



Winmeen.com

**Ancient
Indian History
Notes**

History Part - 1 to 4**1. Pre Historic Period****Notes**

The history of human settlements in India goes back to prehistoric times. **No written records** are available for the **prehistoric period**. However, plenty of archaeological remains are found in different parts of India to reconstruct the history of this period. They include the stone tools, pottery, artifacts and metal implements used by pre-historic people. The development of archaeology helps much to understand the life and culture of the people who lived in this period.

In India, the prehistoric period is divided into the **Paleolithic (Old Stone Age)**, **Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age)**, **Neolithic (New Stone Age)** and the Metal Age.

However, these periods were not uniform throughout the Indian subcontinent. The dating of the prehistoric period is done scientifically. **The technique of radio-carbon dating** is commonly used for this purpose. It is based on measuring the loss of carbon in organic materials over a period of time. **Another dating method** is known as **dendro-chronology**. It refers to the number of tree rings in wood. By counting the number of tree rings in The wood, the date of the wood is arrived at.

Paleolithic or Old Stone Age

The Old Stone Age sites are widely found in various parts of the Indian subcontinent. These sites are generally located near water sources. Several rock shelters and caves used by the Paleolithic people are scattered across the subcontinent. They also lived rarely in huts made of leaves.

Some of the famous sites of Old Stone Age in India are:

- a. The Soan valley and Potwar Plateau on the northwest India.
- b. The Siwalik hills on the north India.
- c. Bhimpetka in Madhya Pradesh.

d. Adamgarh hill in Narmada valley.

e. Kurnool in Andhra Pradesh and

f. Attirampakkam near Chennai.

In the Old Stone Age, food was obtained by hunting animals and gathering edible plants and tubers. Therefore, these people are called as **hunter-gatherers**. They used stone tools, hand-sized and flaked-off large pebbles for hunting animals. Stone implements are made of a hard rock known as quartzite. Large pebbles are often found in river terraces.

The hunting of large animals would have required the combined effort of a group of people with large stone axes. We have little knowledge about their language and communication. Their way of life became modified with the passage of time since they made attempts to domesticate animals, make crude pots and grow some plants.

A few **Old Stone Age paintings** have also been found on rocks at **Bhimbetka** and other places. The period **before 10000 B.C.** is assigned to the **Old Stone Age**.

Mesolithic or Middle Stone Age

The next stage of human life is called **Mesolithic or Middle Stone Age which falls roughly from 10000 B.C. to 6000 B.C.** It was the transitional phase between the Paleolithic Age and Neolithic Age. Mesolithic remains are found in Langhanj in Gujarat, Adamgarh in Madhya Pradesh and also in some places of Rajasthan, Utter Pradesh and Bihar.

The paintings and engravings found at the rock shelters give an idea about the social life and economic activities of Mesolithic people. In the sites of Mesolithic Age, a different type of stone tools is found. These are tiny stone artifacts, often not more than five centimeters in size, and therefore called microliths. The hunting-gathering pattern of life continued during this period. However, there seems to have been a shift from big animal hunting to small animal hunting and fishing.

The use of bow and arrow also began during this period. Also, there began a tendency to settle for longer periods in an area. Therefore, domestication of animals, horticulture and primitive cultivation started. Animal bones are found in these sites and these include dog, deer, boar and ostrich. Occasionally, burials of the dead along with some microliths and shells seem to have been practiced.

Neolithic Age

A remarkable progress is noticed in human civilization in the Neolithic Age. It is approximately dated from **6000 B.C to 4000 B.C.** Neolithic remains are found in various parts of India. These include the Kashmir valley, Chirand in Bihar, Belan valley in Uttar Pradesh and in several places of the Deccan. The important Neolithic sites excavated in south India are Maski, Brahmagiri, Hallur and Kodekal in Karnataka, Paiyampalli in Tamil Nadu and Utnur in Andhra Pradesh.

The chief characteristic features of the Neolithic culture are the **practice of agriculture**, domestication of animals, polishing of stone tools and the manufacture of pottery. In fact, the cultivation of plants and domestication of animals led to the emergence of village communities based on sedentary life.

There was a great improvement in technology of making tools and other equipments used by man. Stone tools were now polished. The polished axes were found to be more effective tools for hunting and cutting trees. Mud brick houses were built instead of grass huts. Wheels were used to make pottery. Pottery was used for cooking as well as storage of food grains.

Large urns were used as coffins for the burial of the dead. There was also improvement in agriculture. Wheat, barely, rice, millet were cultivated in different areas at different points of time. Rice cultivation was extensive in eastern India. Domestication of sheep, goats and cattle was widely prevalent. Cattle were used for cultivation and for transport. The people of Neolithic Age used clothes made of cotton and wool.

Metal Age

The Neolithic period is followed by Chalcolithic (copper-stone) period when copper and **bronze came to be used**. The new technology of smelting metal ore and crafting metal artifacts is an important development in human civilization. But the use of stone tools was not given up. Some of the micro-lithic tools continued to be essential items. People began to travel for a long distance to obtain metal ores. This led to a network of Chalcolithic cultures and the Chalcolithic cultures were found in many parts of India.

Generally, **Chalcolithic cultures had grown in river valleys**. Most importantly, the Harappan culture is considered as a part of Chalcolithic culture. In South India the river valleys of the Godavari, Krishna, Tungabhadra, Pennar and Kaveri were settled by farming communities during this period. Although they were not using metals in the beginning of the Metal Age, there is evidence of copper and bronze artifacts by the end of second millennium B.C. Several bronze and copper objects, beads, terracotta figurines and pottery were found at Paiyampalli in Tamil Nadu.

The Chalcolithic age is followed by Iron Age. Iron is frequently referred to in the Vedas. The Iron Age of the southern peninsula is often related to Megalithic Burials. Megalith means Large Stone. The burial pits were covered with these stones. Such graves are extensively found in South India. Some of the important megalithic sites are Hallur and Maski in Karnataka, Nagarjunakonda in Andhra Pradesh and Adichchanallur in Tamil Nadu. Black and red pottery, iron artifacts such as hoes and sickles and small weapons were found in the burial pits.

Questions With Answers

1. In which part of Tamil Nadu was the eggs of Dinosaur discovered?
The eggs of Dinosaur were discovered in an excavation in Ariyalur of Tamil Nadu.
2. What gives us information on the people who lived before us with evidence and periodic tables?
History.
3. In which part of Tamil Nadu has there been excavation for past 100 years?
Atichanallur, which is at the district of Tirunelveli.
4. In the year 2004 where did they find the 160 burial urns of people in Tamil Nadu?
Atichanallur, which is at the district of Tirunelveli.

5. Which are called as historic evidences?

- Period in which people lived
- Events
- Food habits
- Customs
- Culture
- Forms of Government
- Literature etc.

6. How many divisions are there in History?

History is been divided in two types as Pre-Historic Period and Historical period.

7. What is historical period?

Historical period has the written evidence and other evidences.

8. What is known as written evidences?

The written evidences are literary works, historical notes, stone edicts, copper plates and palm leaves.

9. What are the evidence to know about the pre-historic period?

To know about the pre historic period, there are evidences such as the things that belonged to that period, ruins, fossils, horns and bones of animals, tools made of stones, skulls and deposits (impressions) which are found in different places around the world as well as in India. with the help of these we know about the pre-historic period of India.

10. How can we classify the pre-historic period?

The pre-historic period can be classified as follows,

- Paleolithic age – Old stone age (BC 10000 years ago)
- Neolithic age – New stone age (BC 10000 – BC 4000)
- Chalcolithic age – Copper Stone age (BC 3000 – BC 600)
- Iron age (BC 1500 – BC 600)

11. How can we classify Stone Age?

With the help of the tools used by early man, we can divide the Stone Age into Old Stone Age and New Stone Age.

12. Which is an evidence to prove that women who lived in Old Stone Age were into hunting?

In the Pimpet Ca Cave in Madhya Pradesh we can see a painting. This painting depicts that women with her child tied to her waist is throwing an arrow. From this we know that women were also involved in hunting.

13. Name the places in India where the Old Stone Age tools were found?

- Madhya Pradesh - Soan River bank, Pimpet Ca, Mageshwa.
- Rajasthan - Luni Valley
- Karnataka - Pagalkhat
- Andhra Pradesh - Karnool caves, Renigunta.
- Tamil Nadu - Vadamadurai, Attirampakkam, Pallavaram, Kanchipuram, Vellur, Thiruvallur.

14. Which is the first animal tamed by man?

Dog

15. What is the next step of human evolution called as?

New Stone Age.

16. In which period wheels were introduced?

New Stone Age.

17. Which was the first metal used by human?

Copper.

18. How is copper age called as?

Chalcolithic Age.

19. Which period of civilization does the Harappa Civilization comes to?

Copper Stone Age.

20. In which period did they use tools made out of Iron?

The period when the tools were made up of Iron was called as Iron Age. Household articles and agricultural implements were made out of iron. They learnt to melt the metal and make weapons. They were creative. Vedic period belonged to the Iron Age.

21. Name the places in India where the New Stone Age Weapons were found?

Tirunelveli, Thandikudi, Pudukottai, Tiruchirapalli and Salem

2. Indus Vally Civilization

Notes

The Harappan Civilization

The earliest excavations in the Indus valley were done at Harappa in the West Punjab and Mohenjodaro in Sind. Both places are now in Pakistan. The findings in these two cities brought to light a civilization. It was first called the 'The Indus Valley Civilization'. But this civilization was later named as the 'Indus Civilization' due to the discovery of more and more sites far away from the Indus valley. Also, it has come to be called the 'Harappan Civilization' after the name of its first discovered site.

Important Sites

Among the many other sites excavated, the most important are Kot Diji in Sind, Kalibangan in Rajasthan, Rupar in the Punjab, Banawali in Haryana, Lothal, Surkotada and Dholavira, all the three in Gujarat. The larger cities are approximately a hundred hectares in size. Mohenjodara is the largest of all the Indus cities and it is estimated to have spread over an area of 200 hectares.

Origin and Evolution

The archaeological findings excavated for the last eight decades reveal the gradual development of the Harappan culture. There are four important stages or phases of evolution and they are named as pre-Harappan, early-Harappan, mature-Harappan and late Harappan.

The pre-Harappan stage is located in eastern Baluchistan. The excavations at Mehrgarh 150 miles to the northwest of Mohenjodaro reveal the existence of pre-Harappan culture. In this stage, the nomadic people began to lead a settled agricultural life.

In the early-Harappan stage, the people lived in large villages in the plains. There was a gradual growth of towns in the Indus valley. Also, the transition from rural to urban life took place during this period. The sites of Amri and Kot Diji remain the evidence for early-Harappan stage.

In the mature-Harappan stage, great cities emerged. The excavations at Kalibangan with its elaborate town planning and urban features prove this phase of evolution.

In the late-Harappan stage, the decline of the Indus culture started. The excavations at Lothal reveal this stage of evolution. Lothal with its port was founded much later. It was surrounded by a

massive brick wall as flood protection. Lothal remained an emporium of trade between the Harappan civilization and the remaining part of India as well as Mesopotamia.

Date of the Harappan Culture

In 1931, Sir John Marshall estimated the duration of the occupation of Mohenjodaro between 3250 and 2750 B.C. Subsequently, as and when new sites were discovered, the dating of the Harappan culture is modified. The advent of the radiocarbon method paves way for fixing almost accurate dates. By 1956, Fairservis brought down the dating of the Harappan culture to between 2000 and 1500 B.C.

on the basis of radiocarbon dates of his findings. In 1964, D.P. Agarwal came to the conclusion that the total span of this culture should be between 2300 and 1750 B.C. Yet, there is further scope of modification of these dates.

Salient Features of the Harappan Culture

Town Planning

The Harappan culture was distinguished by its system of townplanning on the lines of the grid system - that is streets and lanes cutting across one another almost at right angles thus dividing the city into several rectangular blocks. Harappa, Mohenjodaro and Kalibangan each had its own citadel built on a high podium of mud brick. Below the citadel in each city lay a lower town containing brick houses, which were inhabited by the common people.

The large-scale use of burnt bricks in almost all kinds of constructions and the absence of stone buildings are the important characteristics of the Harappan culture.

Another remarkable feature was the underground drainage system connecting all houses to the street drains which were covered by stone slabs or bricks. The most important public place of Mohenjodaro is the Great Bath measuring 39 feet length, 23 feet breadth and 8 feet depth. Flights of steps at either end lead to the surface. There are side rooms for changing clothes. The floor of the Bath was made of burnt bricks. Water was drawn from a large well in an adjacent room, and an

outlet from one corner of the Bath led to a drain. It must have served as a ritual bathing site. The largest building in Mohenjodaro is a granary measuring 150 feet length and 50 feet breadth. But in the citadel of Harappa we find as many as six granaries.

Economic life

There was a great progress in all spheres of economic activity such as agriculture, industry and crafts and trade. Wheat and barley were the main crops grown besides sesame, mustard and cotton. Surplus grain is stored in granaries. Animals like sheep, goats and buffalo were domesticated. The use of horse is not yet firmly established. A number of other animals were hunted for food including deer.

Specialized groups of artisans include goldsmiths, brick makers, stone cutters, weavers, boat-builders and terracotta manufacturers. Bronze and copper vessels are the outstanding examples of the Harappan metal craft. Gold and silver ornaments are found in many places. Pottery remains plain and in some places red and black painted pottery is found. Beads were manufactured from a wide variety of semi-precious stones.

Internal trade was extensive with other parts of India. Foreign trade was mainly conducted with Mesopotamia, Afghanistan and Iran. Gold, copper, tin and several semi-precious stones were imported. Main exports were several agricultural products such as wheat, barley, peas, oil seeds and a variety of finished products including cotton goods, pottery, beads, terracotta figures and ivory products.

There is much evidence to prove the trade links between the Indus and Sumerian people. Many seals of Indus valley have been found in Mesopotamia. Trade was of the barter type. The seals and the terracotta models of the Indus valley reveal the use of bullock carts and oxen for land transport and boats and ships for river and sea transport.

Social Life

Much evidence is available to understand the social life of the Harappans. The dress of both men and women consisted of two pieces of cloth, one upper garment and the other lower garment. Beads were worn by men and women. Jewelleries such as bangles, bracelets, fillets, girdles, anklets, ear-rings and fingerrings were worn by women. These ornaments were made of gold, silver, copper, bronze and semi precious stones.

The use of cosmetics was common. Various household articles made of pottery, stone, shells, ivory and metal have been found at Mohenjodaro. Spindles, needles, combs, fishhooks, knives are made of copper. Children's toys include little clay carts. Marbles, balls and dice were used for games. Fishing was a regular occupation while hunting and bull fighting were other pastimes. There were numerous specimens of weapons of war such as axes, spearheads, daggers, bows, arrows made of copper and bronze.

Arts

The Harappan sculpture revealed a high degree of workmanship. Figures of men and women, animals and birds made of terracotta and the carvings on the seals show the degree of proficiency attained by the sculptor. The figure of a dancing girl from Mohenjodaro made of bronze is remarkable for its workmanship. Its right hand rests on the hip, while the left arm, covered with bangles, hangs loosely in a relaxed posture. Two stone statues from Harappa, one representing the back view of a man and the other of a dancer are also specimens of their sculpture. The pottery from Harappa is another specimen of the fine arts of the Indus people. The pots and jars were painted with various designs and colours. Painted pottery is of better quality. The pictorial motifs consisted of geometrical patterns like horizontal lines, circles, leaves, plants and trees. On some pottery pieces we find figures of fish or peacock.

Script

The Harappan script has still to be fully deciphered. The number of signs is between 400 and 600 of which 40 or 60 are basic and the rest are their variants. The script was mostly written from right to left. In a few long seals the boustrophedon method - writing in the reverse direction in

alternative lines - was adopted. Parpola and his Scandinavian colleagues came to the conclusion that the language of the Harappans was Dravidian. A group of Soviet scholars accepts this view. Other scholars provide different view connecting the Harappan script with that of Brahmi. The mystery of the Harappan script still exists and there is no doubt that the decipherment of Harappan script will throw much light on this culture.

