Prehistoric Telangana 4
Indus Valley Civilization and Telangana 7
Satavahana Dynasty 8
Ikshvaku Dynasty 10
Vakataka Dynasty 12
Chalukyas of Badami 14
Rashtrakuta Dynasty 16
Eastern Chalukyas 19
Kakatiyas' Early Beginnings 20
Buddhism in Telangana 23
Jainism in Telangana 24
Hinduism in Ancient Telangana 27
Tribal Societies in Ancient Telangana 28
Language and Literature 31
Art and Architecture 32
Economic Life 35
Coins and Inscriptions 37
Educational Centers 38
Social Structure 41
Wars and Conquests 42
Decline of Ancient Telangana Kingdoms 45
Post-Kakatiya Period 46
Delhi Sultanate's Influence 49
Bahmani Sultanate 50
Qutb Shahi Dynasty 52
Cultural Syncretism Under Qutb Shahis 54
Economic Prosperity 56
Deccan Sultanates and Regional Conflicts 57
Maratha Invasions 59
Mughal Expansion 61
Asaf Jahi Dynasty 63
Religious Practices and Architecture 64
Telangana’s Role in the Vijayanagara Empire 67
Tribal Societies in Medieval Telangana 68

Language and Literature 71
Art and Architecture 72
Society and Social Structure 75
Education and Learning 76
Coinage and Inscriptions 78
Agriculture and Irrigation 79
Trade and Commerce 82
Decline of Medieval Telangana Kingdoms 84
Rebellions and Resistance 86
Advent of European Powers 88
Decline of the Nizam's Sovereignty 90
Role of Hyderabad in the 1857 Revolt 91
Administrative Reforms Under the Nizams 93
Socio-Religious Reforms 94
Hyderabad Liberation Movement 97
Razakars and Communal Politics 99
Telangana Armed Struggle 101
Role of Telangana in Indian Freedom Struggle 102
Integration of Hyderabad State into India 105
Post-Independence Developments 106
Mulki Rules and Protests 108
1969 Telangana Agitation 109
Jai Andhra Movement 112
Telangana Statehood Movement 113
Formation of the State of Telangana (2014) 117
Economic Development During Nizam's Rule 118
Social and Cultural Developments 120
Women's Role in Modern Telangana History 122
Impact of Colonial Policies 125
Educational Reforms Under the Nizams 126
Religious and Communal Harmony 129
Evolution of Political Parties 130
Press and Literature 133
Impact of Global Events 135

Ancient History of Telangana

Prehistoric Telangana

Telangana, with its rich geographical and cultural heritage, holds a significant position in the prehistoric history of the Indian subcontinent. The region, owing to its varied topography and climatic conditions, has been a cradle for human habitation since the earliest times. This article delves into the prehistoric periods of Telangana: **Paleolithic**, **Mesolithic**, **Neolithic**, and **Megalithic**, outlining the developments in human culture, tools, and societal structure.

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1. Paleolithic Period (2.5 million - 10,000 BCE)

Overview

The Paleolithic period, also known as the Old Stone Age, is characterized by the use of rudimentary stone tools and a hunter-gatherer lifestyle. Telangana's archaeological sites provide evidence of human activity during this era.

Key Sites

- **Nagarjuna Sagar**: Several Paleolithic tools and artifacts have been discovered near the Krishna River basin.
- **Peddapalli**: Stone tools like hand axes and cleavers were unearthed, showcasing early human adaptation to the environment.

Tools and Technology

- Tools were primarily made of quartzite and other locally available stones.
- Implements included hand axes, scrapers, and flakes, used for hunting and processing food.

Lifestyle

- Early humans in this period were nomadic hunters and gatherers.
- Evidence of animal bones suggests hunting was a primary activity, supplemented by gathering wild fruits and nuts.

Significance

The findings from this period demonstrate the earliest human attempts at tool-making and survival in the semi-arid landscapes of Telangana.

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2. Mesolithic Period (10,000 - 8,000 BCE)

Overview

The Mesolithic period, or Middle Stone Age, marks a transitional phase between the Paleolithic and Neolithic eras. This period is characterized by smaller, more refined stone tools known as microliths.

Key Sites

- **Mahbubnagar and Sangareddy Districts**: Several microlithic tools were discovered, indicating an evolution in tool-making.
- **Kota Gullu**: Evidence of early settlements was found here, highlighting the transition from nomadic to semi-sedentary life.

Tools and Technology

- Microliths: Small, sharp tools made from fine stone, often used as spear or arrow tips.
- Bone tools: Some tools were made of animal bones, showing resourcefulness in utilizing available materials.

Lifestyle

- Semi-nomadic communities started to emerge, combining hunting with primitive agriculture.
- Domestication of animals such as dogs is evident from archaeological remains.

Art and Culture

- Rock art depicting animals and hunting scenes found in caves and shelters suggests a rudimentary form of artistic expression.

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3. Neolithic Period (8,000 - 2,000 BCE)

Overview

The Neolithic period, or New Stone Age, marks the beginning of agriculture, domestication of animals, and settled life. Telangana was a prominent region for Neolithic settlements, owing to its fertile soil and river systems.

Key Sites

- **Kodur and Palavoy**: Important Neolithic sites that have yielded polished stone tools and pottery fragments.
- **Gundrampalli**: Evidence of early farming and cattle rearing was discovered here.

Tools and Technology

- Polished tools: Axes and sickles made of stone, used for clearing land and harvesting crops.