

**Introduction:**

Many foreign travelers came to India during the medieval period. He came to India for many reasons. Many travelers who came to India wrote their accounts. These passenger accounts deal with a variety of factors. Some travelers' accounts are related to court cases while others are related to religious matters. Some pilgrims create contemporary style architecture and monuments, while others reflect social and economic life.

**1. Agrarian Relations the Ain-i- Akbari**

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Pilgrims coming to India presented a true picture of Indian civilization in their stories.

Al-Biruni, a great scholar from Central Asia, came to India in the 11th century. He came to India during the Mahmud invasion of Ghazni.



Al-Biruni was born on 4 September 973 in Khwarazm, Uzbekistan. Al-Biruni is fluent in many languages. He is fluent in Arabic, Persian, Hebrew and Sanskrit. Al-Biruni's most famous masterpiece 'Kitab-ul-Hind' was written in Ghazni and belongs to India. It is also known as Tariq-ul-Hind and Tahqueek-i-Hind. Al-Biruni shed light on the prevailing caste system in Hindu society. According to al-Biruni, India's economic situation is good. Al-Bir's real name is Abu-Abdullah Muhammad. He loved to travel and wanted to increase his knowledge by making contacts with people from different countries.



He traveled for thirty years of his life. The great Moroccan traveler died in 1377, but the 'Rihala' account he wrote is an enormous treasure. When he returned to Morocco in 1354, he was officially welcomed by the 'Sultan', Abu Inan (Ibn Battuta). Sultan Abu Inan hired Ibn-I-Juzayy to assist in compiling his account 'Rihala'. Rihala is written in Arabic. He described what he saw in India. Undoubtedly, 'Thalihalla' is considered to be an invaluable source for Indian history in the 14th century.

François Bernier was a French traveler who came to India in the 17th century. François Bernier was a great French physician, philosopher and historian who lived in India from 1656 to 1688 and wrote his famous book. "Journey to the Mughal Court". Francois described Indian Kharkhana in great detail. The city, the land ownership system and the social evil means the sati system. The great Iranian scholar Abdur Razak came to India in the 15th century. He was born in 1413 and was appointed Samarkand Khazi under Shahrukh Khan.



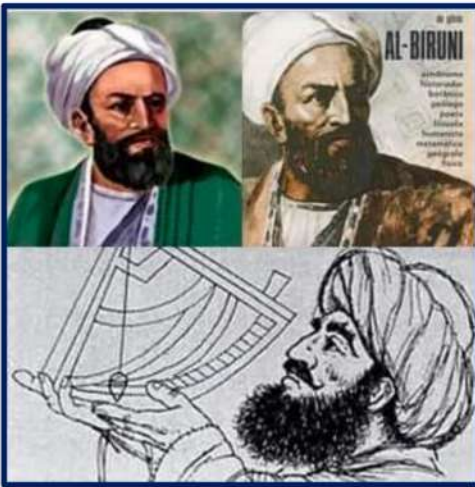
Abdur Razak lived in the court of Diva Raya II of the Vijayanagar Empire from 1442-1443 and gave a clear description of the Vijayanagar Empire. Duarte Barbosa, a Portuguese ruler of southern India, visited the Vijayanagar Empire in 1518 during the reign of Krishna Deva Raya. Other important travelers to India during the Middle Ages were Antonio Montserrat, Peter Mundy, Jean-Baptist Tavernier, Francisco Pellerin and Nicole Munis.

Travelers visiting the subcontinent can enrich our past knowledge through descriptions of social life. Generally, they record the daily activities and practices of the common people along with the details of the kings. Al-Biruni, Ibn Battuta and Francois Bernier were three famous travelers who visited the subcontinent from the 11th century to the 17th century.

### DO YOU KNOW?

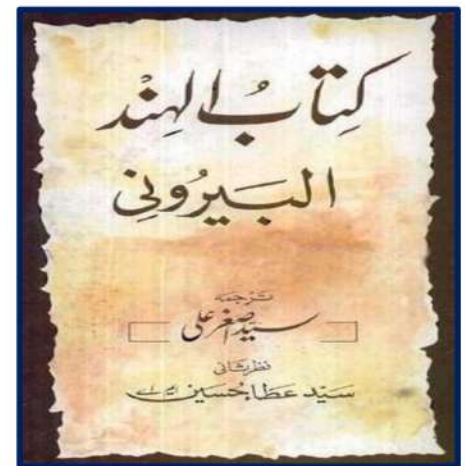
- Hindu:** The word "Hindu" is derived from an old Persian word used in the 6th century BC. It refers to the area east of the Indus River, i.e. the Indus.
- Antyaj:** People belonging to the four major castes are predominant in Indian society.
- Taraba:** Daulatabad means music market.
- Ulak:** Horse postal system.
- Dow:** Foot Postal System.
- Camp towns:** Cities that existed and existed due to the royal camp.

