

Very Short Answer Questions

Q.1. How did Magadha rise as a powerful kingdom?

Ans. The rise of Magadha is attributed to the fertile plains along the river Ganga. Agriculture flourished in this region which helped in the development of trade.

Q.2. Why did Greek invade India?

Ans. Disunity in North-western janapadas encouraged foreigners to invade India in the fourth and fifth century BC. One such invasion was of the Greek in North-western India in 326 BC. Alexander opened new trade routes to India but weakened the authority of North-western rulers.

Q.3. How did Ashoka expand the Mauryan Empire?

Ans. Bindusara was succeeded by his son Ashoka, the most famous of the Mauryan kings. The Mauryan Empire reached its zenith under the rule of Ashoka. He undertook military campaign against Kalinga and after defeating it in a bloody war, annexed it.

Short Answer Questions

Q.1. Write a note on achievements of Chandragupta Maurya.

Ans. Chandragupta Maurya founded the first most powerful Indian empire. He strengthened his army and captured areas of Punjab, Gujarat and South India. He expanded his boundary from Afghanistan in the west to Assam in the East and from Kashmir in the North to Karnataka in the South. Chandragupta crossed Indus in 305 BC and defeated Seleucus, the Greek ruler. Seleucus was forced to sign a peace treaty and give his daughter in marriage to Chandragupta.

Q.2. How did Kalinga war turn Ashoka into a Buddhist?

Ans. In the Kalinga war, about 1,00,000 people were killed and another 1,50,000 were made prisoners. However, the sight of the large scale killing moved Ashoka and he embraced Buddhism. The Kalinga war was the turning point in Ashoka's life as he shunned all forms of violence for the rest of his life.

Q.3. How did Ashoka preach his message?

Ans. Since Ashoka became a devout Buddhist, he began to spread the teachings of Buddha by issuing edicts. These edicts were engraved on the rocks or pillars in Brahmi and Prakrit language so that even common people could read them. As Ashoka wanted the message to reach all his subjects, he used the language which they could understand. Ashoka believed in high ideals, which could lead his people to be good and virtuous beings.

Q.4. What was Ashoka's Dhamma?

Ans. The principles of Dhamma were:

- i. People should live in peace and harmony.
- ii. Respect and tolerance to all irrespective of caste, creed and religion.
- iii. Shunning violence and war.
- iv. Stopping animal sacrifice and non-vegetarianism.

Q.5. How did Ashoka spread Buddhism?

Ans. The *Dhamma Mahamattas* (officers responsible for promoting the policy of Dhamma) looked after the welfare activities across the empire. Ashoka had friendly relations with his neighbours and sent special envoys to them. His son, Mahendra went to Sri Lanka to spread Buddhism there. Buddhist missionaries also went to Burma and other South-east Asian countries to spread Buddhism.

Q.6. What were the duties of king's officials at the centre?

Ans. The king appointed some men of high character and great wisdom as his ministers whom he consulted before deciding any policy. The ministers were of two ranks—the

Mantris and the Amatyas. The mantris were senior ministers who were his chief advisors and also helped him in the conduct of administration. Amatyas were executive officers working under the mantris carrying out the work of different departments.

Q.7. What were the features of the Mauryan economy?

Ans.

- i. Agriculture had been the main occupation of the people and they paid taxes to the government.
- ii. New lands were constantly found for cultivation. Taxes were charged for providing water for irrigation.
- iii. Merchants paid taxes on the sale of goods.
- iv. They used the punch-marked coins with symbols of hills, trees, the sun or the circle with arrows.
- v. As the Mauryans had a large army, most people were employed as soldiers.

Long Answer Questions

Q.1. Describe the central administration of the Mauryas.

Ans. At the apex of the whole administration was the emperor who was the fountain-head of all authority. His powers were limited. He was the law giver, the supreme judge, the commander of the army and the chief executive. He was trained to fulfil these responsibilities. With the expansion of the Mauryan Empire, the functions and powers of the king further increased.

Q.2. Describe provincial administration of the Mauryas.

Ans. For the efficient administration, the Mauryans had divided the empire into provinces. In the time of Ashoka, five provinces were mentioned viz., the Northern Province with its capital at Taxila, the Western Province with its capital at Ujjain, the Southern Province with its capital at Suvarnagiri, the Kalinga province with its capital at Tosali and the home or the Central province with its capital at Pataliputra. The Governor of each province was styled as Kumara or Aryaputra and was generally a prince of royal blood.

Q.3. Describe the features of Mauryan administration as given by Kautilya and Megasthenes.

Ans. Kautilya's Arthashastra and Megasthenes' Indica are the most important sources to know about the Mauryan administration. The features of Mauryan administration were as follows:

- i. The most powerful person was the king, but he made his decisions only after consulting his ministers.
- ii. He even appointed several officers to collect taxes and keep an account of them.
- iii. The tax money was even used for building and maintaining roads, wells, rest houses, irrigation projects and the army.
- iv. The empire was divided into four provinces, each under a prince. The provinces were further divided into districts and the districts into villages.
- v. There was an espionage system and the spies were perhaps used for getting information from faraway places.

Q.4. Write a note on Mauryan art and architecture.

Ans. The Mauryans built many *stupas*, *viharas* and *pillars*.

- i. **Stupa:** A *stupa* is a domed structure of bricks and stones. One such famous *stupa* is at Sanchi, near Bhopal built by Ashoka. There are beautiful carved gateways on four sides.
- ii. **Viharas:** *Viharas* are monasteries of the Buddhist monks. The earliest were rock-cut caves, made during the Mauryan times. The best known are at Barabar hills. They are carved out of granite hills, the walls of which still shine like mirror.

iii. **Pillars:** The pillars were normally a single stone, weighing about 50 tons and more than 30 feet tall. It had to be chiselled, shaped and polished. The capital of the column was crowned with the figures of bulls and lions. One of the famous pillars with its four lion figure is located at the Sarnath Museum. This Ashokan capital is India's National Emblem.

Q.5. On an outline map of India, show Mauryan Empire.

Ans.



Q.6. On an outline map of India, show the Empire of Ashoka.

Ans.

Hots (Higher Order Thinking Skills)

Q.1. Describe the features of the Mauryan society.

Ans.

- i. Megasthenes gives seven divisions in society. The division was based on the different occupations of the people.
- ii. Varna system is mentioned in the Ashokan edicts. However, it was not very rigid.
- iii. Social inequalities did exist. Women were employed as the king's bodyguards and even as spies.

Q.2. How did the Mauryan Empire decline?

Ans. After the death of Ashoka in 232 BC, the central control from Pataliputra became weak, as they had neither the acumen nor the leadership skills of their predecessors. Such a vast empire, therefore became difficult to be managed, as the network of roads was damaged by floods. The state became financially weak, as the administration failed to collect revenues. Provinces started disintegrating and in 185 BC, the Mauryan Empire declined.