

# The Rise of Empires

## The Big Questions (Page 83).

### 1. What is an empire?

- An empire is a large political territory made up of many smaller kingdoms or regions ruled by a powerful emperor. The emperor has central authority over all these areas, although local rulers may continue to govern under his control.
- The word empire comes from the Latin word imperium, meaning "supreme power". In Sanskrit, terms like samraj (lord of all), adhiraja (overlord), and rajadhiraja (king of kings) were used.
- An empire is usually formed by conquering neighboring kingdoms and collecting tribute (gifts like gold, grain, or animals) from them, which is a sign of their loyalty.

### 2. How did empires rise and shape Indian civilization?

- **Empires in India rose due to:**
  - The ambition of powerful kings like Chandragupta, Maurya and Ashoka to expand their territory.
  - The rich resources of regions like Magadha (fertile land, forests, rivers, iron).
  - The development of strong armies, advanced weapons, and strategies.
  - Support from advisors like Kautilya, who helped plan governance and administration.
  - Trade networks and guilds, which provide wealth and stability.
- **Empires shaped Indian civilization by:**
  - Unifying diverse regions under a single rule.
  - Encouraging economic growth through trade and coin usage.
  - Promoting art, architecture, and literature (e.g., Ashoka pillars, Sanchi Stupa).
  - Spreading religions and philosophies (like Buddhism under Ashoka).
  - Building infrastructure, such as roads and rest houses, and ensuring law and order.

### 3. What factors facilitated the transition from kingdoms to empires?

**Ans.** Several key factors led to the change from small kingdoms to large empires:

- **Military strength:** Use of iron weapons and elephants helped expand territories.
- **Geographical advantages:** Rivers for farming and transport, forests for resources.
- **Surplus food:** Led to urbanization and division of labor.
- **Economic prosperity:** Trade routes and guilds increased wealth.
- **Political ambition:** Kings desired fame, power, and control over larger regions.
- **Efficient administration:** Advisors like Kautilya created systems for taxation, justice, and governance.

These factors allowed some kingdoms like Magadha to grow into powerful empires like the Mauryan Empire.

**4. What was life like from the 6th to the 2nd century BCE?**

**Ans.** Life during this period was marked by:

- The growth of large cities like Pataliputra, which were centres of trade and administration.
- An increase in trade — both within India and with other countries (e.g., silk from China, spices from the south).
- The use of coins and the rise of guilds (groups of traders and craftsmen).
- The development of religions and philosophies like Buddhism and Jainism.
- Advances in agriculture using iron ploughs, leading to food surplus.
- A vibrant art and cultural life — sculptures, terracotta figures, and stūpas were common.
- Ashoka's reign brought focus on peace, non-violence, and public welfare through his edicts.

People enjoyed greater economic security, cultural diversity, and social development under well-managed empires.

**LET'S EXPLORE (Page 89)**

**1. Empires extended over vast areas and had diverse people with differing languages, customs and cultures. How do you think the emperors made sure that they lived in harmony? Discuss in groups and share your thoughts with the class.**

**Ans.** Emperors used several strategies to ensure harmony among diverse groups in their empires:

- Respect for all religions and beliefs: Emperors like Ashoka promoted dharma (ethical living) and issued edicts encouraging mutual respect between different sects and communities.
- Use of local rulers: Local kings or chiefs were often allowed to govern their own regions under the emperor's rule, which helped maintain familiar cultural practices.
- Common laws and administration: A strong system of law and justice, along with fair administration, created unity and trust among the people.
- Language and communication: Edicts were issued in local languages and scripts (e.g., Prakrit and Brahmi), so that people could understand the emperor's messages.
- Encouragement of trade and travel: Trade routes connect various regions, allowing cultural exchange and cooperation among people from different backgrounds.
- Support for art, education, and culture: Emperors built schools, temples, monasteries, and supported scholars from various regions, which promoted shared values and harmony.

These measures helped create a sense of unity in diversity, which was essential for peace and stability in large empires.

