

Chapter 11. New Empires and Kingdoms

Very Short Q&A:

Q1: Who composed The Prashasti of Chalukya king Pulakeshin II?

Ans: Ravikirti

Q2: Name the place which was the capital of Chalukya rulers.

Ans: Aihole

Q3: Among the Gupta rulers, the title of maharaj-adhiraja was first adopted by_____.

Ans: Chandragupta

Q4: Who was the founder of the Gupta dynasty?

Ans: Srigupta

Q5: Why most of the rulers of the time took the title of maharaja and maharajadhiraja?

Ans: to show their influence and strength.

Q6: Who checked Harsha's march into the Deccan?

Ans: Pulakeshin II

Q7: Harsha was the ruler of Kanauj. True/False

Ans: True

Q8: Name the Kanauj ruler who was credited for performing Ashvamedha sacrifice several times.

Ans: Harsha

Q9: Chandragupta II led an expedition to western India against _____.

Ans: Shakas

Q10: Who wrote the biography of king Harshavardhana?

Ans: Banabhatta

Q11: Who was Banabhatta?

Ans: Banabhatta was a poet laureate in Harshavardhana court.

Q12: The Sabha was an assembly of _____.

Ans: brahmin land owners

Q13: How did the Sabha functioned?

Ans: through subcommittees, which looked after irrigation, agricultural operations, making roads, local temples.

Q14: China is known for the invention of the technique of making_____.

Ans: Silk

Q15: Name The capital of Chalukyas.

Ans: Aihole

Q16: Ravikriti was the court poet of Pulakeshin II. True/False

Ans: True

Q17: What is the meaning of the term 'genealogies'?

Ans: lists of ancestors

Q18: Why Genealogies is very important in the study of history?

Ans: It is important when we study history and discuss the rule of important dynasties.

Q19: Harisena Prashasti refers to the exploits of _____.

Ans: Samudragupta

Q20: Harisena classifies the campaigns of Samudragupta in this Prashasti. True/False

Ans: True

Q21: Name an Indian king who was known as 'musician king'.

Ans: Samudragupta

Q22: Name the ruler who established diplomatic relations with China.

Ans: Harshavardhan

Q23: What was Ur?

Ans: Village assembly

Q24: For whom the title Maharaja is used for in Gupta records?

Ans: Srigupta and Ghatotkacha.

Q25: Name the capital of Gupta Dynasty.

Ans: Pataliputra or Patna

Q26: What was the main reason for expansion of internal trade during the gupta period?

Ans: peace and order on account of a strong gupta rule

Q27: Both internal and foreign trade flourished during the Gupta period. True/False

Ans: true

Q28: How internal trade was carried on?

Ans: by road and through rivers

Q29: Who was the mother of the greatest Gupta emperor Samudragupta?

Ans: Kumara Devi

Q30: The early Gupta gold and silver coins were based on the coins of the _____.

Ans: Kushanas

Q31: What did Fa Xian noticed during his visit to India?

Ans: the plight of those who were treated as untouchables by the high and mighty.

Q32: Who was Fa Xian?

Ans: a Chinese pilgrim

Q33: Sarthavaha was the title given to_____.

Ans: Leader of merchant caravans

Q34: Internal trade was principally carried by the caravans. True/False

Ans: True

Q35: What is Abhijana Shakuntalam?

Ans: Chief Judicial Officer

Q36: Who was given title "Maha-danda-nayaka"?

Ans: Minister of war and peace

Q37: What was the meaning of a sandhi-vigrahika?

Ans: Harishena

Q38: Name a Sandhi-vigrahika in the court of Samudragupta.

Ans: Kalidasa

Q39: Who is called as Indian Shakespeare?

Ans: Kalidasa

Q40: Who wrote Abhijana Shakuntalam?

Ans: the most famous play written by Kalidasa about a king and his marriage to a forest girl.

Q41: How many rulers were with Dakshinapatha?

