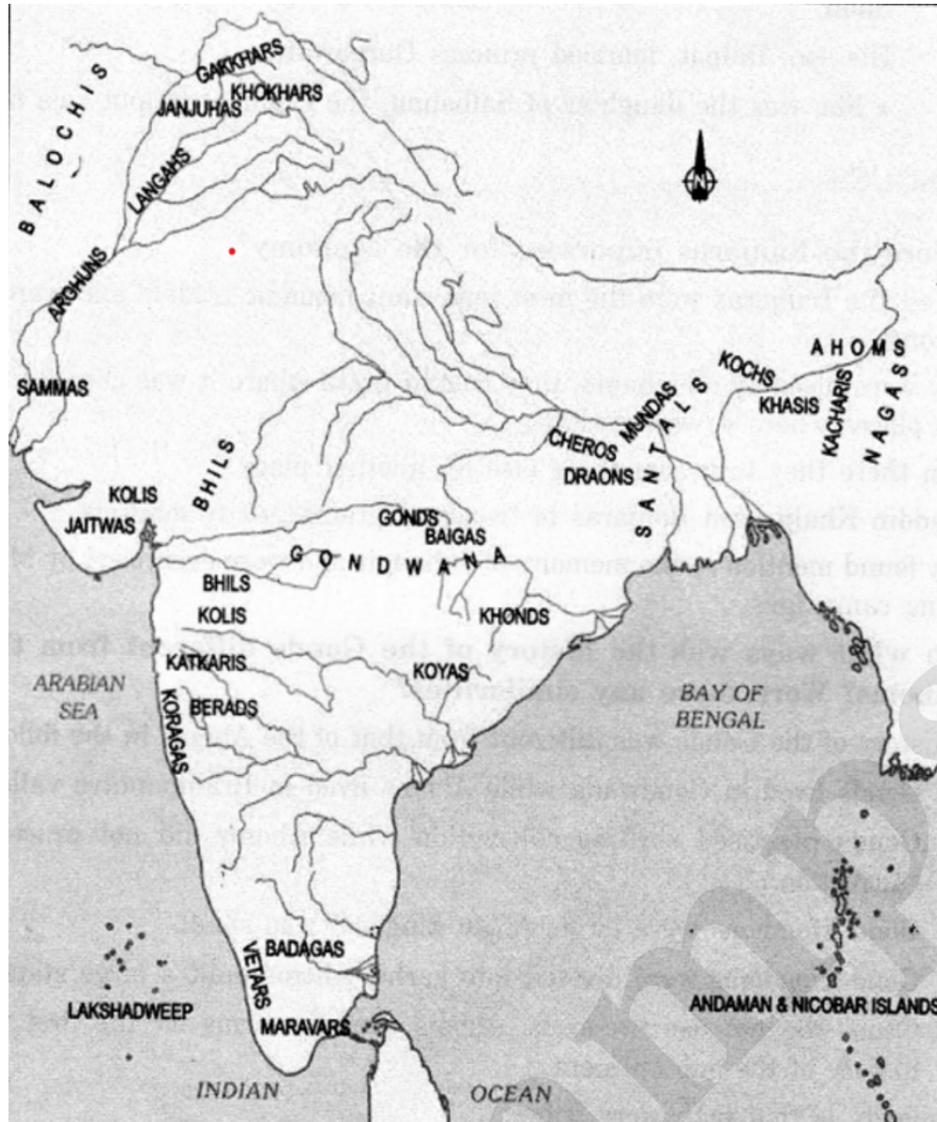


Chapter 7: Tribes, Nomads And Settled Communities

Intext Questions:

Question 1: On a physical map of the subcontinent, identify the areas in which tribal people may have lived?

Answer:



Question 2: Find out how grain is transported from villages to cities at present. In what ways is this similar to or different from the ways in which the Banjaras functioned?

Answer:

1. At present grain is transported through bullock carts, buggies, trucks, and tempos. Tractor trollies are extensively used to carry grains.
2. This is different from the ways of the Banjaras as they carried grains on the back of the oxen.

Question 3: Discuss why the Mughals were interested in the land of the Gonds?

Answer:

1. The Mughals were very ambitious. They desired to expand their kingdom in the land of the Gonds.
2. Garhakatanga was a rich state. It earned much wealth by trapping and exporting elephants to other kingdoms.
3. The Mughals desired to capture a huge booty of precious coins and elephants (which had great importance in the army) of the Gondwana.

Question 4: Why do you think the Mughals tried to conquer the land of the Ahoms?

Answer: The Mughals tried to conquer the land of Ahoms because of the following reasons:

1. Their land was fertile and produced a variety of crops.
2. The Mughals were engaged in expanding their kingdom.
3. The Ahom state was large and was a source of big revenue.

Imagine:

Question: You are a member of a nomadic community that shifts residence every three months. How would this change your life?

Answer: As a member of nomadic community and shifting residence every three months my life would be very different.

