

AREA OF META DATA	CONTENT
THEME	The Past Through The Eyes Of Chinese Travellers: The Account of Zuanzang
SUBJECT	HISTORY
LINKAGE OF THEME WITH CHAPTERS(NAME)	How, When, Where
CLASS/LEVEL	Class VI Our Pasts I
TARGET AUDIENCE	Students
OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To realise the importance of travellers accounts in understanding the past. • To critically analyse the observations of Zuanzang.
DESCRIPTION	<p>Travellers Accounts is a first person account of foreigners who travelled across the seas and land as pilgrims, traders and as travellers to reach the sub-continent. They left descriptions and observations of historical events as well as of different aspects of a society which was otherwise alien to them. The Indian sub-continent has always attracted people from far off regions since early times. Traders, soldiers, envoys, pilgrims, travelers, goods and ideas have passed through the region, crossing frontiers and covering vast distances over land and sea. Some of them recorded their experiences and observations which become</p>

	<p>valuable sources of information in understanding the past. In the ancient period Greek, Roman and Chinese visitors came to India either as travelers or pilgrims and left behind accounts of what they saw and worth recording. The accounts of Xuanzang therefore form important sources of information in understanding the past.</p>
KEY WORDS	Travellers Accounts, Xuanzang, Nalanda.
CONTENT DEVELOPER	Mily Roy Anand
SUBJECT COORDINATOR	Mily Roy Anand
CIET COORDINATOR	Indu Kumar

XUANZANG (Period of Visit 629-645 CE)



Illustration of Xuanzang



Statue of Xuanzang in X'ian, China.

- A Buddhist scholar and traveler who came from China during the rule of the Tang dynasty.
- He was an ardent student of Buddhist scriptures and became a monk at a very early age.
- His main aim was to search for Buddhist texts and to study in the Buddhist monastery in Nalanda now in Bihar.
- He came to India during the rule of king Harshavardhan and spent many years in his court. He visited many places such as Lumbini, Sarnath, Pataliputra, Bodhgaya, etc.
- Harsha became a great supporter of Buddhism owing to Xuanzang's influence and made generous endowments.



Ruins of Nalanda

- **Some interesting observations of Xuanzang:**

Pataliputra and Vaishali were in a state of decline; Priests and nobles led luxurious lives while brahmanas and kshatriyas led simple lives; People who were considered as untouchables lived outside the village; Nalanda monastery was supported from the revenues of 100 villages.

- **During his stay in Nalanda monastery , he interacted with many Buddhist scholars and studied Grammar, Logic, Sanskrit and *Yogacara* school of Buddhism.**
- **He returned to China in 645 C.E with about 650 Sanskrit texts and several statues of the Buddha.**
- **After his return he extensively translated a number of Indian Buddhist texts into Chinese.**
- **He completed his book *Great Tang Records on the Western Regions* which is an important historical source for the study of Central Asia and India.**

ACTIVITY

Choose the correct answer

CIET : Correct Answer Should Flash In Green.

1. Which ruler became a great supporter of Buddhism under the influence of Xuanzang?

- (a) Harsha (b) Chandragupta II (c) Ashoka

2. Xuanzang was a

- (a) Jaina scholar (b) Buddhist scholar (c) Christian scholar

3. Nalanda Mahavira was supported from the revenues of

- (a) Towns (b) Cities (c) Villages

4. Nalanda Mahavira was a

- (a) Monastery (b) Cave (c) Temple

5. During his stay in Nalanda monastery Xuanzang studied

- (a) Sanskrit (b) Prakrit (c) Tamil