Ans: twelve rulers

Q42: Name the gupta ruler who captured the 12 Kings of Dakshinapatha and then liberated them.

Ans: Samudragupta.

Q43: What is the most important teaching in the Islamic faith?

Ans: equality and unity of all before Allah, the one supreme god.

Q44: The rulers who were compared to Gods belonged to _____.

Ans: Gupta dynasty

Q45: What do you mean by "Prashasti"?

Ans: Prashasti is a sanskrit word meaning 'in praise of'.

Q46: The Prashastis usually provide us information on the genealogy of the kings mentioned in them. True/False

Ans: True

Q47: What was the number of different kind of rulers described by Harishena in his prashasti?

Ans: Four

Q48: Name the number of different kind of rulers described by Harishena in his prashasti.

Ans: rulers of Aryavarta, rulers of Dakshinapatha, rulers of inner circle of neighbouring states and rulers of outlying areas.

Q49: Who gave a beautiful description of the king's moving army?

Ans: Ravikriti

Q50: Where is Sind located at present?

Ans: Pakistan.

Q51: Name an Indian astronomer and mathematician of the fifth century A.D.

Ans: Chandragupta II

Short Q&A:

Q1: Write short notes on Harsha- The ruler of Kanauj.

Ans: Harsha was the ruler of Kanauj. He tried to expand his rule beyond the river Narmada. His successive efforts were foiled by the Chalukya ruler Pulakeshin II. He is regarded as most successful Chalukya ruler. He is credited for performing Ashvamedha sacrifice several times.

Q2: Write short notes on Banabhatta.

Ans: Banabhatta was a poet laureate in Harshavardhana court. He was a prolific Sanskrit writer, lived during the 7th century as the court chronicler of King Harshavardhana. 'Harshacharita' and 'Kadambari' are among his renowned works. In 'Harshacharita', Banabhatta has narrated the complete life of King Harshavardhana.

Q3: Write short notes on Chandragupta I .

Ans: Chandragupta I was born in 305 A.D. He married a Lichchhavi princess named Kumaradevi. Through this matrimonial alliance, he gained enormous power and used it to his great advantage. He launched a series of military expansions, pushing the kingdom's boundaries westward. By 320 A.D., he proclaimed himself Maharaj-adhiraja. Many historians consider 320 A.D. was the beginning of the Gupta dynasty.

Q4: Write short notes on Chandragupta II.

Ans: Chandragupta II was an Indian astronomer and mathematician of the fifth century A.D. He lived and worked in Kusumapura near present-day Patna in Bihar. He was born in 476 A.D. in Kerala. He was also a great mathematician. His treatise was Aryabhatyam.

Q5: Briefly describe assemblies in the Southern kingdoms.

Ans: A number of local assemblies were mentioned in the inscriptions of the Pallavas. Most probably these assemblies were controlled by rich and powerful landowners and merchants.

- Sabha was an assembly of brahmin land owners. It performed various roles and functioned through subcommittees, which looked after irrigation, agricultural operations, making roads, local temples etc.
- The ur was a village assembly found in areas where the land owners were not brahmins.
- The nagaram was an organisation of merchants.

Q6: Mention three authors who wrote about the King and the lives of the ordinary people.

Ans: Kalidasa, Fa Xian and Banabhatta wrote about the lives of the ordinary people in the kingdom./p>

- In his plays, Kalidasa has shown the king and most brahmins speaking Sanskrit, while women and men other than the king and brahmins use Prakrit. There is a remarkable description of the plight of a poor fisherman in his play *Abhijnana Shakuntalam*.
- The Chinese pilgrim Fa Xian has given a detailed account of the plight of the untouchables. They were mistreated by the high and mighty and were expected to live on the outskirts of the city.
- Banabhatta provides us with a vivid picture of the king's army on the move.

Q7: What were the changes in the army after the Gupta period?

Ans: The protection of an Empire required huge and strong army. Thus, special attention was paid to maintain a huge and efficient army.