- We would move from one place to another in caravans.
- Our belongings, animals etc. would move with us therefore no permanent houses.
- We would live on milk and pastoral products.
- We would exchange pastoral products for grains, cloth, utensils etc with settled agriculturists.

LET'S RECALL:

Question 1: Match the following:

1)garh	a)khel
2)tanda	b)chaurasi
3)labourer	c)caravan
4)clan	d)Garha Katanga
5)Sib Singh	e)Ahom state
6)Durgawati	f)paik

Answer:

1)garh	a)chaurasi
2)tanda	b)caravan
3)labourer	c)paik
4)clan	d)khel
5)Sib Singh	e)Ahom state
6)Durgawati	f)Garha Katanga

Question 2: Fill in the blanks:

1. The new castes emerging within varnas were called.....
2. were historical works written by the Ahoms.
3. The mentions that Garha Katanga had 70,000 villages.
4. As tribal states became bigger and stronger, they gave land grants toand

Answer:

1. Jatis.
2. Buranjis
3. Akbar Nama
4. Temples, Brahmanas, Scholoars and Poets.

Question 3: State whether true or false:

1. Tribal societies had rich oral traditions.
2. There were no tribal communities in the north-western part of the subcontinent.
3. The chaurasi in Gond states contained several cities.
4. The Bhils lived in the north-eastern part of the subcontinent.

Answer:

1. True
2. False; The Balochis were large and powerful tribe in the north-western part of the subcontinent.
3. False; The Gond kingdom was divided into garhs. Each garh was further divided into units of 84 villages called chaurasi. The chaurasi was subdivided into barhots which were made up of 12 villages each.
4. False; Bhils lived in the western and central part of the subcontinent.

Question 4: What kinds of exchanges took place between nomadic pastoralists and settled agriculturists?

Answer: The following kinds of exchanges took place between nomadic pastoralists and settled agriculturists.

- They exchanged milk, other pastoral products such as wool, ghee, etc.
- Agriculturists gave them grain, cloth, utensils, and other products.

LET'S UNDERSTAND:

Question 5: How was the administration of the Ahom state organised?

Answer: The Ahom state depended upon forced labour. Those forced to work for the state were known as paiks. A census of the population was taken. Each village had to send a number of paiks by rotation. People of densely populated areas were shifted to thinly populated areas. Ahom clans were thus broken up. By the first half of the 17th century the administration became quite centralised.

Question 6: What changes took place in a varna-based society?

Answer: The following changes took place in varna-based society:

1. Smaller castes or jatis emerged within varnas.
2. Many tribes and social groups were taken into caste-based society and given the status of jatis.
3. Specialised artisans-smiths, carpenters and masons – were also recognised as separate jatis by the Brahmanas.
4. Jatis rather than varna, became the basis for organising society.
5. Among the Kshatriyas, new Rajput clans became powerful by the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Question 7: How did tribal societies change after being organized into a state?

Answer: The tribal societies changed in the following manner:

1. They began to evolve a centralised administrative system.
2. Some social divisions within a tribal society also took place.
3. Tribal kings began to grant land to Brahmanas, poets, and scholars.
4. Tribal kings also wished to be recognized as other famous kings of the subcontinent, such as.
5. Tribal kingdoms began to annex smaller neighboring kingdoms. For example, Ahom annexed kingdoms of Chhutiyas and Koch- Hajo.
6. In order to build a large state, Ahoms used firearms.
7. Literary development such as translation of Sanskrit works into the local language and writing history in the Ahom language were also new developments.

LET'S DISCUSS:

Question 8: Were the Banjaras important for the economy?

Answer: Yes, the Banjaras were the most important nomadic traders and were important for the economy.

1. They were hired by merchants, they bought grain where it was cheaper and carried it to places where it was costlier.
2. From there they took something else for another place.
3. Alauddin Khalji used Banjaras to transport grains to city markets.
4. They found mention in the memoirs of Jahangir and were even used by Mughal army during campaigns.

Question 9: In what ways was the history of the Gonds different from that of the Ahoms? Were there any similarities?

Answer: The history of the Gonds was different from that of the Ahoms in the following ways:

- The Gonds lived in a vast forested region called Gondwana. The Ahoms migrated to the Brahmaputra valley from present-day Myanmar in the 13th century.
- The Gonds practised shifting cultivation. The Ahoms did not practice this type of cultivation.
- The Gond society was not as much developed as the Ahom's. The Ahoms built a large state by using firearms. They could even make high-quality gunpowder and cannons.
- Ahom society was very sophisticated. Poets and scholars were given land grants. Theatre was encouraged. We do not find these things in Gond society.