Religion

From the seals, terracotta figurines and copper tablets we get an idea on the religious life of the Harappans. The chief male deity was Pasupati, (proto-Siva) represented in seals as sitting in a yogic posture with three faces and two horns. He is surrounded by four animals (elephant, tiger, rhino, and buffalo each facing a different direction). Two deer appear on his feet. The chief female deity was the Mother Goddess represented in terracotta figurines. In latter times, Linga worship was prevalent. Trees and animals were also worshipped by the Harappans. They believed in ghosts and evil forces and used amulets as protection against them.

Burial Methods

The cemeteries discovered around the cities like Mohenjodaro, Harappa, Kalibangan, Lothal and Rupar throw light on the burial practices of the Harappans. Complete burial and post-cremation burial were popular at Mohenjodaro. At Lothal the burial pit was lined with burnt bricks indicating the use of coffins. Wooden coffins were also found at Harappa. The practice of pot burials is found at Lothal sometimes with pairs of skeletons. However, there is no clear evidence for the practice of Sati.

Decline of the Harappan Culture

There is no unanimous view pertaining to the cause for the decline of the Harappan culture. Various theories have been postulated. Natural calamities like recurring floods, drying up of rivers, decreasing fertility of the soil due to excessive exploitation and occasional earthquakes might have caused the decline of the Harappan cities.

According to some scholars the final blow was delivered by the invasion of Aryans. The destruction of forts is mentioned in the Rig Veda. Also, the discovery of human skeletons huddled together at Mohenjodaro indicates that the city was invaded by foreigners. The Aryans had superior weapons as well as swift horses which might have enabled them to become masters of this region.

Questions With Answers

1. How is Harappa Civilization called as?

City Civilization

2. Which civilization was beginning of civilization in India?

Indus Vally Civilization

3. In which period did the British found burnt bricks and ruins?

1856

4. Which was the place where British found burnt bricks and ruins?

In 1856, while the British were trying to build railway lines near the banks of River Ravi they found mound of sand, well burnt bricks and ruins.

5. Which is the ancient civilization in India?

Harappa.

6. When was Harappa Civilization found in Ancient India?

1921

7. Which language is the word Harappa comes from?

Sindhi

8. What is the meaning of the term Harappa?

Buried City.

9. When was Harappa Civilization flourished in India?

4700 years ago.

10. Name some other cities found through ruins?

Mohenjo-Daro, Chanhu-Daro, Kalibangan, and Lothal.

11. Where is the 'Great Bath' found?

Mohenjo-Daro

12. Where is Lothal situated?

Gujarat

13. What does Mohenjo-Daro mean?

Learning Leads To Ruling

`Mound of Death`

14. What were the techniques of Indus Vally Civilization?

Buildings, Town Planning, administration, drainage system, applied science.

15. What was used to make pots?

Wheel

16. What are the metals used during Indus Vally Civilization?

Copper, Bronze, Gold, Silver. For measurement purpose they used some kind of stone. They did not use iron.

17. Important Business: Agriculture

Cultivation: Wheat and barley

Dress: cotton and wool

Written Process: Pictographic

18. What was the most important product made by Indus Vally Civilization?

Terracotta

19. What were the sculptures of Indus Vally Civilization?

- **Dancing girls sculpture from Mohenja-Daro.**
- **Statue of man with beard made of limestone.**

20. Which god is work shipped by Indus Vally Civilization?

Lord Shiva represented as Pasupathi, Mother Goddess, Lingam, Trident, and Trees.

3. Vedic Period**Notes**

The cities of the Harappan Culture had declined by 1500 B.C. Consequently, their economic and administrative system had slowly declined. Around this period, the speakers of Indo-Aryan language, Sanskrit, entered the north-west India from the Indo-Iranian region. Initially they would have come in small numbers through the passes in the northwestern mountains. Their initial settlements were in the valleys of the north-west and the plains of the Punjab.

Later, they moved into Indo-Gangetic plains. As they were mainly a cattle-keeping people, they were mainly in search of pastures. By 6th century B.C., they occupied the whole of North India, which was referred to as Aryavarta. This period between 1500 B.C and 600 B.C may be divided into

the Early Vedic Period or Rig Vedic Period (1500 B.C - 1000 B.C) and the Later Vedic Period (1000B.C - 600 B.C).

Original Home of the Aryans

The original home of the Aryans is a debatable question and there are several views. Different scholars have identified different regions as the original home of the Aryans. They include the Arctic region, Germany, Central Asia and southern Russia. Bala Gangadhara Tilak argues that the Aryans came from the Arctic region on astronomical calculations.

However, the theory of southern Russia appears to be more probable and widely accepted by historians. From there, the Aryans moved to different parts of Asia and Europe. They entered India in about 1500 B.C. and came to be known as Indo-Aryans. They spoke the Indo-Aryan language, Sanskrit.

Vedic Literature

The word 'Veda' is derived from the root 'vid', which means to know. In other words, the term 'Veda' signifies 'superior knowledge'. The Vedic literature consists of the four Vedas - Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva. The Rig Veda is the earliest of the four Vedas and it consists of 1028 hymns. The hymns were sung in praise of various gods. The Yajur Veda consists of various details of rules to be observed at the time of sacrifice. The Sama Veda is set to tune for the purpose of chanting during sacrifice. It is called the book of chants and the origins of Indian music are traced in it. The Atharva Veda contains details of rituals.

Besides the Vedas, there are other sacred works like the Brahmanas, the Upanishads, the Aranyakas and the epics Ramayana and Mahabharata. The Brahmanas are the treatises relating to prayer and sacrificial ceremony. The Upanishads are philosophical texts dealing with topic like the soul, the absolute, the origin of the world and the mysteries of nature. The Aranyakas are called forest books and they deal with mysticism, rites, rituals and sacrifices. The author of Ramayana was Valmiki and that of Mahabharata was Vedavyas.

Rig Vedic Age or Early Vedic Period (1500 - 1000 B.C.)

During the Rig Vedic period, the Aryans were mostly confined to the Indus region. The Rig Veda refers to Saptasindhu or the land of seven rivers. This includes the five rivers of Punjab, namely Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas and Sutlej along with the Indus and Saraswathi. The political, social and cultural life of the Rig Vedic people can be traced from the hymns of the Rig Veda.

Political Organization

The basic unit of political organization was kula or family. Several families joined together on the basis of their kinship to form a village or grama. The leader of grama was known as gramani. A group of villages constituted a larger unit called visu. It was headed by vishayapati. The highest political unit was called jana or tribe. There were several tribal kingdoms during the Rig Vedic period such as Bharatas, Matsyas, Yadus and Purus.

The head of the kingdom was called as rajan or king. The Rig Vedic polity was normally monarchical and the succession was hereditary. The king was assisted by purohita or priest and senani or commander of the army in his administration. There were two popular bodies called the Sabha and Samiti. The former seems to have been a council of elders and the latter, a general assembly of the entire people.

Social Life

The Rig Vedic society was patriarchal. The basic unit of society was family or graham. The head of the family was known as grahapathi. Monogamy was generally practiced while polygamy was prevalent among the royal and noble families. The wife took care of the household and participated in all the major ceremonies. Women were given equal opportunities as men for their spiritual and intellectual development. There were women poets like Apala, Viswavara, Ghosa and Lopamudra during the Rig Vedic period. Women could even attend the popular assemblies. There was no child marriage and the practice of sati was absent.

Both men and women wore upper and lower garments made of cotton and wool. A variety of ornaments were used by both men and women. Wheat and barley, milk and its products like curd and ghee, vegetables and fruits were the chief articles of food. The eating of cow's meat was prohibited since it was a sacred animal. Chariot racing, horse racing, dicing, music and dance were the favourite pastimes. The social divisions were not rigid during the Rig Vedic period as it was in the later Vedic period.

Economic Condition

The Rig Vedic Aryans were pastoral people and their main occupation was cattle rearing. Their wealth was estimated in terms of their cattle. When they permanently settled in North India they began to practice agriculture. With the knowledge and use of iron they were able to clear forests and bring more lands under cultivation.

Carpentry was another important profession and the availability of wood from the forests cleared made the profession profitable. Carpenters produced chariots and ploughs. Workers in metal made a variety of articles with copper, bronze and iron. Spinning was another important occupation and cotton and woolen fabrics were made. Goldsmiths were active in making ornaments. The potters made various kinds of vessels for domestic use.

Trade was another important economic activity and rivers served as important means of transport. Trade was conducted on barter system. In the later times, gold coins called nishka were used as media of exchange in large transactions.

Religion

The Rig Vedic Aryans worshiped the natural forces like earth, fire, wind, rain and thunder. They personified these natural forces into many gods and worshipped them. The important Rig Vedic gods were Prithvi (Earth), Agni (Fire), Vayu (Wind), Varuna (Rain) and Indra (Thunder). Indra was the most popular among them during the early Vedic period. Next in importance to Indra was Agni who was regarded as an intermediary between the gods and people.

Varuna was supposed to be the upholder of the natural order. There were also female gods like Aditi and Ushas. There were no temples and no idol worship during the early Vedic period. Prayers were offered to the gods in the expectation of rewards. Ghee, milk and grain were given as offerings. Elaborate rituals were followed during the worship.

Later Vedic Period (1000 – 600 B.C.)

The Aryans further moved towards east in the Later Vedic Period. The Satapatha Brahmana refers to the expansion of Aryans to the eastern Gangetic plains. Several tribal groups and kingdoms are mentioned in the later Vedic literature. One important development during this period is the growth of large kingdoms. Kuru and Panchala kingdoms flourished in the beginning. Parikshat and Janamejaya were the famous rulers of Kuru kingdom. Pravahana Jaivali was a popular king of the Panchalas. He was a patron of learning. After the fall of Kurus and Panchalas, other kingdoms like Kosala,

Kasi and Videha came into prominence. The famous ruler of Kasi was Ajatasatru. Janaka was the king of Videha with its capital at Mithila. His court was adorned by scholar Yajnavalkya. Magadha, Anga and Vanga seem to be the easternmost tribal kingdoms. The later Vedic texts also refer to the three divisions of India - Aryavarta (northern India), Madhyadesa (central India) and Dakshinapatha (southern India).

Political Organization

Larger kingdoms were formed during the later Vedic period. Many jana or tribes were amalgamated to form janapadas or rashtras in the later Vedic period. Hence the royal power had increased along with the increase in the size of kingdom. The king performed various rituals and sacrifices to strengthen his position. They include Rajasuya (consecration ceremony), Asvamedha (horse sacrifice) and Vajpeya (chariot race). The kings also assumed titles like Rajavisvajanan, Ahilabhuvanapathi, (lord of all earth), Ekraat and Samrat (sole ruler).

In the later Vedic period, a large number of new officials were involved in the administration in addition to the existing purohita, senani and gramani. They include the treasury officer, tax

collector and royal messenger. At the lower levels, the administration was carried on by the village assemblies. The importance of the Samiti and the Sabha had diminished during the later Vedic period.

Economic Condition

Iron was used extensively in this period and this enabled the people to clear forests and to bring more land under cultivation. Agriculture became the chief occupation. Improved types of implements were used for cultivation. Besides barley, rice and wheat were grown. Knowledge of manure was another improvement. Industrial activity became more varied and there was greater specialization. Metal work, leather work, carpentry and pottery made great progress. In addition to internal trade, foreign trade became extensive.

The Later Vedic people were familiar with the sea and they traded with countries like Babylon. A class of hereditary merchants (vaniya) came into existence. Vaisyas also carried on trade and commerce. They organized themselves into guilds known as ganas. Besides nishka of the Rig Vedic period, gold and silver coins like satamana and krishnala were used as media of exchange.

Social Life

The four divisions of society (Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras) or the Varna system was thoroughly established during the Later Vedic period. The two higher classes - Brahmana, and Kshatriya enjoyed privileges that were denied to the Vaisya and Sudra. A Brahmin occupied a higher position than a Kshatriya but sometimes Kshatriyas claimed a higher status over the Brahmins. Many sub-castes on the basis of their occupation appeared in this period.

In the family, the power of the father increased during the Later Vedic period. There was no improvement in the status of women. They were still considered inferior and subordinate to men. Women also lost their political rights of attending assemblies.

Child marriages had become common. According to the Aitareya Brahmana a daughter has been described as a source of misery. However, the women in the royal household enjoyed certain privileges.

Religion

Gods of the Early Vedic period like Indra and Agni lost their importance. Prajapati (the creator), Vishnu (the protector) and Rudra (the destroyer) became prominent during the Later Vedic period. Sacrifices were still important and the rituals connected with them became more elaborate. The importance of prayers declined and that of sacrifices increased. Priesthood became a profession and a hereditary one.

The formulae for sacrifices were invented and elaborated by the priestly class. Therefore, towards the end of this period there was a strong reaction against priestly domination and against sacrifices and rituals. The rise of Buddhism and Jainism was the direct result of these elaborate sacrifices. Also, the authors of the Upanishads, which is the essence of Hindu philosophy, turned away from the useless rituals and insisted on true knowledge (jnana) for peace and salvation.

Questions With Answers

1. The place where Aryans settled in India is called as - **Arya Vardham**.
2. The Aryans migrated to India through - **Khyber and Bolan**
3. Aryans made their livelihood by herding the cattle. They compiled the prayers of their ancestors as Vedas. In History this was called as Vedic Age.
4. The Vedic Age was classified into two types,
 - **Early Vedic Age: BC 1500 - BC 1000**
 - **Later Vedic Age: BC 1000 - BC 600**
5. Early Vedic Age - **Rig Veda**
6. **Sapta Sindhu** - The Land of Seven Rivers
7. In Rig Veda, Aryans lived in Sindhu which is now in Pakistan. They settled in Sapta Sindhu in Punjab.
8. The basic unit of the society - **Family**
Many Families - **Village**

Many Villages - **Vis** - Head - Vishwapathy

The next higher administration - **Jana**- Head- Rajan (King)

People lived in kingdom - **Prajas** (King - Prajapathi)

Many Chieftains- **Mahajanapadas**

9. **Saba**- Group of Elders

Samithi - Representatives of people

10. Women Poets of Early Vedic Age

- **Vishwawara**
- **Abala**
- **Kosa**
- **Lobamuthra**

11. In Early Vedic Age Widows Remarriage was accepted.

12. **In Early Vedic Age** - Cattle rearing, agriculture were the important business.

13. **Yagas made during Early Vedic Age** - Ashvamedha, Rajasuya and Vajapaya.

14. **Later Vedic Period**: Sama Veda, Atharvana Veda, Yajur Veda.

15. During the Later Vedic Period Brahmanas, Upanishads, Aranyakas were written.

16. Later Vedic Period : (**B.C 1000 to BC 600**)

- The metal widely used was iron.
- According to the number of cattle owned by a person his wealth and economic status was estimated.
- Sati, according to which the widow will throw herself into the funeral pyre of her husband, was in practice.
- Highly educated women are Gargi, Maitreyi.

17. Gold silver Coins - **Nishka, Swarna and Satamana** were in use in Later Vedic Period.

18. **Thanur Veda**: War Practice.

4. Sangam Period

Notes

The Sangam Age constitutes an important chapter in the history of South India. According to Tamil legends, there existed three Sangams (Academy of Tamil poets) in ancient Tamil Nadu popularly called Muchchangam. These Sangams flourished under the royal patronage of the Pandyas. The first Sangam, held at Then Madurai, was attended by gods and legendary sages but no

literary work of this Sangam was available. The second Sangam was held at Kapadapuram but the all the literary works had perished except Tolkappiyam. The third Sangam at Madurai was founded by Mudathirumaran. It was attended by a large number of poets who produced voluminous literature but only a few had survived. These Tamil literary works remain useful sources to reconstruct the history of the Sangam Age.