- Infantry, cavalry and elephants were the main divisions of the army.
- Besides, there were military leaders known as samantas, who provided troops to the king whenever required.
- Samantas were not paid regular salaries. Instead, some of them received grants of land. They collected revenue from the land and used this to maintain soldiers, horses and provide equipment for warfare.

Q8: Explain the new developments in the field of administration after the Gupta period.

Ans: During the Gupta period, there were some new developments in the administrative field. Kings adopted numerous measures to win the support of powerful men such as:

- Some important administrative posts now became hereditary. For example, the poet Harishena was a maha-danda-nayaka, or chief judicial officer, like his father.
- At times, one person held many offices. For instance, besides being a maha-danda-nayaka, Harishena was a kumar-amatya, and asandhi- vighraha.
- Besides, important men probably had a say in local administration.

Q9: Who was Pulakeshin II? How have we come to know about him?

Ans: Pulakeshin was one of the famous Chalukyan rulers. A prashasti, composed by his court poet Ravikirti, is an important source of information regarding his early life and his expeditions. This provides us with the information about his ancestors for four generations. It tells us that Pulakeshin evidently got the kingdom from his uncle. According

to Ravikirti, he led expeditions along both the west and east coasts. He also checked the advance of Harsha.

Q10: Write a short note on the Pallavas and Chalukyas.

Ans: The most important ruling dynasties in south India were the Pallavas and Chalukyas. The realm of the Pallavas spread from the region around their capital, Kanchipuram, to the Kaveri delta. The kingdom of the Chalukyas was centred on the Raichur Doab between the rivers Krishna and Tungabhadra. Aihole was the capital of the Chalukyas. It was an important trading centre as well as a religious centre. The Pallavas and Chalukyas frequently attacked each other's lands, especially the capital cities, which were prosperous towns.

Q11: Mention an important source of information about Samudragupta.

Ans: An important source of information about Samudragupta is a long inscription in the form of poem written in Sanskrit by his court poet, Harisena nearly 1700 years ago.

Q12: How did the poet of Prashastis praise Samudragupta?

Ans: The poet praised the king as warrior and as a king who won victories in battle. He was learned and the best of poets. He is also described as equal to the gods.

Q13: What was the title adopted by Chandragupta, the father of Samudragupta?

Ans: Chandragupta was the first ruler of the Gupta dynasty who adopted the grand title of maharaj-adhiraja. Later on this title was also adopted by Samudragupta.

Q14: Write about the kingdom of the Chalukyas.

Ans: The Chalukyas were one of the important dynasties in south India during 3rd -5th A.D. The kingdom of the Chalukyas centered around the Raichur Doab, between the rivers Krishna and Tungabhadra. Their capital city was Aihole. It was an important trading centre. It was also an important religious centre, with a number of temples. Pulakeshin II was the famous Chalukya ruler.

Q15: Who controlled the local assemblies such as Sabha, ur, and nagaram?

Ans: These assemblies were controlled by rich and powerful landowners and merchants.

Q16: From Where do we get information about King Harshavardhana?

Ans: We get information about Harshavardhana from his biography titled Harshacharita in Sanskrit, written by his court poet, Banabhatta.

Q17: Write about the kingdom of the Pallavas.

Ans: The kingdom of the Pallavas spread from the region around their capital, Kanchipuram, to the Kaveri delta. They were one of the most important ruling dynasties in south India during the 3rd to 5th A.D.

Q18: Write the meaning of these terms: nagara shreshthi, Sarthavaha, Prathama-kulika

Ans:

Nagara-shreshthi: Chief banker or merchant of the city

Sarthavaha: Leader of the merchant caravans

Prathama-kulika: Chief craftsman and head of the then kayasthas or scribes.

Q19: Who were samantas?