**2. Should a king be so keen to expand his kingdom into an empire and become an emperor? Here are a few possible answers; see if you can think of a few more:**

- An ambition to 'rule the entire world', a metaphor for controlling large territories and ensuring that they would be remembered for posterity;**
- A wish to bring large areas under control and gain access to their resources to build economic and military strength;**
- A desire for great wealth for himself and for the empire.**

**Ans.** While expansion brings power and resources, it also brings responsibility. Here are some reasons why a king might want to become an emperor:

- To rule vast territories and be remembered in history as a great ruler (posterity).

- b. To access more natural and human resources – forests, rivers, minerals, and skilled people – strengthening the economy and military.
- c. To gain wealth and taxes through trade and tribute from other regions.

**Additional reasons could be:**

- d. To establish political unity and end wars among smaller kingdoms, thus bringing peace.
- e. To spread a common culture, religion or ethical code, like Ashoka did with Buddhism and dharma.
- f. To ensure better governance and development, like building roads, rest houses, and trade centers for the benefit of all.

However, such expansion should be motivated by public welfare and justice, not only personal ambition. A good emperor rules with wisdom, compassion, and fairness.

**LET'S EXPLORE (Page 91)**

1. **Warfare apart, what other methods do you think the rulers might have used to expand their empires? Open your ideas and share them with your class.**

**Ans.** Apart from warfare, rulers used several non-violent methods to expand their empires and influence:

**1. Forming Alliances:**

- Rulers often made political alliances or marriage alliances with neighboring kingdoms.
- These helped to bring regions under control without fighting.
- Example: Marrying into royal families or offering treaties of peace in exchange for loyalty.

**2. Trade and Economic Influence:**

- Powerful rulers encouraged trade across regions, offering safety, roads, and support.
- As trade grew, nearby regions became economically dependent, and gradually came under imperial influence.
- Guilds and merchant groups also helped spread the empire's reach.

**3. Diplomacy and Negotiation:**

- Diplomats were sent to other regions to negotiate treaties, tributes, or support.
- Through smart diplomacy, rulers could gain control or loyalty without war.

**4. Religious and Cultural Spread:**

- Emperors like Ashoka used religious and moral teachings (like Buddhism and Dharma) to connect with distant regions.
- Sending missionaries or scholars helped to influence other areas spiritually and culturally.

**5. Infrastructure and Public Works:**

- Rulers built roads, rest houses, granaries, and wells even in far-off regions.
- This earned the trust and loyalty of the people, encouraging them to willingly join the empire.

**6. Offering Protection:**

- Small or weak kingdoms sometimes voluntarily joined empires to gain protection from enemies or natural disasters.
- In return, the emperor would ensure security and support.

These peaceful methods helped expand empires while reducing conflict and maintaining long-term stability.

**LET'S EXPLORE (Page 93)**

1. **Observe the map of the trade routes. Identify geographical features that helped the traders travel across the Subcontinent.**

**Ans.** Several geographical features supported trade in ancient India:

- **Rivers:** Rivers like the Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Krishna, and Narmada acted as natural highways, helping in the movement of goods and people.
- **Plains:** The northern plains provided flat, fertile land, making land routes easier to construct and travel on.
- **Mountain passes:** The northwestern passes (like the Khyber Pass) allowed trade between India and Central Asia.
- **Coastlines:** Long coastlines along the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal supported maritime trade with other countries.
- **Forest and hill resources:** Traders accessed timber, herbs, and minerals from hilly areas like the Vindhyas and Deccan plateau, which were vital for commerce.

These features connected key cities like Pataliputra, Ujjayini, Kaveripattinam, and Tamralipti across major trade routes like the Uttarapatha (northern route) and Dakshinapatha (southern route).

2. **List other such professions you expect in a complex society of the 1st millennium BCE.**

**Ans.** Ancient traders used several modes of transport:

- Bullock carts and horse-drawn carriages for carrying goods on land routes
- Caravans of camels and oxen for long-distance travel, especially across dry or hilly areas
- Boats and river rafts to transport goods on major rivers like the Ganga and Yamuna
- Ships for overseas trade across the seas to places like Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia, and even the Roman Empire
- Elephants and donkeys for moving heavy loads or traveling through forests and rough terrain

These traditional methods allowed goods such as textiles, spices, gems, metals, and handicrafts to move across the subcontinent and beyond.

