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## Mauryas – Time of Ashoka

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### Ashoka and Buddhism

- Ashoka became a Buddhist in his 9<sup>th</sup> regnal year, after the Kalinga war
- According to the Roopnath Inscription, he started visiting Buddhist sangha
- According to the VIII rock edict, he visited Samodhi (Gaya) and became Sambodhi
- In his 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> regnal year, he visited Lumbinigram and the Buddha Kanakmuni stupa was enlarged
- According to Ceylonese chronicle, he was converted to Buddhism by Nigrodh-a-7-year-old boy, but according to Divyadana Upgupta converted him
- In the Bhabru edict, he openly confessed that he has faith in the Buddhist Dharma and Sangha.

### Army of Ashoka

- The six branches of Army are
  1. Infantry
  2. Cavalry
  3. Elephants
  4. Chariots
  5. Transport
  6. Admiral of the fleet
- Chanakya has mentioned only four wings Chatur-Agobla
  1. Infantry
  2. Cavalry
  3. Chariots
  4. Elephants
- He mentioned that each was under a commander
- Arthashastra has also mentioned about medical services to the Army.
- Kautilya has classified the troops into three categories:-

1. Hereditary troop
  2. Hired troop
  3. Soldiers belonging to the corporations
- The hereditary troop constitutes the standing army of the king and did probably Megasthenes refer to the troops in describing the fifth class in the soldiers
  - Megasthenes says that numerically they were the second
  - The officers and the soldiers were paid in cash.

## Espionage (Spy)

- The main task of the spies were:-
  1. Keeping an eye on the ministers
  2. Reporting on government officials
  3. Collecting impressions regarding the feeling of citizens
  4. Know the secret of foreign rulers
- For this they adopted various disguise like ascetics student, house holders, merchants, mendicant women prostitute etc
- Kautilya said that the spies were organized through the 'Institutions of espionage'
- He also divided them into Sansthan (stationary) and Sanchari (wandering)
- Serpant charmers, acrobats and many other professionals were engaged on a part time or full time basis
- The spies were both male and female
- Barber, astrologers, peasants, prostitutes, all were recruited
- Arthashastra also mentions a special kind of spy- 'star' - an orphan trained from the childhood for this work.
- The spies reported to the king directly.
- There reference of spies sent to the foreign countries.

## Judiciary at Time of Ashoka

- The lowest was Grama
- On 10 villages, was a Sangrahan
- On 400 villages there was a court called Dronamukha
- On 800 villages there was a court called Sthaniya
- City Judiciary was Vyavharika Mahamatta
- Diwani Court was related to revenue and was called Dharmasthaiya
- Jurisdiction in the rural areas was conducted by the Rajuka
- This information is given by the 5<sup>th</sup> Pillar Edict

- Jurisdiction in the cities was carried out by the mahamattas specially appointed for this purpose (according to the 1<sup>st</sup> Separate Edict)
- The Rajukas had control over the problem related to the agriculture and land disputes
- Arthashastra has mentioned about two types of courts
  - i. Dharmasthiya – decided about the personal disputes
  - ii. Kantakasodhana – decides matters related to individuals and state like conduct of works, murder, theft etc.
- In the civil cases, the Hindu code of law as described in the ‘Shastras’ was administred.
- The source of law, according to Arthashastra were
  1. Dharma
  2. Vyavhara – current loyal codes
  3. Charitra – customs
  4. Rajasano – the royal decree
- The king was the upholder of the Dharma and held the supreme judicial power
- The cases were decided by a body of abritrators with a system of appeal to the king
- Punishment was largely in the form of fines
- Those who could not pay, were permitted to sell them bondage
- Capital punishment was also practiced
- Despite being a Buddhist, Ashoka did not abolish death penalty.

## Ashokan Inscriptions

### Pillar Inscriptions: There 7 Pillar Edicts

1. Lauriya – Araraj: Champaran district of Bihar
2. Lauriya – Nandagarh: Champaran district of Bihar
3. Rampurva: Champaran district of Bihar
4. Nigali Sagar In Tarai region in Nepal
5. Sarnath: Banaras
6. Topra – near modern Peshawar but shifted to Delhi
7. Merrut – in Delhi, (at) PresentFiroz Shah Tughlaq transferred Topra and Merrut pillar inscriptions to Delhi.