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Tender Heart High School,
Sector 33 B, Chandigarh

Class VI

Subject: History and Civics

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Chapter 8

Rise of Kingdoms and Republicans

Good Morning Students!

We have come across the term Jana in the chapter Vedic civilization. The large territories were called Jana. Over a period of time the larger and more powerful Janas came to be known as Mahajanapadas.

The Buddhist and the Jain literature provide us a list of sixteen Mahajanapadas in the 6th Century B.C. The monarchical mahajanapadas had a king or a queen. Kinship was hereditary. The Republican mahajanapadas were ruled by a group, elected by people. Decisions were taken by a majority vote.

Four important mahajanapadas were Vatsa, Avanti, Kosala and Magadha. But Magadha was the most powerful one. It had certain advantage as Magadha had a very fertile land and the surplus production increased the revenue of the state. The rivers like Ganga, Son helped in transportation not only of goods but also of men. The capital Rajagriha had geographical advantage. The elephants found in the forest were used in the wars by the

rulers of Magadha. It was also rich in mineral resources like iron and copper.

The rulers of Magadha were also powerful and conquered new territories.

Let us now study about some important rulers of Magadha. The first important ruler of Magadha was Bimbisara. He made Rajagriha his capital. He expanded his kingdom by conquests and by marrying princesses of powerful kingdoms such as Kosala, Vatsali and Madra. He conquered Anga, which was an important centre of trade and commerce.

Bimbisara was succeeded by his son Ajatashatru. Like his father, he too followed a policy of conquest and expansion. He defeated the King of Kosala and occupied Kashi. Under Ajatashatru, Magadha grew even more powerful.

Ajatashatru was succeeded by weak rulers. In 413 BCE Shishunaga became the ruler of Magadha. He and his successors ruled for about 50 years. They were overthrown by the Nandas.

MCQ's

1. Mahajanapadas
2. Rajagriha
3. Shishunaga
4. Macedonia

5. Jhelum.