**LET'S EXPLORE (Page 94)**

1. **Take a close look at the panel given above. How many types of weapons can you identify? What different uses of iron can you make out?**

**Ans.**

- **In the panel (Sanchi Stupa relief), we can identify several types of weapons:**
  - Swords
  - Spears
  - Bows and arrows
  - Shields

These weapons were used by soldiers riding horses, elephants, and on foot.

- **Different uses of iron are visible or implied:**
  - Iron weapons like swords and spears were used in warfare.
  - Iron tools (not directly visible in the panel) were likely used for:

- i. Tilling land (agriculture)
- ii. Building fortifications and structures
- iii. Making armor and war equipment

The panel reflects on how the use of iron helped in both military and agricultural advancement, enabling the rise of powerful kingdoms and empires like Magadha.

**2. In the left part of the panel, a parasol (chhattra) is kept over the casket containing the Buddha's relics. Why do you think this was done?**

**Ans.** The parasol (chhattra) over the Buddha's relics is a symbol of honor, respect, and royalty:

- In ancient India, the parasol was used to indicate nobility or divinity.
- Placing it over the casket signifies the sacredness of the Buddha's relics.
- It also shows that the relics were revered and protected, considered spiritually powerful and important.
- The act of carrying relics with a parasol suggests a ceremonial procession and religious devotion.

Thus, the parasol symbolizes both the veneration of the Buddha and the spiritual significance of his teachings in society.

**THINK ABOUT IT (Page 97)**

**1. Why do you think Alexander wanted to rule over the entire world? What would he have gained from it?**

**Ans.**

**Alexander wanted to rule the entire world because:**

- He was deeply ambitious and wanted to be remembered as the greatest ruler in history.
- He believed it was his destiny to conquer all lands, influenced by the idea of divine kingship.
- He wanted to spread Greek culture (Hellenism) across the world.
- He may have also wished to unify different regions and peoples under one rule, creating peace through power.
- Alexander grew up hearing stories of heroic warriors like Achilles, which inspired his desire for eternal fame and glory.

**If Alexander had ruled the entire world, he would have gained:**

- Immense power and control over people, resources, and wealth.
- Access to rich lands, including fertile plains, gold, spices, and trade routes.
- Military superiority, which would prevent any rivals from threatening his rule.
- A lasting legacy as a world-conqueror, ensuring his name lived on in history.
- The ability to influence cultures, laws, and governance across a vast empire.

Even though he died young, Alexander's dream had a major impact—creating Indo-Greek contacts and spreading knowledge and culture across continents.

**LET'S EXPLORE (Page 97)**

1. When, after the battle, Alexander asked Porus how he wished to be treated, Porus answered, "Like a King." Alexander then left Porus at the head of his kingdom, as satrap. With the help of your teachers, find more details on the battle between Porus and Alexander. Enact a play of this battle scene using your imagination in addition to what you have discovered.

**Ans.** The Battle of the Hydaspes took place in 326 BCE near the Hydaspes River (modern-day Jhelum in Punjab, Pakistan).

It was fought between Alexander the Great of Macedonia and King Porus of India.

- Porus had a strong army with war elephants, which the Greeks had never faced before.
- Despite the fierce resistance and bravery shown by Porus, Alexander defeated him using tactical brilliance by crossing the river secretly at night and launching a surprise attack.
- Impressed by Porus's courage and dignity, Alexander asked how he wanted to be treated.
- Porus replied, "Like a king should be."
- Alexander, admiring his honor, not only spared Porus but restored his kingdom and made him a satrap (governor) under his empire.

This battle showed mutual respect between two powerful leaders, and it opened up cultural exchanges between the Greeks and Indians.

