

Key Question 1**Page 102**

Srigupta was the founder of the Gupta dynasty.

Key Question 2**Page 106**

The lowest section of the ancient Hindu society were the chandalas who lived outside the cities and regarded as untouchables.

Key Question 3**Page 107**

Kalidasa the famous poet, adorned the court of Gupta ruler *Chandragupta II*.

Exercises

- I. A.** 1. (b) 2. (b) 3. (c)
 4. (a) 5. (b)
- B.** 1. (c) 2. (a) 3. (b)
 4. (f) 5. (d) 6. (e)
- C.** 1. False 2. True 3. True
 4. True 5. False.
- II. 1.** Chandragupta I married a Lichchhavi princess of the politically influential and powerful Lichchavi Royal family which strengthened his political position and brought honour and prestige to the Gupta Empire.
- 2.** The five kinds of kingdoms Samudragupta won were:
- (i) Ganga-Yamuna valley or Aryavarta (*i.e.* Northern India).
 - (ii) Frontier States of Assam, Nepal and coastal Bengal.
 - (iii) Twelve rulers of the Deccan or Dakshinapath surrendered to Samudragupta. He then allowed them to rule again.
 - (iv) The forest kingdom in Vindhya region.
 - (v) The descendants of the Kushanas and Shakas ruling in Afghanistan and the ruler of Sri Lanka also submitted to him.

- 3.** The names of three ports Chandragupta-II acquired in Western India were: Broach, Cambay and Sopara.

- 4.** The Gupta rulers followed the policy of religious tolerance by respecting the sentiments of other religious people. They got the temples built on a large scale and didn't stop Buddhism and Jainism from the celebrations. The Bhakti movement also became popular.

- 5.** Prayag Prashasti was a glowing account of Samudragupta's military achievements which was written by his court poet Harisena. This was inscribed on a pillar at prayag (Now 'Allahabad') and is known as a Prayag Prashasti.

- III. 1.** Allahabad pillar inscription is known as 'Prayag Prashasti' because it praises military achievements of Samudragupta, the most powerful warrior king of the Gupta dynasty. It gives us the realities with glorification of the special qualities and achievements of the King. It is written in Sanskrit.

- 2.** In the field of mathematics and science we come across during this period a work called *Aryabhatiyam* written by *Aryabhatta*. He discovered the decimal system and the concept of zero. In this time *Varahamihira* wrote *Brihat-samhita* and stated that the Moon revolves around the Earth and the Earth revolves around the Sun.

In the field of literature, excellent poems and dramas in Sanskrit were composed at this time. For example, would famous poet *Kalidasa*'s work *Abhijnana Shakuntalam* is considered to be one of the best literary works in the world. The world famous stories for children named *Panchatantra*

by Vishnu Sharma were also written during this period.

3. According to the Chinese pilgrim Fa-Hien, the *chandalas* were the lowest section of the Hindu society. The people belonging to the upper sections in Hindu society hated them and they (*chandalas*) were regarded as untouchables. They lived outside the city and had to carry a wooden piece on their head.
4. The caste system was more complex in the Gupta period because of the rise of too many sub-castes. Many foreigners and tribes were absorbed into the Indian society to make the caste system more complex.
5. Samundragupta was called 'the Napoleon of India' because like Napoleon he enlarged his kingdom by bravery and courage. Like Napoleon, he always defeated his enemies, and was never overcome by his opponents.
6. The reasons behind the decline of Gupta Empire were that after the demise of Chandragupta-II his son Kumaragupta and grandson Skandagupta ruled the Empire and they didn't have administrative qualities like Chandragupta-II. That's why the powerful and strong kingdom became weak. The Gupta Empire faced the threat of the Huna invasion during the rule of Skandagupta. Skandagupta and his successors couldn't withstand them because the Hunas were excellent horsemen and archers. The Gupta rule lingered on till the middle of the 6th century AD and later on, no successor was found to bring the past glory of Gupta dynasty back. Finally it led to the downfall of the Empire.
7. (i) **Navaratnas**
The word 'Navratnas' is the combination of two Hindi words **Nav** and **Ratna** where 'Nav' means 'Nine' while 'Ratna' mean 'Gems'. In this way the meaning of Navratnas is nine gems. Here, the word 'Gems' indicate 'the highly profiled men of art and literature'. The renowned king of Gupta Dynasty Chandragupta-II had the Navratnas (Nine gems) including Kalidas in his court.
(ii) **Stridhana**
The property owned by woman in the form of 'Jewellery', 'Garments', etc given to her on the occasion of marriage is known as **Stridhana**. In the Gupta period, women rights were limited and they also lacked property rights.
8. In the Gupta period, the women were said to be more faithful to their husbands and family

members. The custom of sati prevailed during this time. Women didn't have economic or social independence and they were completely dependent on the male members of their family and were often expected to follow their husband to the funeral pyre. Like this, there remained some restrictions on them and they were not so highly respected or honoured as in the Mauryan period.