## 2. Al-Biruni and Kitab-ul-Hind:



Al-Biruni was born in 973 in Khwarazm, present-day Uzbekistan. He is fluent in various languages such as Syriac, Arabic, Persian, Hebrew and Sanskrit. With the invasion of Khwarazm in 1017, he reached Ghazni as a captive. But gradually the liking for the city and the interest in India increased. When Punjab became part of the Ghaznavid Empire, it traveled extensively in Punjab and other parts of northern India.

He learned Sanskrit and spent years in the company of Brahmin priests and scholars studying religions and philosophical texts. Al-Biruni wrote simply and clearly in Arabic as 'Kitab-ul-Hind'. It is a large text covering over 80



chapters covering topics such as religion, philosophy, festivals, astronomy, alchemy, etiquette and customs, social life, weight and measure, iconography, law and metrology. Al-Biruni is well versed in translating and translating Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit texts into Arabic. However, he also criticized how these texts were written and how to

improve them.

## 3. Al-Birun's view of Indian society:

According to al-Biruni, Sanskrit is very different from Arabic and Persian, and ideas and concepts are not easily translated from one language to another. Al-Biruni sought to explain the caste system by comparing it with other societies. Tried to indicate that social divisions do not exist only in India. Al-Biruni is based on the Vedas, Puranas, Bhagavad Gita, Patanjali's writings, Manusmriti, etc. The rules of the caste system are dictated in the Sanskrit scriptures from the point of view of the Brahmins, but in real life this system is not so strict.





#### DO YOU KNOW?

1. Al-Biruni is born in Uzbekistan
2. Kitab-ul-Hind published in Arabic by al-Biruni
3. Ibn Battuta is bombed at Tangier
4. Ibn Battuta arrives in the Indus

#### DO YOU KNOW?

- 1354:** Ibn Battuta returns to Morocco  
**1377:** Rihala is published  
**1620:** Francisco-Pleaser, a Dutch traveler, arrives in India  
**1628:** Peter Mundy of England visits India  
**1656-68:** Francois Bernier visits India

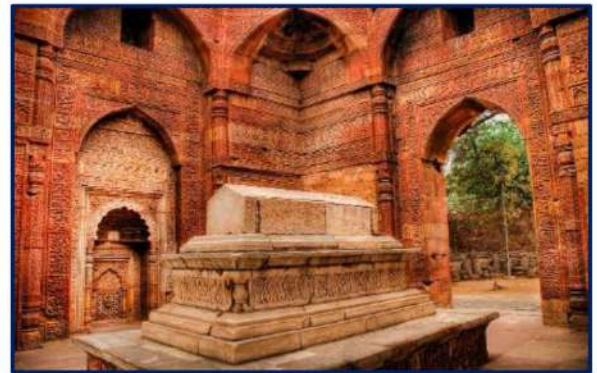
#### 4. Battuta's description of Indian society

In the 14th century the Indian subcontinent had relations with China from east to northwest Africa and from western Europe. Ibn Battuta traveled through these lands and visited the holy temples in the 14th century and reached Delhi after meeting rulers, scholars, and people who spoke Arabic, Persian, Turkish and other languages. They shared ideas, information and events. Ibn Battuta specifically described unfamiliar things like coconut and betel, describing Indian society.

Ibn Battuta found that cities in India were densely populated and prosperous. According to him, Delhi is the largest city in India. He has the same vision in the case of Daulatabad (in Maharashtra).

Bazaars are places of financial transaction and also centers for social and cultural activities. There are mosques and temples for prayers and there are also some marked markets with open spaces for dancers, musicians and singers. Ibn Battuta found Indian agriculture very productive due to the fertility of the soil, where farmers grow two crops a year.

The Indian manufacturing sector has grown due to the inter-Asian network of trade and commerce. They are in good demand in both West Asia and Southeast Asia, with artists and traders making huge profits. Indian textiles, especially cotton, fine muslin, silk, brocade and satin are also in high demand. Ibn Battuta was amazed at the ability of the postal system to have two types of horse post called 'Ulu' and foot-post called 'Da'wa'.



#### 5. Francois Bernier

A French traveler Many Portuguese, Dutch, English and French travelers came to India in the 16th and 17th centuries. Among them, the Jesuits Roberto

Nobili, Duarte Barbosa, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier and Manuchi wrote on various aspects of Indian society. The French physician, political philosopher and historian François Bernier spent twelve years in India (1656 to 1668) and was closely associated with the Mughal

court. Bernier traveled to many parts of India and wrote detailed accounts comparing the situation in India with that in Europe. His works were published in France in 1670-71 and translated into English, Dutch, German and Italian. His works are very popular.

