UNIT 4: AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY IN EARLY MEDIEVAL INDIA

Unit Structure

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4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVE

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the importance of wet-rice cultivation and irrigation in agricultural growth;
- discuss the major agricultural technologies introduced during the period;
- identify the important food crops and commercial crops cultivated in different regions;
- explain the changes that took place in the land revenue system and the practice of land grants; and
- understand the connection between agricultural production, trade, and the growth of towns.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

Agriculture formed the foundation of the economy in early medieval India (c. AD 600–1200). The period witnessed significant changes in agricultural production, landholding patterns, irrigation systems, and commercial activities, which together transformed the socio-economic structure of Indian society. The expansion of

cultivation into forested and wasteland areas, supported by royal patronage and the widespread practice of land grants, led to the growth of permanent rural settlements and increased agricultural output. The agrarian economy became closely linked with the emergence of regional kingdoms, the rise of temples as economic institutions, and the development of local markets and long-distance trade.

One of the most remarkable developments of this period was the expansion of **wet rice cultivation**, particularly in the river valleys and deltaic regions of South and Eastern India. The construction of irrigation tanks, canals, reservoirs, embankments, and wells enabled farmers to cultivate rice on a much larger scale, resulting in higher productivity and food surpluses. However, historians have debated whether this agricultural expansion primarily reflected technological progress and economic prosperity or whether it also contributed to the growth of landlordism, social stratification, and feudal relations. These debates have enriched our understanding of the agrarian transformation that took place during the early medieval period.

Alongside the spread of wet rice cultivation, important **agricultural technologies** were introduced and improved. The wider use of iron ploughshares, better irrigation devices, improved methods of water management, and the adoption of multiple cropping systems enhanced agricultural efficiency. Farmers cultivated a wide variety of **crops**, including rice, wheat, barley, millets, pulses, sugarcane, cotton, oilseeds, spices, fruits, and vegetables, reflecting the diverse ecological conditions of the Indian subcontinent. Agricultural diversification not only ensured food security but also supplied raw materials for industries and trade.

The period also witnessed significant **changes in the land revenue system**. Land became an increasingly important source of wealth and political authority, leading rulers to grant villages and agricultural lands to Brahmins, temples, officials, and military officers. These grants altered patterns of land ownership, taxation, and agrarian administration, while local institutions such as village assemblies played a vital role in managing irrigation, collecting revenue, and resolving disputes. The growth of agricultural surplus encouraged the expansion of **trade**, both within India and with foreign regions. Flourishing market centres, merchant guilds, ports, and trade routes connected rural producers with urban consumers, contributing to the economic prosperity of many regional kingdoms.

This unit examines the major features of the agricultural economy in early medieval India by analysing the growth of wet rice cultivation, the historiographical debates surrounding it, the introduction of new agricultural technologies, the cultivation of various crops, the evolution of the land revenue system, and the development of trade. Understanding these developments provides valuable insight into the economic foundations of early medieval Indian society and the processes that shaped its political, social, and cultural transformation.

4.3 WET RICE CULTIVATION

Wet rice cultivation was one of the most important features of the agrarian expansion that characterized early medieval India. During this period, agriculture

became the backbone of the economy, and the cultivation of paddy in irrigated fields expanded significantly across different regions of the subcontinent. Wet rice cultivation refers to the practice of growing rice in waterlogged or flooded fields, requiring a regular and controlled supply of water through canals, tanks, reservoirs, wells, embankments, and river channels. This method differed from dry farming because it demanded greater investment in irrigation, labour, and land management, but it also produced much higher yields. The spread of wet rice agriculture was particularly prominent in the fertile river valleys and deltaic regions of South India, eastern India, Bengal, Assam, Odisha, Kerala, and the Krishna-Godavari and Kaveri deltas, where abundant rainfall and alluvial soils created favourable conditions for paddy cultivation. The expansion of irrigated rice farming transformed the economic, social, and political landscape of early medieval India by increasing agricultural productivity, encouraging permanent settlements, and strengthening regional states.

