

Class 6 History Chapter 5 Kingdoms, Kings and an Early Republic Important Questions

1. Fill in the blanks.

- (i) 'Rajas' who let the _____ horse pass through their lands were invited to the sacrifice.
- (ii) Archaeologists have found huts in the settlements of the _____.
- (iii) Pots to store grain were made out of Painted _____.
- (iv) _____ were paid regular salaries and maintained by the king throughout the year.
- (v) Both the Buddha and Mahavira belonged to _____ or _____.
- (vi) Ajatasattu wanted to attack the _____.

Answer:

- (i) ashvamedha
- (ii) janapadas
- (iii) Grey Ware
- (iv) Soldiers
- (v) ganas or sanghas
- (vi) Vajjis

2. Write True/False against each of the following statement

- (i) Priests performed the rituals including the sprinkling of sacred water.
- (ii) Usually, the tax was fixed at 1/6th of what was produced. This was known as bhaga or a share.
- (iii) The word kammakaras used for slave men and women.
- (iv) Raja composed later Vedic books.
- (v) Shudras had to serve the other three groups and could not perform any rituals.
- (vi) In Magadha elephants were captured and used in army.

Answer:

- (i) True
- (ii) True

- (iii) False
- (iv) False
- (v) True
- (vi) True

Answer each of the following questions

1. What is 'Sangha'?

Answer: Sangha means organisation or association.

2. What was the source of income of Raja of Mahajanapadas?

Answer: Taxes was the source of income of Raja of Mahajanapadas.

3. Name the four groups into which later vedic society was divided.

Answer: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras

4. Name some rivers that flowed through Magadha.

Answer: Many rivers such as the Ganga and Son flowed through Magadha.

5. Who conquered the last of the ganas or sanghas?

Answer: Gupta rulers conquered the last of the ganas or sanghas.

6. What was the most important source of revenue to the state?

Answer: Agriculture

7. What was the capital of Vajji?

Answer: Vaishali (Bihar)

8. What does ashvamedha means?

Answer: Ashvamedha means horse sacrifice.

9. Name the animal that played a pivotal role during Ashvamedha.

Answer: Horse

10. What is the modern name of Rajagriha?

Answer: Rajagriha (present-day Rajgir) is in Bihar.

11. Name the Later Vedic books.

Answer: The Samaveda, Yajurveda and Atharvaveda are the Later Vedic books.

12. Who was the minister of Ajatasattu?

Answer: Vassakara was the minister of Ajatasattu.

13. What does the word 'Janapada' mean?

Answer: The word janapada literally means the land where the jana set its foot, and settled down.

14. What is Digha Nikaya?

Answer: Digha Nikaya is a famous Buddhist book, which contains some of the speeches of the Buddha. These were written down about 2300 years ago.

15. Why the rivers that flowed through Magadha were considered important.

Answer: This was important for (a) transport, (b) water supplies (c) making the land fertile.

16. Who were the groups who could not participate in the assemblies of the ganas?

Answer: Women, dasas and kammakaras could not participate in these assemblies.

17. What does Varna mean?

Answer: The priests divided people into four groups, called varnas. According to them, each varna had a different set of functions.

18. Why Shudras were excluded from every ritual?

Answer: Shudras were excluded from every ritual because according to priests contact with these groups was polluting.

19. Name the system of government in Vajji.

Answer: Vajji, with its capital at Vaishali (Bihar), was under a different form of government, known as gana or sangha.

20. Name some Janapadas.

Answer: Purana Qila in Delhi, Hastinapur near Meerut (Uttar Pradesh), and Atranjikhhera, near Etah (Uttar Pradesh)

21. How were cities of mahajanapadas fortified?

Answer: The cities of mahajanapadas were fortified by building huge walls of wood, brick or stone around them.

22. What was the content of Later Vedic books?

Answer: Later Vedic books were composed by priests, and described how rituals were to be performed. They also contained rules about society.

23. What is 'Bhaga'?

Answer: Taxes on crops were the most important. Usually, the tax was fixed at 1/6th of what was produced. This was known as bhaga or a share.

24. How some men came to be recognized as rajas?

Answer: Some men by performing big sacrifices, like, the Ashvamedha Yajna or horse sacrifice, came to be recognised as rajas.

