced the invasions of the Yadavas of Devagiri. The next ruler Mahadeva extended the kingdom to the coastal area. In A.D.1199, Ganapati succeeded him. He was the greatest of the Kakatiyas and the first after the Satavahanas to bring the entire Telugu area under one rule. He put an end to the rule of the Velanati Cholas in A.D.1210. He forced the Telugu Cholas of Vikramasimhapura to accept his suzerainty. He established order in his vast dominion and encouraged trade.

As Ganapati Deva had no sons, his daughter Rudramba succeeded him in A.D.1262 and carried on the administration. Some generals, who did not like to be ruled by her, rebelled. She could, however, suppress the internal rebellions and external invasions with the help of loyal subordinates. The Cholas and the Yadavas suffered such setbacks at her hands that they did not think of troubling her for the rest of her rule.

Prataparudra succeeded his grandmother Rudramba in A.D.1295 and ruled till A.D.1323. He pushed the western border of his kingdom up to Raichur. He introduced many administrative reforms. He divided the kingdom into 75 Nayakships, which was later adopted and developed by the Rayas of Vijayanagara. In his time the territory

constituting Andhra Pradesh had the first experience of a Muslim invasion. In A.D.1303, the Delhi Sultan Ala-ud-din Khilji sent an army to plunder the kingdom. But Prataparudra defeated them at Upparapalli in Karimnagar district. In A.D. 1310, when another army under Malik Kafur invaded Warangal, Prataparudra yielded and agreed to pay a large tribute. In A.D.1318, when Ala-ud-din Khilji died, Prataparudra withheld the tribute. It provoked another invasion of the Muslims. In A.D.1321, Ghiaz-ud-din Tughlaq sent a large army under Ulugh Khan to conquer the Telugu country then called Tilling. He laid siege to Warangal, but owing to internal dissensions he called off the siege and returned to Delhi. Within a short period, he came back with a much bigger army. In spite of unpreparedness, Prataparudra fought bravely. For want of supplies, he surrendered to the enemy who sent him to Delhi as a prisoner, and he died on the way. Thus ended the Kakatiya rule, opening the gates of the Telugu land to anarchy and confusion yielding place to an alien ruler.

The Kakatiya period was rightly called the brightest period of the Telugu history. The entire Telugu speaking area was under the kings who spoke Telugu and encouraged Telugu. They established order throughout the strife torn land and the forts built by them played a dominant role in the defence of the realm. Anumakonda and Gandikota among the 'giridurgas', Kandur and Narayanavanam among the 'vanadurgas', Divi and Kolanu among the 'jaladurgas', and Warangal and Dharanikota among the 'sthaladurgas' were reckoned as the most famous strongholds in the Kakatiya period. The administration of the kingdom was organized with accent on the military.

Though Saivism continued to be the religion of the masses, intellectuals favoured revival of Vedic rituals. They sought to reconcile the Vaishnavites and the Saivites through the worship of Harihara. Arts and literature found patrons in the Kakatiyas and their feudatories. Tikkana Somayaji, who adorned the court of the Telugu Chola ruler Manumasiddhi II, wrote the last 15 cantos of the Mahabharata which was lying unfinished. Sanskrit, which could not find a place in the Muslim-occupied north, received encouragement at the hands of the Kakatiyas. Prataparudra was himself a writer and he encouraged other literature.

**End of Preview.**

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