**Sample Play Scene (Short Script):**

**Title:** "Like a King" — The Battle of the Hydaspes

**Characters:**

- |                       |                 |                  |
|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| • Narrator            | • King Porus    | • Indian Soldier |
| • Alexander the Great | • Greek General |                  |

**[Scene 1: On the Battlefield]**

- **Narrator:** In 326 BCE, on the banks of the Hydaspes, two mighty warriors prepare for battle — Alexander of Macedonia and Porus of India.
- **Alexander:** (to his soldiers) We shall cross the river by night and take them by surprise. Remember, they are brave, but we are wiser.
- **Greek General:** Yes, my lord. Their elephants may be fierce, but our tactics will prevail.  
[Sounds of battle – drums, clashing swords]
- **Indian Soldier:** King Porus! We are surrounded, but we will not give up!
- **Porus:** Stand your ground! We fight not just for land, but for honor!
- **Narrator:** The battle was long and fierce. Eventually, Porus is wounded and captured.

**[Scene 2: Alexander's Tent]**

- **Alexander:** (looking at Porus with admiration) You fought with courage, Porus. Tell me, how would you like to be treated?
- **Porus:** (proudly) Like a King.
- **Alexander:** (smiling) Then like a king you shall be. You will rule your land, as satrap under my empire.

- **Narrator:** Thus, respect and bravery bridged cultures, and the legacy of this battle lived on for centuries. [Curtain closes]

### THINK ABOUT IT (Page 103)

1. Kautilya says, “A king shall increase his power by promoting the welfare of his people, for power comes from the countryside which is the source of all economic activity. [The king] shall show special favours to those in the countryside who do things which benefit the people, such as building embankments or road bridges, beautifying villages, or helping to protect them.”

**Ans.** Kautilya's statement highlights a very important idea — that true power comes from the welfare of the people, especially those living in the countryside, which was the heart of the economy in ancient times.

#### Here's why this was important:

- The countryside was where most agriculture and resource production happened — grains, vegetables, animals, timber, etc.
- Farmers and artisans in villages provided the taxes and goods that supported the king's army and administration.
- If the countryside was peaceful, prosperous, and well-managed, the entire kingdom would be strong and stable.
- By supporting public works like embankments (to stop floods), road bridges (for transport), and village beautification, the king improved the quality of life for people.
- Happy and secure people are more loyal and productive, which makes the king more respected and powerful.

So, Kautilya believed that a king should invest in rural development, protect villages, and reward those who contribute to the common good — because the strength of an empire lies in the strength of its people.

2. **Why do you think it was important to take special care of the countryside? (Hint: Think back to what you have learnt at the beginning of this chapter)**

**Ans.** It was important to take special care of the countryside because the countryside was the foundation of the entire empire. As we learnt at the beginning of the chapter:

- Most people lived in villages and worked in agriculture, which was the main source of food and wealth for the kingdom.
- The countryside produced grains, animals, herbs, timber, and other natural resources needed for daily life, trade, and the army.
- Taxes collected from farmers helped the king run the administration, build roads, maintain armies, and support public welfare.
- A peaceful and prosperous countryside ensured economic stability, reduced the chances of rebellion or unrest, and allowed trade to grow.
- By encouraging activities like building embankments, road bridges, and beautifying villages, the king helped protect villages from floods, improve transportation, and increase happiness among the people.

Thus, as Kautilya wisely said, power comes from the countryside—if the villages are strong, the entire empire becomes strong.

### LET'S EXPLORE (Page 103)

#### 1. Organise a group discussion in your class and compare the features of Kautilya's idea of an empire with a modern nation.

**Ans.** Here is how you can organise and present a group discussion comparing Kautilya's idea of an empire with a modern nation:

**Topic for Group Discussion:** "Kautilya's Empire vs. a Modern Nation: Similarities and Differences"

#### • Key Points to Discuss and Compare:

##### a. Governance and Leadership

- Kautilya's Empire:
  - i. Ruled by a king or emperor with central authority.
  - ii. Power was inherited or taken through conquest.
  - iii. The king's duty was to protect the people and promote welfare.
- Modern Nation:
  - i. Run by elected leaders in a democracy.
  - ii. Power comes from the people's vote, not birth.
  - iii. Governments must follow a written Constitution and law.

