

Mahajanapadas

1. The term "Mahajanapada" literally means:

- (a) Great Kingdom
- (b) Great Republic
- (c) Great Foot of a Tribe
- (d) Great Realm

Answer: (c) Great Foot of a Tribe (It refers to the "great foothold" or territory of a tribe/jana)

2. Which of the following Buddhist texts provides a list of 16 Mahajanapadas?

- (a) Digha Nikaya
- (b) Vinaya Pitaka
- (c) Anguttara Nikaya
- (d) Sutta Pitaka

Answer: (c) Anguttara Nikaya (Primary source for the list)

3. How many of the 16 Mahajanapadas were located in the region of present-day Uttar Pradesh and Bihar?

- (a) 8
- (b) 10
- (c) 12
- (d) 6

Answer: (b) 10 (Most were concentrated in the fertile Gangetic plains)

4. Which of the following Mahajanapadas was a *gana-sangha* or republic?

- (a) Avanti
- (b) Kosala
- (c) Vajji
- (d) Magadha

Answer: (c) Vajji (It was a confederacy of clans, most famously the Licchavis)

5. The capital of the Magadha Mahajanapada was initially at:

- (a) Pataliputra
- (b) Rajagriha (Rajgir)
- (c) Vaishali
- (d) Champa

Answer: (b) Rajagriha

(Rajgir) (Girivraja/Rajgir was the first capital before Pataliputra)

6. Which Mahajanapada was located in modern-day Malwa (Madhya Pradesh) with its capital at Ujjaini?

- (a) Matsya
- (b) Avanti
- (c) Chedi
- (d) Ashmaka

Answer: (b) Avanti

7. The Vajji confederacy had its capital at:

- (a) Pataliputra
- (b) Vaishali
- (c) Mithila
- (d) Kushinagar

Answer: (b) Vaishali

8. Which ruler is traditionally considered the founder of the Haryanka dynasty of Magadha?

- (a) Bimbisara
- (b) Ajatashatru
- (c) Udayin
- (d) Shishunaga

Answer: (a) Bimbisara (Though some sources mention him as the first major king)

9. King Pradyota, a contemporary of Buddha, was a ruler of which Mahajanapada?

- (a) Kosala
- (b) Avanti
- (c) Vatsa
- (d) Gandhara

Answer: (b) Avanti (Pradyota dynasty of Avanti)

10. The strategic importance of Magadha did NOT include:

- (a) Control over iron-rich mines
- (b) Fertile alluvial soil
- (c) Location on the major trade route of the Ganga
- (d) Direct access to the sea ports

Answer: (d) Direct access to the sea ports (Magadha was landlocked)

11. Which of these was NOT a reason for the rise of Magadha as the most powerful Mahajanapada?

- (a) Use of elephants in warfare
- (b) Strong revenue system
- (c) Republican form of government
- (d) Ambitious and capable rulers

Answer: (c) Republican form of government (Magadha was a monarchy)

12. The city of Pataliputra was located at the confluence of which rivers?

- (a) Ganga and Yamuna
- (b) Son and Ganga
- (c) Gandak and Son
- (d) Ganga and Ghaghara

Answer: (b) Son and Ganga (Confluence of Son & Ganga, though it was near Gandak as well)

13. The famous dialect of Prakrit, Ardhmagadhi, is associated with the teachings of:

- (a) Buddha
- (b) Mahavira
- (c) Both Buddha and Mahavira
- (d) Neither

Answer: (b) Mahavira (It became the canonical language of Jain scriptures)

14. The kingdom of Kosala, associated with King Prasenajit, had its capital at:

- (a) Ayodhya
- (b) Varanasi
- (c) Shravasti
- (d) Saket

Answer: (c) Shravasti (Important capital of Kosala during Buddha's time)

15. The first council of Buddhists was held at Rajgir, the capital of Magadha, during the reign of:

- (a) Ajatashatru
- (b) Bimbisara
- (c) Udayin
- (d) Shishunaga

Answer: (a) Ajatashatru (Held shortly after Buddha's death)

16. Which Mahajanapada was famous for its fine cotton textiles?

- (a) Kashi
- (b) Vatsa
- (c) Kuru
- (d) Panchala

Answer: (a) Kashi (Banaras/Varanasi region was known for textiles)

17. The Mahajanapada that was located in the region of present-day Bihar and had Champa as its capital was:

- (a) Anga
- (b) Magadha
- (c) Vajji
- (d) Malla

Answer: (a) Anga

18. Bimbisara of Magadha strengthened his position through matrimonial alliances. He did NOT marry a princess from:

- (a) Kosala
- (b) Lichchhavi (Vajji)
- (c) Madra (Punjab)
- (d) Avanti

Answer: (d) Avanti (He married from Kosala, Lichchhavi, and Madra)