Sangam Literature

The corpus of Sangam literature includes Tolkappiyam, Ettutogai, Pattuppattu, Pathinenkilkanakku, and the two epics - Silappathigaram and Manimegalai. Tolkappiyam authored by Tolkappiyar is the earliest of the Tamil literature. It is a work on Tamil grammar but it provides information on the political and socio economic conditions of the Sangam period. The Ettutogai or Eight Anthologies consist of eight works - Aingurunooru, Narrinai, Aganaooru, Purananooru, Kuruntogai, Kalittogai, Paripadal and Padirrupattu. The Pattuppattu or Ten Idylls consist of ten works - Thirumurugarruppadai, Porunararruppadai, Sirupanarruppadai, Perumpanarruppadai, Mullaippattu, Nedunavadai, Maduraikkanji, Kurinjippattu, Pattinappalai and Malaipadukadam. Both Ettutogai and Pattuppattu were divided into two main groups - Aham (love) and Puram (valour). Pathinenkilkanakku contains eighteen works mostly dealing with ethics and morals. The most important among them is Tirukkural authored by Thiruvalluvar. Silappathigaram written by Elango Adigal and Manimegalai by Sittalai Sattanar also provides valuable information on the Sangam polity and society.

Other Sources

In addition to the Sangam literature, the Greek authors like Megasthenes, Strabo, Pliny and Ptolemy mention the commercial contacts between the West and South India. The Asokan inscriptions mention the Chera, Chola and Pandya rulers on the south of the Mauryan empire. The Hathikumbha inscription of Kharavela of Kalinga also mentions about Tamil kingdoms. The excavations at Arikamedu, Poompuhar, Kodumanal and other places reveal the overseas commercial activities of the Tamils.

Period of Sangam Literature

The chronology of the Sangam literature is still a disputed topic among the scholars. The sheet anchor of Sangam chronology lies in the fact that Gajabhagu II of Sri Lanka and Cheran Senguttuvan of the Chera dynasty were contemporaries. This is confirmed by Silappathigaram as well as the Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa. Also the Roman coins issued by Roman emperors of the first century A.D were found in plenty in various places of Tamil Nadu. Therefore, the most probable date of the Sangam literature has been fixed between the third century B.C. to third century A.D. on the basis of literary, archaeological and numismatic evidences.

Political History

The Tamil country was ruled by three dynasties namely the Chera, Chola and Pandyas during the Sangam Age. The political history of these dynasties can be traced from the literary references.

Cheras

The Cheras ruled over parts of modern Kerala. Their capital was Vanji and their important seaports were Tondi and Musiri. They had the palmyra flowers as their garland. The Pugalur inscription of the first century A.D refers to three generations of Chera rulers. Padirruppattu also provides information on Chera kings. Perum Sorru Udhiyan Cheralathan, Imayavaramban Nedum Cheralathan and Cheran Senguttuvan were the famous rulers of this dynasty.

Cheran Senguttuvan belonged to 2nd century A.D. His younger brother was Elango Adigal, the author of Silappathigaram. Among his military achievements, his expedition to the Himalayas was remarkable. He defeated many north Indian monarchs.

Senguttuvan introduced the Pattini cult or the worship of Kannagi as the ideal wife in Tamil Nadu. The stone for making the idol of Kannagi was brought by him after his Himalayan expedition. The consecration ceremony was attended by many princes including Gajabhagu II from Sri Lanka.

Cholas

The Chola kingdom of the Sangam period extended from modern Tiruchi district to southern Andhra Pradesh. Their capital was first located at Uraiyur and then shifted to Puhar. Karikala was a famous king of the Sangam Cholas. Pattinappalai portrays his early life and his military conquests. In the Battle of Venni he defeated the mighty confederacy consisting of the Cheras, Pandyas and eleven minor chieftains. This event is mentioned in many Sangam poems. Vahaipparandalai was another important battle fought by him in which nine enemy chieftains submitted before him. Karikala's military achievements made him the overlord of the whole Tamil country. Trade and commerce flourished during his reign period. He was responsible for the reclamation of forest lands and brought them under cultivation thus adding prosperity to the people. He also built Kallanai across the river Kaveri and also constructed many irrigation tanks.

Pandyas

The Pandyas ruled over the present day southern Tamil Nadu. Their capital was Madurai. The earliest kings of the Pandyan dynasty were Nediyon, Palyagasalai Mudukudumi Peruvaludhi and Mudathirumaran. There were two Neduncheliyans. The first one was known as Aryappadai Kadantha Nedunchelihan (one who won victories over the Aryan forces). He was responsible for the execution of Kovalan for which Kannagi burnt Madurai. The other was Talaiyalanganattu Cheruvenra (He who won the battle at Talaiyalanganam) Nedunchelihan. He was praised by Nakkirar and Mangudi Maruthanar. He wore this title after defeating his enemies at the Battle of Talaiyalanganam, which is located in the Tanjore district. By this victory Nedunchelihan gained control over the entire Tamil Nadu. Maduraikkanji written by Mangudi Maruthanar describes the socio-economic condition of the Pandya country including the flourishing seaport of Korkai. The last famous Pandyan king was Uggira Peruvaludhi. The Pandyan rule during the Sangam Age began to decline due to the invasion of the Kalabhras.

Minor Chieftains

The minor chieftains played a significant role in the Sangam period. Among them Pari, Kari, Ori, Nalli, Pegan, Ay and Adiyaman were popular for their philanthropy and patronage of Tamil poets. Therefore, they were known as Kadai Yelu Vallalgal.

Although they were subordinate to the Chera, Chola and Pandya rulers, they were powerful and popular in their respective regions.

Sangam Polity

Hereditary monarchy was the form of government during the Sangam period. The king had also taken the advice of his minister, court-poet and the imperial court or avai. The Chera kings assumed titles like Vanavaramban, Vanavan, Kuttuvan, Irumporai and Villavar, the Chola kings like Senni, Valavan and Killi and the Pandya kings Thennavar and Minavar. Each of the Sangam dynasties had a royal emblem - carp for the Pandyas, tiger for the Cholas and bow for the Cheras. The imperial court or avai was attended by a number of chiefs and officials. The king was assisted by a large body of officials who were divided into five councils. They were ministers (amaichar), priests (anthanar), military commanders (senapathi), envoys (thuthar) and spies (orzar). The military administration was also efficiently organized during the Sangam Age. Each ruler had a regular army and their respective Kodimaram (tutelary tree).

Land revenue was the chief source of state's income while custom duty was also imposed on foreign trade. The Pattinappalai refers to the custom officials employed in the seaport of Puhar. Booty captured in wars was also a major income to the royal treasury. Roads and highways were well maintained and guarded night and day to prevent robbery and smuggling.

Sangam Society

Tolkappiyam refers to the five - fold division of lands - Kurinji (hilly tracks), Mullai (pastoral), Marudam (agricultural), Neydal (coastal) and Palai (desert). The people living in these five divisions had their respective chief occupations as well as gods for worship.

- **Kurinji - chief deity was Murugan - chief occupation, hunting and honey collection.**
- **Mullai - chief deity Mayon (Vishnu) - chief occupation, cattle-rearing and dealing with dairy products.**
- **Marudam - chief deity Indira - chief occupation, agriculture.**
- **Neydal - chief deity Varunan - chief occupation fishing and salt manufacturing.**

- **Palai – chief deity Korravai – chief occupation robbery.**

Tolkappiyam also refers to four castes namely arasar, anthanar, vanigar and vellalar. The ruling class was called arasar. Anthanars played a significant role in the Sangam polity and religion. Vanigars carried on trade and commerce. The vellalas were agriculturists. Other tribal groups like Parathavar, Panar, Eyinar, Kadambar, Maravar and Pulaiyar were also found in the Sangam society. Ancient primitive tribes like Thodas, Irulas, Nagas and Vedars lived in this period.

Religion

The primary deity of the Sangam period was Seyon or Murugan, who is hailed as Tamil God. The worship of Murugan was having an ancient origin and the festivals relating to God Murugan was mentioned in the Sangam literature. He was honoured with six abodes known as Arupadai Veedu. Other gods worshipped during the Sangam period were Mayon (Vishnu), Vendan (Indiran), Varunan and Korravai. The Hero Stone or Nadu Kal worship was significant in the Sangam period. The Hero Stone was erected in memory of the bravery shown by the warrior in battle. Many hero stones with legends inscribed on them were found in different parts of Tamil Nadu. This kind of worshipping the deceased has a great antiquity.

Position of Women

There is a plenty of information in the Sangam literature to trace the position of women during the Sangam age. Women poets like Avvaiyar, Nachchellaiyar, and Kakkaiadinaiyar flourished in this period and contributed to Tamil literature. The courage of women was also appreciated in many poems. Karpu or Chaste life was considered the highest virtue of women. Love marriage was a common practice. Women were allowed to choose their life partners. However, the life of widows was miserable. The practice of Sati was also prevalent in the higher strata of society. The class of dancers was patronized by the kings and nobles.

Fine Arts

Poetry, music and dancing were popular among the people of the Sangam age. Liberal donations were given to poets by the kings, chieftains and nobles. The royal courts were crowded with singing bards called Panar and Viraliyar. They were experts in folk songs and folk dances. The arts of music and dancing were highly developed.

A variety of Yazhs and drums are referred to in the Sangam literature. Dancing was performed by Kanigaiyar. Koothu was the most popular entertainment of the people.

Economy of the Sangam Age

Agriculture was the chief occupation. Rice was the common crop. Ragi, sugarcane, cotton, pepper, ginger, turmeric, cinnamon and a variety of fruits were the other crops. Jack fruit and pepper were famous in the Chera country. Paddy was the chief crop in the Chola and Pandya country.

The handicrafts of the Sangam period were popular. They include weaving, metal works and carpentry, ship building and making of ornaments using beads, stones and ivory. There was a great demand for these products, as the internal and external trade was at its peak during the Sangam period. Spinning and weaving of cotton and silk clothes attained a high quality. The poems mention the cotton clothes as thin as a cloud of steam or a slough of a snake. There was a great demand in the western world for the cotton clothes woven at Uraiyur.

Both internal and foreign trade was well organized and briskly carried on in the Sangam Age. The Sangam literature, Greek and Roman accounts and the archaeological evidences provide detailed information on this subject. Merchants carried the goods on the carts and on animal-back from place to place. Internal trade was mostly based on the barter system.

External trade was carried between South India and the Greek kingdoms. After the ascendancy of the Roman Empire, the Roman trade assumed importance. The port city of Puhar became an emporium of foreign trade, as big ships entered this port with precious goods. Other ports of commercial activity include Tondi, Musiri, Korkai, Arikamedu and Marakkanam. The author of Periplus provides the most valuable information on foreign trade. Plenty of gold and silver coins

issued by the Roman Emperors like Augustus, Tiberius and Nero were found in all parts of Tamil Nadu. They reveal the extent of the trade and the presence of Roman traders in the Tamil country.

The main exports of the Sangam age were cotton fabrics, spices like pepper, ginger, cardamom, cinnamon and turmeric, ivory products, pearls and precious stones. Gold, horses and sweet wine were the chief imports.

End of the Sangam Age

Towards the end of the third century A.D., the Sangam period slowly witnessed its decline. The Kalabhras occupied the Tamil country for about two and a half centuries. We have little information about the Kalabhra rule. Jainism and Buddhism became prominent during this period. The Pallavas in the northern Tamil Nadu and Pandyas in southern Tamil Nadu drove the Kalabhras out of the Tamil country and established their rule.

Questions With Answers

1. Which is the 'Grand Old Country of Bharath'?
The land made between Himalayas and Cape Comorin.
2. What language is spoken by people living near South of Tirupathi?
Tamil
3. How was South India called by British People?
Madras Presidency.
4. When Tamil Nadu did was named as Tamil Nadu?
1967
5. Who named Tamil Nadu as Tamil Nadu?
Chief Minister Arignar Anna (1967)
6. What are the Tamil Sangams name them with their headquatres?

Sangam	Headquatres
First Sangam	Thenmadurai
Second Sangam	Kapadapuram

Third Sangam	Madurai Muthoor
--------------	-----------------

7. In which place did the poets of Padava Rule did research on Tamil? How is that process called as?

Madurai Muthoor. Because of this it is called as Kudal.

8. What is Prehistoric Tamil Nadu?

- Before Prehistoric period, the Indian Ocean on the South of Cape Comorin was a land mass.
- It was called as `Kumari Kandam`.
- The river Fahruli ran on this land mass which was eight to ten times bigger than South India.
- There were wide ranges of mountains.
- It was said that the land has sufficient rain, dense forest, civilized people and efficient kingdom.
- That kingdom was called as ancient Pandyan Kingdom.

9. What is Lemuria?

There was a land mass connecting Africa and Australia this was called Lemuria. It was named after the Monkey Lemur.

10. Which period is called as Sangam age?

- The historic period of Tamil Nadu begins from Sangam Period.
- Sangam age is the period during which the poets of the third sangam joined together and did research on Tamil.
- This period lasted for 400 years from BT 200- AT 200.
- Some considered that it was from BT 300 to AT 300.

11. Which was the oldest Tamil literature originated before third sangam?

Tolkappiyam.

12. Which was the literature which has non religious text and originated during sangam period?

Thirukkural.

13. Name the words which are denoted to mode of travel at sea?

Navai, Kalam, Kappal, Thoni, Odam, Padagu, Theppam and Katamaram.

14. What are the regions in which Tamil Nadu made its trade?

Egypt, Yavanam, Rome, China and other Eastern countries.

15. Name two examples of town civilization?

Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa Civilization.

16. How were lands divided by Sangam period poets?

Kurinchi	Mountainous region
Mullai	Forest region
Marutham	Wet agriculture land
Neithal	Coastal area
Palai	Sandy region

17. Which occupation was honored during sangam period?

Agriculture as it provided food for all.

18. Who are the famous Chera Kings?

- **Imayavaramban Neducheralathan**
- **Silambu Pugazh Chera Senguttuvan.**

19. Chera, Chola Pandava Kingdoms Capital, Ports and Symbol.

	Chera	Chola	Pandava
Capital	Vanchi (Karur)	Uraiyur	Madurai
Port	Thondi and Musuri	Kaveripoopattanam	Korkai (Tuticorin)
Symbol	Bow and arrow	Tiger	Fish

20. Who are the famous kings of Pandavas?

- **Mudatirumaran**
- **Thalaiyalanganathu Cheruvendra Nedunchezian**
- **Kadaiyazhu Vallalgal**
- **Pari**
- **Ori**
- **Malayan**
- **Nalli**
- **Ezhini**
- **Pegan**

- Aay

21. What were the worshipping procedures followed during Sangam period?

As the buildings of temple were not in practice they worshipped the stones erected in memories of dead soldiers which were the known as Hero Stones or Nadukkal and their ancestors.

22. Who was the famous king of Chola Dynasty?

- Karikalan- He ruled over 2000 years ago and conquered Eelam.
- He built Kallani on the banks of river Cauvery.
- He was called as Karikalan Peruvalathan.
- Others were Rajaraja Cholan and Rajendra Cholan.

23. What are the functions celebrated during Sangam period?

- Harvest festival,
- Pongal
- Festival of spring season
- Indiravizha.

History Part - 5 to 10**5] Jainism And Buddhism****Notes**

The sixth century B.C. is considered a wonderful century in history. Great thinkers like Buddha, Mahavira, Heraclitus, Zoroaster, Confucius and Lao Tse lived and preached their ideas in this century. In India, the republican institutions were strong in the 6th century B.C. This enabled rise of heterodox sects against the orthodox religion dominated by rites and rituals. Among them the most successful were Jainism and Buddhism whose impact on the Indian society was remarkable.

Causes for the Rise of Jainism and Buddhism

The primary cause for the rise of Jainism and Buddhism was the religious unrest in India in the 6th century B.C. The complex rituals and sacrifices advocated in the Later Vedic period were not acceptable to the common people. The sacrificial ceremonies were also found to be too expensive. The superstitious beliefs and mantras confused the people. The teachings of Upanishads, an alternative to the system of sacrifices, were highly philosophical in nature and therefore not easily understood by all. Therefore, what was needed in the larger interests of the people was a simple, short and intelligible way to salvation for all people. Such religious teaching should also be in a language known to them. This need was fulfilled by the teachings of Buddha and Mahavira.