25. Which two powerful rulers of Magadha used all possible means to conquer other janapadas?

Answer: Magadha had two very powerful rulers, Bimbisara and Ajatasattu, who used all possible means to conquer other janapadas.

26. Which category of people was excluded from many rituals in the Later Vedic Period?

Answer: Some people such as those who were regarded as shudras by the priests were excluded from many rituals.

27. When was the first democratic government formed?

Answer: Around 2500 years ago, the people of Athens set up a form of government, which was called a democracy, which lasted for about 200 years.

28. How were forests useful for the people of Magadha?

Answer: Parts of Magadha were forested. Elephants, which lived in the forest, could be captured and trained for the army. Forests also provided wood for building houses, carts and chariots.

29. What were the two major changes that took place in agriculture during the Later Vedic Period?

Answer: There were two major changes in agriculture around this time. One was the growing use of iron ploughshares. Second, people began transplanting paddy.

30. When Alexander wanted to march further eastwards, his soldiers refused. Why?

Answer: Alexander wanted to march further eastwards but his soldiers refused because they were scared, as they had heard that the rulers of India had vast armies of foot soldiers, chariots and elephants.

31. Why was an iron plough considered better than that of wood?

Answer: Iron plough considered better than that of wood because iron is hard and strong than wood and thus heavy, clayey soil could be turned over better than with a wooden ploughshare.

32. Name the four varnas that are described in the Vedas.

Answer: Four varnas are:

- i. Brahmins
- ii. Kshatriyas
- iii. Vaishyas
- iv. Shudras

33. Why books such as Samaveda, Yajurveda and Atharvaveda, as well as other books are often called later Vedic?

Answer: These books are often called later Vedic, because they were composed after the Rigveda. These were composed by priests, and described how rituals were to be performed. They also contained rules about society.

34. In what ways are present-day elections different from the ways in which rulers were chosen in janapadas?

Answer: Some men became recognized as rajas by performing very big sacrifices. The ashvamedha or horse sacrifice was one such ritual. In present day elections leaders or rulers are chosen by voting.

35. What led to the increase in the production?

Answer: People began transplanting paddy. This meant that instead of scattering seed on the ground, from which plants would sprout, saplings were grown and then planted in the fields. This led to increased production, as many more plants survived.

36. Why were taxes collected by the rulers of the mahajanapadas?

Answer: As the rulers of the mahajanapadas were building huge forts and maintaining big armies, they needed more resources. So, instead of depending on occasional gifts brought by people, as in the case of the raja of the janapadas, they started collecting regular taxes.

37. Who was Alexander? Name some places that were conquered by him.

Answer: More than 2300 years ago, a ruler named Alexander, who lived in Macedonia in Europe, wanted to become a world conqueror. He conquered parts of Egypt and West Asia, and came to the Indian subcontinent, reaching up to the banks of the Beas.

38. What archaeologists have found about the 'janapadas' and their people?

Answer: Archaeologists have excavated a number of settlements in these janapadas. They found that people lived in huts, and kept cattle as well as other animals. They also grew a variety of crops – rice, wheat, barley, pulses, sugarcane, sesame and mustard.

39. Write a short note on painted grey ware.

Answer: Plates and bowls are the most common vessels made out of Painted Grey Ware. These are extremely fine to touch, with a nice, smooth surface. Perhaps these were used on special occasions, for important people, and to serve special food.

40. Write a short note on gana or sangha.

Answer: In a gana or a sangha there were not one, but many rulers. Sometimes, even when thousands of men ruled together, each one was known as a raja. These rajas performed rituals together. They also met in assemblies, and decided what had to be done and how, through discussion and debate.

41. Why did the rajas of Mahajanapadas build forts?

Answer: Forts were probably built because:-

- People were afraid of attacks from other kings and needed protection.
- It is also likely that some rulers wanted to show how rich and powerful they were by building really large, tall and impressive walls around their cities.
- Also in this way, the land and the people living inside the fortified area could be controlled more easily by the king.

42. How were the Mahajanapadas different from Janapadas?

Answer:

Mahajanapadas	Janapadas
1. About 2500 years ago, some janapadas became more important than others, and were known as mahajanapadas.	1. The word janapada literally means the land where the jana set its foot, and settled down.
2. Example: Kosala, Anga, Magadha, Vajji, Panchala, Avanti, Gandhara, Kuru etc.	2. Example: Chedi, Aja, Bharata, Puru, Mahavrisha etc.