There were many similarities between the Gonds and Ahoms:

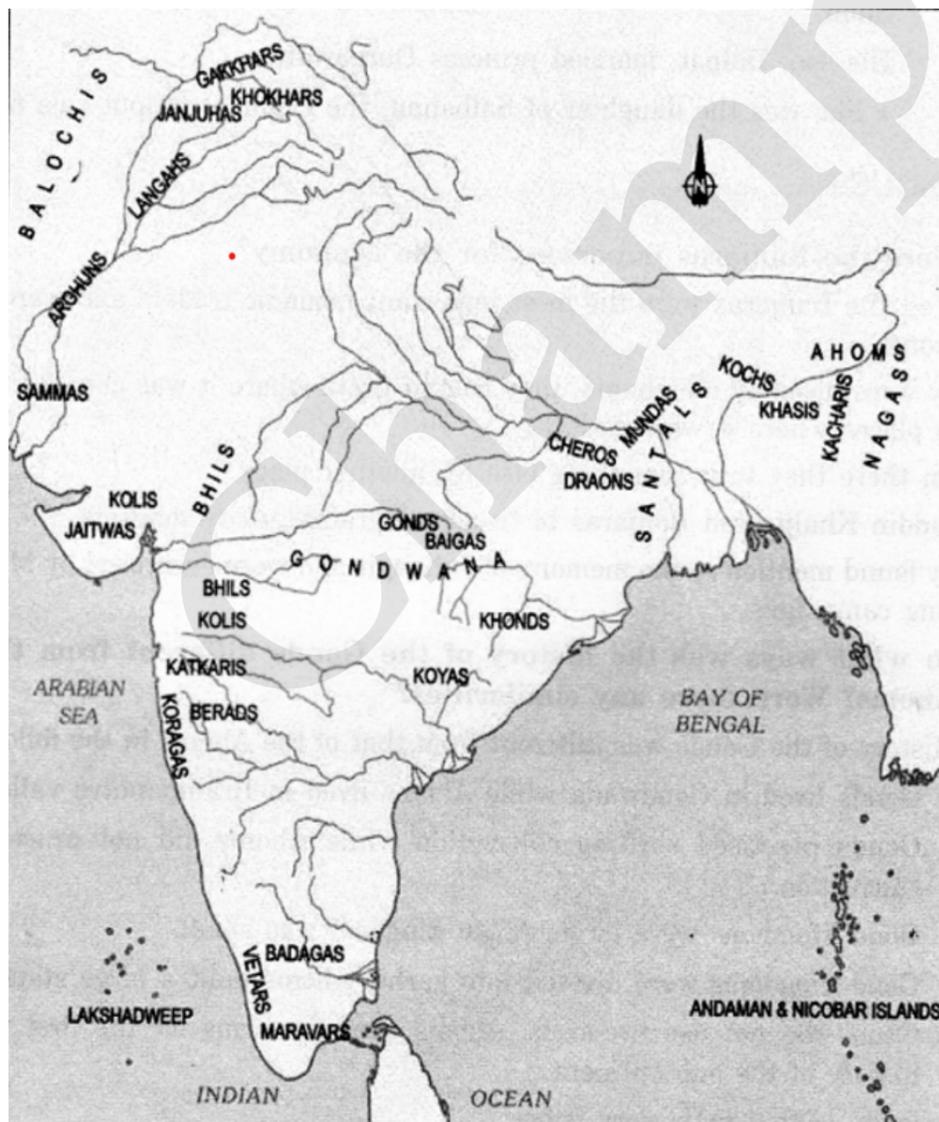
- Both were capable of building large states.
- Both had to face Mughal attack. Despite their brave defence, both were defeated by the Mughals.
- Both of them granted land to the Brahmanas, who became very influential.
- We find the administration centralised in the history of the Gonds as well as the Ahoms.

LET'S DO:

Question 10: Plot the location of the tribes mentioned in this chapter on a map. For any two, discuss whether their mode of livelihood was suited to the geography and the environment of the area where they lived.

Answer: Please see the map. The two examples where geography suited their livelihoods are: Ahoms settled in the north eastern part of the country. They experienced heavy rainfall. They introduced new methods of rice cultivation that required more water. They were engaged in building dams and irrigation systems.

Bhils lived in the western part of the country. It had fertile land and forests. By the 16th century many of them led a settled life of agriculturists. Many remained hunter-gathers.



Question 11: Find out about present-day government policies towards tribal populations and organise a discussion about these.

Answer: Present-day government policies towards tribal populations are very positive.

- Education is being spread in the tribal areas.
- Facilities like roads, water, electricity have been increased.
- The government is doing activities for the overall upliftment of the tribal populations.

- The government has enforced reservation for them in government jobs. This policy of the government has helped the tribal people in many ways. They are now joining the mainstream of society.
- The government is also determined to protect its cultural and social traditions.

Question 12: Find out more about present-day nomadic pastoral groups in the subcontinent. What animals do they keep? Which are the areas frequented by these groups?

Answer: Some of the main present-day nomadic pastoral groups of the subcontinent are-Gujjars (J & K), Gaddis (Himachal), Bhotiyas, Monpas (north-east), Raikas (Rajasthan), Banjaras (Central India), Dhangars (Maharashtra) and Maldharis (Gujarat). These pastoralists keep sheep, buffaloes, camels, etc.

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