Other than the religious factor, social and economic factors also contributed to the rise of these two religions. The rigid caste system prevalent in India generated tensions in the society. Higher classes enjoyed certain privileges which were denied to the lower classes. Also, the Kshatriyas had resented the domination of the priestly class. It should also be noted that both Buddha and Mahavira belonged to Kshatriya origin. The growth of trade led to the improvement in the economic conditions of the Vaisyas. As a result, they wanted to enhance their social status but the orthodox Varna system did not allow this. Therefore, they began to extend support to Buddhism and Jainism. It was this merchant class that extended the chief support to these new religions.

Jainism

Life of Vardhamana Mahavira (539 - 467 B.C.)

Vardhamana Mahavira was the 24th Tirthankara of the Jain tradition. He was born at Kundagrama near Vaisali to Kshatriya parents Siddhartha and Trisala. He married Yasoda and gave birth to a daughter. At the age of thirty he became an ascetic and wandered for twelve years. In the 13th year of his penance, he attained the highest spiritual knowledge called Kevala Gnana. Thereafter, he was called Mahavira and Jina.

His followers were called Jains and his religion Jainism. He preached his doctrines for 30 years and died at the age of 72 at Pava near Rajagriha.

Teachings of Mahavira

The three principles of Jainism, also known as Triratnas (three gems), are:

- right faith
- right knowledge
- right conduct.

Right faith is the belief in the teachings and wisdom of Mahavira. Right Knowledge is the acceptance of the theory that there is no God and that the world has been existing without a creator and that all objects possess a soul. Right conduct refers to the observance of the five great vows:

- not to injure life
- not to lie
- not to steal
- not to acquire property
- not to lead immoral life.

Both the clergy and laymen had to strictly follow the doctrine of ahimsa. Mahavira regarded all objects, both animate and inanimate, have souls and various degrees of consciousness. They

possess life and feel pain when they are injured. Mahavira rejected the authority of the Vedas and objected to the Vedic rituals. He advocated a very holy and ethical code of life.

Even the practice of agriculture was considered sinful as it causes injury to the earth, worms and animals. Similarly the doctrine of asceticism and renunciation was also carried to extreme lengths by the practice of starvation, nudity and other forms of self-torture.

Spread of Jainism

Mahavira organised the Sangha to spread his teachings. He admitted both men and women in the Sangha, which consisted of both monks and lay followers. The rapid spread of Jainism was due to the dedicated work of the members of the Sangha. It spread rapidly in Western India and Karnataka. Chandragupta Maurya, Kharavela of Kalinga and the royal dynasties of south India such as the Gangas, the Kadambas, the Chalukyas and the Rashtrakutas patronized Jainism.

By the end of the fourth century B.C., there was a serious famine in the Ganges valley. Many Jain monks led by Bhadrabagu and Chandragupta Maurya came to Sravana Belgola in Karnataka. Those who stayed back in north India were led by a monk named Sthulabahu who changed the code of conduct for the monks. This led to the division of Jainism into two sects Svetambaras (whiteclad) and Digambaras (Sky-clad or Naked).

The first Jain Council was convened at Pataliputra by Sthulabahu, the leader of the Digambaras, in the beginning of the 3rd century B.C. The second Jain Council was held at Valabhi in 5th century A.D. The final compilation of Jain literature called Twelve Angas was completed in this council.

Buddhism

Life of Gautama Buddha (567- 487 B.C.)

Gautama or Siddhartha, the founder of Buddhism, was born in 567 B.C. in Lumbini Garden near Kapilavastu. His father was Suddodhana of the Sakya clan and mother Mayadevi. As his mother died at child birth, he was brought up by his aunt Prajapati Gautami. At the age of sixteen he

married Yasodhara and gave birth to a son, Rahula. The sight of an old man, a diseased man, a corpse and an ascetic turned him away from worldly life. He left home at the age of twenty nine in search of Truth. He wandered for seven years and met several teachers but could not get enlightenment. At last, he sat under a bodhi tree at Bodh Gaya and did intense penance, after which he got Enlightenment (Nirvana) at the age of thirty five. Since then he became known as the Buddha or 'the Enlightened One'. He delivered his first sermon at Sarnath near Benares and for the next forty five years he led the life of a preacher. He died at the age of eighty at Kusinagara.

The most important disciples of Buddha were Sariputta, Moggallanna, Ananda, Kassapa and Upali. Kings like Prasenajit of Kosala and Bimbisara and Ajatasatru of Magadha accepted his doctrines and became his disciples. Buddha in his lifetime spread his message far and wide in north India and visited places like Benares, Rajagriha, Sravasti, Vaisali, Nalanda and Pataligrama. It should be noted that he did not involve himself in fruitless controversies regarding metaphysical questions like god, soul, karma, rebirth, etc., and concerned himself with the practical problems confronting man.

Teachings of Buddha

The Four Noble Truths of Buddha are:

- The world is full of suffering.
- The cause of suffering is desire.
- If desires are get rid off, suffering can be removed.
- This can be done by following the Eightfold Path.

The Eightfold Path consists of right view, right resolve, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. Buddha neither accepts god nor rejects the existence of god. He laid great emphasis on the law of karma. He argued that the condition of man in this life depends upon his own deeds.

He taught that the soul does not exist. However, he emphasized Ahimsa. By his love for human beings and all living creatures, he endeared himself to all. Even under the gravest

provocation he did not show the least anger or hatred and instead conquered everyone by his love and compassion. His religion was identical with morality and it emphasized purity of thought, word and deed. He was a rationalist who tried to explain things in the light of reason and not on the basis of blind faith. Though he did not make a direct attack on the caste system, he was against any social distinctions and threw open his order to all. Therefore, Buddhism was more a social than religious revolution.

It taught the code of practical ethics and laid down the principle of social equality.

Spread of Buddhism

Buddha had two kinds of disciples - monks (bhikshus) and lay worshippers (upasikas). The monks were organized into the Sangha for the purpose of spreading his teachings. The membership was open to all persons, male or female and without any caste restrictions. There was a special code for nuns restricting their residence and movement. Sariputta, Moggallana and Ananda were some of the famous monks. The Sangha was governed on democratic lines and was empowered to enforce discipline among its members. Owing to the organised efforts made by the Sangha, Buddhism made rapid progress in North India even during Buddha's life time. Magadha, Kosala, Kausambi and several republican states of North India embraced this religion. About two hundred years after the death of Buddha, the famous Mauryan Emperor Asoka embraced Buddhism. Through his missionary effort Asoka spread Buddhism into West Asia and Ceylon. Thus a local religious sect was transformed into a world religion.

Buddhist Councils

The first Buddhist Council was held at Rajagraha under the chairmanship of Mahakasapa immediately after the death of Buddha. Its purpose was to maintain the purity of the teachings of the Buddha. The second Buddhist Council was convened at Vaisali around 383 B.C. The third Buddhist Council was held at Pataliputra under the patronage of Asoka. Moggaliputta Tissa presided over it. The final version of Tripitakas was completed in this council. The fourth Buddhist Council was convened in Kashmir by Kanishka under the chairmanship of Vasumitra. Asvagosha participated in

this council. The new school of Buddhism called Mahayana Buddhism came into existence during this council. The Buddhism preached by the Buddha and propagated by Asoka was known as Hinayana.

The Buddhist texts were collected and compiled some five hundred years after the death of the Buddha. They are known as the Tripitakas, namely the Sutta, the Vinaya and the Abhidhamma Pitakas. They are written in the Pali language.

Causes for the Decline of Buddhism in India

The revival of Brahmanism and the rise of Bhagavatism led to the fall of popularity of Buddhism. The use of Pali, the language of the masses as the language of Buddhism was given up from the 1st century A.D. The Buddhists began to adopt Sanskrit, the language of the elite. After the birth of Mahayana Buddhism, the practice of idol worship and making offerings led to the deterioration of moral standards. Moreover, the attack of the Huns in 5th and 6th centuries and the Turkish invaders in 12th century destroyed the monasteries. All these factors contributed to the decline of Buddhism in India.

Contribution of Buddhism to Indian Culture

Buddhism has made a remarkable contribution to the development of Indian culture.

- The concept of ahimsa was its chief contribution. Later, it became one of the cherished values of our nation.
- Its contribution to the art and architecture of India was notable. The stupas at Sanchi, Bharhut and Gaya are wonderful pieces of architecture. Buddhism takes the credit for the chaityas and viharas in different parts of India.
- It promoted education through residential universities like those at Taxila, Nalanda and Vikramasila.
- The language of Pali and other local languages developed through the teachings of Buddhism.
- It had also promoted the spread of Indian culture to other parts of Asia.

Short Notes

1. Intellectual awakening – 6th Century BC – Period of raise of Jainism and Buddhism.
2. Jainism was founded by – Vardhamana Mahavira
3. Buddhism was founded by – Gautama Buddha
4. In Jainism 24 Thirthangaras were work shipped.
5. Who gave strong formation to Jainism? 24th Vardhamana Mahavira.
6. Period of Vardhamana Mahavira – B.C. 534 to B.C. 462.
7. Vardhamana Mahavira - He won his search for truth. So he was called “Jina” which means “Conqueror”. People called him Mahavira.
8. “Ahimsa or Non-Violence” was the principle of Vardhamana Mahavira
9. Trade - Jains important business.
10. Period of Gautama Buddha- BC 563 to BC 483.
11. Three Gems or Triratna of Vardhamana Mahavira are,
 - Right knowledge
 - Right Belief
 - Right Action
12. Five Doctrines of Vardhamana Mahavira,
 - Ahimsa (Non Violence)
 - Satya (Truth)
 - Asatya (Non stealing)
 - Aparigraha (Non-Possession)
 - Brahmacharya (Celibacy)
13. Kings who followed Jainism:
 - Chandragupta Maurya
 - Kalingathu Karavelen
 - Koon Pandian
 - Mahendravarma Pallava I
14. Contribution made by Jainism to Tamil Literature
 - Epics: Sillapatigaram, Chivagachinthamani, Vallayapathi, Soodamani.
 - Literature and Grammar work: Yapperungalaviruthi, Neminatham, Nannool, Agalporulvillakam, Naladiar, Nanmadikadikai, Pazhamozhi, Thinaimalai Noorthiyampathu and Tamil Nigandu.

15. Contributions made by Jains architecture

- Rajasthan - Dilwara Temple at Mount Abu
- Kajiraho - Chittoor
- Ranakpur - Temples of Jains

16. Where is Gomatheswara temple situated?

Saravanabelagola is at Karnataka

17. Where Buddha did got his enlighten?

He got enlighten under a pipal tree at Gaya.

18. What is the meaning of Buddha?

The meaning of Buddha is a person who knows what is good, what is bad and what is suffering.

19. Where did Buddha preach?

Deer Park in Sarnath near Banares in Uttar Pradesh.

20. What are the four noble truths of Buddha?

- Life is full of sorrow
- Desire is the cause of sorrow
- Sorrow can be ended by giving up desire
- The eight fold path is the way to end sorrow.

21. What are the eight fold paths to overcome desire?

- Right belief
- Right speech
- Right living
- Right memory
- Right effort
- Right thought
- Right action
- Right medication

22. What is the term used to call people who accepted Buddha as God and did idol worship?

Mahayana

23. Who are the people who accepted Buddha as God but did not do any idol worship called as?

Hinayana

24. What is the meaning of Sangam?

Buddhist monks came forward to spread principles of Buddhism this organization of monks is called as Sangam.

25. Name some countries where Buddhism is been followed?

Ceylon, Burma, Tibet, China, Japan and Thailand.

26. Name some kings who followed Buddhism?

Ashoka, Kanishka and Harsha.

27. Name some literature which speaks about Buddhism?

The Buddhist literature texts are called as Tripitakas. They are Vinaya Pitaka, Sutta Pitaka and Abhidamma Pitaka.

28. What are the national symbols taken from Ashoka?

- Our national emblem is taken from capital of Ashoka pillar.
- The Chakara in our national flag is taken from 'Dharma chakra' of Ashoka pillar.

29. Where can we find historical monuments of Buddha?

- The Jataka are depicted at Gaya.
- Ajanta and Ellora caves.
- Gandara arts belong to Buddhism.

30. What do Jataka stories speaks about?

The Jataka stores speaks about tales of history of Buddhism.

31. What are the Buddhist statues and paintings?

Ajanta and Ellora cave paintings which are in Aurangabad at Maharashtra describes the fame of Buddhism.

32. What is Chaityas?

The prayer halls of the Buddhist monks are called as Chaityas.

33. What is Tripitakas?

The Buddhist religious texts are called as Tirpitakas.

34. Which country produces Mahavamsam?

Sri Lanka.

35. What is Tripatakam in Pali language?

Three baskets

36. What do Sillapadigaram known for?

Grammar

37. Which literature does Manimekalai refers to?

Learning Leads To Ruling

Buddhist

38. Which literature was written during Vattakkamini Abayan?

Mahavamsam.

History Part - 6**6] Mahajanapadas****Notes**

In the beginning of the 6th century B.C., the northern India consisted of a large number of independent kingdoms. Some of them had monarchical forms of government, while some others were republics. While there was a concentration of monarchies on the Gangetic plain, the republics were scattered in the foothills of the Himalayas and in northwestern India. Some of the republics consisted of only one tribe like the Sakyas, Licchavis and Mallas. In the republics, the power of decision in all matters of state vested with the Public Assembly which was composed of the tribal representatives or heads of families. All decisions were by a majority vote.

The Buddhist literature Anguttara Nikaya gives a list of sixteen great kingdoms called 'Sixteen Mahajanapadas'. They were Anga, Magadha, Kasi, Kosala, Vajji, Malla, Chedi, Vatsa, Kuru, Panchala, Matsya, Surasena, Asmaka, Avanti, Gandhara and Kambhoja. The Jain texts also contain references to the existence of sixteen kingdoms.

In course of time, the small and weak kingdoms either submitted to the stronger rulers or gradually got eliminated. Finally in the mid 6th century B.C., only four kingdoms - Vatsa, Avanti, Kosala and Magadha survived.

Vatsa

The Vatsa kingdom was situated on the banks of the river Yamuna. Its capital was Kausambi near modern Allahabad. Its most popular ruler was Udayana. He strengthened his position by entering into matrimonial alliances with Avanti, Anga and Magadha. After his death, Vatsa was annexed to the Avanti kingdom.

Avanti

The capital of Avanti was Ujjain. The most important ruler of this kingdom was Pradyota. He became powerful by marrying Vasavadatta, the daughter of Udayana. He patronized Buddhism. The successors of Pradyota were weak and later this kingdom was taken over by the rulers of Magadha.

Kosala

Ayodhya was the capital of Kosala. King Prasenajit was its famous ruler. He was highly educated. His position was further strengthened by the matrimonial alliance with Magadha. His sister was married to Bimbisara and Kasi was given to her as dowry. Subsequently there was a dispute with Ajatasatru. After the end of the conflict, Prasenajit married the daughter of Bimbisara. After the death of this powerful king, Kosala became part of the Magadha.

Magadha

Of all the kingdoms of north India, Magadha emerged powerful and prosperous. It became the nerve centre of political activity in north India. Magadha was endowed by nature with certain geographical and strategic advantages. These made her to rise to imperial greatness. Her strategic position between the upper and lower part of the Gangetic valley was a great advantage. It had a fertile soil. The iron ores in the hills near Rajgir and copper and iron deposits near Gaya added to its natural assets. Her location at the centre of the highways of trade of those days contributed to her wealth.

Rajagriha was the capital of Magadha. During the reign of Bimbisara and Ajatasatru, the prosperity of Magadha reached its zenith.

Bimbisara (546 - 494 B.C.)

