

CHAPTER – 8
ASHOKA, THE EMPEROR WHO GAVE UP WAR

❖ LET'S RECALL

Q. 1 Make a list of the occupations of the people who lived within the Mauryan Empire.

Answer:

The followings were the occupations of people in Mauryan Empire:

1. Farming
2. Handicrafts
3. Trading
4. Herding
5. Hunting and gathering

Q. 2 Complete the following sentences:

- (a) Officials collected _____ from the area under the direct control of the ruler.
- (b) Royal princes often went to the provinces as _____
- (c) The Mauryan rulers tried to control _____ and _____ which were important for transport.
- (d) People in forested regions provided the Mauryan officials with _____

Answer:

- (a) Officials collected **Taxes** from the area under the direct control of the ruler.

Officials were appointed by king to collect taxes from farmers, herders and crafts men.

(b) Royal princes often went to provinces as **governor**.

Royal princes often visited places like Taxila, which were far from capital to supervise the administration as Governor.

(c) The Mauryan rulers tried to control **roads** **and rivers** which were important for transport.

Transportation system was important for trade and control on the Empire. Officials used these transport systems to go to faraway places to collect taxes and resources.

(d) People in forested regions provided the Mauryan officials with **elephants, timber and honey**.

People living in forests were experts in controlling elephants and collecting honey. Officials approached them for resources available in forest.

Q. 3 State whether true or false:

(a) Ujjain was the gateway to the north-west.

(b) Chandragupta's ideas were written down in the Arthashastra.

(c) Kalinga was the ancient name of Bengal.

(d) Most Ashoka inscriptions are in the Brahmi script.

Answer:

(a) False

Taxila a province of Mauryan Empire was the gateway to north-west.

(b) False

Arthshashtra is the Sanskrit word which means economic sciences. Ideas of Kautilya or Chanakya were written down in Arthshashtra.

NOTE: Chankya or kautilya was the advisor or guru of Chandraupta Maurya.

(c) False

Kalinga refers to the coastal region between Godavari and Mahanadi rivers. Bengal doesn't lie in Kalinga.

(d) True

Brahmi Script is the parent language of Hindi and many other north Indian languages. Ashoka inscriptions were written in Brahmi script. It was most commonly used language.

❖ LET'S DISCUSS

Q. 4 What were the problems that Ashoka wanted to solve by introducing dhamma?

Answer:

Emperor Ashoka wanted to solve the following problems by introducing dhamma:

1. Conflict between people from different religions.
2. Sacrificing animals for religious rituals.
3. Ill treatment of servants and slaves.
4. Fights between neighbors over petty issues.

NOTE: Dhamma is a prakrit word which means dharma.

Q. 5 What were the means adopted by Ashoka to spread the message of dhamma?

Answer:

Ashoka adopted the following means to spread his message of dhamma:

1. He appointed officials called Dhamma Mahamatta who went to different places to spread the message of dhamma.
2. He sent messengers to Egypt and Syria with the message of dhamma.
3. He got his message inscribed on pillars and rocks so that common man can read them.
4. Officials were directed to read out the messages inscribed on pillars to those who couldn't read.

Q. 6 Why do you think slaves and servants were ill-treated? Do you think the orders of the emperor would have improved their condition? Give reasons for your answer.

Answer:

Slaves and servants were ill-treated owing to the following reasons:

1. They were mainly prisoners of wars.
2. They were people from the lowest social order.
3. They didn't have any rights as a human.

Their condition would have improved after the order of Emperor because:

1. No one had the courage of defying the order of the king.
2. Whatever the king said was taken as an order and was followed properly.
3. The people who disobeyed king were punished by officials.
4. Emperor was the supreme commander of the Empire.

❖ LET'S DO

Q. 7 Write a short paragraph explaining to Roshan why the lions are shown on our currency notes. List at least one other object on which you see them.

Answer:

Ashokan pillar in Sarnath has 4 lions on top of it. Lord Buddha gave his first teaching in Sarnath. The four lions are related to Buddhism and signify peace and friendship. During our battle for independence Buddhist ideas of non-violence inspired our struggle. These lions on our symbol signify truth, peace, friendliness and also remind us of our great culture.

We can see this symbol on the emblem of Supreme Court of India, CBI, Police and almost all government departments.

NOTE: The symbol of four lions has been adopted as the National emblem of India and is used in all government offices. Its motto is Satyamev Jayate which means truth always triumph.

Q. 8 Suppose you had the power to inscribe your orders, what four commands would you like to issue?

Answer:

I will love to issue these four commands:

1. Students should not be punished.
2. There should be no discrimination on any basis.
3. There should be harmony in the society.
4. No child should be denied education.