The remarkable growth of wet rice cultivation during this period was closely associated with the expansion of irrigation systems and the reclamation of cultivable land. Regional rulers invested heavily in the construction and maintenance of tanks, canals, reservoirs, dams, and embankments to ensure a reliable water supply throughout the agricultural season. South Indian kingdoms, particularly the Cholas, developed sophisticated irrigation networks that enabled intensive paddy cultivation in the Kaveri delta. The repair and extension of older irrigation works, together with the construction of new tanks, transformed previously uncultivated or forested land into fertile agricultural fields. Similarly, eastern India witnessed the expansion of paddy cultivation through river-based irrigation and natural flooding. These developments significantly increased food production and supported the growth of population and rural settlements. The increasing importance of irrigation also encouraged collective participation by village communities in maintaining tanks, canals, sluices, and embankments, thereby strengthening local institutions of self-governance.

Land grants constituted another important factor behind the spread of wet rice cultivation. Kings frequently granted land to Brahmins, temples, monasteries, military officers, and administrative officials. Many of these grants included forested or uncultivated areas that had to be cleared and brought under cultivation. The recipients of these grants organized the reclamation of land, settled cultivators, and introduced irrigation facilities wherever possible. Temples emerged as important centres of agricultural management by owning large tracts of irrigated land and supervising cultivation through tenant farmers and labourers. These institutions not only encouraged agricultural expansion but also became centres of economic exchange, storage, and redistribution of surplus produce. As more land came under cultivation, rice became the principal staple crop in many parts of India, providing food security for growing populations and generating substantial land revenue for regional kingdoms.

Wet rice cultivation also had profound social consequences. The expansion of irrigated agriculture led to the establishment of stable village settlements and the integration of frontier regions into agrarian society. New peasant communities emerged in reclaimed areas, while traditional village institutions became responsible for water management, taxation, and agricultural organization. The increasing demand for labour created opportunities for landless labourers, tenant cultivators, artisans, and service

groups who supported agricultural production. At the same time, inequalities in land ownership increased as temples, Brahmins, landlords, and local chiefs accumulated extensive landed property through royal grants. Thus, the agrarian structure became increasingly stratified, although village communities continued to play an important role in maintaining irrigation systems and managing local resources.

The economic significance of wet rice cultivation was immense. Higher agricultural productivity generated food surpluses that sustained expanding populations, encouraged the growth of towns and markets, and stimulated internal and overseas trade. Rice became one of the principal commodities exchanged in regional markets and contributed substantially to state revenue through land taxes. The agricultural surplus also supported the flourishing of crafts, industries, temples, educational institutions, and urban centres. Powerful regional kingdoms such as the Cholas, Pandyas, Eastern Gangas, and Palas derived considerable wealth from irrigated agriculture, enabling them to maintain large armies, undertake public works, and patronize religion, literature, and architecture. Thus, wet rice cultivation formed the economic foundation of political power during the early medieval period.

In conclusion, wet rice cultivation was a defining feature of the agrarian transformation of early medieval India. Supported by irrigation technology, land reclamation, royal patronage, and village cooperation, it expanded agricultural production and reshaped rural society. The cultivation of irrigated rice not only ensured food security but also generated economic surplus, strengthened regional kingdoms, promoted trade and urbanization, and contributed to the emergence of a prosperous agrarian economy. Consequently, wet rice cultivation occupies a central place in understanding the economic and social history of early medieval India.

4.4 DEBATE ON WET RICE CULTIVATION

The expansion of wet rice cultivation in early medieval India has been a subject of considerable debate among historians. Scholars differ in their interpretation of its origins, driving forces, social consequences, and impact on the economy and state formation. While some historians view the spread of irrigated rice cultivation as a sign of agricultural progress and economic prosperity, others argue that it also intensified social inequalities and reflected changing political and agrarian structures.

One major debate concerns the **role of the state in promoting wet rice cultivation**. Historians such as **Burton Stein** argue that South Indian rulers, especially the Cholas, played an active role in constructing irrigation tanks, canals, embankments, and reservoirs, which facilitated the expansion of wet rice agriculture. According to Stein's "segmentary state" model, local institutions such as village assemblies (sabhas and urs) managed irrigation and agricultural production, while the state exercised limited direct control. Thus, agricultural expansion resulted from cooperation between local communities and regional rulers rather than from centralized state intervention.

In contrast, **R. S. Sharma** places greater emphasis on the role of land grants and changing agrarian relations. He argues that the proliferation of land grants to Brahmins, temples, and officials led to the reclamation of forests and wastelands,

including areas suitable for wet rice cultivation. However, Sharma contends that this process also encouraged the growth of landlordism and dependent peasantry, contributing to what he describes as **Indian feudalism**. According to this interpretation, although wet rice cultivation increased agricultural production, it also strengthened the control of landed elites over cultivators and reduced peasant autonomy.