Bimbisara belonged to the Haryanka dynasty. He consolidated his position by matrimonial alliances. His first matrimonial alliance was with the ruling family of Kosala. He married Kosaladevi, sister of Prasenajit. He was given the Kasi region as dowry which yielded large revenue. Bimbisara married Chellana, a princess of the Licchavi family of Vaisali. This matrimonial alliance secured for him the safety of the northern frontier. Moreover, it facilitated the expansion of Magadha

northwards to the borders of Nepal. He also married Khema of the royal house of Madra in central Punjab. Bimbisara also undertook many expeditions and added more territories to his empire. He defeated Brahmadatta of Anga and annexed that kingdom. He maintained friendly relations with Avanti. He had also efficiently reorganized the administration of his kingdom.

Bimbisara was a contemporary of both Vardhamana Mahavira and Gautama Buddha. However, both religions claim him as their supporter and devotee. He seems to have made numerous gifts to the Buddhist Sangha.

Ajatasatru (494 - 462 B.C.)

The reign of Ajatasatru was remarkable for his military conquests. He fought against Kosala and Vaisali. He won a great success against a formidable confederacy led by the Lichchavis of Vaisali. This had increased his power and prestige. This war lasted for about sixteen years. It was at this time that Ajatasatru realised the strategic importance of the small village, Pataligrama (future Pataliputra). He fortified it to serve as a convenient base of operations against Vaisali.

Buddhists and Jains both claim that Ajatasatru was a follower of their religion. But it is generally believed that in the beginning he was a follower of Jainism and subsequently embraced Buddhism. He is said to have met Gautama Buddha. This scene is also depicted in the sculptures of Barhut. According to the Mahavamsa, he constructed several chaityas and viharas. He was also instrumental in convening the First Buddhist Council at Rajagriha soon after the death of the Buddha.

The immediate successor of Ajatasatru was Udayin. He laid the foundation of the new capital at Pataliputra situated at the confluence of the two rivers, the Ganges and the Son. Later it became famous as the imperial capital of the Mauryas. Udayin's successors were weak rulers and hence Magadha was captured by Saisunaga. Thus the Haryanka dynasty came to an end and the Saisunaga dynasty came to power.

Saisunaga dynasty

The genealogy and chronology of the Saisunagas are not clear. Saisunaga defeated the king of Avanti which was made part of the Magadhan Empire. After Saisunaga, the mighty empire began to collapse. His successor was Kakavarman or Kalasoka. During his reign the second Buddhist Council was held at Vaisali. Kalasoka was killed by the founder of the Nanda dynasty.

Nandas

The fame of Magadha scaled new heights under the Nanda dynasty. Their conquests went beyond the boundaries of the Gangetic basin and in North India they carved a well-knit and vast empire.

Mahapadma Nanda was a powerful ruler of the Nanda dynasty. He uprooted the kshatriya dynasties in north India and assumed the title ekarat. The Puranas speak of the extensive conquests made by Mahapadma. The Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela of Kalinga refers to the conquest of Kalinga by the Nandas. Many historians believe that a considerable portion of the Deccan was also under the control of the Nandas. Therefore, Mahapadma Nanda may be regarded as a great empire builder.

According to the Buddhist tradition, Mahapadma Nanda ruled about ten years. He was succeeded by his eight sons, who ruled successively. The last Nanda ruler was Dhana Nanda. He kept the Magadhan empire intact and possessed a powerful army and enormous wealth. The fabulous wealth of the Nandas is also mentioned by several sources. The enormous wealth of the Nandas is also referred to in the Tamil Sangam work Ahananuru by the poet Mamulanar. The flourishing state of agriculture in the Nanda dominions and the general prosperity of the country must have brought to the royal treasury enormous revenue. The oppressive way of tax collection by Dhana Nanda was resented by the people. Taking advantage of this, Chandragupta Maurya and Kautilya initiated a popular movement against the Nanda rule. It was during this time that Alexander invaded India.

Alexander's Invasion of India (327-325 B.C.)

Political Condition on the eve of Alexander's Invasion After two centuries of the Persian invasion, Alexander from Macedonia invaded India. On the eve of his invasion, there were a number

of small kingdoms in northwestern India. The leading kings were Ambhi of Taxila, the ruler of Abhisara and Porus who ruled the region between the rivers of Jhelum and Chenab. There were many republican states like Nysa. In short, the northwestern India remained the most disunited part of India and the rulers were fighting with one another. They never come together against common enemy. Yet, it was not easy for Alexander to overcome so many sources of opposition.

Causes of the Invasion

Alexander ascended the throne of Macedonia after the death of his father Philip in 334 B.C. He conquered the whole of Persia by defeating Darius III in the battle of Arbela in 330 B.C. He also aimed at further conquest eastwards and wanted to recover the lost Persian Satrapy of India. The writings of Greek authors like Herodotus about the fabulous wealth of India attracted Alexander. Moreover, his interest in geographical enquiry and love of natural history urged him to undertake an invasion of India. He believed that on the eastern side of India there was the continuation of the sea, according the geographical knowledge of his period. So, he thought that by conquering India, he would also conquer the eastern boundary of the world.

Alexander continued his march as far as the river Beas encountering opposition from the local tribes. He wanted to proceed still further eastwards towards the Gangetic valley. But he could not do so because his soldiers refused to fight. Hardships of prolonged warfare made them tired and they wanted to return home. Alexander could not persuade them and therefore decided to return. He made arrangements to look after his conquered territories in India. He divided the whole territory from the Indus to the Beas into three provinces and put them under his governors. His retreat began in October 326 B.C. and the return journey was not free from ordeals. Many republican tribes attacked his army. Anyhow he managed to reach beyond the Indus. On his way he reached Babylon where he fell seriously ill and died in 323 B.C.

Effects of Alexander's invasion

The immediate effect of Alexander's invasion was that it encouraged political unification of north India under the Mauryas. The system of small independent states came to an end. Alexander's

invasion had also paved the way for direct contact between India and Greece. The routes opened by him and his naval explorations increased the existing facilities for trade between India and West Asia. However, his aim of annexing the northwestern India to his empire was not fulfilled due his premature death. His authority in the Indus valley was a short-lived one because of the expansion of Mauryan Empire under Chandragupta Maurya.

Short Notes

1. Small Aryan Kings - **Janapadas**
2. Many Janapadas joint together - **Mahajanapadas**
3. Term Mahajanapadas is derived from **Sanskrit**
4. Strongest Mahajanapadas - **Kosala, Avanti, Vatsa and Magadha.**
5. The area around Patna in Bihar is called **Magadha.**
6. Who built Pataliputra? **Ajatasatru.**
7. Who brought Second Buddhist Council? **Sisunaga**
8. Where was Second Buddhist Council held? **Vaisali**
9. Period of Chandra Gupta Maurya - **BC 320 - 298.**
10. **Seleucus Nikator** - Greek King
11. **Megasthenese**, was the ambassador of Seleucus stayed at Pataliputra for many year and wrote about India in his book '**Indica**'.
12. In which year was the stamp issued on historical ruler Changdra Gupta Maurya? **2001**
13. Period of Ashoka - **BC 273 - 236**
14. What is '**Dig Vijaya**'? **Conquest of the world.**
15. What is '**Dharma Vijaya**'? **In order to spread Dharma Ashoka** undertook a journey called as '**Dharma Vijaya**'.
16. In India who introduced people's welfare state? **Ashoka**
17. Ashokas renovated monuments of Buddhism - **Kapilavastu, Saranath and Buddhagaya.**
18. Who built hundreds of Stupas and pillars? **Ashoka**
19. Where Ashoka did conducted Third Buddhist Council? **Pataliputra**

20. Sangamithra - **Daughter of Ashoka.**
21. Name some Buddhist Stupas which is known for its beauty? **Sarnath, Lumbini.**
22. In which language is the Buddhist stupas written? **Prakrit.**
23. Those who protected the frontier were known as '**Andamahamatras**'.
24. Who was the last king of Maurya? **Brihadratha.**
25. Who is the first king of Nandha Dynasty? **Mahabhadra.**
26. Who was sent to Sri Lanka by Ashoka to spread Buddhism?

Son: Mahendran

Daughter : Sangamithra.

History Part - 7

7] The Mauryan Empire

Notes

The foundation of the Mauryan Empire opens a new era in the history of India. For the first time, the political unity was achieved in India. Moreover, the history writing has also become clear from this period due to accuracy in chronology and sources. Besides plenty of indigenous and foreign literary sources, a number of epigraphical records are also available to write the history of this period.

Literary Sources

Kautilya's Arthashastra

This book in Sanskrit was written by Kautilya, a contemporary of Chandragupta Maurya. Kautilya was also called 'Indian Machiavelli'. The manuscript of Arthashastra was first discovered by R. Shama Sastri in 1904. The Arthashastra contains 15 books and 180 chapters but it can be divided into three parts: the first deals with the king and his council and the departments of government; the second with civil and criminal law; and the third with diplomacy and war. It is the most important literary source for the history of the Mauryas.

Visakadatta's Mudrarakshasa

The Mudrarakshasa written by Visakadatta is a drama in Sanskrit. Although written during the Gupta period, it describes how Chandragupta with the assistance of Kautilya overthrew the Nandas. It also gives a picture on the socio-economic condition under the Mauryas.

Megasthenes' Indica

Megasthenes was the Greek ambassador in the court of Chandragupta Maurya. His book Indica has survived only in fragments. Yet, his account gives details about the Mauryan administration, particularly the administration of the capital city of Pataliputra and also the military organization. His picture on contemporary social life is notable. Certain unbelievable information provided by him has to be treated with caution.

Other Literature

Apart from these three important works, the Puranas and the Buddhist literature such as Jatakas provide information on the Mauryas. The Ceylonese Chronicles Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa throw light on the role Asoka in spreading Buddhism in Sri Lanka.

Archaeological Sources

Edicts of Asoka

The inscriptions of Asoka were first deciphered by James Prinsep in 1837. They are written in Pali language and in some places Prakrit was used. The Brahmi script was employed for writing. In the northwestern India Asokan inscriptions were found in Karoshti script. There are fourteen Major Rock Edicts. The two Kalinga Edicts are found in the newly conquered territory. The major pillar Edicts were erected in important cities. There are minor Rock Edicts and minor pillar Edicts. These Edicts of Asoka deal with Asoka's Dhamma and also instructions given to his officials. The XIII Rock Edict gives details about his war with Kalinga. The Pillar Edict VII gives a summary of his efforts to promote the Dhamma within his kingdom. Thus the Asokan inscriptions remain valuable sources for the study of Asoka and the Mauryan Empire.

POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE MAURYAS

Chandragupta Maurya (322 – 298 B.C.)

Chandragupta Maurya was the founder of the Mauryan Empire. He, at the young age of 25, captured Pataliputra from the last ruler of the Nanda dynasty, Dhanananda. In this task he was assisted by Kautilya, who was also known as Chanakya or Vishnugupta. After firmly establishing his power in the Gangetic valley, he marched to the northwest and subdued the territories up to the Indus. Then he moved to central India and occupied the region north of Narmada river.

In 305 B.C., he marched against Selukas Niketar, who was Alexander's General controlling the northwestern India. Chandragupta Maurya defeated him and a treaty was signed. By this treaty, Selukas Niketar ceded the trans-Indus territories - namely Aria, Arakosia and Gedrosia - to the Mauryan Empire. He also gave his daughter in marriage to the Mauryan prince. Chandragupta made a gift of 500 elephants to Selukas. Megasthenes was sent to the Mauryan court as Greek ambassador.

Chandragupta embraced Jainism towards the end of his life and stepped down from the throne in favour of his son Bindusara. Then he went to Sravana Belgola, near Mysore along with Jain monks led by Bhadrabhagu and starved himself to death.

Bindusara (298 – 273 B.C.)

Bindusara was called by the Greeks as "Amitragatha" meaning slayer of enemies. He is said to have conquered the Deccan up to Mysore. Taranatha, the Tibetan monk states that Bindusara conquered 16 states comprising 'the land between the two seas'. The Sangam Tamil literature also confirms the Mauryan invasion of the far south. Therefore, it can be said that the Mauryan Empire under Bindusara extended up to Mysore.

Bindusara received Deimachus as ambassador from the Syrian king Antiochus I. Bindusara wrote to Antiochus I asking for sweet wine, dried figs and a sophist. The latter sent all but a sophist because the Greek law prohibited sending a sophist. Bindusara supported the Ajivikas, a religious sect. Bindusara appointed his son Asoka as the governor of Ujjain.

Asoka the Great (273 – 232 B.C.)

There is little information regarding the early life of Asoka. He acted as Governor of Ujjain and also suppressed a revolt in Taxila during his father Bindusara's reign. There was an interval of four years between Asoka's accession to the throne (273 B.C.) and his actual coronation (269 B.C.). Therefore, it appears from the available evidence that there was a struggle for the throne after Bindusara's death. The Ceylonese Chronicles, Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa state that Asoka captured power after killing his ninety nine brothers including the his elder brother Susima. The youngest brother Tissa was spared. But according to Taranatha of Tibet, Asoka killed only six of his brothers. Asoka's Edict also refers to his brothers acting as officers in his administration. However, it is clear that the succession of Asoka was a disputed one.

The most important event of Asoka's reign was his victorious war with Kalinga in 261 B.C. Although there is no detail about the cause and course of the war, the effects of the war were described by Asoka himself in the Rock edict XIII: "A hundred and fifty thousand were killed and many times that number perished..." After the war he annexed Kalinga to the Mauryan Empire. Another most important effect of the Kalinga war was that Asoka embraced Buddhism under the influence of Buddhist monk, Upagupta.

Asoka and Buddhism

According some scholars, his conversion to Buddhism was gradual and not immediate. About 261 B.C. Asoka became a Sakya Upasaka (lay dsicple) and two and a half years later, a Bikshu (monk). Then he gave up hunting, visited Bodh-Gaya, and organized missions. He appointed special officers called Dharma Mahamatras to speed up the progress of Dhamma. In 241 B.C., he visited the birth place of Buddha, the Lumbini Garden, near Kapilavastu. He also visited other holy places of Buddhism like Sarnath, Sravasti and Kusinagara. He sent a mission to Sri Lanka under his son Mahendra and daughter Sangamitra who planted there the branch of the original Bodhi tree. Asoka convened the Third Buddhist Council at Pataliputra in 240 B.C. in order to strengthen the Sangha. It was presided over by Moggaliputta Tissa.

Extent of Asoka's Empire

Asoka's inscriptions mention the southernmost kingdoms - Cholas, Pandyas, Satyaputras and Keralaputras - as border-states. Therefore these states remained outside the Mauryan Empire. According to Rajatarangini, Kashmir was a part of the Mauryan Empire. Nepal was also within the Mauryan empire. The northwestern frontier was already demarcated by Chandragupta Maurya.

Asoka's Dhamma

Although Asoka embraced Buddhism and took efforts to spread Buddhism, his policy of Dhamma was a still broad concept. It was a way of life, a code of conduct and a set of principles to be adopted and practiced by the people at large. His principles of Dhamma were clearly stated in his Edicts. The main features of Asoka's Dhamma as mentioned in his various Edicts may be summed as follows:

1. Service to father and mother, practice of ahimsa, love of truth, reverence to teachers and good treatment of relatives.
2. Prohibition of animal sacrifices and festive gatherings and avoiding expensive and meaningless ceremonies and rituals.
3. Efficient organization of administration in the direction of social welfare and maintenance of constant contact with people through the system of Dhammayatras.
4. Humane treatment of servants by masters and prisoners by government officials.
5. Consideration and non-violence to animals and courtesy to relations and liberality to Brahmins.
6. Tolerance among all the religious sects.
7. Conquest through Dhamma instead of through war.

The concept of non-violence and other similar ideas of Asoka's Dhamma are identical with the teachings of Buddha. But he did not equate Dhamma with Buddhist teachings. Buddhism remained his personal belief. His Dhamma signifies a general code of conduct. Asoka wished that his Dhamma should spread through all social levels.

