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Tender Heart High School,
Sector 33B, Chandigarh

Class IX

15.07.24

Subject:- History and Civics

Teacher:- Rameet Duggal

Chapter 4 The Mauryan Empire

Good Morning Students!

This lesson is of Class IX for the subject of History Chapter 4 The Mauryan Empire starting on Page No. 43 of your textbook titled Total History and Civics ICSE 9 and is being submitted to you on 15.07.24.

Students, you must have heard the names of Chandragupta Maurya, Chanakya, Ashoka. These are related to the Mauryan Empire. Chandragupta Maurya founded the Mauryan dynasty. Both literary and archaeological sources are available for the Mauryan dynasty. Let us study about literary sources first.

1. Arthashastra of Kautilya: It contains about 6000 verses, divided into fifteen sections. It provides details of the art of administration - duties of the king, functions of ministers and organisation of the civil service. It deals with high level of diplomacy and relations between states.
2. Indika written by Megasthenes provides information about the organisation of Mauryan army, the administration of Pataliputra, growth in the economy, the customs and religion of the people. The original Indika is lost but his

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writing is supported by other Greek writers, such as Strabo, Plutarch and Justin.

Archaeological Sources:-

1. Ashokan Edicts:- An edict means "an official order or proclamation". They can broadly be divided into two classes — those engraved on Rocks and those incised on Pillars of stone. They are the most reliable source of information for Mauryan history, because they are well preserved and also bear the year of Ashokan reign. Like the Rock Edict XIII inform us about the Kalinga War.

2. Sanchi Stupa:- A stupa is a dome-like structure made of stone or bricks. The purpose of a stupa was to commemorate a sacred spot or a particular event or to enshrine the relics of Buddha or Bodhisattvas. The Sanchi Stupa built by Ashoka is in Madhya Pradesh. It was enlarged during the Sunga period. It reveals the high degree of artistic skills of the people.

Let us study about the political history of the Mauryas. The invasion of Alexander indirectly helped in the establishment of the Mauryan rule. The unstable state of affairs in Punjab provided opportunity to conquer one kingdom after another. Chandragupta uprooted the Nanda dynasty and established control over Magadha. He also defeated the Greek general Seleucus

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Indicator. Chandragupta was succeeded by his son Bindusara. Very little is known about him.

Ashoka was the third and the most enlightened ruler of the Mauryan dynasty. As a young prince Ashoka was in charge of Ujjain as its Viceroy. After becoming the ruler Ashoka led a few years as an ordinary monarch. It was in 261 BC that Ashoka decided to add Kalinga to his already vast domains. But the Kalinga War proved a turning point in his career. All the misery awakened in his heart the feeling of profound grief and regret. He decided to give up the policy of conquest by force. He embraced Buddhism and got erected pillars and edicts to spread it. In his personal life Ashoka gave up hunting and eating meat.

Before we study about the Mauryan administration, let us take a short break. You are requested to kindly read the assignment and write the following questions in your notebook.

1. What does Arthashastra deal with?
2. Why did Kalinga War proved a turning point in Ashoka's life?
3. Who wrote Indika?

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1. Arthashastra deals with politics, rules of diplomacy, principles of administration and other such political topics.
2. Ashoka gave up the policy of conquest by force and embraced Buddhism.
3. Megasthenes

We will now resume our lecture and study about the civil administration. The king was the supreme Head of the State and had military, judicial and executive powers. There was a Council of Ministers to advise the king and keep a check on the King's powers. These included the chief Pujari or the Purohit, Senapati who advised on matters related to war and peace.

Next to the emperor, ranked the Governors incharge of provinces of the empire. He was assisted by a number of officials. During the reign of Chandragupta there were four provinces — Magadha, Gandhara, Avanti, Southern Province, Kalinga was added during the reign of Ashoka.

Provinces were subdivided into districts for the purpose of administration. Ashokan inscriptions refer to three classes of high officials namely, the Rajukas, Yuktas and Mahamatras.

Administration of the Cities - Arthashastra

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mentions the Nagraka who functioned as a City-Magistrate. A number of officials assisted him. The duties of the Nagraka were - the provision of water to the city dwellers, the maintenance of public roads and public buildings.

Revenue System - Land revenue was the main source of income. Bhaga was levied on agricultural produce and bali was a religious tribute. Kautilya said that the tax should be reasonable. A king should act like a bee which collects honey without causing damage to the flower. The tax collected was spent on army, salaries of officials and public works.

A Network of Spies - The Mauryan State made extensive use of reporters and spies to keep the king informed about the opponent and their activities.

Chandragupta maintained a huge army. The whole army was under a board consisting of thirty members. The salaries were paid in cash to the soldiers.

Ashoka's Dhamma:- The horrors of a single war convinced Ashoka that "the chiefest conquest is the conquest of Right and not of Might". The Dhamma of Ashoka was a 'Moral Law', an ethical Code of Conduct. It implied concepts such

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as justice, virtue, morality, law and duty. The principles of 'Dhamma' included respect of elders, love for children, Ahimsa, religious toleration and good deeds. In order to spread Dhamma he appointed a special class of officials called Dhamma Mahamattas. He himself set an ideal before the people. Ashoka's dhamma had a positive impact on the people. It made people lead a moral life and follow the policy of religious toleration. The rate of crime reduced and money was spent on welfare works. The Mauryan dynasty declined and the last ruler Brihadratha was killed by Pushyamitra Sunga.

Students please read the chapter again.

Home Assignment

1. Short Answer Questions:- 1, 3, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14
2. Structured Questions:- 1(a, b, c); 2(b); 3(b); 4(a, b)
5(a, b, c); 6(a, b, c)