

## ch1-History-When, Where and How

### Various terms used for Indian Subcontinent

The ancient Greeks referred to the Indians as Indoi or 'People of the Indus. During medieval period, the name **Hindustan** gained popularity. If you look at a map of India, you will notice that river Indus or Sindhu and its five tributaries formed western frontier of India. Sindhu was a name which could not be pronounced correctly by people who invaded or visited India from Northwest. In their language, the 'S' became 'h'. So, instead of Sindhu, they pronounced the river's name as Hindu-and hence the name Hindustan, the land of the river Hindu.

The terms Hind & Hindustan were used in Persian and Arabic after the Islamic conquests of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. So, rulers of Delhi Sultanate and the Mughals began to call their Indian empire by the name of Hindustan. The term came to be used for the region of India between the river Indus and Brahmaputra and the Himalayan and Vindhyan mountains ranges. India's present name is also derived from the river Indus.

However, while the name Hindustan continued to be popular throughout the medieval period, the area which was covered by this name varied widely. For example, in the early medieval period, the name denoted the land lying between rivers Ganges and Yamuna,;in the late medieval period the name came to denote much of what is today modern India including South India.