Estimate of Asoka

Asoka was “the greatest of kings” surpassing Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar and other renowned Emperors of the world. According to H.G. Wells “Amidst the tens and thousands of names of monarchs that crowd the columns of history, the name of Asoka shines and shines almost alone, a star”. Asoka was true to his ideals.

He was not a dreamer but a man of practical genius. His Dhamma is so universal that it appeals to humanity even today. He was an example in history for his benevolent administration and also for following the policy of non-aggression even after his victory in the war. His central ideal was to promote the welfare of humanity.

Later Mauryas

Asoka's death in 232 B.C. was followed by the division of the Mauryan Empire into two parts – western and eastern. The western part was ruled by Kunala, son of Asoka and the eastern part by Dasaratha, one of the grand sons of Asoka. Due to the Bactrian invasions, the western part of the empire collapsed. The eastern part was intact under Samprati successor of Dasaratha. The last Mauryan king was Brihadratha, who was assassinated by Pushyamitra Sunga.

Mauryan Administration

Central Government

The ascendancy of the Mauryas had resulted in the triumph of monarchy in India. Other systems like republics and oligarchies that were prevalent in the pre-Mauryan India had collapsed. Although Kautilya the foremost political theorist of ancient India supported the monarchical form of government, he did not stand for royal absolutism. He advocated that the king should take the advice of his ministry in running the administration. Therefore, a council of ministers called Mantriparishad assisted the king in administrative matters. It consisted of Purohita, Mahamantri, Senapati and Yuvaraja. There were civil servants called Amatyas to look after the day-to-day administration. These officers were similar to the IAS officers of independent India. The method of

selection of Amatyas was elaborately given by Kautilya. Asoka appointed Dhamma Mahamatras to supervise the spread of Dhamma. Thus the Mauryan state had a well organized civil service.

Revenue Department

Samharta, the chief of the Revenue Department, was in charge of the collection of all revenues of the empire. The revenues came from land, irrigation, customs, shop tax, ferry tax, forests, mines and pastures, license fee from craftsmen, and fines collected in the law courts. The land revenue was normally fixed as one sixth of the produce. The main items of expenditure of the state related to king and his household, army, government servants, public works, poor relief, religion, etc.

Army

The Mauryan army was well organized and it was under the control of Senapati. The salaries were paid in cash. Kautilya refers to the salaries of different ranks of military officers. According to Greek author Pliny, the Mauryan army consisted of six lakh infantry, thirty thousand cavalry, nine thousand elephants and eight thousand chariots. In addition to these four wings, there were the Navy and Transport and Supply wings. Each wing was under the control of Adyakshas or Superintendents. Megasthenes mentions six boards of five members each to control the six wings of the military.

Department of Commerce and Industry

This department had controlled the retail and wholesale prices of goods and tried to ensure their steady supply through its officers called Adyakshas. It also controlled weights and measures, levied custom duties and regulated foreign trade.

Judicial and Police Departments

Kautilya mentions the existence of both civil and criminal courts. The chief justice of the Supreme Court at the capital was called Dharmathikarin. There were also subordinate courts at the provincial capitals and districts under Amatyas. Different kinds of punishment such as fines,

imprisonment, mutilation and death were given to the offenders. Torture was employed to extract truth. Police stations were found in all principal centres. Both Kautilya and Asoka's Edicts mention about jails and jail officials. The Dhamma Mahamatras were asked by Asoka to take steps against unjust imprisonment. Remission of sentences is also mentioned in Asoka's inscriptions.

Census

The taking of Census was regular during the Mauryan period. The village officials were to number the people along with other details like their caste and occupation.

They were also to count the animals in each house. The census in the towns was taken by municipal officials to track the movement of population both foreign and indigenous. The data collected were cross checked by the spies. The Census appears to be a permanent institution in the Mauryan administration.

Provincial and Local Administration

The Mauryan Empire was divided into four provinces with their capitals at Taxila, Ujjain, Suvarnagiri and Kalinga. The provincial governors were mostly appointed from the members of royal family. They were responsible for the maintenance of law and order and collection of taxes for the empire. The district administration was under the charge of Rajukas, whose position and functions are similar to modern collectors. He was assisted by Yuktas or subordinate officials. Village administration was in the hands of Gramani and his official superior was called Gopa who was in charge of ten or fifteen villages.

Both Kautilya and Megasthenes provided the system of Municipal administration. Arthashastra contains a full chapter on the role of Nagarika or city superintendent. His chief duty was to maintain law and order. Megasthenes refers to the six committees of five members each to look after the administration of Pataliputra.

These committees looked after: 1. Industries 2. Foreigners 3. Registration of birth and deaths 4. Trade 5. Manufacture and sale of goods 6. Collection of sales tax.

Mauryan Art and Architecture

The monuments before the period of Asoka were mostly made of wood and therefore perished. The use of stone started from the time of Asoka. Even of the numerous monuments of Asoka, only a few have remained. His palace and monasteries and most of his stupas have disappeared. The only remaining stupa is at Sanchi. The artistic remains of the Mauryan period can be seen in the following heads:

Pillars

The pillars erected by Asoka furnish the finest specimen of the Mauryan art. Asokan pillars with inscriptions were found in places like Delhi, Allahabad, Rummindai, Sanchi and Saranath. Their tops were crowned with figures of animals like lion, elephant and bull. The Saranath pillar with four lions standing back to back is the most magnificent. The Indian government adopted this capital with some modifications as its state emblem.

Stupas

Asoka built a number of stupas throughout his empire but majority of them were destroyed during foreign invasions. Only a few have survived. The best example is the famous Sanchi stupa with massive dimensions. It was originally built with bricks but later enlarged after the time of Asoka.

Caves

The caves presented to the Ajivikas by Asoka and his son Dasaratha remain important heritage of the Mauryas. Their interior walls are polished like mirror. These were meant to be residences of monks. The caves at Barabar hills near Bodh Gaya are wonderful pieces of Mauryan architecture.

Causes for the Decline of the Mauryas

The causes for the decline of the Mauryan empire have been widely debated by scholars. The traditional approach attributes the decline to Asoka's policies and his weak successors. Another approach holds the inadequate political and economic institutions to sustain such a vast empire. It was said that Asoka's pro-Buddhist policies antagonized the Brahmins who brought about a revolution led by Pushyamitra Sunga. But Asoka was never acted against Brahmins. That Asoka's policy of non-violence reduced the fighting spirit of his army was another charge against him. But Asoka had never slackened his control over his empire despite following a pacifist policy. Therefore solely blaming Asoka for the decline of the Mauryan empire may not be correct because Asoka was more a pragmatist than an idealist.

There are multiple causes for the decline of the Mauryan empire such as weak successors, partition of empire and administrative abuses after Asoka's reign. The combination of these factors speeded up the breakup of the Mauryan empire and facilitated Pushyamitra Sunga to drive away the Mauryan power and establish the Sunga dynasty.

History Part - 8, 9

India After Mauryas

8, 9] Sunga Dynasty, Kushana Empire

Notes

After the death of Asoka, his successors were not able to keep the vast Mauryan Empire intact. The provinces started declaring their independence. The northwest India slipped out of the control of the Mauryas and a series of foreign invasions affected this region. Kalinga declared its independence and in the further south the Satavahanas established their independent rule. As a result, the Mauryan rule was confined to the Gangetic valley and it was soon replaced by the Sunga dynasty.

Sungas

The founder of the Sunga dynasty was Pushyamitra Sunga, who was the commander-in-chief under the Mauryas. He assassinated the last Mauryan ruler and usurped the throne. The most important challenge to the Sunga rule was to protect north India against the invasions of the

Bactrian Greeks from the northwest. The Greeks advanced up to Pataliputra and occupied it for sometime. However, Pushyamitra succeeded in regaining the lost territory. He also fought a campaign against Kharavela of Kalinga who invaded north India.

Pushyamitra was a staunch follower of Brahmanism. He performed two asvamedha sacrifices. Buddhist sources refer him as a persecutor of Buddhism. But there is enough evidence to show that Pushyamitra patronised Buddhist art. During his reign the Buddhist monuments at Bharhut and Sanchi were renovated and further improved.

After the death of Pushyamitra, his son Agnimitra became the ruler. The last Sunga ruler was Devabhuti, who was murdered by his minister Vasudeva Kanva, the founder of the Kanva dynasty. The Kanva dynasty ruled for 45 years. After the fall of the Kanvas, the history of Magatha was a blank until the establishment of the Gupta dynasty.

The rule of the Sungas was important because they defended the Gangetic valley from foreign invasions. In the cultural sphere, the Sungas revived Brahmanism and horse sacrifice. They also promoted the growth of Vaishnavism and the Sanskrit language. In short, the Sunga rule was a brilliant anticipation of the golden age of the Guptas.

Satavahanas

In the Deccan, the Satavahanas established their independent rule after the decline of the Mauryas. Their rule lasted for about 450 years. They were also known as the Andhras. The Puranas and inscriptions remain important sources for the history of Satavahanas. Among the inscriptions, the Nasik and Nanaghad inscriptions throw much light on the reign of Gautamiputra Satakarni. The coins issued by the Satavahanas are also helpful in knowing the economic conditions of that period.

The founder of the Satavahana dynasty was Simuka. He was succeeded by Krishna, who extended the kingdom up to Nasik in the west. The third king was Sri Satakarni. He conquered western Malwa and Berar. He also performed asvamedha sacrifices. The seventeenth king of the Satavahana dynasty was Hala. He reigned for a period of five years. Hala became famous for his book Gathasaptasati, also called Sattasai. It contains 700 verses in Prakrit language.

The greatest ruler of the Satavahana dynasty was Gautamiputra Satakarni. He ruled for a period of 24 years from 106 to 130 A.D. His achievements were recorded in the Nasik inscription by his mother Gautami Balasri. Gautamiputra Satakarni captured the whole of Deccan and expanded his empire. His victory over Nagapana, the ruler of Malwa was remarkable. He patronized Brahmanism. Yet, he also gave donations to Buddhists.

Gautamiputra Satakarni was succeeded by his son Vashishtaputra Pulamayi. He extended the Satavahana power up to the mouth of the Krishna river. He issued coins on which the image of ships was inscribed. They reveal the naval power and maritime trade of the Satavahanas. The last great ruler of Satavahanas was Yajna Sri Satakarni.

Economic Condition

There was a remarkable progress in the fields of trade and industry during the Satavahana rule. Merchants organized guilds to increase their activities. The craft guilds organized by different craftsmen such as potters, weavers and oil pressers also came into existence. Silver coins called Karshapanas were used for trade. The Satavahana period also witnessed overseas commercial activity. Ptolemy mentions many ports in the Deccan. The greatest port of the Satavahanas was Kalyani on the west Deccan. Gandakasela and Ganjam on the east coast were the other important seaports.

Cultural Contributions

The Satavahanas patronized Buddhism and Brahmanism. They built chaityas and viharas. They also made grants of villages and lands to Buddhist monks. Vashishtaputra Pulamayi repaired the old Amaravathi stupa. Their architecture in Nagarjunakonda was also notable. Brahmanism was revived by the Satavahanas along with the performance of asvamedha and rajasuya sacrifices. They also patronized the Prakrit language and literature. Hala's Sattasai is an excellent piece of Prakrit literature.

Foreign Invasions of Northwest India

Bactrians

Bactria and Parthia became independent from the Syrian empire in the middle of the third century B.C. Demetrius, the Greek ruler of Bactria invaded Afghanistan and Punjab and occupied them. From Taxila, he sent two of his commanders, Appolodotus and Menander for further conquests. Appolodotus conquered the Sindh and marched up to Ujjain. Menander extended his rule up to Mathura and from there he made attempts to capture Pataliputra. But he was stopped by the army of Vasumitra, the grandson of Pushyamitra Sunga.

Menander was also known as Milinda and the capital of his kingdom was Sakala (Sialcot). He evinced much interest in Buddhism and his dialogues with the Buddhist monk Nagasena was compiled in the Pali work, Milindapanho (Questions of Milinda).

He also embraced Buddhism. A Greek ambassador Heliodorus became a Vaishnavite and erected the Garuda Pillar at Besnagar. The Greek influence in India lasted for more than a century after the death Menander.

Sakas

The Sakas or the Scythians attacked Bactria and Parthia and captured them from the Greek rulers. Following the footsteps of the Greeks, the Sakas gradually extended their rule over northwestern India. There were two different groups of Sakas - the Northern Satraps ruling from Taxila and the Western satraps ruling over Maharashtra.

The founder the Saka rule in India in the first century B.C. was Maues. His son and successor was Azes I, who was considered to be the founder of the Vikrama era. Sakas rulers of Taxila were overthrown by the Parthians.

Kushanas

The Kushanas were a branch of Yuchi tribe, whose original home was central Asia. They first came to Bactria displacing the Sakas. Then they gradually moved to the Kabul valley and seized the Gandhara region. The founder of the Kushana dynasty was Kujula Kadphises or Kadphises I.

He occupied the Kabul valley and issued coins in his name. His son Wima Kadphises or Kadphises II conquered the whole of northwestern India as far as Mathura. He issued gold coins with high-sounding titles like the 'Lord of the Whole World'. He was a devotee of Lord Siva.

Kanishka (78 - 120 A.D.)

Kanishka was the most important ruler of the Kushana dynasty. He was the founder of the Saka era which starts from 78 A.D. He was not only a great conqueror but also a patron of religion and art.

Kanishka's Conquests

At the time of his accession his empire included Afghanistan, Gandhara, Sind and Punjab. Subsequently he conquered Magadha and extended his power as far as Pataliputra and Bodh Gaya.

According to Kalhana, Kanishka invaded Kashmir and occupied it. His coins are found in many places like Mathura, Sravasti, Kausambi and Benares and therefore, he must have conquered the greater part of the Gangetic plain.

He also fought against the Chinese and acquired some territories from them. During the first expedition he was defeated by the Chinese general Pancho. He undertook a second expedition in which he was successful and he scored a victory over Panyang, the son of Pancho. Kanishka annexed the territories of Kashgar, Yarkand and Khotan into his empire.

The empire of Kanishka was a vast one extending from Gandhara in the west to Benares in the east, and from Kashmir in the north to Malwa in the south. His capital was Purushapura or modern day Peshawar. Mathura was another important city in his empire.

Kanishka and Buddhism

Kanishka embraced Buddhism in the early part of his reign. However, his coins exhibit the images of not only Buddha but also Greek and Hindu gods. It reflects the Kanishka's toleration towards other religions. In the age of Kanishka the Mahayana Buddhism came into vogue. It is different in many respects from the religion taught by the Buddha and propagated by Asoka. The

Buddha came to be worshipped with flowers, garments, perfumes and lamps. Thus image worship and rituals developed in Mahayana Buddhism.

Kanishka also sent missionaries to Central Asia and China for the propagation of the new faith. Buddhist chaityas and viharas were built in different places. He patronised Buddhist scholars like Vasumitra, Asvagosha and Nagarjuna. He also convened the Fourth Buddhist Council to discuss matters relating to Buddhist theology and doctrine. It was held at the Kundalavana monastery near Srinagar in Kashmir under the presidentship of Vasumitra. About 500 monks attended the Council. The Council prepared an authoritative commentary on the Tripitakas and the Mahayana doctrine was given final shape. Asvagosha was a great philosopher, poet and dramatist. He was the author of Buddhacharita. Nagarjuna from south India adorned the court of Kanishka. The famous physician of ancient India Charaka was also patronized by him.

Gandhara Art

The home of the Gandhara school of art is the territory in and around Peshawar in northwestern India. The best of the Gandhara sculpture was produced during the first and second centuries A.D. It originated during the reign of Indo-Greek rulers but the real patrons of this school of art were the Sakas and the Kushanas, particularly Kanishka. Gandhara art was a blend of Indian and Graeco-Roman elements. Specimens of Gandhara sculpture have been found in Taxila, Peshawar and in several places of northwest India. The Gandhara school made sculptures of the Buddha in various sizes, shapes and postures. The reliefs depict Buddha's birth, his renunciation and his preaching. The salient features of Gandhara art are:

- Moulding human body in a realistic manner with minute attention to physical features like muscles, moustache and curly hair.
- Thick drapery with large and bold fold lines.
- Rich carving, elaborate ornamentation and symbolic expressions.
- The main theme was the new form of Buddhism - Mahayanism and the evolution of an image of Buddha.

