

Revision Notes
Chapter – 09
Vital Villages Thriving Towns

- Rise of new kingdoms and towns led to an increase in agriculture and trade.
- It resulted in the growth of new towns.

• **Rapid Increase in Agricultural Production:**

- (i) The discovery of iron tools led to rapid rise in agricultural production.
 - (ii) It made it easier to bring more land under cultivation by clearing forests.
 - (iii) The use of iron ploughshare made it possible to dig deep in those areas where the soil was fertile.
 - (iv) It led to significant rise in agriculture production first in North India and then in South India.
 - (v) New tools and the system of transplantation increased production, irrigation was also used. During this time, canals, wells, tanks and artificial lakes were built for irrigation works.
- **Growth of Crafts and Craftsmen:**
- (i) Art and crafts flourished in every village.
 - (ii) Each village had weavers, dyers, potters, blacksmiths, basket-weaver, goldsmiths, carpenters and other skilled craftsmen.
 - (iii) Silk weaving, dyeing, coin-minting, ivory-carving, cloth-making and bead-making became the popular occupations.
 - (iv) The manufacture of cloth was important at that time. There were famous centres for cloth, such as Varanasi in the North, and Madurai in the South. Men as well as women worked in these centres.
 - (v) Archaeological sources show extremely fine pottery called the Northern Black Polished Ware. It gets its name from the fact that it is generally found in the Northern part of the sub-

continent and is usually black in colour.

(vi) Most craftsmen organized themselves into organisations called Shrenis. These shrenis provided training, procured raw material and distributed finished product. Shrenis also served as banks where rich men and women deposited money.

• **Increase in Trade:**

(i) The rapid rise in agricultural production and crafts led to surplus production. This surplus in villages was supplied to towns.

(ii) All this led to growth of trade.

(iii) Merchants and traders participated in both the internal and external trade.

(iv) All trading communities were organised into guilds.

(v) Use of money gave rise to punch marked coins.

(vi) Taxes collected from trade acted as an important source of revenue for the king,

• **How did People Live:**

(i) Very little information is available about the life of the people.

(ii) The main sources to know about them include stories from books, the accounts of sailors and travellers and sculptures which show scenes from the daily life.

(iii) In many cities, archaeologists have found rows of pots or ceramic rings, arranged one on top of the other. These are known as ring wells. Hardly some remains of palaces, markets or homes of ordinary people have been safe.

• **The Second Urbanisation: Town and Cities:**

(i) Large-scale agricultural production, growth of crafts and increased trade and commerce led to emergence of new towns and cities.

(ii) It led to growth of urban centres and is called the Age of Second Urbanisation.

(iii) Some important towns of this period were Vaishali, Ujjayani, Hastinapur, Pataliputra, Mathura, Arikamedu, Bodh Gaya, Rajagriha and Kaveripattanam.

• **Functions of Towns:**

- (i) Each town was famous for some particular activity.
- (ii) Some towns were religious while others were administrative.
- (iii) Several towns like Sopara were trading towns.
- (iv) Two such famous towns were Mathura and Arikamedu.
- (v) Mathura was the second capital of Kushanas and a centre of temples, Buddhist monasteries, Jaina shrines , and it was also an important centre for the worship of Krishna. The Mathura School of Art grew here.
- (vi) Arikamedu was an important coastal trading centre, a port and a centre for export and import. Traders from Rome came here. Roman lamps, glassware and gems have also been found at Arikamedu.

• **Life of People of Tamil Nadu: Under the Cholas and the Pandyas:**

- (i) Most people lived in villages and were farmers. Large land owners were known as vellalar, and ordinary ploughmen were known as uzhavar. Landless labourers, including slaves, were known as kadaisiyar and adimai.
- (ii) Towns were near the coast.
- (iii) Trade went as far as Rome and China.
- (iv) People liked amusements, games and gambling.
- (v) The administration was headed by a king. There was even a general assembly known as the Sabha.
- (vi) The most popular God was Murugan (Kartikeya in North).
- (vii) The Chola Kingdom was situated between the Pennar and the Velur rivers and its centre of power was Uraiyar, a famous cotton centre.
- (viii) The Pandya kingdom with its capital at Madurai was known for its pearls. It is mentioned by Megasthenes and the Sangam literature.