FRANCOIS BERNIER





### **His views on Bernier and contemporary society:**

Compared to Ibn Battuta, Bernier believed in a different intellectual tradition, where he was more critical. He compared what he saw in India with the situation in Europe in general and France in particular. Bernier's book 'Travels in the Mughal Empire' is marked by detailed commentary, critical insights and reflections. He consistently compared Mughal India with contemporary Europe, generally emphasizing the dominance of the latter. According to him, the Mughal emperor owned the land and distributed it to his nobles and this had devastating consequences for the economy and society. This concept was supported by many travelers of the time. Landlords cannot give their land to their children due to lack of legal rights over the land. Therefore, they avoid any long-term investment in the livelihood and expansion of the product.

This crown ownership system of land has destroyed the living standards of all sections of society except agriculture as well as the ruling class which oppresses the peasants. He explained that due to the coronation on earth, there was no social group or class between the rich and the poor in Indian society. He added, "There is no middle ground in India." Bernier described the Mughal king as "the king of beggars and barbarians". But Abul Fazal explained that the income was a claim made by the ruler to his people for his protection and not for rent on the land he owned. Bernier's interpretation has influenced Western theorists since the 18th century. For example, the French philosopher Montesquieu used this account to develop an idea of Oriental authoritarianism, and in the 19th century, Karl Marx used this account to develop the Asian production method.

He explained that India has a more complex social reality where there is no incentive for artisans to improve the quality of their products because the profits are allocated by the state. But at the same time, he said, the country was exchanging its manufactured goods for precious metals.

Gold and silver, from outside the subcontinent. He also recognized the existence of a prosperous business community. There are cities of all kinds, i.e. manufacturing cities, commercial towns, port cities, holy sites, pilgrimage cities, and so on. Different urban groups include Mahajan, Sheth, Nagarsheth, Hakeem or Wade, Pandit or Mulla, walkie-talkie, painter, architect, musician, calligrapher, etc.

### **6. Travelers' thoughts on women:**

Slaves along with horses, camels and other goods were sold for free in the markets. Ibn Battuta noted that there was a considerable difference between slaves. Slaves were commonly used for domestic work and female slaves were used to serve the sultan and keep a watchful eye on lords.

Bernier wrote about the ritual of sati. While some women happily embrace death, others are said to be committing forced deaths. Women's labor is important in both agriculture and non-agricultural production. Women from business families participated in business activities. Passenger accounts provide us with important information about that period, but many aspects of social life go unnoticed.

#### **Activity**

- Q1. Make a note on the Agrarian relation during the Akbar's reign?
- Q2. Write a short note on Ain-i-Akbari and author's view?
- Q3. See the political India map and find out the territory of Akbar?
- Q4. Write a work of Al-Biruni and his view of Indian society?
- Q5. Who was Ibn-e-Battuta and when he came in India?
- Q6. Who was Francois Bernier and when he came in India?