A large number of monasteries were also built from first to fourth centuries A.D. Ruins of about fifteen monasteries were found in and around Peshawar and Rawalpindi. The Buddhist stupas erected during this period had Graeco-Roman architectural impact. The height of the stupa was raised and ornamentation was added to the structure of the stupa. These changes made the stupa more attractive.

Mathura School of Art

The school of art that developed at Mathura in modern Uttar Pradesh is called the Mathura art. It flourished in the first century A.D. In its early phase, the Mathura school of art developed on indigenous lines. The Buddha images exhibit the spiritual feeling in his face which was largely absent in the Gandhara school. The Mathura school also carved out the images of Siva and Vishnu along with their consorts Parvathi and Lakshmi. The female figures of yakshinis and apsaras of the Mathura school were beautifully carved.

Successors of Kanishka and end of Kushana Rule

The successors of Kanishka ruled for another one hundred and fifty years. Huvishka was the son of Kanishka and he kept the empire intact. Mathura became an important city under his rule. Like Kanishka he was also a patron of Buddhism. The last important Kushana ruler was Vasudeva. The Kushana empire was very much reduced in his rule. Most of his inscriptions are found in and around Mathura. He seems to have been a worshipper of Siva. After Vasudeva, petty Kushan princes ruled for sometime in northwestern India.

Short Notes

1. Who are the people who belonged to Yueh-chi tribes?

Kushanas.

2. Who controlled the Kushanas?

Kadphises II

3. Who was successful king of Kushanas?

Kanishka

4. Who brought up 4th Buddhist Council at Kashmir?

Kanishka

5. Name some famous Buddhist philosophers of Kanishka period?

Vasupandu, Ashvagosha and Nagarjuna.

6. Who was Mahayana Buddhist scholar?

Ashvagosha.

7. Name some of the books written by Ashvagosha in Sanskrit literature?

Buddhacharitha, Sutralankar

8. Who wrote Mahavibhasa?

Vasumithra

9. who was the great builder in Kashika's Empire?

Ajilasil

10. Who was the famous Physician in kanishka's Empire?

Charaka

11. What is Gandhara art?

The Gandhara art combined both the Indo-Greek style.

12. Who is Ashoka II ?

Kanishka

History Part - 10

10] Gupta Empire

Notes

There are plenty of source materials to reconstruct the history of the Gupta period. They include literary, epigraphical and numismatic sources. The Puranas throw light on the royal genealogy of the Gupta kings. Contemporary literary works like the Devichandraguptam and the Mudhrakshasam written by Visakadatta provide information regarding the rise of the Guptas. The Chinese traveler Fahien, who visited India during the reign of Chandragupta II, has left a valuable account of the social, economic and religious conditions of the Gupta empire.

Apart from these literary sources, there are inscriptions like the Meherauli Iron Pillar Inscription and the Allahabad Pillar inscription. The first refers to the achievements of Chandragupta I. The most important source for the reign of Samudragupta is the Allahabad Pillar inscription.

It describes his personality and achievements. This inscription is engraved on an Asokan pillar. It is written in classical Sanskrit, using the Nagari script. It consists of 33 lines composed by Harisena. It describes the circumstances of Samudragupta's accession, his military campaigns in north India and the Deccan, his relationship with other contemporary rulers, and his accomplishments as a poet and scholar.

The coins issued by Gupta kings contain legends and figures. These coins provide interesting details about the titles and sacrifices performed by the Gupta monarchs.

Chandragupta I (320 - 330 A.D.)

The founder of the Gupta dynasty was Sri Gupta. He was succeeded by Ghatotkacha. These two were called Maharajas. Much information was not available about their rule. The next ruler was Chandragupta I and he was the first to be called Maharajadhiraja (the great king of kings). This title indicates his extensive conquests.

He strengthened his position by a matrimonial alliance with the Licchavis. He married Kumaradevi, a princess of that family. This added to the power and prestige of the Gupta family. The Meherauli Iron Pillar inscription mentions his extensive conquests.

Chandragupta I is considered to be the founder of the Gupta era which starts with his accession in A.D. 320.

Samudragupta (330-380 A.D.)

Samudragupta was the greatest of the rulers of the Gupta dynasty. The Allahabad Pillar inscription provides a detailed account of his reign. It refers to three stages in his military campaign:

- Against some rulers of North India
- His famous Dakshinapatha expedition against South Indian rulers
- A second campaign against some other rulers of North India.

In the first campaign Samudragupta defeated Achyuta and Nagasena. Achyuta was probably a Naga ruler. Nagasena belonged to the Kota family which was ruling over the upper Gangetic valley. They were defeated and their states were annexed. As a result of this short campaign, Samudragupta had gained complete mastery over the upper Gangetic valley.

Then Samudragupta marched against the South Indian monarchs. The Allahabad Pillar inscription mentions that Samudragupta defeated twelve rulers in his South Indian Expedition. They were Mahendra of Kosala, Vyaghraraja of Mahakanthara, Mantaraja of Kaurala, Mahendragiri of Pishtapura, Swamidatta of Kottura, Damana of Erandapalla, Vishnugupta of Kanchi, Nilaraja of Avamukta, Hastivarman of Vengi, Ugrasena of Palakka, Kubera of Devarashtra and Dhananjaya of Kushtalapura.

Samudragupta's policy in South India was different. He did not destroy and annex those kingdoms. Instead, he defeated the rulers but gave them back their kingdoms. He only insisted on them to acknowledge his suzerainty.

The third stage of Samudragupta's campaign was to eliminate his remaining north Indian rivals. He fought against nine kings, uprooted them and annexed their territories. They were Rudradeva, Matila, Nagadatta, Chandravarman, Ganapathinaga, Nagasena, Achyuta, Nandin and Balavarman. Most of these rulers were members of the Naga family, then ruling over different parts of north India.

After these military victories, Samudragupta performed the asvamedha sacrifice. He issued gold and silver coins with the legend 'restorer of the asvamedha'. It is because of his military achievements Samudragupta was hailed as 'Indian Napoleon'.

Extant of Samudragupta's Empire

After these conquests, Samudragupta's rule extended over the upper Gangetic valley, the greater part of modern U.P., a portion of central India and the southwestern part of Bengal. These territories were directly administered by him. In the south there were tributary states. The Saka and Kushana principalities on the west and northwest were within the sphere of his influence. The kingdoms on the east coast of the Deccan, as far as the Pallava Kingdom, acknowledged his suzerainty.

Estimate of Samudragupta

Samudragupta's military achievements remain remarkable in the annals of history. He was equally great in his other personal accomplishments. The Allahabad Pillar inscription speaks of his magnanimity to his foes, his polished intellect, his poetic skill and his proficiency in music. It calls him Kaviraja because of his ability in composing verses. His image depicting him with Veena is found in the coins issued by him. It is the proof of his proficiency and interest in music. He was also a patron of many poets and scholars, one of whom was Harisena. Thus he must be credited with a share in the promotion of Sanskrit literature and learning, characteristic of his dynasty. He was an ardent follower of Vaishnavism but was tolerant of other creeds. He evinced keen interest in Buddhism and was the patron of the great Buddhist scholar Vasubandu.

Chandragupta II (380-415 A.D.)

Samudragupta was succeeded by his son Chandragupta II Vikramaditya. But according to some scholars, the immediate successor of Samudragupta was Ramagupta, the elder brother of Chandragupta II. But there is little historical proof for this. Chandragupta II inherited the military genius of his father and extended the Gupta Empire by his own conquests.

He achieved this by a judicious combination of the policy of diplomacy and warfare. Through matrimonial alliances he strengthened his political power. He married Kuberanaga, a Naga princess of central India. He gave his daughter Prabhavati in marriage to the Vakataka prince Rudrasena II. The political importance of this marriage lies in the fact that the Vakatakas occupied a

geographically strategic position in the Deccan. This alliance served a useful purpose when Chandragupta-II undertook his campaign in western India against the Sakas.

Conquest of Western India

The greatest of the military achievements of Chandragupta II was his war against the Saka satraps of western India. Rudrasimha III, the last ruler of the Saka satrap was defeated, dethroned and killed. His territories in western Malwa and the Kathiawar Peninsula were annexed into the Gupta Empire. After this victory he performed the horse sacrifice and assumed the title Sakari, meaning, 'destroyer of Sakas'. He also called himself Vikramaditya

As a result of the conquest of western India, the western boundary of the Empire reached to the Arabian Sea gaining access to Broach, Sopara, Cambay and other sea ports. This enabled the Gupta empire to control trade with the western countries. Ujjain became an important commercial city and soon became the alternative capital of the Guptas. The fine cotton clothes of Bengal, Indigo from Bihar, silk from Banares, the scents of the Himalayas and the sandal and species from the south were brought to these ports without any interference. The western traders poured Roman gold into India in return for Indian products. The great wealth of the Gupta Empire was manifest in the variety of gold coins issued by Chandragupta II.

Other Conquests

Chandragupta II defeated a confederacy of enemy chiefs in Vanga. He also crossed the river Sindh and conquered Bactria. The Kushanas ruling in this region were subdued by him. With these conquests, the Gupta empire extended in the west as far as western Malwa, Gujarat and Kathiawar. In the northwest it extended beyond the Hindukush up to Bactria. In the east, it included even eastern Bengal and in the south the Narmada river formed the boundary.

Fahien's Visit

The famous Chinese pilgrim, Fahien visited India during the reign of Chandragupta II. Out of his nine years stay in India, he spent six years in the Gupta empire. He came to India by the land

route through Khotan, Kashgar, Gandhara and Punjab. He visited Peshawar, Mathura, Kanauj, Sravasti, Kapilavastu, Kusinagara, Pataliputra, Kasi and Bodh Gaya among other places. He returned by the sea route, visiting on the way Ceylon and Java. The main purpose of his visit was to see the land of the Buddha and to collect Buddhist manuscripts from India. He stayed in Pataliputra for three years studying Sanskrit and copying Buddhist texts.

Fahien provides valuable information on the religious, social and economic condition of the Gupta empire. According to him, Buddhism was in a flourishing condition in the northwestern India but in the Gangetic valley it was in a state of neglect. He refers to the Gangetic valley as the 'land of Brahmanism'. Fahien mentions the unsatisfactory state of some of the Buddhist holy places like Kapilavastu and Kusinagara. According to him the economic condition of the empire was prosperous.

Although his account is valuable in many respects, he did not mention the name of Chandragupta II. He was not interested in political affairs. His interest was primarily religion. He assessed everything from the Buddhist angle. His observations on social conditions are found to be exaggerated. Yet, his accounts are useful to know the general condition of the country.

Estimate of Chandragupta II

The power and glory of Gupta empire reached its peak under the rule Chandragupta II Vikramaditya. He also contributed to the general cultural progress of the age and patronized great literary figures like Kalidasa. He promoted artistic activity.

Because of the high level of cultural progress that was achieved during this period, the Gupta period is generally referred to as a golden age. A detailed account of the cultural progress in the Gupta age is given below.

Successors of Chandragupta II

Kumaragupta was the son and successor of Chandragupta II. His reign was marked by general peace and prosperity. He issued a number of coins and his inscriptions are found all over

the Gupta empire. He also performed an asvamedha sacrifice. Most importantly, he laid the foundation of the Nalanda University which emerged an institution of international reputation. At the end of his reign, a powerful wealthy tribe called the 'Pushyamitras' defeated the Gupta army. A branch of the Huns from Central Asia made attempts to cross the Hindukush mountains and invade India.

But it was his successor Skandagupta who really faced the Hun invasion. He fought successfully against the Huns and saved the empire. This war must have been a great strain on the government's resources. After Skandagupta's death, many of his successors like Purugupta, Narasimhagupta, Buddhagupta and Baladitya could not save the Gupta empire from the Huns. Ultimately, the Gupta power totally disappeared due to the Hun invasions and later by the rise of Yasodharman in Malwa.

Gupta Administration

According to inscriptions, the Gupta kings assumed titles like Paramabhattaraka, Maharajadhiraja, Parameswara, Samrat and Chakravartin. The king was assisted in his administration by a council consisting of a chief minister, a Senapati or commander in - chief of the army and other important officials. A high official called Sandivigraha was mentioned in the Gupta inscriptions, most probably minister for foreign affairs.

The king maintained a close contact with the provincial administration through a class of officials called Kumaramatyas and Ayuktas. Provinces in the Gupta Empire were known as Bhuktis and provincial governors as Uparikas. They were mostly chosen from among the princes. Bhuktis were subdivided into Vishyas or districts.

They were governed by Vishyapatis. Nagara Sreshtis were the officers looking after the city administration. The villages in the district were under the control of Gramikas.

Fahien's account on the Gupta administration provides useful information. He characterises the Gupta administration as mild and benevolent. There were no restrictions on people's movements and they enjoyed a large degree of personal freedom. There was no state interference

in the individual's life. Punishments were not severe. Imposing a fine was a common punishment. There was no spy system.

The administration was so efficient that the roads were kept safe for travelers, and there was no fear of thieves. He mentioned that people were generally prosperous and the crimes were negligible. Fahien had also appreciated the efficiency of the Gupta administration as he was able to travel without any fear throughout the Gangetic valley. On the whole the administration was more liberal than that of the Mauryas.

Social Life

The pre-Gupta period in India witnessed a series of foreign invasions. Indian society had given way to those foreigners who had become permanent residents here. But during the Gupta period, the caste system became rigid. The Brahmins occupied the top ladder of the society. They were given enormous gifts by the rulers as well as other wealthy people. The practice of untouchability had slowly begun during this period. Fahien mentions that Chandalas were segregated from the society. Their miserable condition was elaborated by the Chinese traveler.

The position of women had also become miserable during the Gupta period. They were prohibited from studying the religious texts like the Puranas. The subjection of women to men was thoroughly regularized. But it was insisted that they should be protected and generously treated by men. The practice of Swyamvara was given up and the Manusmriti suggested the early marriage for girls.

In the sphere of religion, Brahmanism reigned supreme during the Gupta period. It had two branches - Vaishnavism and Saivism. Most of the Gupta kings were Vaishnavaites. They performed Aswamedha sacrifices. The worship of images and celebration of religious festivals with elaborate rituals made these two religions popular.

Religious literature like the Puranas was composed during this period. The progress of Brahmanism led to the neglect of Buddhism and Jainism. Fahien refers to the decline of Buddhism in the Gangetic valley. But a few Buddhist scholars like Vasubandhu were patronized by Gupta kings.

In western and southern India Jainism flourished. The great Jain Council was held at Valabhi during this period and the Jain Canon of the Svetambras was written.

Art and Culture

The Gupta period witnessed a tremendous progress in the field of art, science and literature and on account of this it has been called "a golden age". A few scholars even call this period a period of renaissance. But it should be remembered that there was no dark period before the Gupta rule. Therefore the cultural progress witnessed during the Gupta period may be called the culmination of Indian intellectual activities.

Art and Architecture

In the history of Indian art and architecture, the Gupta period occupies an important place. Both the Nagara and Dravidian styles of art evolved during this period. But most of the architecture of this period had been lost due to foreign invasions like that of Huns. Yet, the remaining temples, sculptures and cave paintings provide an idea about the grandeur of the Gupta art.

The temple at Deogarh near Jhansi and the sculptures in the temple at Garhwas near Allahabad remain important specimen of the Gupta art. There was no influence of Gandhara style. But the beautiful statue of standing Buddha at Mathura reveals a little Greek style. The Buddha statue unearthed at Saranath was unique piece of Gupta art. The Bhitari monolithic pillar of Skandagupta is also remarkable.