Another debate centres on the **relationship between irrigation and state formation**. Burton Stein argues that irrigation projects supported the growth of local agrarian communities and enabled the rise of regional kingdoms without necessarily creating a highly centralized administration. In contrast, **B. D. Chattopadhyaya** suggests that the expansion of agriculture, including wet rice cultivation, contributed to the integration of frontier regions into larger political systems. He argues that the spread of cultivation transformed forested areas into settled agrarian landscapes, thereby strengthening the authority of emerging regional states.

Historians also debate the **economic significance of wet rice cultivation**. Traditional historians regard irrigated rice farming as the foundation of economic prosperity because it generated food surpluses, increased state revenue, encouraged trade, and supported urban growth. The Kaveri delta, Krishna-Godavari region, Bengal, and Assam are often cited as examples where wet rice cultivation sustained prosperous agrarian economies. However, some scholars caution against assuming that agricultural expansion benefited all sections of society equally. They argue that the surplus generated from wet rice cultivation was often appropriated by temples, landlords, and ruling elites through taxation and land control, leaving cultivators with limited economic gains.

The **role of temples** in promoting wet rice cultivation is another area of scholarly discussion. Historians such as **R. Champakalakshmi** emphasize that temples functioned not merely as religious institutions but also as major economic centres. They owned extensive irrigated lands, organized cultivation, financed irrigation works, employed agricultural labour, and redistributed surplus produce. In this interpretation, temples were instrumental in expanding wet rice cultivation and stimulating local economies. Other historians, however, argue that temple ownership of land also reinforced social hierarchy and concentrated wealth in institutional hands.

Environmental historians have added another dimension to the debate by highlighting the ecological impact of wet rice cultivation. The expansion of irrigated agriculture often required the clearing of forests, construction of tanks and embankments, and alteration of natural water systems. While these developments increased agricultural output, they also transformed landscapes and demanded continuous maintenance of irrigation infrastructure. The success of wet rice cultivation therefore depended not only on royal patronage but also on the collective labour of village communities.

Overall, historians generally agree that wet rice cultivation was one of the most significant developments of early medieval India, but they differ in explaining its causes and consequences. For some, it represented technological progress, agricultural expansion, and the economic foundation of regional states. For others, it also marked

the growth of landlordism, social stratification, and changing agrarian relations. These differing interpretations demonstrate that wet rice cultivation was not merely an agricultural technique but a complex historical process that shaped the economic, social, political, and environmental history of early medieval India.

4.5 NEW AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY

The Early Medieval period (c. 600–1200 CE) witnessed significant developments in agricultural technology that contributed to the expansion of cultivation and increased agricultural productivity. In this period, innovations in irrigation, water-lifting techniques and the use of animal power contributed to increased cultivation and agricultural productivity. These developments enabled the extension of farming into new regions and strengthened the agrarian economy.

One of the most important technological developments was the expansion of irrigation facilities. As agriculture became increasingly dependent on a reliable water supply, rulers, local chiefs, temples, and village communities invested in the construction of tanks, reservoirs, canals, embankments, wells, and watercourses. Central and Peninsular India emerged as major centres of tank irrigation. Notable examples include the large reservoir built by King Bhoja in Malwa during the eleventh century and the Grand Anicut across the Kaveri River in South India, which distributed water through an extensive canal system. These irrigation works enabled the cultivation of larger areas and promoted wet-rice agriculture. Historical evidence suggests that rulers actively supported irrigation projects. The *Rajatarangini* records that the Kashmiri ruler Lalitaditya Muktapida initiated measures to improve irrigation by redirecting river water and distributing water-lifting devices among villages.

The period also witnessed improvements in water-lifting technology. Devices such as the *araghatta* were increasingly used to draw water from rivers, tanks, and wells. Wells and tanks became important elements of rural infrastructure. In western India, step-wells provided access to water throughout the year, while tanks and reservoirs supplied irrigation water to surrounding fields. In regions with limited rainfall, these facilities ensured more stable agricultural production and, in some cases, enabled farmers to harvest more than one crop annually.

