



**Gana Sangha:** During the initial phase of Second urbanization the Gana Sangha emerged as an important political system in competition to the monarchies. The Nationalist historians like **K.P.Jayaswal** have characterized the Gana Sangha polity as a form of democracy in early India.

Although this view has been challenged by later historians who called these Gana Sangha as **Oligarchies** rather Democracy, it should be remembered that the democratic character should not be judged with modern parallels and even in modern democracy the franchise has been limited for a considerable period.

**Conclusion:** Although this democratic tradition was overshadowed by the monarchies in later periods, this democratic tradition survived and the survival and growth of a diverse country as India in post Independence period could be best understood through these deep rooted democratic traditions in Indian society.

#### GIST OF THE ANSWER

- **Important Sources:** Mahabharata's Shanti Parva, Arthashastra, Greek accounts of Megasthenes, Arrian, Coins and inscriptions.
- **Related Historian:** K.P. Jayaswal.
- **Concept/Principle in Body:** Highlight the elements of democracy during Vedic period- Sabha, Samit, Vidhata. Discuss their democratic features. Also discuss the democratic features of Gana Sanghas.
- **Conclusion:** Although this democratic tradition was overshadowed by the monarchies in later periods, this democratic tradition survived.

**Q4(b) Reconstruct the societal structure along with the food habits of Harappans as gleaned through historical sources. (15 marks)**

**Ans: Introduction:** As the Harappan script could not be deciphered yet therefore all the information including the social structure, food habits and dressing sense of Harappans could be reconstructed only on the **basis of archaeological sources**.

**Body:** Social structure of Harappan Civilization through archeological sources:

- **Social differentiation:** According to noted historian **R.S.Sharma** the hierarchical settlement in urban centres show the differentiated society. Ruling class, merchants and traders lived in the **Citadel** area whereas the common masses lived in the **lower towns**.  
Even the **different residential structure**, with a number of rooms varying from 1 to 12 support the social differentiation in Harappan society.