## Questions For Practice

1. According to Ibn-n-Battuta, which of the following cities is the largest?  
(a) Surat                      (b) Delhi  
(c) Daulatabad              (d) Agra
2. Who authored the book 'Travels in the Mughal Empire'?  
(a) Francois Bernier  
(b) John Marshall  
(c) Colin McKenzie  
(d) James Prinsep
3. Which of the following is a book written by Al-Biruni?  
(a) Rihala  
(b) Kitab-Ul-Hind  
(c) Discovery of India  
(d) Economics
4. Select the appropriate option:  
Who established Delhi as a city of great potential?  
(a) Ibn-Battuta  
(b) Al-Biruni  
(c) Francois Bernier  
(d) Karl Marx
5. Who is the only Portuguese author to describe in detail the trade and society in South India?  
(a) Jean-Baptiste Tavernier  
(b) Duarte Barbosa  
(c) Francois Bernier  
(d) Ibn Battuta
6. Which of the following is not one of the limitations discussed by Al-Biruni?  
(a) language  
(b) Slavery in Eastern societies  
(c) Differences in religious beliefs and practices  
(d) Self-absorption and consequent ignorance of the local population
7. Which of the following is incorrect?  
(a) According to Ibn Battuta, the fruit of the coconut tree looks like a man's head.  
(b) According to Bernier, Indian peasants were exploited by the zamindars.  
(c) Abdur Razak is the only historian to have provided a detailed account of the workings of royal factories or workshops.
- (d) Ibn Battuta elaborated on slavery in India.
8. Which of these French travelers visited in the 17th century?  
(a) Al-Biruni                      (b) Ibn-Battuta  
(c) Abul failed                  (d) Francois Bernier
9. Consider the following statements.  
1. Montesquieu used Bernier's accounts to develop his Eastern authoritarian ideology.  
2. Bernier provided a detailed report on rural society.  
3. According to Bernier, crown ownership of land is good for farmers.  
4. According to Bernier, the Indian king was the king of beggars.  
Which of the given statements is correct / correct?  
(a) 1, 2, 3, 4                      (b) 1, 2, 3  
(c) 1, 2, 4                          (d) 2, 3, 4
10. Choose the correct option:  
(a) Ibn Battuta traveled extensively in China.  
(b) Al-Biruni identified Indian cities as the most populous.  
(c) Al-Biruni was heavily influenced by the Indian postal system.  
(d) According to Ibn-Battuta. The crown ownership of the land is very devastating to the farmers.
11. According to Ibn Battuta, which of the following cities is the largest?  
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3. According to Bernier, crown ownership of land is good for farmers.
4. According to Bernier, the Indian king was the king of beggars. Which of the given statements is correct / correct?
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(c) 1, 2, 4 (d) 2, 3, 4
20. Choose the correct option:
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21. Two things in India that many foreign travelers consider unusual -
- (a) Milk and eggs  
(b) Coconut and betel  
(c) Papaya and tomato  
(d) Melon and watermelon
22. What was the name of Al-Biruni who came to India with him?
- (a) Muhammad Ghori  
(b) Timur lung  
(c) Mahmud Ghaznavid  
(d) Nadir Shah
23. In which century did Al-Biruni come to India?
- (a) 11<sup>th</sup> Century (b) 10<sup>th</sup> Century  
(c) 14<sup>th</sup> Century (d) 17<sup>th</sup> Century
24. Ibn Battuta's visit to India is believed to date back to which century?
- (a) 11<sup>th</sup> Century (b) 12<sup>th</sup> Century  
(c) 14<sup>th</sup> Century (d) None
25. What is the name of the country where Ibn Battuta came from?
- (a) Morocco (b) Uzbekistan (c) Herat (d) Portugal
26. What was the name of the country where Francois Bernier came to India?
- (a) Portugal (b) France  
(c) England (d) Spain
27. Which of these cities is also known as Cantonment city during the Mughal period?
- (a) By Bernier  
(b) By Marco Polo  
(c) Ibn Battuta  
(d) None of these
28. Which of the following was a European traveler to the Indian subcontinent in the 17th century?
- (a) Al Biruni  
(b) Ibn Battuta  
(c) Abul Fazal  
(d) Francois Bernier
29. In which century did Francois Bernier come to India?
- (a) 17<sup>th</sup> Century (b) 19<sup>th</sup> Century  
(c) 16<sup>th</sup> Century (d) 5<sup>th</sup> Century
30. Who was born in al-Biruni Khwarazm?
- (a) 873 AD (b) 973 AD  
(c) 1073 AD (d) 999 AD
31. Which of these French travelers came during the 17th century?
- (a) Al-Biruni  
(b) Ibn-Battuta  
(c) Abul Failed  
(d) Francois Bernier
32. Who among the following belonged to Morocco?
- (a) Ibn Battuta  
(b) Al-Biruni  
(c) Francois Bernier  
(d) Abdul Shah
33. Who wrote 'Kitab-ul-Hind'?
- (a) Colin Mackenzie  
(b) Al-Biruni  
(c) Abdul Samad Lahori (d) Ibn Battuta
34. Islamic law is known as \_\_\_\_\_?
- (a) Sharia (b) same  
(c) Ulema (d) all of these
35. Ibn Battuta stayed in India for \_\_\_\_\_ years?
- (a) 12 (b) 14  
(c) 16 (d) 18
36. Which one of the following cities was the largest according to Ibn Battuta?
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39. Who established Delhi as a city full of exciting opportunities?
- (a) Ibn-Battuta  
(b) Al-Biruni  
(c) Francois Bernier  
(d) Karl Marx
40. choose the right option:
- (a) Ibn-Battuta traveled extensively in China.  
(b) Al-Biruni found Indian cities to be quite populated.  
(c) Al-Biruni was highly influenced by the Indian postal system.  
(d) According to Ibn-Battuta. Crown ownership of land was quite disastrous for the peasants.

## Solutions

- |        |        |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. (b) | 5. (b) | 9. (c)  | 13. (b) | 17. (c) | 21. (b) | 25. (a) | 29. (a) | 33. (b) | 37. (a) |
| 2. (a) | 6. (b) | 10. (d) | 14. (a) | 18. (d) | 22. (c) | 26. (b) | 30. (b) | 34. (a) | 38. (d) |
| 3. (b) | 7. (c) | 11. (b) | 15. (b) | 19. (c) | 23. (a) | 27. (b) | 31. (d) | 35. (a) | 39. (a) |
| 4. (a) | 8. (d) | 12. (a) | 16. (b) | 20. (d) | 24. (c) | 28. (d) | 32. (a) | 36. (b) | 40. (d) |