Agricultural expansion was further aided by the use of improved iron tools. Iron ploughshares, axes, sickles, etc made it easier to clear forests, prepare fields, and cultivate different types of soil. The growing use of iron technology allowed cultivators to bring previously uncultivated lands under agriculture and improve the efficiency of farming operations.

Animal power also became increasingly important in agricultural activities. Oxen and other draught animals were employed for ploughing, threshing, transportation, and operating water-lifting devices. The wider use of animal-powered mechanisms reduced labour requirements and increased productivity. Agricultural processing activities such as oil extraction and sugar production also benefited from the use of animal-driven equipment.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1.What was the araghatta?

2.Name one important irrigation device used in the Early Medieval period.

4.6 CROPS

The agricultural economy of Early Medieval India was characterized by the cultivation of a wide variety of crops adapted to different ecological and climatic conditions. Information regarding crop production is derived from literary works, inscriptions, foreign travel accounts, and regional texts. These sources reveal that agriculture was diversified and regionally specialized, providing both subsistence and commercial products.

Rice was the most important staple crop in many parts of eastern, northeastern, and southern India. Its cultivation expanded with the growth of irrigation facilities and wet-rice agriculture. Numerous varieties of rice were known during this period, particularly in Bengal and Assam, where the crop occupied a central place in the agrarian economy. Xuanzang's account suggests that both wet-rice and upland-rice varieties were cultivated in different parts of northern India.

Wheat and barley were the principal crops of north-western and western India. The Chinese pilgrim Yijing refers to the abundance of wheat in these regions, indicating its importance in the local diet. Barley continued to be cultivated alongside wheat and rice, especially in Kashmir and other northern regions. The *Nilamata Purana* points to the significance of barley in Kashmir, where it functioned as an important secondary crop. Millets such as ragi, kodon, and china millet were also cultivated, particularly in regions with less dependable rainfall. Oilseed cultivation occupied an important place in the rural economy. Crops such as sesame, mustard, and castor were grown in different parts of the country and were used for the production of edible oils, medicines, and ritual purposes. These crops complemented food-grain cultivation and added to the diversity of agricultural production.

The period also witnessed the cultivation of several commercial crops that supported trade and craft production. Sugarcane was one of the most important cash crops and was cultivated across a wide geographical area extending from Kashmir and Gandhara to Bengal. Literary and epigraphic sources indicate that sugarcane cultivation was widespread and contributed to the production of jaggery and sugar. Cotton was another major commercial crop. It was cultivated in regions such as Malwa, Bundelkhand, Gujarat, and Bengal, providing raw material for the flourishing textile industry. By the later centuries of the period, Malwa had emerged as an important cotton-producing region.

Other cash crops included indigo, flax, sann-hemp, betel leaves, and betel nut. Saffron was particularly associated with Kashmir and adjoining north-western regions, where favourable climatic conditions supported its cultivation. Coconut and arecanut, though more prominent in coastal and eastern regions, gradually became important

commercial crops by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Their increasing cultivation reflects the changing pattern of agricultural production and market demand.

Regional specialization was a notable feature of crop cultivation during this period. Magadha was renowned for the quality of its rice, while Vaishali was known for its orchards of mangoes and plantains . In South India, rice remained the principal crop, supported by extensive irrigation systems, tanks, reservoirs, and canal networks, especially in the fertile Kaveri delta.Vegetables, spices, and fruits also formed an important part of the agrarian economy.

Thus, the cultivation of food grains, oilseeds, commercial crops, fruits, and spices formed the foundation of the Early Medieval agrarian economy. Agricultural diversity ensured food security, generated surplus production, and supported the growth of trade, urban centres, and regional states.

Check Your Progress 3

3.*What were the major food crops cultivated in Early Medieval India?*

4.Name the principal commercial crops of the Early Medieval period.

4.7 CHANGES IN LAND REVENUE SYSTEM

The Early Medieval period (c. 700–1200 CE) witnessed important changes in the land revenue system. Land became the principal source of wealth, political authority, and state income. As agricultural production expanded, rulers increasingly depended on land revenue to maintain administration, military activities, and religious patronage. Consequently, control over land and its resources acquired greater significance than in earlier centuries.

One of the most notable developments was the widespread practice of land grants. Evidence from numerous copper-plate charters and inscriptions shows that rulers granted land to Brahmanas, temples, monasteries, royal officials, military commanders, and members of the royal family. Such grants often transferred not only cultivated and uncultivated land but also the right to collect taxes and dues from the inhabitants of the donated area. Historians such as R. S. Sharma have regarded this transfer of fiscal rights as a key feature of the early medieval agrarian order.

