Chapter - 09 History

Vital Villages Thriving Towns

- Rise of new kingdoms and towns led to an increase in agriculture and trade.
- It resulted in the growth of new towns.

• Rapid Increase in Agricultural Production:

- (i) The discovery of iron tools led to rapid rise in agricultural production.
- (ii) It made it easier to bring more land under cultivation by clearing forests.
- (iii) The use of iron ploughshare made it possible to dig deep in those areas where the soil was fertile.
- (iv) It led to significant rise in agriculature production first in North India and then in South India.

• Growth of Crafts and Craftsmen:

- (i) Art and crafts flourished in every village.
- (ii) Each village had weavers, dyers, potters, blacksmiths, basket-weaver, goldsmiths, carpenters and othe rskilled craftsmen.
- (iii) Silk weaving, dyeing, coin-minting, ivory-carving, cloth-making and bead-making became the popular occupations.
- (iv) Archaeological sources show exteremly fine pottery called the Northern Black Polished Ware.
- (v) Most craftsmen organized themselves into organisations called Shrenis.

• Increase in Trade:

- (i) The rapid rise in agricultural production and crafts led to surplus production. This surplus in villages was supplied to towns.
- (ii) All this led to growth of trade.
- (iii) Merchants and traders participated in both the internal and external trade.
- (iv) All trading communities were orgainsed into guilds.
- (v) Use of money gave rise to punch marked coins.
- (vi) Taxes collected from trade acted as an important source of revenue for the king,

• How did People Live:

- (i) Very little information is available about the life of the people.
- (ii) The main sources to know about them include stories from books, the accounts of sailors and travellers and sculptures which show scenes from the daily life.

• The Second Urbanisation: Town and Cities:

- (i) Large-scale agricultural production, growth of crafts and increased trade and commerce led to emergence of new towns and cities.
- (ii) It led to growth of urban centres and is called the Age of Second Urbanisation.
- (iii) Some important towns of this period were Vaishali, Ujjayani, Hastinapur, Pataliputra, Mathura, Arikamedu, Bodh Gaya, Rajagriha and Kaveripattnam.

Functions of Towns:

- (i) Each town was famous for some particular activity.
- (ii) Some towns were religious while others were administrative.
- (iii) Several towns like Sopara were trading towns.
- (iv) Two such famous towns were Mathura and Arikamedu.
- (v) Mathura was the second capital of Kushanas and a centre of temples monasteries, arts and crafts. The Mathura School of Art grew here.

(vi) Arikamedu was an important coastal trading centre, a port and a centre for export and import. Traders from Rome came here.

• Life of People of Tamil Nadu: Under the Cholas and the Pandyas:

- (i) Most people lived in villages and were farmers.
- (ii) Towns were near the coast.
- (iii) Trade went as far as Rome and China.
- (iv) People like amusements, games and gambling.
- (v) The administration was headed by a king. There was even a general assembly known as the Sabha.
- (vi) The most popular God was Murugan (Kartikeya in North).
- (vii) The Chola Kingdom was situated between the Pennar and the Velur rivers and its centre of power was Uraiyar, a famous cotton centre.
- (viii) The Pandyha kingdom with its capital at Madurai was known for its pearls. It is mentioned by Megasthenes and the Sangam literature.