

Long Answer Questions

Q.1. Describe the agricultural system under the Mahajanapadas.

Ans. Two major changes were introduced in agriculture around this time which were as follows:

First, it was the rapid use of iron ploughshares. Through iron ploughshares, heavy and clayey soil could be turned over better as compared to a wooden ploughshare. It increased production of grains.

Second, people started transplanting paddy.

Q.2. How did caste system become rigid in later Vedic age?

Ans. In India, the definition of caste system changed in later Vedic Age. The class system got converted into caste system. At the top of the hierarchy were Brahmins, who imparted knowledge and wisdom. Second in hierarchy were the Kshatriyas who were supposed to be brave and courageous rulers. The third in hierarchy were the Vaishyas who contributed to the trade and prosperity of the state. Last in hierarchy were the Shudras who were looked down upon as *dasas*. In post Vedic Age, they were known as untouchables who were denied entry into the mainstream.

Q.3. Describe the political organisation of the Mahajanapadas.

Ans. The political organisation of the mahajanapadas was organised into two forms—Monarchy and Republican system.

Monarchy

In this system, the king was the head of the state. Kingship was hereditary and king was the law-maker. Taxes were collected by the king to maintain a strong army and develop the kingdom.

Republic

Under this system, state was ruled by an elected chief called Ganapat. This was not hereditary. Rulers ruled with the help of the elders of the Kshatriya family. Tax collected from people was spent on army for the welfare of its citizens. *Lichchhavis* and *Mallas* were kingdoms which came under this classification.

Q.4. Who was Vajjis? What type of rule did they represent?

Ans.

- i. Vajji was a powerful kingdom with its capital at Vaishali (Bihar).
- ii. It was under a different form of government known as *gana* or *sangha*.

- iii. Sometimes even thousands of them ruled together, each one was known as Raja.
- iv. They also had assemblies where decisions were made through debates and discussions.
- v. However women, dasas and Kammakaras could not participate in these assemblies.

Q.5. Examine the taxation system under the Mahajanapadas.

Ans. As the rulers of the mahajanapadas needed huge amount of money, they used to collect regular taxes. These included:

- i. One-sixth tax was fixed on crops which was called bhaga or a share.
- ii. Taxes were collected from craftspersons.
- iii. Herders were also expected to pay taxes in the form of animals and animal produce.
- iv. Taxes on goods that were bought and sold through trade.
- v. Hunters and gatherers had to provide forest produce to the raja.

Q.6. On an outline map of India, mark major Mahajanapadas.

Ans.