Religious grants took various forms. Lands donated to Brahmanas were known as *Brahmadeya*, while tax-free villages granted to groups of Brahmanas were called *Agrahara* in northern India and *Mangalam* in the south. Lands assigned to temples, monasteries, and other religious establishments were known as *Devadana*. Inscriptions from different regions indicate that these institutions became major landholders and played an important role in the expansion of cultivation and settlement.

Alongside religious grants, secular land grants also became increasingly common from about the seventh century onwards. Land was assigned to ministers, military officers, local chiefs, and royal relatives in return for administrative and military services. References to such grants are found in the inscriptions of the Cholas, Palas,

Rashtrakutas, and several regional dynasties. These grants contributed to the rise of a class of landed intermediaries who exercised authority over local resources and revenue.

The growing importance of land grants transformed patterns of land ownership and revenue collection. According to the *Yajnavalkya Smriti* and *Brihaspati Smriti*, different levels of rights could exist over the same piece of land, including those of the king, the landholder, the cultivator, and the tenant. Thus, rights over land became increasingly layered and hierarchical. While peasants continued to cultivate the land, superior claims were often exercised by landlords and grantees who received fiscal and administrative privileges from the state.

The revenue system itself became more decentralized. Land-grant inscriptions mention a variety of taxes, including *bhaga*(the king's share of produce), *bhoga* (supplies and provisions), *kara* (tax or tribute), *hiranya* (cash payment), and *uparikara* (additional dues). Studies by Lallanji Gopal based on inscriptional evidence reveal the existence of numerous other taxes and cesses. In many cases, these revenues were transferred to the grantees, reducing the direct control of the state over local resources.

Another important consequence was the increasing burden on the peasantry. Many grants transferred not only land but also rights over forests, water resources, pastures, and village labour. Chola inscriptions contain frequent references to *vishti* (forced labour), which could be demanded by landlords and other beneficiaries of land grants. As a result, cultivators were subjected to various obligations and dues, while local elites acquired greater control over rural society.

Historians have interpreted these developments in different ways. R. S. Sharma viewed the growth of land grants, intermediary rights, and decentralization of revenue collection as important features of Indian feudalism. B. D. Chattopadhyaya, however, emphasizes the regional character of these developments and argues that land grants also facilitated agrarian expansion and the integration of frontier regions into emerging political structures. The expansion of land grants, the transfer of fiscal rights, the rise of landed intermediaries, and the growing complexity of agrarian relations transformed the economic and social structure of the period.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

5. What was a Brahmadeya grant?

6. What was a Devadana grant?

4.8 TRADE

Trade and commerce remained important components of the early medieval economy, although their nature and scale varied across regions and periods. Historians generally identify two broad phases in the development of trade between the eighth and thirteenth centuries. The period between c. 700 and 900 CE is often associated with a relative decline in long-distance trade, urban centres, and coin circulation in some regions. From about the tenth century onwards, however, commercial activities

witnessed a revival, marked by the expansion of markets, growth of towns, and increasing participation in both inland and overseas trade. This revival was closely connected with agricultural expansion, rising surplus production, and the growth of craft industries.

The extension of cultivation and the increase in agricultural output created favourable conditions for commercial exchange. Surplus production of cereals, pulses, oilseeds, and cash crops supported the growth of local and regional markets. Craft production also expanded during this period, with textiles, metalware, leather goods, jewellery, and other manufactured items being produced for exchange. Textile production became particularly significant, and accounts of later travellers such as Marco Polo and several Arab writers refer to the high quality of Indian cotton fabrics, especially those produced in regions like Bengal and Gujarat. Manufacturing centres such as Paithan, Nagapattinam, Kalinga, and Multan gained prominence for their commercial activities.

Inland trade was facilitated by a network of roads, river routes, and market centres connecting different regions of the subcontinent. Inscriptions mention the movement of commodities such as food grains, oil, butter, salt, sugar, jaggery, coconuts, arecanuts, betel leaves, indigo, spices, metals, and textiles. Luxury goods, including horses, elephants, jewellery, carpets, leather products, swords, and spears, were also traded. The accounts of travellers such as Benjamin of Tudela, Al-Idrisi, and Friar Jordanus provide valuable evidence regarding the movement of goods and merchants across different parts of India and beyond.

