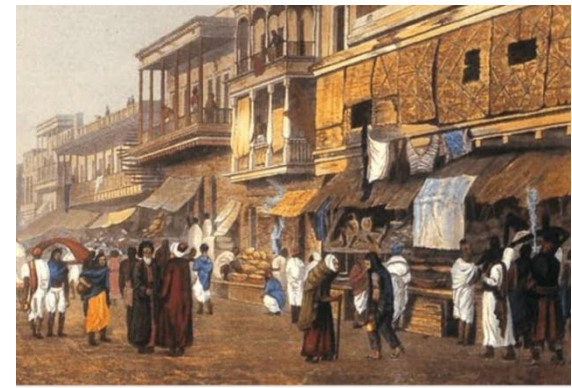


**HISTORY**  
**CLASS -7**  
**CHAPTER- 6**  
**MODULE:2/4**

**TOWNS, TRADERS  
AND CRAFTSPERSONS**

## A NETWORK OF SMALL TOWNS

- From the eighth century onwards several small towns emerged in the subcontinent. These probably developed from large villages. They usually had a **mandapika** [ **mandi** in later times] to which nearby villagers came to sell their produce.
- They also had market streets called **hatta** or (hatt of the later times) lined with shops. There were streets for different kinds of artisans such as potters, oil pressers, sugar makers, toddy makers, smiths, stonemasons, etc.
- **Usually a samanta** built a fortified palace in or near these towns. They levied taxes on traders, artisans and articles of trade and sometimes ‘donated’ the “right” to collect these taxes to local temples.



# Traders Big and Small

- Several traders, especially horse traders formed associations, with headmen who negotiated on their behalf with warriors who bought horses.
- Traders had to pass through many kingdoms and forests, they usually travelled in caravans and they formed **guilds** to protect their interests.
- **Manigramam and Nanadesi** were the most famous guilds in south India. The communities like the **Chettians and the Marwari Oswal** were the principal trading groups of the country. Gujarati traders, including the communities of **Hindu Baniyas and Muslim Bohras**, traded extensively with the ports of Red sea, Persian Gulf, East Africa, Southeast Asia and China.



# Indian Spices and Cotton Cloth

- Indian spices and cloth sold in the **Red Sea ports** were purchased by Italian traders and eventually reached European markets, fetching very high profits.
- Spices like **pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg, dried ginger**, etc. became an important part of European cooking.
- Cotton cloth was very attractive. This eventually drew European traders to India.



**Indian spices**



**Cotton cloth**

# The Craftspersons of Bidar

- The craftspersons of Bidar were so famed for their inlay work in copper and silver that it came to be called **Bidri**.
- **The Panchalas or Vishwakarmas** community, consisting of goldsmiths, bronzesmiths, blacksmiths, masons and carpenters, were essential to the building of temples, palaces, tanks and reservoirs.
- Weavers such as **the Saliyar or Kaikkolars** emerged as successful communities, they also made donations to temples. Some aspects of cloth making like cotton cleaning, spinning and dyeing became specialized and independent crafts.