19. The "Saptanga" theory of state (seven limbs), often mentioned in this period, was later elaborated in:

- (a) Arthashastra
- (b) Manusmriti
- (c) Ashthadhyayi
- (d) Mahabhashya

Answer: (a) Arthashastra (Kautilya's treatise)

20. Which of these was a major economic change during the Mahajanapada period (6th century BCE)?

- (a) Introduction of gold coins
- (b) Widespread use of iron ploughshare
- (c) Decline of trade
- (d) Barter system disappeared completely

Answer: (b) Widespread use of iron ploughshare (Led to agricultural surplus)

21. Which Mahajanapada was located in the northwest (modern Pakistan-Afghanistan) and was famous for its skilled mercenaries?

- (a) Kamboja
- (b) Gandhara
- (c) Both (a) and (b)
- (d) Matsya

Answer: (c) Both (a) and (b) (Both were in the NW and known for horses/warriors)

22. The tax on agricultural produce, the main source of revenue, was called:

- (a) Bali
- (b) Bhaga
- (c) Shulka
- (d) Kara

Answer: (b) Bhaga *(Usually 1/6th of the produce)*

21. Which of the following Mahajanapadas was NOT situated in the Gangetic plain?

- (a) Ashmaka
- (b) Malla
- (c) Chedi
- (d) Vatsa

Answer: (a) Ashmaka (It was located on the Godavari river in the Deccan)

23. The use of *punch-marked coins* became prevalent during the Mahajanapada period. They were mostly made of:

- (a) Gold
- (b) Silver
- (c) Copper
- (d) Bronze

Answer: (b) Silver

24. Who was the first king to establish a permanent standing army?

- (a) Bimbisara
- (b) Ajatashatru
- (c) Mahapadma Nanda
- (d) Chandragupta Maurya

Answer: (c) Mahapadma Nanda (The Nandas are credited with a large standing army)

25. The city of Taxila (Takshashila), a great centre of learning, was located in which Mahajanapada?

- (a) Gandhara
- (b) Kuru
- (c) Madra
- (d) Kamboja

Answer: (a) Gandhara

26. The philosopher king Janaka, mentioned in the Upanishads, was associated with the region of:

- (a) Videha (part of Vajji confederacy later)
- (b) Kosala
- (c) Magadha
- (d) Panchala

Answer: (a) Videha (Mithila region)

27. Which of these rulers is known for using a war engine called *Mahashilakantaka* (a

catapult) and a covered chariot with a mace (*Rathamusala*)?

- (a) Ajatashatru
- (b) Pradyota of Avanti
- (c) Prasenajit of Kosala
- (d) Udayin of Magadha

Answer: (a) Ajatashatru (*Used against the Licchavis*)

28. The Shishunaga dynasty of Magadha was founded after the downfall of the:

- (a) Nanda dynasty
- (b) Haryanka dynasty
- (c) Pradyota dynasty
- (d) Gupta dynasty

Answer: (b) Haryanka dynasty

29. During the Mahajanapada period, the term "Bhaga" referred to:

- (a) A type of military officer
- (b) The share of agricultural produce paid as tax
- (c) The chief priest in the kingdom
- (d) The royal treasury

Answer: (b) The share of agricultural produce paid as tax (*Standard tax*)

30. The Malla Mahajanapada, where Lord Buddha attained Mahaparinirvana, was a:

- (a) Monarchy
- (b) Republic (Gana-sangha)
- (c) Tribal oligarchy
- (d) Nomadic federation

Answer: (b) Republic (Gana-sangha) (*Like the Vajjis*)

31. The initial capital of the Vatsa Mahajanapada was at Kaushambi, situated on the banks of the river:

- (a) Yamuna
- (b) Ganga
- (c) Chambal
- (d) Betwa

Answer: (a) Yamuna

32. Which ruler transferred the capital of Magadha from Rajgir to Pataliputra?

- (a) Bimbisara
- (b) Ajatashatru
- (c) Udayin
- (d) Shishunaga

Answer: (c) Udayin (*Son of Ajatashatru*)

33. The Mahajanapada period is often described as the period of:

- (a) First Urbanization in India
- (b) Second Urbanization in India
- (c) Decline of Urban Centers
- (d) Nomadic Settlements

Answer: (b) Second Urbanization in India (*After the Indus Valley*)

34. The famous ruler of Magadha who implemented the policy of aggressive expansionism and was a contemporary of Buddha was:

