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THE RAJPUTS

- The Rajputs always insisted that they were of the *kshatriya* caste and they were divided into clans.
- The Rajput kings belonged to ordered family, which connected them with either the sun-family (*surya-vamshi*) or the moon-family (*chandra-vamsha*) of ancient Indian kings.
- However, there were four clans who claimed that they had not descended from either of these two families, but rather from the fire-family (*agni-kula*).

Rajput Clans

- The four clans, namely –
 - Pratiharas, (or Pariharas),
 - Chauhans (or Chahamanas),
 - Solankis (or Chaulukyas), and
 - Pawars (or Paramaras).
- These four *agni-kula* clans established their power in western India and parts of central India.
 - The Pariharas ruled in the region of Kanauj;
 - The Chauhans were strong in central Rajasthan;
 - Solanki power rose in the region of Kathiawar and the surrounding areas, and
 - The Pawars established themselves in the region of Malwa with their capital at Dhar near Indore.
- Besides, some other minor rulers also became powerful and gradually built small kingdoms in various parts of northern India, for example –
 - Nepal,
 - Kamarupa (in Assam),
 - Kashmir, and
 - Utkala (in Orissa).
- Many of the hill states of the Punjab also developed during the early phase of medieval period; such as –
 - Champaka (Chamba),
 - Durgara (Jammu), and
 - Kuluta (Kulu) in Himachal.
- Some other worth noting kingdoms of central India (contemporary to the Rajputs) were –
 - The Chandelles in Bundelkhand,
 - The Guhilas in Mewar to the south of the Chauhans, and
 - The Tomaras in Haryana and the Delhi region.
- Over a period of time, the *Chauhans* defeated the *Tomaras* and annexed their kingdom.

- **Prithviraj III**, the prince of Chauhan dynasty, was the most powerful king of that period in northern India.
- Chandbardai, the Hindi poet of his (Prithviraj's) court had written the famous poem '*Prithviraja-raso.*'

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