

11th SEPT.

1) How was overseas trade organised in South India up to 300 AD?  
Discuss this with special reference to Roman trade and point out its impact on Indian economy. (30M).

Ans) The historical period in <sup>Part</sup> South India started with the Sangam Age, named after the Sangam poems of the area.

It roughly corresponds from 200/100 BC - 200/300 AD.

In the Deccan area, on other hand, Satavahanas emerged after the decline of Mauryan dynasty to establish their empire, stretching between both North and South India.

The Peninsular South India is ~~over~~ surrounded by oceans on the 3 sides, making it a suitable area for overseas trade. The diversion of Silk route into India strengthened its contact with western world and Roman empire. This maritime trade with Roman empire ~~has~~ also happened from the coastal areas of South India as well.

This overseas trade can be understood from the several evidences of the period:

The Dakshinapatha joined the cities of Satavahana empire

such as Paithan, Amravati etc. to the port cities, from where they participated in overseas trade. Paithan is the only inland city mentioned in the Periplus of Erythraean Sea.

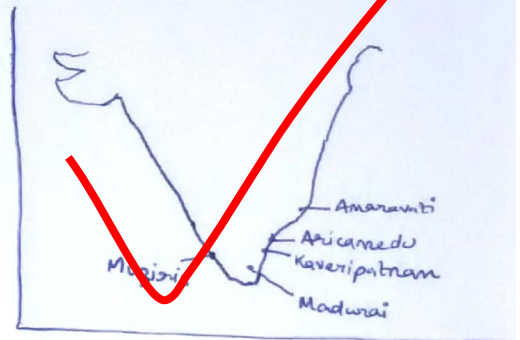
Question is only about overseas trade

- Vienna Papyrus scroll gives the evidences of direct trade links between Alexandria of Roman Empire to Muchiris in Ind.
- The Roman pottery such as Amphorae Jars and Aretine ware have been found from various coastal cities of South India.
- Arikamedu or Pondicherry is a richly excavated site which gave evidence of Indo-Roman trade. Even a Roman temple has been found here.
- Roman coins are found from several sites across the Indian subcontinent, though they are richly concentrated in South Indian sites.
- The ports of South India mainly traded with the items like Spices (mainly Pepper), Ivory, Muslin, cotton etc. They traded these items for Roman Gold coins, for which Pliny had lamented about drain of Roman Gold to India.
- The Sangam states not only traded with Roman empire, but also had trade contacts on other sides such as Malacca and South east Asia, known as Suvannadwipa in Talakes.



## IMPACT ON ECONOMY:

- Various cities emerged leading to urbanisation in South India.
- Gradually, the Indo-Roman trade shifted from Gujarat and Western coast to the Coromandal coast.
- The trade activities helped in the formation of states in South India, such as the Veluzh and Vendaru. These states provided protection to trade routes as well.
- The trade contacts with Sri Lanka, South East Asia, Persian Gulf etc. increased.
- Also lead to increased coastal trade from West Bengal in North to Tamil Nadu. Eg. Rouletted Ware found all along the western coast.
- Pepper was known as Yavana Periya and spice trade resulted in more contacts with South East Asia.
- Trading and market towns emerged. Eg. Madurai, Puhar etc.



Thus, the Indo-Roman trade maintained the favourable Balance of Trade for India and helped in the 2nd urbanisation witnessed in the country.