

**CBSE Class 7 Social Science History Notes Chapter 6:** Chapter 6 of CBSE Class 7 Social Science History, "Towns, Traders, and Craftsperson," explores how towns grew and became important for trade in medieval India. It talks about traders who traveled long distances to exchange goods, like silk, spices, and other items.

Craftspersons, like weavers, potters, and metalworkers, were also crucial. They made goods that were sold in markets. The chapter explains how these activities influenced society, culture, and how cities were governed during that time. It gives students a clear picture of how medieval Indian towns thrived and contributed to the economy and daily life.

## **CBSE Class 7 Social Science History Notes Chapter 6 Towns, Traders and Craftsperson Overview**

The notes for Chapter 6 "Towns, Traders, and Craftsperson" in CBSE Class 7 Social Science History have been made by experts at Physics Wallah. This chapter talks about how towns became busy places for trade during medieval times in India. It explains how traders traveled long distances to exchange goods like silk and spices.

It also discusses the important role of craftspersons like weavers and potters who made items sold in markets. Through this chapter, students learn about the lively urban life and economic activities of medieval India, and how towns, traders, and craftspersons shaped society and culture during that time.

## **CBSE Class 7 Social Science History Notes Chapter 6 PDF**

For detailed notes on Chapter 7 of the CBSE Class 7 Social Science History book, titled "Towns, Traders and Craftsperson," you can check out the PDF linked below.

These notes, made by subject experts at Physics Wallah, help you understand the changes in society and politics during this time in India's history.

**CBSE Class 7 Social Science History Notes Chapter 6 PDF**

## **CBSE Class 7 Social Science History Notes Chapter 6 Towns, Traders and Craftsperson**

### **Administrative Centres**

Thanjavur, the ancient capital of the Chola dynasty, remains much as it was a thousand years ago. Situated near the perennial river Kaveri, the city echoes with the sound of bells from the Rajarajeshvara temple, a grand monument built by King Rajaraja Chola. The temple, designed by the architect Kunjaramallan Rajaraja Perunthachchan, boasts of his name carved on its walls. Inside, a massive Shiva linga stands as the focal point of worship.

Adjacent to the temple are palaces adorned with mandapas or pavilions, where kings hold court and issue orders to their subordinates. The city is bustling with markets selling various commodities like grain, spices, cloth, and jewelry.

Water supply is facilitated by wells and tanks. The skilled Saliya weavers of Thanjavur and nearby Uraiyur produce a variety of cloth, from fine cotton for the king and nobility to coarse cotton for the masses. In Svamimalai, sculptors called sthapatis craft exquisite bronze idols and ornamental bell metal lamps, showcasing the city's rich artistic heritage.

## **Temple Towns and Pilgrimage Centres**

Thanjavur an example of a temple town, representing a significant pattern of urbanization where cities develop around temples. Temples were not just places of worship but also central to the economy and society.

Rulers built temples to display their devotion to various deities and endowed them with grants of land and money for elaborate rituals, feeding pilgrims, and celebrating festivals. Pilgrims who visited these temples also made donations, contributing to the wealth of temple authorities.

This wealth was often used to finance trade and banking activities. Temple towns grew rapidly as priests, workers, artisans, traders, and others settled nearby to cater to the needs of the temple and pilgrims. Examples of other important temple towns include Bhillasvamin (Bhilsa or Vidisha), Somnath, Kanchipuram, Madurai, and Tirupati. Pilgrimage centers like Vrindavan and Tiruvannamalai evolved into townships due to the influx of pilgrims.

Ajmer, once the capital of the Chauhan kings and later a Mughal suba headquarters, exemplifies religious coexistence. The settlement of Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti, a celebrated Sufi saint, in the 12th century attracted devotees from all backgrounds, making Ajmer a symbol of religious harmony. Additionally, Pushkar Lake near Ajmer has been a pilgrimage site since ancient times, drawing pilgrims from far and wide.

## **A Network of Small Towns**

From the 8th century onwards, the Indian subcontinent saw the emergence of numerous small towns, likely originating from large villages. These towns featured a central mandapika, similar to later-day markets or mandis, where nearby villagers brought their produce to sell.

