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# 1. EARLY MEDIEVAL PERIOD (c.600-1200 CE)

## 1. NORTH INDIA: RAJPUTANA PERIOD

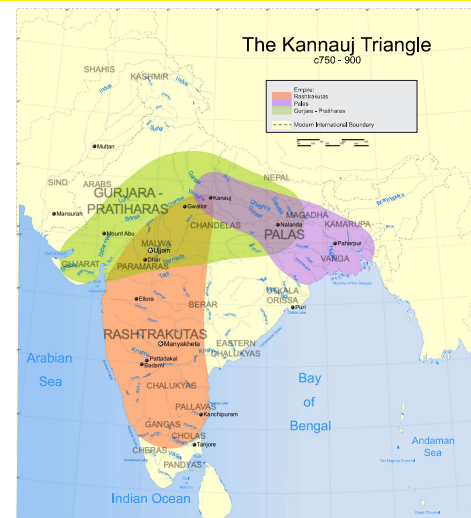
After Harshavardhana, the **Rajputas emerged as a powerful force in North India** and dominated the Indian political scene for **about 500 years from 7<sup>th</sup> century**.

### TRIPARTITE STRUGGLE (750- 1000 CE):

- The period from 750 - 1000 CE saw the rise of three important empires: **Gurjara-Pratihara (Western India), Palas (Eastern India) and Rashtrakutas (Deccan)**.
- The conflict among these three powers (basically **for control over Kannauj area** of Ganga valley) is often describes as **“tripartite struggle”**.
- **Kannauj** was strategically and commercially very important. It was located on the **Ganga trade route and was connected to the Silk route**. Previously, Kannauj was capital of Harshvardhan Empire.

### GURJARA-PRATIHARA EMPIRE (WESTERN INDIA): 730-1036

- Known as Gurjara - Pratihara, as they originated from Gurjaras, who were primarily **pastoralists and fighters**.
- Dynasty was **founded by Harichandra**, in and around jodhpur, south western Rajasthan.
- Pratihara were instrumental in containing Arab armies moving east of the Indus River.
- Gurjara-Pratihara are known for their **sculptures, carved panels and open pavilion style temples**. The greatest development of their style of temple building was at **Khajuraho, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site**.
- Sanskrit Poet & Dramatist **Rajasekhara lived in the court of Mahendrapala I** – son of Mihir bhoja.
- Mahipala is Pala king. It has to be replaced by Mahendrapala-I (885–910) was a ruler of the Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty.
- Foreign traveller **Al-Masudi** had visited Pratihara empire.



### IMPORTANT RULERS:

<b>Nagabhata I (730-760)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most famous Pratiharas kings, known for containing Arab armies</li> <li>• Defeated by Rashtrakuta king Dhruva.</li> </ul>
<b>Vatsaraja (780-800)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Made <b>Kannauj</b> in western U.P as his <b>capital</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Expansionist policy</b> brought him into conflict with Dharmapala, the Pala king and Rashtrakuta king <b>Dhruv</b>, thus <b>began “tripartite struggle”</b> and continued for about another 350 years.</li> <li>• Vatsrāja defeated the Pala ruler Dharmapala and Dantidurga, the Rashtrakuta king, for control of Kannauj.</li> </ul>
<b>Nagabhata II (805-833)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He <b>conquered Kannauj</b> and the Indo-Gangetic Plain as far as Bihar from the Palas, and again checked the Muslims in the west.</li> <li>• He <b>rebuilt the Shiva temple at Somnath in Gujarat</b>, which had been demolished in an Arab raid from Sindh.</li> </ul>

<b>Bhoja I/ Mihir Bhoja (836-885)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greatest ruler of Pratiharas, got victories over Palas and Rashtrakutas.</li> <li>• Capital at Kannauj, which also known as <b>Mahodaya</b>.</li> <li>• Devotee of Vishnu, adopted title '<b>Adivaraha</b>'.</li> </ul>
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Pratiharas were wiped out from political scenario by Ghaznavids and their rule was succeeded Chauhan in Rajputana, Chalukyas or Solanki in Gujarat and Paramara in Malwa.

**THE PALAS OF BENGAL: 750-1150**

- In 750 AD, **Gopala** founded Pala dynasty.
- **Capital:** Muddagiri/ Munger (Bihar)
- Pala kingdom included **Bengal and Bihar**, which included major cities of Pataliputra, Vikrampura, Monghyr, Tamralipti.
- Palas were followers of **Mahayana Buddhism and Tantric schools** of Buddhism.
- Pala had close **cultural relations with Tibet**. The noted Buddhist scholars, **Santarakshita** and **Dipankara** were invited to Tibet. They introduced a new form of religion there.
- They had close **trade contacts** and **cultural links** with South-East Asia.
- Sailendra dynasty (Buddhist) which ruled over Malaya, Java, Sumatra sent many embassies to the Pala court.
- Pala period is considered as **golden period in history of Bengal**.
- Pala armies were famous for its **vast war elephant cavalry**.
- Arab merchant **Sulaiman** had visited Pala kingdom.
- The Palas power were destroyed by the Sena dynasty under Vijyasena.

**IMPORTANT RULERS:**

<b>Gopala (around 750 CE)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As per Khalimpur copper inscription of Dharampala, he <b>founded Pala dynasty</b>, replacing later Guptas of Magadha and Khadga dynasty.</li> <li>• <b>Built famous Odantpuri monastery</b> at Bihar, 2<sup>nd</sup> largest after Nalanda university.</li> </ul>
<b>Dharampala (770-810)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defeated by Rashtrakuta king Dhruva and Pratihara king Nahabhatta II.</li> <li>• Founded the <b>Vikramshila University</b> near Bhagalpur, Bihar and built <b>Somapuri monastery</b> (paharpur, Bihar).</li> <li>• <b>Revived Nalanda University</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Devapala (810-850)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded empire in the east included Assam.</li> <li>• His Inscriptions proclaims his victory over Hunas, Gurjaras and Dravidas.</li> <li>• His Court poet was Buddhist scholar <b>Vajradatta, author of Lokesvarasataka</b>.</li> </ul>

<b>Pala &amp; Pratihara's Administration:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The directly administered territories were divided into <b>Bhukti</b> (province) and Mandala or <b>Visaya</b> (Districts)</li> <li>• The governor of Bhukti was called <b>Uparika</b> &amp; had duty to collect land revenue and maintain law and order.</li> <li>• The head of Visaya was <b>Visayapati</b> and had same duties like Uparika within their territories.</li> <li>• Smaller unit below the Visaya was <b>pattala</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Bhogapatis or Samantas</b> were small chieftain, dominated villages.</li> </ul>
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**THE RASHTRAKUTAS (DECCAN) (752-973)**

- Rashtrakutas meaning '**the chief of a rashtra**', they considered as the feudatory of the Chalukyas.