Maritime trade expanded significantly from the tenth century onward. India's strategic location in the Indian Ocean enabled commercial contacts with West Asia, Southeast Asia, and China. Arab merchants played a major role in overseas trade, although Indian merchant groups were also actively involved in commercial ventures across the seas. Indian exports included cotton textiles, indigo, rice, spices, sugar, ivory, precious stones, and other agricultural and craft products. In return, India imported horses, silk, metals, and luxury goods. Among these imports, horses were especially important because of their military value to contemporary kingdoms.

Several ports emerged as important centres of overseas commerce. On the western coast, Bharuch (Broach) and Cambay (Khambayat) became major trading centres. Quilon on the Malabar Coast and ports along the eastern seaboard, including Kalingapatnam and Tamralipti, connected India with wider maritime networks. Evidence from inscriptions indicates that rulers sought to encourage trade by protecting merchants, maintaining ports, and regulating customs duties. The Motupalli inscription of Andhra Pradesh, for example, records measures taken to ensure the safety of merchants and ships. Similarly, Ibn Battuta observed that the property of deceased foreign merchants was protected and returned to their legal heirs, reflecting official concern for commercial interests.

Commercial transactions were conducted through a combination of coinage, barter, and credit mechanisms. Although coins circulated in many regions, barter continued to play an important role in everyday exchange. Merchants also employed credit instruments such as the *hundika* (bill of exchange), which facilitated long-

distance trade without the direct transfer of money. The *Lekhapaddhati* of Gujarat provides evidence for the use of loans, credit arrangements, and commercial partnerships, indicating the growing sophistication of trading practices.

Merchant groups and trading communities contributed significantly to the expansion of commerce. They organized the transport of goods, arranged credit facilities, and maintained commercial connections between different regions. Their activities helped integrate local economies into wider networks of exchange and promoted the circulation of goods across the subcontinent and beyond.

The growth of trade had important economic and social consequences. Expanding commercial activities stimulated the development of markets, ports, and urban settlements. Historians often describe this process as the "third urbanization" of the Indian subcontinent, characterized by the growth of towns and commercial centres after the early historical period. Thus, trade and commerce played a vital role in linking agriculture, craft production, and urban development, making them an essential feature of the early medieval economy.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

7. Name one important port of Early Medieval India.

8. What is meant by the "third urbanization"?

4.9. LET US SUM UP

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4.10 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q1: Araghatta was a water-lifting device used to draw water from wells, tanks, and rivers for irrigation purposes during the Early Medieval period.

Answer to Q2: Araghatta (water wheel) was an important irrigation device used in the Early Medieval period.

Answer to Q3: Rice, wheat , barley , millets

Answer to Q4: Rice

Answer to Q5: A Brahmadeya grant was a grant of land given by a ruler to one or more Brahmanas, usually with revenue and tax privileges.

Answer to Q6: A Devadana grant was land donated to temples, monasteries, or other religious institutions for their maintenance and religious activities.

Answer to Q7: Broach was an important port of Early Medieval India.

Answer to Q8: The term “third urbanization” refers to the growth of towns and urban centres in India during the Early Medieval period due to the revival of trade, commerce, and craft production.

4.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

Very Short Questions

1. Which metal was commonly used for agricultural tools?
2. Name one cash crop cultivated in Early Medieval India.
3. Which region was famous for saffron cultivation?
4. What was an Agrahara grant?
5. What is vishti?

Short Questions

1. Discuss the major agricultural technologies introduced during the Early Medieval period.
2. Describe the major food crops and commercial crops cultivated in Early Medieval India.
3. Write a short note on inland and maritime trade in Early Medieval India.

Long Questions

1. Analyse the major developments in agricultural technology during the Early Medieval period, with special reference to irrigation and water-lifting devices.
2. Discuss the pattern of crop cultivation in Early Medieval India. Highlight the importance of food crops, commercial crops, and regional specialization.
3. Examine the changes in the land revenue system during the Early Medieval period. How did land grants transform agrarian relations?
4. Discuss the different types of land grants in Early Medieval India. Assess their economic and social impact.
5. Analyse the growth of inland and maritime trade in Early Medieval India. What factors contributed to the revival of commerce after the tenth century?