

## Long Answer Questions

### Q.1. Describe the sources of knowing about the Guptas.

**Ans.** Clear evidences and historical sources have been found for knowing about the Guptas. These include archaeological and literary sources. **Archaeological** Archaeological sources of Guptas include the rock-cut temples of Ajanta and brick temples in Devgarh, Kanpur and Jhansi. Further, pillar inscription at Allahabad about Samudragupta by his court poet Harisena, are rich sources of Gupta Heritage. **Coins and Literary Sources** Coins of Gupta Age, made of gold and silver, have been found with images of gods and goddesses or kings like Samudragupta. Further, the accounts of travellers like Fa Xian help in enriching us about the Gupta Age. The famous poet Kalidasa's work such as Raghuvamsa, Meghaduta and Abhijnana Shakuntalam belong to this age. The famous collection of fables called Panchatantra also belongs to this age.

### Q.2. Write a short note on Samudragupta.

**Ans.** Under Samudragupta, the Gupta empire was firmly established and attained the supremacy equal to what the Mauryans had exercised before. The Allahabad pillar inscription describes the conquest and glory of Samudragupta. By the end of his reign, his empire included almost the whole of northern India (except West Punjab, Kashmir, Sindh, Western Rajputana and Gujarat).

### Q.3. Give an account of slavery in India under Gupta Age.

**Ans.** Slavery was prevalent during the Gupta times but not in so rigid form as it was in Greece and Rome. The contemporary literary works give description of numerous categories of slaves like prisoners of war, slave debtors, losergamblers, female slaves, etc. Slavery in India, however, was not life long and liberty could be regained.

### Q.4. Describe the trade under the Gupta Age.

**Ans.** India had brisk trade relations with the foreign countries on the west by way of the Persian Gulf and Red Sea as well as the land routes converging on Palmyra and Petra. The conquest of the maritime province of Saurashtra and ports on the Arabian Sea poured into India for the first time, the wealth of Roman empire through Kalyani, Broach and Kambay. Tamralipti was the principal port for trade with China, Ceylon, Java and Sumatra.

### Q.5. Write a note on religion under Guptas.

**Ans.** The Gupta period was an age of blossoming of Hindu religion in its thousand petals and myriad scents. The Puranas were recast in their present form during this age. Brahmanism became supreme and was patronised by the Gupta rulers. Hinduism became state religion. As idol worship became popular, the Gupta rulers got erected many temples of Hindu gods such as Shiva, Vishnu, Sun, Kartikeya, etc. Donations were also made for the maintenance of temples.

**Q.6. Give an account of rise of Harshavardhan.**

**Ans.** With the decline of Gupta empire, many small kingdoms came to power. One such powerful kingdom was Vardhana dynasty led by Harshavardhana. At the height of his glory, his kingdom spanned Punjab, Bengal, Orissa and the entire Indo-Gangetic plain on the north of Narmada river. After his accession, he merged the two kingdoms of Thaneshwar and Kannauj and shifted his capital to Kannauj. Harshavardhana had tried to cross the region across River Narmada but was defeated by the Chalukyan king, Pulakeshin II. He wrote three plays Ratnavali, Priyadarsika and Nagananda.

**Q.7. Give an account of religion of Harshavardhan.**

**Ans.** Harsha was a follower of Shiva in his early years. Later he embraced Buddhism. However, he was tolerant towards all religions. He called two great assemblies to discuss Buddhism. During his rule, the Nalanda University came up as an important centre of learning. Harsha's death in 647 AD marked the end of all successful attempts to restore political unity in North India.

**Q.8. Describe an account of life of ordinary people of this age.**

**Ans.** We can know about the lives of ordinary people from plays and other accounts. Kalidasa, known for his plays, depicted life in the king's court through the chosen medium. An interesting trait about these plays is that the king and brahmins mostly speak Sanskrit, while women and men other than the king and brahmins use Prakrit. The Chinese pilgrim Fa Xian, also wrote the plight of those treated as untouchables by the high and mighty. They were expected to live on the outskirts of the city.

**Q.9. On an outline map of India, mark the extent of the Gupta Empire.**

**Ans.**



**Q.10. On an outline map of India, mark the extent of Pallavas and Chalukyas.**

**Ans.**

