**10.The Post Mauryan empire**

**Cheras:**

The Cheras had their rule over major parts of modern Kerala/ malabar areas.

* The capital of Cheras was Vanji and their important seaports were Tondi and Musiri.
* They had the palmyra flowers as their garland.
* The insignia of Cheras is the” bow and arrow”.
* The Pugalur inscription of the 1st century AD has reference to three generations of Chera rulers.
* The important ruler of Cheras was Senguttuvan who belonged to 2nd century His military achievements have been chronicled in epic Silapathikaram, with details about his expedition to the Himalayas where he defeated many north Indian rulers.
* Senguttuvan introduced the Pattini cult or the worship of Kannagi as the ideal wife in Tamil Nadu.
* He was the first to send embassy to China from South India.

**Cholas:**

The Chola kingdom in the Sangam period extended from Northern Tamil Nadu to southern Andhra Pradesh.

* Their capital was firstly at Uraiyur and later shifted to Puhar(Tanjore).
* King Karikala was a famous king of the Sangam Cholas.
* The insignia of Cholas was “tiger”.
* Pattinappalai portrays his life and military conquests.
* Many Sangam Poems mention the Battle of Venni where he defeated the confederacy of Cheras, Pandyas and eleven minor chieftains.
* He also fought at Vahaipparandalai in which nine enemy chieftains submitted before him.
* Hence, Karikala’s military achievements made him the overlord of the whole Tamil country.
* Therefore, Trade and commerce flourished during his reign.
* He also built irrigation tanks near river Kaveri to provide water for reclaimed land from forest for cultivation

**Pandyas:**

The Pandyas ruled over the present day southern Tamil Nadu.

* Their capital was Madurai.
* Their insignia was the “carp”.
* King Neduncheliyans also known as Aryappadai Kadantha Neduncheliyan. He ordered the execution of Kovalan. The curse of Kovalan’s wife-Kannagi burnt and destroyed Madurai.
* Maduraikkanji was written by Mangudi Maruthanar which describes the socio-economic condition of the flourishing seaport of Korkai.

## Economy of the Sangam Age:

* Agriculture was the chief occupation where rice was the most common crop.
* The handicraft included weaving, metal works and carpentry, ship building and making of ornaments using beads, stones and ivory.
* These were in great demand of all above products in the internal and external trade as this was at its peak during the Sangam period.
* A high expertise was attained in spinning and weaving of cotton and silk clothes. Various poems mention of cotton clothes as thin as a cloud of steam or like a slough of snake. These were in great demand in the western world especially for the cotton clothes woven at Uraiyur.
* The port city of Puhar became an important place of foreign trade, as big ships entered this port containing  precious goods.
* Other significant ports of commercial activity were Tondi, Musiri, Korkai, Arikkamedu and Marakkanam.
* Many gold and silver coins that were issued by the Roman Emperors like Augustus, Tiberius and Nero have been found in all parts of Tamil Nadu indicating flourishing trade.
* Major exports of the Sangam age were cotton fabrics and spices like pepper, ginger, cardamom, cinnamon and turmeric along with ivory products, pearls and precious stones.
* Major imports for the traders were horses, gold, and sweet wine.