Ans: Samantas were military leaders who provided the king with troops whenever he needed them. For their service they were not paid regular salaries. Instead, they received the grants of land from the king. They collected revenue from the land and used it for the maintenance of soldiers and horses and to provide war equipments. Whenever the king was weak they tried to become independent.

Q20: What was the Sabha during the Pallavas rule?

Ans: A number of local assemblies have been mentioned in the inscriptions of the Pallavas. The Sabha was one of the local assemblies. It was an assembly of brahmin land owners. This assembly had sub-committees that looked after irrigation, agricultural operations, making roads, and local temples, etc.

Q21: The Prayag Prashasti lists the conquests of Samudragupta. What is the other information that it provides us, about the ruler?

Ans: The Prayag Prashasti mainly talks of the military conquests and achievements of Samudragupta. Apart from that it also traces the genealogy of Samudragupta. This is the obvious information that is available to us. These inscriptions also give us information about his state policies which can be interpreted from the accounts of his treatment of the conquered territories. They also provide information about his court and the people who attended it.

Q22: What do you think were the causes of the downfall of the Gupta Empire?

Ans: The administration was decentralised and land grants were given to administrative officers in lieu of regular salaries. At times, these officers became powerful and started

fighting for their independence. Also during Skandagupta's reign, the empire was attacked by the Huns, the nomadic tribes from Central Asia. These attacks proved to be the death knell on the Gupta Empire.

Q23: What was the political scenario after the fall of the Gupta Dynasty?

Ans: The end of the Gupta Empire saw a period of disorder which prevailed for a while. There were many small kingdoms that became powerful and fought against each other. These were finally conquered by Harshavardhana who established a powerful empire.

Q24: Describe in brief the administrative system prevalent during the Gupta period.

Ans: The administration had been decentralised to a large degree. The king reigned at the top of the hierarchy with his council of ministers. The kingdom was divided into provinces. These were called 'bhuktis' and were ruled by governors who were assisted by their officers. These provinces were further divided into districts or 'vishayas' and were administered by the 'ayuktas'. At the bottom of the hierarchy were the villages which were administered by the village elders. At each level, people were powerful enough to take decision so as to ease the administration and function efficiently.

Q25: Harshavardhana wanted to expand his kingdom but could not proceed beyond the Deccan. Why was this so?

Ans: The Chalukya king Pulakesin II defeated Harshavardhana in battle on the banks of Narmada thus checking his advancement into the Deccan and then further south.

Q26: How was the money spent which was collected in the form of revenue?

Ans: The money collected was spent on facilitating good administration. Grants and donations for religious and educational establishments were made. A portion of the revenue was also spent on maintaining the armies.

Long Q&A:

Q1: Mention four different kinds of rulers as described by Harisena. What was Samudragupta's policy towards them?

Ans: Harisena, the court poet of Samudragupta has mentioned the four different rulers in the prashasti. Samudragupta's policy toward them is as follows:

1. The rulers of Aryavarta (Kanauj, Pataliputra, Prayaga, Mathura and Nalanda) were some nine rulers. These kingdoms were made part of Samudragupta's empire.

2. The rulers of Dakshinapatha were twelve rulers. These rulers were defeated by Samudragupta and then allowed to rule their kingdoms.
3. The neighbouring states such as Assam, coastal Bengal, Nepal and a number of gana sanghas brought tribute, followed his order and attended his court.
4. The rulers of north-west and the ruler of Sri Lanka submitted to him and offered daughters for marriage.

Q2: What do you mean by prashastis and how did they help?

Ans: Prashastis is a special kind of inscription meaning "in praise of". They were composed in praise of the rulers. An important example is a prashasti of Samudragupta. It is a poem in Sanskrit, composed by his court poet Harisena, nearly 1700 years ago. It is inscribed on the Ashokan pillar at Allahabad. The poet has praised the king in glowing terms. He is described as equal to God. It tells about his conquests. Most prashastis also mention the ancestors of the ruler. Samudragupta's great grandfather, grandfather, father and mother are mentioned by Harisena in the prashasti.