There were market streets known as hatta, resembling modern-day haats, lined with shops. Various streets catered to different artisans, including potters, oil pressers, sugarmakers, and more. While some traders settled in these towns, others traveled from town to town.

Many people from both near and far visited these towns to buy local goods and sell products from distant places, such as horses, salt, camphor, saffron, betel nut, and spices like pepper. A local ruler, known as a samanta or later a zamindar, often built a fortified palace in or near these towns.

They levied taxes on traders, artisans, and trade goods, sometimes granting the right to collect these taxes to local temples built by themselves or wealthy merchants. These rights were often documented in inscriptions that have survived to this day, providing insights into the economic and administrative structure of these small towns.

## **Traders Big and Small**

Traders came in many forms in medieval India, including the nomadic Banjaras and various horse traders. Horse traders formed associations, with headmen negotiating on their behalf with warriors who bought horses.

To navigate through the many kingdoms and forests, traders traveled in caravans and formed guilds to protect their interests. In south India, guilds like the Manigramam and Nanadesi became famous from the 8th century onwards, trading extensively within the peninsula and with Southeast Asia and China.

Certain communities, such as the Chettiars and Marwari Oswals, emerged as the country's primary trading groups. Gujarati traders, including Hindu Baniyas and Muslim Bohras, traded extensively with ports across the Red Sea, Persian Gulf, East Africa, Southeast Asia, and China.

They sold textiles and spices in exchange for goods like gold and ivory from Africa, spices and Chinese blue pottery from Southeast Asia, and silver from China. Towns along the west coast were hubs for traders from Arabia, Persia, China, as well as Jewish and Syrian Christian communities.

Indian spices and cloth sold in Red Sea ports were bought by Italian traders and eventually reached European markets, fetching high profits. Spices like pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg, and dried ginger, grown in tropical climates, became essential in European cooking. Additionally, cotton cloth from India attracted European traders to the region, further influencing trade dynamics during this period.

## **A Closer Look: Hampi, Masulipatnam and Surat**

# **The Architectural Splendour of Hampi**

Hampi, situated in the Krishna-Tungabhadra basin, served as the heart of the Vijayanagara Empire, established in 1336. The breathtaking ruins of Hampi unveil a meticulously fortified city, where no mortar or cement was used in constructing the walls. Instead, a technique of interlocking stones was employed, showcasing the remarkable architectural skills of the time.

The architecture of Hampi is characterized by splendid arches, domes, and pillared halls adorned with niches for sculptures. The city boasted well-planned orchards and pleasure gardens adorned with sculptural motifs like lotus flowers and corbels.

During the 15th and 16th centuries, Hampi buzzed with vibrant commercial and cultural activities. Muslim merchants, Chettis, and agents of European traders, including the Portuguese, thronged its bustling markets. Temples served as focal points for cultural events, with devadasis (temple dancers) captivating audiences in the magnificent pillared halls of the Virupaksha temple.

The Mahanavami festival, akin to Navaratri in the south today, held great significance in Hampi's cultural calendar. Archaeologists have discovered the Mahanavami platform, where the king received guests, accepted tributes from subordinate chiefs, and enjoyed dance, music, and wrestling performances.

Unfortunately, Hampi met its downfall following the defeat of Vijayanagara in 1565 by the Deccani Sultans, including the rulers of Golconda, Bijapur, Ahmadnagar, Berar, and Bidar. Despite its decline into ruins, Hampi's architectural splendor and cultural legacy continue to mesmerize visitors to this day.

## **A Gateway to the West: Surat**

Surat, located in Gujarat, emerged as the premier emporium of western trade during the Mughal period, alongside Cambay (present-day Khambhat) and later, Ahmedabad. Known as the gateway for trade with West Asia via the Gulf of Ormuz, Surat was also dubbed the "gate to Mecca" due to the departure of many pilgrim ships from its shores. The city was cosmopolitan, with people of all castes and creeds residing there.