- IV. 1. During the period of Chandragupta-II, the Guptas reached the zenith of success. He inherited a vast kingdom by defeating the Shakas of Western Malwa and Gujarat. He had control over three prosperous ports—**Broach**, **Cambay** and **Sopara**. He made Ujjain his second capital. On the other hand, he was a great lover of art and literature. Many great scholars including **Kalidas** adorned his court. The Chinese pilgrim **Fa-Hien** visited India during his time. Fa-Hien highlighted many things about the achievements of the ruler and real conditions of the people of his time. In brief it may be concluded that Chandragupta-II had a great share in making the country India **Great**.
2. When we consider the important features of the Gupta administration, we find that all powerful Gupta Kings adopted high sounding titles such as **Parameshvaram** and **Maharajadhiraja**. The kings maintained a standing army for their defence. The Guptas succeeded in administration by dividing the Empire into provinces, districts and villages. In the village, the village headman was given power to assist the government. In this way, Guptas involved the local people in the task of administration. Senapati, Mahasenapati Mahabaladhikrita, etc. were some of the important military ranks. Besides acting as Samants intermediaries had to maintain soldiers and horses and provide equipment for warfare.
3. Under the Guptas, there was good progress in the field of Art and Architecture. It was regarded as the Golden Age of Ancient India. Both Samundragupta and Chandragupta-II were more inclined towards the development of art and literature. We find developments in the field of architecture as well. The temples constructed at Jhansi and Bhattargaon (Kanpur) are worth mentioning. We find Ajanta paintings as the greatest specimen of Buddhist art. At Sarnath and Mathura, beautiful images of Buddha were made. The Gupta period also found a great

progress in the field of literature. Kalidas, one of the gems in the court of Chandragupta-II, had his famous works including **Meghadutam**, **Raghuvansham**, **Abhijnana Shakuntalam**. **Panchatantra** by the famous literarian **Vishnu Sharma** was also written during the Gupta Period.

4. Chandragupta-II made the Gupta empire rich by using rich resources and utilizing power in positive directions. The Guptas attained the highest position of power and prosperity in this period. As history reveals he had his control over three prosperous ports of western India—Broach, Cambay and Sopara. He then utilized all the ports for boosting his business and trade with western countries. In brief whatever he did with the cooperation of his nobles and faithful subordinates, he did to make his empire rich and prosperous. Finally history reveals that it was Vikramaditya (Chandragupta-II) who, with the instruments of power and wisdom, listed India in the list of progressive countries of the world.
5. Gupta rulers decentralized their administration to make the administrative work easier. They divided the empire into provinces, districts and villages and gave power and responsibility to the officials of the provinces and districts. In this way, it was the decentralization of power. The village headman was regarded as a very important person in the Gupta times because he managed village affairs with the help of village elders. This scheme tells us that it was convenient to people as well as for the Gupta rulers to continue the work of administration towards positive direction.
6. There was decentralization of power during the Gupta period because it was aimed to raise the efficiency of administration. Decentralization of power involved people into the administration. The governors and princes of the small political units took care of the needs of the people.
7. According to Prayag Prashasti, Samundragupta defeated many rulers but he did not absorb all the defeated states into the Gupta Empire. He knew very well that it was very difficult to rule a vast empire and so he did not overextend his kingdom.
Samudragupta had forcibly unified the greater part of India under him and his influence and power was felt in a much larger area but he knew his limitation and did not absorb all the defeated states into the Gupta Empire.

8. The Gupta period is called the Golden Age of Ancient India because of the excellent achievements in literature, art and architecture and science and mathematics field which make the people proud even today. The Great Gupta rulers, Samundragupta and Chandragupta-II were great promoters of science, art and literature. Princes and richer people could divert a part of their income for the support of those who were engaged in art and literature. Excellent poems and dramas in Sanskrit were composed at this time.

Aryabhatta and **Varahamihira** were two famous mathematicians and astronomers of this period.

The greatest specimen of Buddhist art in Gupta period is provided by the Ajanta paintings which depict various events of the life of Gautama Buddha and the previous Buddhas. Architecture flourished under the Gupta period. Temples constructed at Bhitargaon in Kanpur, Deogarh in Jhansi are worth mentioning.

Value Added Questions

1. Virtues like love, kindness, forbearance and tolerance are the essence of our character and when we practise virtues in everyday life, we live with purpose. These virtues are universal and recognized by all cultures as basic qualities necessary for our well-being and happiness. Love is a feeling of strong or constant affection for someone/something. Kindness is the quality of being kind towards someone who is having a bad day. It can make him/her smile and build support. Tolerance means willingness to accept someone's opinions or behaviour that we might not agree with. For example, tolerant attitude towards other religions. Forbearance is the ability of tolerance without being annoyed or upset, especially when someone has done something wrong.
2. Adopting good ideas and being sympathetic to someone are the qualities which help us to build a good and healthy society. It depends on a person which type of ideas he/she would like to accept. Some prefer to adopt liberal ideas while some prefer radical ideas. People should adopt good ideas which help to build healthy society.
Thus, both qualities—adopting good ideas and being sympathetic to the sufferings—make a good human being. A good human being will help in building a healthy society.