

## THE PORTUGUESE

### How Portuguese became the first?

**1. Political ruler:** The rise of strong centralized state and kings in later part of 15th century favored the exploration to Indian subcontinent. The kings like **Prince Henry of Portugal** were nicknamed as the Navigator for his zeal to find a way to Indian Ocean in order to circumvent Muslim domination of eastern Mediterranean.



Prince Henry the Navigator

**2. Spirit of religion:** Pope Nicholas V gave Henry a bull in 1454 as a symbol to flight Islamic influence and spread Christian faith in as far as India and the East. The spirit of religion drove Portuguese to carry out missionary activities as well.

**3. Availability of Finances :** Italian (Florentines) and German financiers supplied cash and commodities to King of Lisbon Since copper was given in part-payment for Indian commodities, especially pepper and other spices, large quantity of copper was needed for transactions. Some of the German merchant financiers like the Fuggers had a monopoly over the production of copper in Europe.



Jakob Fugger

**4. Favorable factors in India:** Several Indian merchants supplied commodities to the Portuguese on credit when the latter did not have cash or commodities to furnish in exchange. For example, the king of Cochin came forward to help the Portuguese several times making the required volume of commodities available to them on credit



Bahmani Empire

- Along with this, **political conditions in India** also helped them gain prominence. For instance the Bahmani empire was disintegrating. And none of the powerful empires thought of creating a naval strength.
- The near-absence or the inferiority of the naval power of the Asian states greatly helped the policies of **the Estado da India** (lit. State of India; functional on behalf of Portuguese crown)