In the 17th century, Surat attracted the attention of European powers like the Portuguese, Dutch, and English, who established their factories and warehouses in the city. According to English chronicler Ovington, Surat's port was a bustling hub with an average of a hundred ships from different countries anchored at any given time. The city boasted several retail and wholesale shops selling its famous cotton textiles, renowned for their intricate gold lace borders (zari), which had a thriving market in West Asia, Africa, and Europe.

To accommodate the diverse array of visitors, Surat built numerous rest-houses, alongside magnificent buildings and countless pleasure parks. The Kathiawad seths or mahajans,

prominent moneychangers, operated vast banking houses in Surat, with Surat hundis being honored in far-off markets like Cairo, Basra, and Antwerp.

However, Surat's fortunes began to wane towards the end of the 17th century due to various factors. These included the decline of the Mughal Empire, the Portuguese's control of sea routes, and competition from Bombay (present-day Mumbai), where the English East India Company shifted its headquarters in 1668. Despite its decline, Surat remains a bustling commercial center in modern times, retaining traces of its rich historical legacy.

## **Fishing in Troubled Waters: Masulipatnam**

Masulipatnam, nestled on the delta of the Krishna River, was a bustling hub of activity in the 17th century, earning its moniker as the "fish port town." This coastal town became a focal point for Dutch and English East India Companies, vying for control due to its strategic importance as the primary port on the Andhra coast. The Dutch constructed a fort in Masulipatnam to fortify their presence.

However, the Qutb Shahi rulers of Golconda imposed royal monopolies on the sale of textiles, spices, and other goods to prevent complete dominance by the East India Companies. Fierce competition among various trading groups, including Golconda nobles, Persian merchants, Telugu Komati Chettis, and European traders, fueled the city's prosperity and population growth.

The Mughals, extending their power to Golconda, annexed it in 1686-1687 under Emperor Aurangzeb's rule. This geopolitical shift prompted the European Companies to seek alternative ports. The English East India Company, as part of its new policy, sought trade centers that combined political, administrative, and commercial roles. Consequently, Company traders migrated to emerging centers like Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras, leading to Masulipatnam's decline in both merchants and prosperity over the 18th century.

Today, Masulipatnam stands as a dilapidated town, a mere shadow of its former bustling self, reflecting the ebb and flow of history and trade in the region.

## **New Towns and Traders**

During the 16th and 17th centuries, European nations sought spices and textiles, highly sought-after commodities in Europe and West Asia. To expand their commercial endeavors in the East, the English, Dutch, and French established East India Companies. Initially, prominent Indian traders like Mulla Abdul Ghafur and Virji Vora, who owned numerous ships, competed with them. However, the European Companies utilized their naval strength to gain control of sea trade

and coerced Indian traders into working as their agents. Among the European powers, the English emerged as the most successful commercial and political force in the subcontinent.

The surge in demand for goods like textiles led to a significant expansion of crafts such as spinning, weaving, bleaching, and dyeing, with more people joining these professions. Indian textile designs became increasingly refined during this period. However, there was also a decline in the independence of craftspeople as they began working under a system of advances, weaving cloth already promised to European agents. Weavers lost the freedom to sell their own cloth or create their own designs, instead reproducing patterns supplied by Company agents.

The 18th century witnessed the rise of Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras as key nodal cities, which remain significant today. This period saw major changes in both crafts and commerce, with merchants and artisans, particularly weavers, relocated to Black Towns established by European companies within these new cities. The "blacks" or native traders and craftspeople were confined to these areas, while the "white" rulers occupied superior residencies like Fort St. George in Madras or Fort St. William in Calcutta.

## **Benefits of CBSE Class 7 Social Science History Notes**

### **Chapter 6 Towns, Traders and Craftsperson**

- **Comprehensive Understanding:** The notes provide a thorough understanding of the historical developments related to towns, traders, and craftspersons during the medieval period in India.
- **Conceptual Clarity:** The notes help in clarifying important concepts, such as the emergence of towns, the role of traders, and the evolution of craftspersons' occupations, facilitating a better grasp of the subject.
- **Exam Preparation:** These notes are a valuable study material for exams, helping students revise key topics and prepare effectively.
- **Makes Learning Fun:** The notes are written in a way that makes history interesting, so students enjoy learning about towns, traders, and craftspersons.