##### b. Administration

- Kautilya's Idea:
  - i. Seven key parts of a kingdom: king, ministers, army, forts, treasury, allies, and people.
  - ii. Emphasis on law and order, punishment for corruption, and the welfare of citizens.
- Modern Nation:
  - i. It has separate branches: executive, legislature, and judiciary.
  - ii. Administration is run by civil servants and guided by modern law.
  - iii. Focus on development, justice, and citizen rights.

##### c. Role of People

- Kautilya's Empire:
  - i. People were expected to obey the king.
  - ii. Welfare of the people was important, but they had no role in choosing the ruler.
- Modern Nation:
  - i. People have rights and responsibilities.
  - ii. Citizens elect their government and can speak freely.

##### d. Economy and Taxes

- Kautilya's Empire:
  - i. The economy is based on agriculture, trade, and tribute from smaller kingdoms.
  - ii. Taxes were collected to run the empire and build public works.
- Modern Nation:
  - i. The economy includes industry, services, agriculture, and global trade.
  - ii. Taxes are collected under proper law and used for public services.

**e. Foreign Relations**

- Kautilya's Empire:
  - i. Formed alliances or waged war for power and control.
  - ii. Used spies and diplomacy to deal with enemies.
- Modern Nation:
  - i. Maintains peaceful relations through diplomacy and international laws.
  - ii. Member of global organizations like the UN.

**Conclusion** (To be shared in class):

- While Kautilya's empire was ahead of its time in planning and welfare ideas, a modern nation is more democratic, inclusive, and rule-based.
- Both value strong administration, public welfare, and peace, but modern nations give more power to the people.

**THINK ABOUT IT (Page 104)**

1. **Ashoka, in his edicts, tells the story of the Ka-linga war. He could have chosen not to mention it and maintain his image as a peaceful, benevolent king for future generations. Why do you think he admitted to this destructive war?**

**Ans.** Ashoka chose to admit the truth about the Ka-linga war in his edicts, even though it was a violent and destructive event, because:

**1. Honesty and Moral Responsibility:**

- Ashoka wanted to be an honest and self-aware ruler.
- By acknowledging the suffering caused by the war, he showed that he took responsibility for his actions.

**2. A Turning Point in His Life:**

- The Ka-linga war deeply affected Ashoka's heart and conscience.
- The sight of mass deaths and grief made him realize the horrors of war.
- This experience led him to adopt the path of non-violence (ahimsa) and dhamma (moral living).

**3. To Teach a Lesson:**

- By sharing his mistakes openly, Ashoka wanted to set an example for future kings.
- He showed that true strength lies in compassion, not in conquest.
- The edicts were a way to teach people to value peace over war.

**4. To Win People's Trust:**

- Admitting the past made him appear humble and truthful.
- People respected him more because he showed that even a powerful king could change for the better.

**Conclusion:** Ashoka's decision to tell the truth about the Ka-linga war showed his greatness not just as a ruler, but as a human being. It helped him promote a message of peace, tolerance, and moral leadership that continues to inspire India and the world even today.

**LET'S EXPLORE (Page 107)**

1. According to one of Ashoka's edicts, he instructed his officers and city magistrates to act fairly, treat people kindly, and avoid harsh punishments. He even arranged for special officers to check if these instructions were being followed. Do you think these steps would have helped in better management of his empire? Why or why not?

**Ans.** Yes, Ashoka's instructions would have greatly helped in managing his empire more effectively and justly. Here's why:

1. **Promoted Kind and Fair Governance:**

- By reminding officials that "all men are my children," Ashoka encouraged them to treat people with compassion and respect, not just as subjects but as family.
- This likely built trust between the people and the administration, which is essential for a strong and peaceful empire.

2. **Reduced Misuse of Power:**

- Ashoka clearly warned against unjust imprisonment or torture.
- These instructions helped in preventing cruelty and corruption among officials, ensuring justice for all.