Metallurgy had also made a wonderful progress during the Gupta period. The craftsmen were efficient in the art of casting metal statues and pillars. The gigantic copper statue of Buddha, originally found at Sultanganj now kept at Birmingham museum, was about seven and a half feet height and nearly a ton weight. The Delhi Iron pillar of the Gupta period is still free from rust though completely exposed to sun and rain for so many centuries.

The paintings of the Gupta period are seen at Bagh caves near Gwalior. The mural paintings of Ajantha mostly illustrate the life of the Buddha as depicted in the Jataka stories. The paintings at Sigiriya in Sri Lanka were highly influenced by the Ajantha style.

The Gupta coinage was also remarkable. Samudragupta issued eight types of gold coins. The legends on them throw much light on the achievements of that marvelous king. The figures inscribed on them are illustrative of the skill and greatness of Gupta numismatic art. Chandragupta II and his successors had also issued gold, silver and copper coins of different varieties.

Literature

The Sanskrit language became prominent during the Gupta period. Nagari script had evolved from the Brahmi script. Numerous works in classical Sanskrit came to be written in the forms of epic, lyrics, drama and prose. The best of the Sanskrit literature belonged to the Gupta age.

Himself a great poet, Samudragupta patronized a number of scholars including Harisena. The court of Chandragupta II was adorned by the celebrated Navratnas. Kalidasa remain the foremost among them. His master-piece was the Sanskrit drama Shakuntala. It is considered one among the 'hundred best books of the world'. He wrote two other plays - the Malavikagnimitra and Vikramorvasiya. His two well-known epics are Raghuvamsa and Kumarasambhava. Ritusamhara and Meghaduta are his two lyrics.

Visakadatta was another celebrated author of this period. He was the author of two Sanskrit dramas, Mudrarakshasa and Devichandraguptam. Sudraka was a renowned poet of this age and his book Mrichchakatika is rich in humour and pathos.

Bharavi's Kirtarjuniya is the story of the conflict between Arjuna and Siva. Dandin was the author of Kavyadarsa and Dasakumaracharita. Another important work of this period was Vasavadatta written by Subhandhu. The Panchatantra stories were composed by Vishnusarma during the Gupta period. The Buddhist author Amarasimha compiled a lexicon called Amarakosa.

The Puranas in their present form were composed during this period. There are eighteen Puranas. The most important among them are the Bhagavatha, Vishnu, Vayu and Matsya Puranas. The Mahabharatha and the Ramayana were given final touches and written in the present form during this period.

Science

The Gupta period witnessed a brilliant activity in the sphere of mathematics, astronomy, astrology and medicine. Aryabhatta was a great mathematician and astronomer. He wrote the book Aryabhatiya in 499 A.D. It deals with mathematics and astronomy. It explains scientifically the occurrence of solar and lunar eclipses.

Aryabhatta was the first to declare that the earth was spherical in shape and that it rotates on its own axis. However, these views were rejected by later astronomers like Varahamihira and Brahmagupta.

Varahamihira composed Pancha Siddhantika, the five astronomical systems. He was also a great authority on astrology. His work Brihadsamhita is a great work in Sanskrit literature. It deals with a variety of subjects like astronomy, astrology, geography, architecture, weather, animals, marriage and omens. His Brihadjataka is considered to be a standard work on astrology.

In the field of medicine, Vagbhata lived during this period. He was the last of the great medical trio of ancient India. The other two scholars Charaka and Susruta lived before the Gupta age. Vagbhata was the author Ashtangsamgraha (Summary of the eight branches of medicine).

Short Notes

1. What is Saka era?

The year that Kanishka ascended the throne was the beginning of the Saka era.

2. After Kushanas which empire has its capital at Pataliputra?

Gupta Dynasty

3. What do the Allahabad inscription states?

The Allahabad inscription states about the conquests and victories of Samudragupta.

4. The Allahabad inscription was inspired by whom?

Harisena.

5. Period of Chandragupta I - **BC 319 to 335**

6. Samudragupta period - **BC 335 - 375**

7. Chandragupta II period - **BC 380 to 414**

8. When were Ramayana and Mahabharata written?

Gupta Dynasty

9. What was the regional language of Guptas?

Sanskrit

10. When was Nalanda University formed?

Gupta Dynasty

11. What is Mehrauli?

Mehrauli has a iron pillar which has not be into any metallurgy for past 1500 years.

12. Which is the period of Aryabhatta and Varahamihira?

Gupta Dynasty

13. Which period is called as Golden age?

Gupta Dynasty

14. Name some of the reasons for decline of Gupta Dynasty.

Invasion of Pushyamithra and Huns

History Part - 11**11] Harshavardhana (606 – 647 A.D)****Notes**

The decline of the Gupta Empire was followed by a period of political disorder and disunity in North India. It was only in the beginning of the seventh century A.D. that Harshvardhana succeeded in establishing a larger kingdom in north India.

The chief sources for tracing the history of Harsha and his times are the Harshacharita written by Bana and the Travel accounts of Hiuen Tsang. Bana was the court poet of Harsha. Hiuen Tsang was the Chinese traveler who visited India in the seventh century A.D. Besides these two sources, the dramas written by Harsha, namely Ratnavali, Nagananda and Priyadarsika also provide useful information. The Madhuben plate inscription and the Sonpat inscription are also helpful to know the chronology of Harsha. The Banskhera inscription contains the signature of Harsha.

Early Life of Harsha

The founder of the family of Harsha was Pushyabhuti. Pushyabhutis were the feudatories of the Guptas. They called themselves Vardhanas. After the Hun invasions they assumed independence. The first important king of Pushyabhuti dynasty was Prabhakaravardhana. His capital was Thaneswar, north of Delhi. He assumed the title Maharajadhiraja and Paramabhattaraka.

After Prabhakaravardhana's death, his elder son Rajyavardhana came to the throne. He had to face problems right from the time of his accession. His sister, Rajyasri had married the Maukhari ruler called Grihavarman. The ruler of Malwa, Devagupta in league with Sasanka, the ruler of Bengal had killed Grihavarman. Immediately on hearing this news, Rajyavardhana marched against the king of Malwa and routed his army. But before he could return to his capital, he was treacherously murdered by Sasanka. In the meantime, Rajyasri escaped into forests. Harsha now succeeded his brother at Thaneswar. His first responsibility was to rescue his sister and to avenge the killings of his brother and brother-in-law. He first rescued his sister when she was about to immolate herself.

Harsha's Military Conquests

In his first expedition, Harsha drove out Sasanka from Kanauj. He made Kanauj his new capital. This made him the most powerful ruler of north India. Harsha fought against Dhuruvasena II of Valabhi and defeated him. Dhuruvasena II became a vassal.

The most important military campaign of Harsha was against the Western Chalukya ruler Pulakesin II. Both the accounts of Hiuen Tsang and the inscriptions of Pulakesin II provide the details of this campaign. Harsha with an ambition to extend his kingdom south of the Narmada river marched against the Chalukya ruler. But the Aihole inscription of Pulakesin II mentions the defeat of Harsha by Pulakesin, who after this achievement assumed the title Paramesvara. Hiuen Tsang's accounts also confirm the victory of Pulakesin.

Harsha led another campaign against the ruler of Sindh, which was an independent kingdom. But, it is doubtful whether his Sind campaign was a successful one. Nepal had accepted Harsha's overlordship. Harsha established his control over Kashmir and its ruler sent tributes to him. He also maintained cordial relations with Bhaskaravarman, the ruler of Assam. Harsha's last military campaign was against the kingdom of Kalinga in Orissa and it was a success.

Thus Harsha established his hold over the whole of north India. The regions modern Rajasthan, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa were under his direct control. But his sphere of influence was much more extensive. The peripheral states such as Kashmir, Sind, Valabhi and Kamarupa acknowledged his sovereignty.

Harsha and Buddhism

In his early life, Harsha was a devout Saiva but later he became an ardent Hinayana Buddhist. Hiuen Tsang converted him to Mahayana Buddhism. Harsha prohibited the use of animal food in his kingdom and punished those who kill any living being.

He erected thousands of stupas and established travellers' rests all over his kingdom. He also erected monasteries at the sacred places of Buddhists. Once in five years he convened a gathering of representatives of all religions and honoured them with gifts and costly presents. He brought the Buddhist monks together frequently to discuss and examine the Buddhist doctrine.

Kanauj Assembly

Harsha organized a religious assembly at Kanauj to honour the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang towards the close of his reign. He invited representatives of all religious sects. It was attended by 20 kings, 1000 scholars from the Nalanda University, 3000 Hinayanists and Mahayanists, 3000 Brahmins and Jains. The Assembly went on continuously for 23 days. Hiuen Tsang explained the values of Mahayana doctrine and established its superiority over others. However, violence broke out and there were acts of arson. There was also an attempt on the life of Harsha. Soon, it was brought under control and the guilty were punished. On the final day of the Assembly, Hiuen Tsang was honoured with costly presents.

Allahabad Conference

Hiuen Tsang mentions in his account about the conference held at Allahabad, known as Prayag. It was the one among the conferences routinely convened by Harsha once in five years. Harsha gave away his enormous wealth as gifts to the members of all religious sects. According to Hiuen Tsang, Harsha was so lavish that he emptied the treasury and even gave away the clothes and jewels he was wearing. His statement might be one of admiring exaggeration.

Harsha's Administration

The administration of Harsha was organized on the same lines as the Guptas did. Hiuen Tsang gives a detailed picture about this. The king was just in his administration and punctual in discharging his duties. He made frequent visits of inspection throughout his dominion. The day was too short for him. Taxation was also light and forced labour was also rare. One sixth of the produce was collected as land tax. Cruel punishments of the Mauryan period continued in the times of Harsha. Hiuen Tsang condemned the trials as barbarous and superstitious. Harsha's army consisted of the traditional four divisions - foot, horse, chariot and elephant. The number of cavalry was more than one lakh and the elephants more than sixty thousands. This was much more than that of the Mauryan army. The maintenance of public records was the salient feature of Harsha's

administration. The archive of the Harsha period was known as nilopitu and it was under the control of special officers. Both good and bad events happened during his time had been recorded.

Society and Economy under Harsha

Both Bana and Hiuen Tsang portray the social life in the times of Harsha. The fourfold division of the society - Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vysya and Sudra - was prevalent. The Brahmins were the privileged section of the society and they were given land grants by the kings. The Kshatriyas were the ruling class. The Vysyas were mainly traders.

Hiuen Tsang mentions that the Sudras practiced agriculture. There existed many sub castes. The position of women was not satisfactory. The institution of Swyamvara (the choice of choosing her husband) had declined. Remarriage of widows was not permitted, particularly among the higher castes. The system of dowry had also become common. The practice of sati was also prevalent. Hiuen Tsang mentions three ways of disposal of the dead - cremation, water burial and exposure in the woods.

The trade and commerce had declined during Harsha's period. This is evident from the decline of trade centres, less number of coins, and slow activities of merchant guilds. The decline of trade in turn affected the handicrafts industry and agriculture.

Since there was no large scale demand for goods, the farmers began to produce only in a limited way. This led to the rise of self-sufficient village economy. In short, there was a sharp economic decline as compared to the economy of the Gupta period.

Cultural Progress

The art and architecture of Harsha's period are very few and mostly followed the Gupta style. Hiuen Tsang describes the glory of the monastery with many storeys built by Harsha at Nalanda. He also speaks of a copper statue of Buddha with eight feet in height. The brick temple of Lakshmana at Sirpur with its rich architecture is assigned to the period of Harsha.

Harsha was a great patron of learning. His biographer Banabhatta adorned his royal court. Besides Harshacharita, he wrote Kadambari. Other literary figures in Harsha's court were Matanga Divakara and the famous Barthrihari, who was the poet, philosopher and grammarian. Harsha himself authored three plays - Ratnavali, Priyadarsika and Nagananda. Harsha patronised the Nalanda University by his liberal endowments. It attained international reputation as a centre of learning during his reign. Hiuen Tsang visited the Nalanda University and remained as a student for some time.

Nalanda University

The Chinese travelers of ancient India mentioned a number of educational institutions. The most famous among them were the Hinayana University of Valabhi and the Mahayana University of Nalanda. Hiuen Tsang gives a very valuable account of the Nalanda University. The term Nalanda means "giver of knowledge". It was founded by Kumaragupta I during the Gupta period. It was patronised by his successors and later by Harsha. The professors of the University were called panditas. Some of its renowned professors were Dingnaga, Dharmapala, Sthiramati and Silabadhra. Dharmapala was a native of Kanchipuram and he became the head of the Nalanda University.

Nalanda University was a residential university and education was free including the boarding and lodging. It was maintained with the revenue derived from 100 to 200 villages endowed by different rulers. Though it was a Mahayana University, different religious subjects like the Vedas, Hinayana doctrine, Sankhya and Yoga philosophies were also taught. In addition to that, general subjects like logic, grammar, astronomy, medicine and art were in the syllabus. It attracted students not only from different parts of India but from different countries of the east. Admission was made by means of an entrance examination. The entrance test was so difficult that not more than thirty percent of the candidates were successful.

Discipline was very strict. More than lectures, discussion played an important part and the medium of instruction was Sanskrit. Recent archeological excavations have brought to light the ruins of the Nalanda University. It shows the grandeur of this centre of learning and confirms the account given by the Chinese pilgrims. It had numerous classrooms and a hostel attached to it.

According to Itsing, the Chinese pilgrim, there were 3000 students on its rolls. It had an observatory and a great library housed in three buildings. Its fame rests on the fact that it attracted scholars from various parts of the world. It was an institution of advanced learning and research.

Short Notes

1. Period of Harshavardhana - **BC 606 - 647**

2. Capital of Harsha - **Kannauj**

3. Sisters name of Harsha - **Raja Sri**

4. Who wrote Harsha Charitha?

Bana (Minister of Harsha)

5. Who wrote Nagananda, Ratnavali and Priyadarshika?

Harsha

6. Who is the Buddhist monk who visited India from China?

Hieun Tsang

7. During whose dynasty did Hieun Tsang visited India?

Harsha

8. What was the name of the book written by Hieun Tsang?

Si- Yu - Ki

9. What was the last empire in India before the invasion of Islamic conquest?

Harsha

10. **Harshavardhana** created the kingdom in the north India after the fall of the Gupta.

12. **Prabhakaravardhana** is the founder of vardhana tradition

13. The scholars supported by harsha is **Haridatta, Jayasena**

14. What was the last Empire in North India before the invasion of Muslims?

Harsha Empire

15. Which language scholar is bana ?

Sanskrit

16. Who was known as 'The prince of pilgrims'?

Hiuen-Tsang

17. Who helped Harsha to fight long with Sasangan who killed Harsha's brother?

Bhaskaravarman

18. Chalukya King Pulakeshi II defeated Harsha on the **Narmada River**.

19. Harsha initially embraced **Hinduism**.

20. The famed university of Buddhist University - **Nalanda** was the best educated college in the world at that time due to the Harsha influence.

21. Who influenced Harsha to follow Buddhism?

Hieun- Tsang & Rajyasri

22. Why did Harsha's great religious conferences take place in Kanauj and Prayaga?

To honor Hieun -Tsang's boarding in India

23. In which year Hieun - Tsang came to India ?

AD 644

24. Who came to power after the death of the Prabhakaravardhana?

Rajyavardhana

25. '**Si-Yu-Ki**' is a travel book written by Hieun -Tsang, that offers many news about India and Buddhism.

26. What partition did Harsha follow in Buddhism?

Mahayana

27. Who wrote the books ' Harshacharita' 'Kadambari'?

Bana

28. What were the books written by Harsha?

Nagananda, Ratnavali, Priyardarsika

29. Buddhist monk **HiuenTsang** of the Chinese country came to India during Harsha period.

30. Hiuen Tsang Visited **Kanauj, Prayag, Nalanda, Kanchipuram and many other places.**

31. During harsha period there were no severe penalties such as **death sentence.**

32. Harsha donated his wealth in **prayag convend** which was held once in a five-year.