43. Why did people oppose the system of varnas?

Answer: Many people did not accept the system of varna laid down by the Brahmins:

- Some kings thought they were superior to the priests.
- Others felt that birth could not be a basis for deciding which varna people belonged to.
- Besides, some people felt that there should be no differences amongst people based on occupation.

- Others felt that everybody should be able to perform rituals.
- And others condemned the practice of untouchability.

44. Write a short note on the governance system in 'Ganas' and 'Sanghas'.

Answer: Note on the governance system in 'Ganas' and 'Sanghas'

- In a gana or a sangha there were not one, but many rulers. Sometimes, even when thousands of men ruled together, each one was known as a raja.
- These rajas performed rituals together. They also met in assemblies, and decided what had to be done and how, through discussion and debate.
- For example, if they were attacked by an enemy, they met to discuss what should be done to meet the threat.
- However, women, dasas and kammakaras could not participate in these assemblies.

45. What are the different roles of different people during Ashvamedha Yagya?

Answer: The raja was a central figure in these rituals. He often had a special seat, a throne or a tiger skin. His charioteer, who was his companion in the battle field and witnessed his exploits, chanted tales of his glory. His relatives, especially his wives and sons, had to perform a variety of minor rituals. The other rajas were simply spectators who had to sit and watch the performance of the sacrifice. Priests performed the rituals including the sprinkling of sacred water on the king. The ordinary people, the vish or vaishya, also brought gifts. However, some people, such as those who were regarded as shudras by the priests, were excluded from many rituals.

46. How were taxes collected by the rulers of Mahajanapadas?

Answer: Taxes were collected in the following ways:

- Taxes on crops were the most important. This was because most people were farmers. Usually, the tax was fixed at 1/6th of what was produced. This was known as bhaga or a share.
- There were taxes on crafts persons as well. These could have been in the form of labour.
- Herders were also expected to pay taxes in the form of animals and animal produce.
- There were also taxes on goods that were bought and sold, through trade.
- And hunters and gatherers also had to provide forest produce to the raja.

47. Write a short note on 'ashvamedha'.

Answer:

- Some men now became recognized as rajas by performing very big sacrifices.
- The ashvamedha or horse sacrifice was one such ritual.

- A horse was let loose to wander freely and it was guarded by the raja's men. If the horse wandered into the kingdoms of other rajas and they stopped it, they had to fight.
- If they allowed the horse to pass, it meant that they accepted that the raja who wanted to perform the sacrifice was stronger than them.
- These rajas were then invited to the sacrifice, which was performed by specially trained priests, who were rewarded with gifts.
- The raja who organised the sacrifice was recognised as being very powerful, and all those who came brought gifts for him.

48. Explain the four Varnas of the Later Vedic Period.

Answer: The priests divided people into four groups, called varnas. According to them, each varna had a different set of functions.

- The first varna was that of the brahmin. Brahmins were expected to study (and teach) the Vedas, perform sacrifices and receive gifts.
- In the second place were the rulers, also known as kshatriyas. They were expected to fight battles and protect people.
- Third were the vish or the vaishyas. They were expected to be farmers, herders, and traders. Both the kshatriyas and the vaishyas could perform sacrifices.
- Last were the shudras, who had to serve the other three groups and could not perform any rituals. Often, women were also grouped with the shudras. Both women and shudras were not allowed to study the Vedas.

49. What helped Magadha to become a powerful kingdom in North India?

Answer: Magadha became a powerful kingdom in North India because:-

- Many rivers such as the Ganga and Son flowed through Magadha. This was important for (a) transport, (b) water supplies (c) making the land fertile.
- Parts of Magadha were forested. Elephants, which lived in the forest, could be captured and trained for the army. Forests also provided wood for building houses, carts and chariots.
- Besides, there were iron ore mines in the region that could be tapped to make strong tools and weapons.
- Magadha had two very powerful rulers, Bimbisara and Ajatasattu, who used all possible means to conquer other janapadas. Mahapadma Nanda was another important ruler. He extended his control up to the north-west part of the subcontinent.