3. **Regular Supervision:**

- Ashoka arranged for special officers to tour every five years to make sure his rules were followed.
- This system of monitoring and accountability ensured that officials were doing their duties properly and fairly.

4. **Building a Moral and Peaceful Society:**

- His teachings of dhamma encouraged both officials and citizens to live by moral values, which reduced conflicts and improved overall harmony in the empire.

**Conclusion:** Ashoka's ideas of fairness, kindness, and regular supervision were advanced for his time and helped create an efficient, just, and people-friendly administration. These steps would have made his empire strong, stable, and respected by the people.

**LET'S EXPLORE (Page 109)**

- **Wear the hat of a historian. Look carefully at the artefacts presented on the spread on the next page. What conclusions can you draw about people and life during the Mauryan era?**

**Ans.** Wearing the hat of a historian, and after observing the artifacts from the Mauryan era (like terracotta figurines, coins, sculptures, and stone pillars), we can draw several conclusions about the people and life during that time:

1. **Rich Art and Culture:**

- The terracotta figurines of women with detailed jewelry, hairstyles, and clothes show that people valued beauty, fashion, and artistic expression.
- Dancing girl figurines and sculptures suggest that dance and entertainment were a part of daily life.

**2. Advanced Craftsmanship:**

- The highly polished stone pillars (like the Lion Capital at Sarnath) and carved elephant sculptures show the skilled craftsmanship and architectural excellence of the Mauryan period.
- The designs on the artifacts indicate a high level of detail and artistic achievement.

**3. Religious Life and Beliefs:**

- The stupas and images of goddesses (Yakshis) suggest that religion played a major role in people's lives.
- The construction of Chaityas, Viharas, and Stupas shows a strong Buddhist influence, especially under Ashoka.

**4. Economic Prosperity:**

- The punch-marked silver coins show that trade and currency were well-developed, indicating a prosperous economy.
- Coins with symbols suggest that people had shared systems of value and exchange.

**5. Organized Urban Life:**

- Artifacts like road signage, rest houses, and urban structures tell us that cities were well-planned, and people enjoyed a structured civic life.
- The presence of granaries (as seen from the Sohgaury copper plate) indicates food security and administrative planning.

**Conclusion:** Life during the Mauryan era was economically strong, culturally rich, and well-governed. People took pride in art, religion, trade, and public welfare. The artifacts reflect a highly developed civilization that valued both spiritual and material well-being.

**LET'S EXPLORE (Page 112)**

- Notice the different symbols on the coins. Can you guess what any of the symbols in the coins below might mean?



**Ans.** By observing the symbols on the Mauryan punch-marked coins in the image, we can make the following guesses about their meanings:

**1. The Wheel (Chakra) Symbol:**

- This likely represents the Dharma-chakra, or "Wheel of Dharma."

- It may symbolize law, justice, and righteous rule, especially linked to Emperor Ashoka's Buddhist beliefs.

## 2. The Crescent or Bow-like Symbol:

- This could represent a moon, a weapon, or a royal insignia.
- It might stand for protection, power, or authority of the king.

## 3. The Sun-like or Starburst Symbol:

- Possibly represents the Sun, which symbolizes light, energy, and prosperity.
- It may also indicate divine guidance or cosmic power.

## 4. Tree – or Hill-like Patterns:

- These could represent nature, sacred trees, or geographical features like hills that were important religiously or administratively.
- Possibly linked to fertility, wealth, or local symbols of identity.

**Conclusion:** These symbols were not just decorations — they likely conveyed political authority, religious beliefs, and cultural identity. Since there was no written script on the coins, symbols helped people recognize the kingdom or ruler that issued them.

# Questions and activities (114-115)

## 1. What are the features of an empire, and how is it different from a kingdom? Explain.

**Ans.** An empire is a vast territory made up of multiple kingdoms or regions, ruled by a single powerful ruler (an emperor). It includes people of diverse cultures, languages, and customs.

A kingdom, on the other hand, is usually smaller and more localised, ruled by a king, and more culturally uniform.

