

HARSHAVARDHANA

(ADMINISTRATION)

**B.A. (HISTORY) PART-2
PAPER-3**

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Harshavardhana, as an able ruler maintain a profound and systematic administration during his reign. The success of Harsha's administration is testified by Hiuen Tsang. He was highly impressed by the character of Harsha's civil administration, which he considered to be founded on benevolent principles. Instead of relying on the services of trained bureaucracy, the king personally supervised the administration, constantly toured the provinces and extended justice to all. From various

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accounts it is evident that the kingdom of Harsha was mostly extended towards the east, and it was probably natural too that he should aspire to control the territories lying on this side, since the southern routes were blocked to the mighty arm of Pulakesin II. Harsha succeeded in bringing nearly the whole of the Gangetic plain under his yoke. According to some scholar his empire was extended from Kamarupa to Kashmir and from Himalaya to the Vindhya. He was referred as the

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lord of North India or Sakalottarapathanath by Hiuen Tsang. In an oriental disposition the sovereign being the centre of the state much of the success in administration necessarily depend on his benevolent examples. He must need to pay laborious attentions to details in order to infuse life into the government apparatus and to check the corruption and laxity of officer placed in authority over distant areas. With this ends in view Harsha appears to have handled the difficult task of supervising personally the affair of his

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dominion. Hiuen Tsang notes ‘ the king's day was divided into three periods of which one was given up to affairs of government, and two more devoted to religious works. He was indefatigable and the day was too short for him. But in spite of this overwork Harsha was not content to rule from the luxurious surroundings of the palace only. He constantly toured the province and extended justice to all. The royal tours were not merely confined to urban areas, but rural areas also received equal attentions. The tours were

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conducted in the manner of state procession accompanied by music and pace drum. During the tours he punished the evil doers and established contact with the peoples. The tours were only suspended during the rainy seasons. He took himself the duties of royal inspector and listened to complaint, inspected general working of the administration and also made donations. Thus denying himself the comforts of the palace, Harsha toured round his far flung empire to promote the wellbeing of his subjects. In order to

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rule his empire properly, Harsha divided his empire into many administrative units and appointed officials for smooth running of the administrations. For the safety and security of his empire Harsha maintained a large army. Hiuen Tsang notes that Harsha's army consisted of 6,000 elephants and 1, 00,000 cavalry. The police department of Harsha was very efficient and the judicial administration was very harsh.