

NCERT QUESTIONS WITH SOLUTIONS

1. Compare the political strategies of the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughals. What similarities and differences existed between them?

Ans. (i) Both the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire used military power to expand their rule. They fought battles, raided cities, and collected taxes like jizya and land revenue to support their armies. However, their methods of governing were quite different.

(ii) The Delhi Sultans mostly relied on force and used the iqta system, where land was given to nobles in return for military service. This often caused instability, with frequent power struggles and short reigns on average, only around nine years per sultan.

(iii) The Mughals, especially under Emperor Akbar, followed a more stable and thoughtful approach. They used diplomacy, made marriage alliances, and promoted religious tolerance through the idea of sulh-i-kul (peace with all).

(iv) Akbar also introduced the mansabdari system to manage his officials and army better. This led to longer and more peaceful reigns — Mughal emperors ruled for about 27 years on average until Aurangzeb.

(v) So, while both relied on war and taxes, the Mughals had a more organised and lasting way of ruling the empire.

2. Why did kingdoms like the Vijayanagara Empire and the Ahom Kingdom manage to resist conquest for a longer time compared to others? What geographical, military, and social factors contributed to their success?

Ans. (i) Kingdoms like the Vijayanagara Empire and the Ahom Kingdom were able to resist conquest for a longer time due to a mix of geographical advantages, strong military tactics, and social unity.

(ii) The Vijayanagara Empire benefited from the natural protection of Hampi's rocky and hilly terrain, which made it hard for enemies to attack. Under rulers like Krishnadevaraya, they built a strong army and maintained unity through support for religion and culture, especially by building temples and encouraging literature.

(iii) On the other hand, the Ahom Kingdom in Assam used its dense forests, rivers, and hills to its advantage. They relied on guerrilla tactics and deep knowledge of the land to defeat larger invading forces, as seen in the famous Battle of Saraighat in 1671.

(iv) Their paik system also helped build a flexible army by requiring every man to serve when needed. Both kingdoms had strong local support, which gave them social strength and stability.

(v) So, their geography, clever military planning, and strong community bonds helped them stay independent for longer than many others.

3. How come Akbar, a ruthless conqueror in his young days, grew tolerant and benevolent after some years? What could have led to such a change?

Ans. When Akbar became emperor at the young age of 13, he was a fierce and ruthless leader focused on conquest and military power. Early in his reign, he showed great brutality, such as during the long siege of Chittor where many lives were lost and the survivors faced harsh treatment. However, over time, Akbar's attitude began to change. Through his interactions with people of different faiths, his marriage alliances with Rajput princesses, and the influence of scholars in his court, he gradually adopted a more tolerant and inclusive approach.

He abolished the jizya tax on non-Muslims and promoted the policy of sulh-i-kul, meaning 'peace with all,' which encouraged religious tolerance and harmony. Akbar realised that ruling through respect and cooperation brought greater stability and unity to his vast empire than ruling through fear alone. This change was also influenced by his

personal reflections, as recorded by his court historian Abul Fazl, where Akbar admitted that forcing others to convert to Islam religion was wrong and unlikely to last. Thus, Akbar evolved from a harsh conqueror into a wise and benevolent ruler who valued peace and diversity.

4. What might have happened if the Vijayanagara Empire had won the Battle of Talikota? Imagine and describe how it could have changed the political and cultural history of south India.

Ans. If the Vijayanagara Empire had won the Battle of Talikota in 1565, the history of South India could have been very different. The empire would have stayed strong and united, likely continuing to grow its power over the Deccan and beyond. This victory might have stopped the empire from breaking into smaller Nayaka states, helping Vijayanagara remain a powerful kingdom for much longer. Politically, a strong Vijayanagara could have stood firm against invasions from the Deccan Sultanates and even challenged northern powers like the Mughals, possibly changing the balance of power in India.

Culturally, the golden age under Krishnadevaraya might have lasted longer, bringing even greater growth in art, literature, and temple building. Poets, scholars, and religious centres would have continued to receive support, helping to keep cultural unity strong across the region.

Temples and cities like Vijayanagara could have grown larger and more beautiful, attracting traders, artists, and pilgrims from far and wide. Overall, a Vijayanagara victory at Talikota might have turned South India into a leading political and cultural force for many centuries.

5. Many values promoted by early Sikhism, including equality, seva, and justice, remain relevant today. Select one of these values and discuss how it remains relevant in contemporary society.

Ans. Equality, as promoted by early Sikhism, is a value that remains strongly relevant in today's world. Guru Nanak's teachings about the oneness of God (Ik Onkar) and the equal worth of all people challenged the deep social divisions of his time, such as caste and religious discrimination.

Later Sikh Gurus continued this belief, not only through their words but also their actions — for example, Guru Tegh Bahadur sacrificed his life defending the rights of Kashmiri Pandits to practise their faith freely. This shows that Sikhism stood firmly for the dignity and equality of all, regardless of religion or background.

In today's diverse and often divided societies, the values of equality, seva and justice help promote mutual respect and peaceful coexistence. It encourages us to treat everyone fairly, support those who face injustice, and build communities based on shared humanity. Whether in schools, workplaces, or daily life, the Sikh belief in equality reminds us to stand up for others and live with compassion and integrity.