### Features of an empire:

- Large territory
- Centralised authority
- Collection of tribute
- Strong army and administration
- Control over trade routes

## 2. What are some important factors for the transition from kingdoms to empires?

**Ans.**

- Desire of rulers to gain power and control over vast areas
- Use of iron tools and weapons in farming and warfare
- Rich resources like forests, rivers, and fertile land
- Efficient administration and taxation systems
- Growth of trade and urban centers
- Strong military and strategic alliances

**3. Alexander is considered an important king in the history of the world — why do you think that is so?**

**Ans.** Alexander is famous for:

- Conquering one of the largest empires in history across Europe, Asia, and Africa
- Introducing Greek culture (Hellenism) wherever he went
- Reaching as far as India and defeating King Porus
- Spreading ideas, knowledge, and influencing East-West relations
- His military strategies and vision for unity made him historically significant.

**4. In early Indian history, the Mauryas are considered important. State your reasons.**

**Ans.**

- The Mauryan Empire was India's first large and unified empire.
- Founded by Chandragupta Maurya, strengthened by Kautilya's guidance
- Ashoka promoted dhamma and welfare after the Ka linga war
- They had a strong administration, economy, and infrastructure.
- Promoted Buddhism and built stupas, roads, and rest houses

**5. What were some of Kautilya's key ideas? Which ones of these can you observe even today in the world around us?**

**Ans.**

**Kautilya's key ideas included:**

- A king must protect and promote the welfare of the people.
- Power comes from the countryside (agriculture and economy).
- Importance of justice, discipline, and administration
- Anti-corruption measures and regular monitoring

**Seen today:**

- Focus on rural development
- Welfare schemes for people
- Law enforcement, anti-corruption drives
- Administrative planning and taxation

**6. What were the unusual things about Ashoka and his empire? What of that has continued to influence India and why? (Write your opinion in about 250 words)**

**Ans.** Ashoka was unique because after the Ka-linga war, instead of expanding through violence, he chose the path of non-violence and dhamma. He openly admitted the destruction caused by war and turned towards peace, compassion, and public welfare.

**He:**

- Built roads, rest houses, and hospitals
- Spread Buddhism to Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia
- Appointed Officers of Dhamma to care for people of all faiths
- Promoted religious tolerance and equal treatment

**Ashoka's impact continues even today:**

- The Lion Capital of Sarnath is India's national emblem.

- The Ashoka Chakra is on the national flag.
- His values inspire peaceful and just governance.

His moral leadership showed that true greatness lies in caring for people, not just conquering lands.

**7. After reading the above edict of Ashoka, do you think he was tolerant towards other religious beliefs and schools of thought?**

**Ans.** Yes, Ashoka was very tolerant. His edict clearly shows that he respected all sects—Buddhists, Brahmins, Jains, and others.

He appointed Officers of Dhamma to ensure that people of all beliefs were treated fairly. This shows his commitment to religious harmony and inclusion, which was rare in that time.

**8. The Brahmi script was a writing system that was widely used in ancient India. Try to learn more about this script. Create a small project and include what you have learnt.**

**Ans.**

- **Name:** Brahmi script
- **Used from:** 3rd century BCE
- **Famous for:** Ashoka's edicts
- **Written in:** Left to right
- **Used to write:** Prakrit, Sanskrit
- **Importance:** It is the ancestor of modern Indian scripts like Devanagari, Tamil, Kannada, and Bengali.

Include samples of Brahmi letters and compare them with today's scripts.

**9. Suppose you had to travel from Kaushambi to Kaveripattinam in the 3rd century BCE. How would you undertake this journey, and how long would you expect it to take, with reasonable halts on the way?**

**Ans.** In the 3rd century BCE, I would:

- Travel by bullock cart or on foot along the Dakshinapatha trade route
- Use boats on rivers like the Ganga or Godavari where possible.
- Halt at major trade centres like Pataliputra, Ujjayini, and Madurai

Estimated time: Several weeks to a few months, considering rest, weather, and road conditions.