

## Early Kingdoms and Republics

### D. Short-answer questions:

1. What do you understand by the terms *janapada* and *mahajanapada*? Explain the difference between the two.
2. Write down any two features of *mahajanapadas*.
3. Why did people have to pay taxes in *Triahajanapadas*?
4. Who could not participate in the assemblies and discussions of the *gana-sanghas*?
5. What were the two important advancements in agriculture during this period?
6. What was the *Ashvamedha* sacrifice?

## Solutions

### D. Short-answer questions:

1. By the end of the Rig Vedic period, many territorial states emerged in different parts of the country. These were known as janapadas. They were regions consisting of urban and rural settlements along with its inhabitants. The larger janapada came to be known as mahajanapadas. These were large kingdoms. The term mahajanapada is derived from Sanskrit and it means 'great country'. The mahajanapadas had a capital city.
2. Firstly, the Mahajanapadas were large kingdoms. They had a capital city. Strong walls made of brick, stones or wood were made around the cities. Secondly, the Mahajanapadas had standing armies. The soldiers were trained and paid regular salaries.
3. The raja needed resources for maintaining an army and also for fortifying the cities. The people had to pay taxes to the king who appointed officials to collect taxes.
4. Women, slaves and karamkaras were not allowed to participate in any assemblies or discussion of the gana sanghas.
5. There were two important advancements in agriculture which led to increased agricultural production: Firstly, now iron ploughshares were used to till the land. Also, iron axes helped to clear land for agriculture. Secondly, Farmers began adopting new techniques in agriculture. Paddy seeds were not sown in the field directly. Saplings were grown and these were then transplanted in the fields. This led to better rice production.
6. Sometimes a person became a raja by performing the Ashvamedha or horse sacrifice. The king who organized it was considered very powerful. During this sacrifice, a special horse was allowed to roam free for a year. It was followed by the king's soldiers. Whichever kingdom the horse roamed into had to accept the king's supremacy or fight with him.