- (a) Bimbisara
- (b) Ajatashatru
- (c) Udayin
- (d) Mahapadma Nanda

Answer: (b) Ajatashatru

35. The Matsya Mahajanapada was located in the area of modern:

- (a) Rajasthan
- (b) Gujarat
- (c) Bengal
- (d) Odisha

Answer: (a) Rajasthan (*Jaipur-Alwar-Bharatpur region*)

36. The "Agrahara" land grants during this period were typically made to:

- (a) Merchants
- (b) Soldiers

- (c) Brahmanas
- (d) Artisans

Answer: (c) Brahmanas (*For religious and educational purposes*)

37. Which of these was a *gana-sangha*?

- (a) Magadha
- (b) Kosala
- (c) Shakya (of Kapilavastu)
- (d) Avanti

Answer: (c) Shakya (of Kapilavastu) (*Buddha's own clan was a republic*)

38. The Nanda dynasty, which succeeded the Shishunagas, is often described in sources as of:

- (a) Brahmana origin
- (b) Kshatriya origin
- (c) Shudra origin
- (d) Vaishya origin

Answer: (c) Shudra origin (*Puranas mention them as born of Shudra women*)

39. The term "Janapada" originally signified:

- (a) The king's palace
- (b) The territory and people of a tribe settled down
- (c) A royal decree
- (d) A type of sacrifice

Answer: (b) The territory and people of a tribe settled down

40. The famous physician Jivaka, who treated Buddha, was in the court of:

- (a) Prasenajit of Kosala
- (b) Bimbisara of Magadha
- (c) Pradyota of Avanti
- (d) Udayana of Vatsa

Answer: (b) Bimbisara of Magadha

41. Which of the following was NOT a characteristic of the republican (*gana-sangha*) Mahajanapadas?

- (a) Rule by a council of chiefs (*rajas*)
- (b) Discussion in public assemblies
- (c) Hereditary monarchy
- (d) Often smaller territories than monarchies

Answer: (c) Hereditary monarchy (*That was a feature of monarchical janapadas*)

42. The kingdom of Anga was finally annexed to Magadha by:

- (a) Bimbisara
- (b) Ajatashatru
- (c) Udayin
- (d) Shishunaga

Answer: (a) Bimbisara (*His first major conquest*)

43. The primary unit of administration in most Mahajanapadas was the:

- (a) Village (Gram)
- (b) District (Ahar)
- (c) Province (Desha)
- (d) City (Nagara)

Answer: (a) Village (Gram) (*Basic unit of administration and revenue*)

44. The "Purohita" in the administrative structure of a Mahajanapada was the:

- (a) Chief Minister
- (b) Commander-in-Chief
- (c) Chief Priest
- (d) Chief Revenue Officer

Answer: (c) Chief Priest

45. In the Buddhist literature, which Mahajanapada is often described as having a mixed population due to its location on trade routes?

- (a) Kashi
- (b) Gandhara
- (c) Avanti
- (d) Magadha

Answer: (b) Gandhara (*Taxila was a cosmopolitan centre*)

46. The Vajji confederacy was ultimately defeated and annexed by Magadha under:

- (a) Bimbisara
- (b) Ajatashatru
- (c) Kalashoka
- (d) Mahapadma Nanda

Answer: (b) Ajatashatru (*After a long war using stratagem*)

47. The doctrine of *Ahimsa* (non-violence) gained political significance during this period primarily due to the teachings of:

- (a) Buddhism and Jainism
- (b) Brahmanism only
- (c) The Charvaka school
- (d) Vedic rituals

Answer: (a) Buddhism and Jainism

48. The famous king Udayana of the Vatsa Mahajanapada, a contemporary of Buddha, is a celebrated figure in:

- (a) Buddhist Jatakas and Sanskrit drama
- (b) Sangam literature
- (c) Vedas
- (d) Puranas only

Answer: (a) Buddhist Jatakas and Sanskrit drama (*e.g., Sivapnavasavadattam*)

49. Which of the following factors was LEAST important in the context of conflicts between Mahajanapadas?

- (a) Control over fertile land
- (b) Control over riverine trade routes
- (c) Control over religious pilgrimage sites
- (d) Control over iron ore deposits

Answer: (c) Control over religious pilgrimage sites (*Economic and strategic factors were primary*)

50. The ultimate political result of the Mahajanapada period was:

- (a) Fragmentation of India into smaller states
- (b) Establishment of a pan-Indian republic
- (c) Emergence of Magadha as the dominant power leading to the Mauryan Empire
- (d) Foreign invasion and conquest

Answer: (c) Emergence of Magadha as the dominant power leading to the Mauryan Empire (*It set the stage for India's first empire*)