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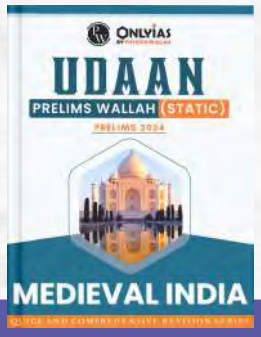

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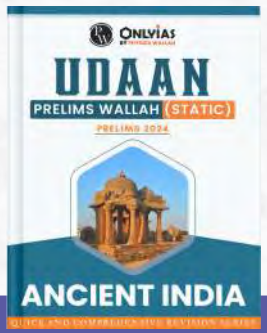

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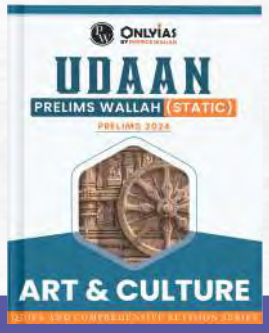

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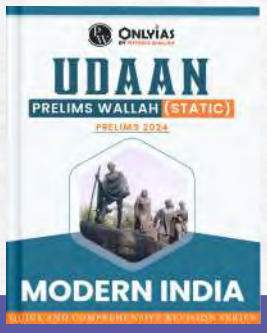

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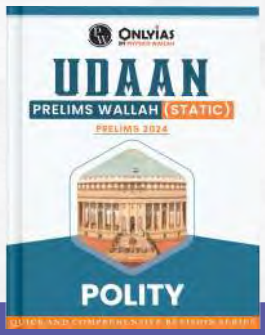

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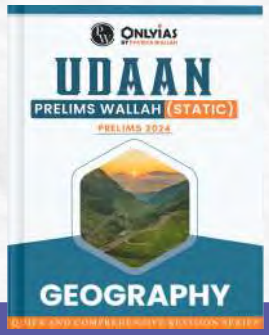

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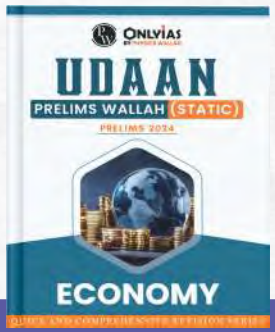

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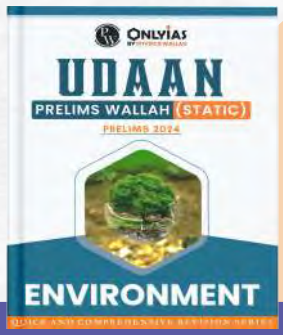

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PREFACE

A highly skilled professional team of PW ONLY IAS works arduously to ensure that the students receive the best content for the UPSC exam.

A plethora of UPSC study materials are available in the market, but PW ONLY IAS professionals continuously work to provide supreme-quality study material for our UPSC students.

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Faculties have adopted a new style of presenting the content in easy-to-understand language and have provided the team with guidance and supervision throughout the creation of this book.

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This book adopts a multi-faceted approach to mastering and understanding the concepts and equipping the students with the knowledge for this competitive exam.

The main objective of the study material is to provide short, crisp, concise and high-quality content to our students.

BOOK FEATURES

- Holistic coverage of topics, strictly as per exam syllabus.
- One-stop solution for prelims based, subject-wise coverage.
- Diagrams and Timelines for quick understanding and revision.
- Quick Revision Module for the UPSC Prelims examination.
- Every topic is structured in headings and bullets for easy understanding of the students.

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1 Early History

History can be classified into three categories: **Pre-History, Proto-History,** and **History.**

- **Pre-history** covers the events **before writing was invented.** The three Stone Ages usually represent it.
- **Proto-history,** generally, refers to a period between prehistory and history when the knowledge of writing was there, but their scripts are yet to be deciphered.
  - The **Harappan** script has not yet been deciphered, but the civilization is mentioned in the writings of Mesopotamia.
  - Similarly, the **Vedic civilisation** from 1500–600 BC had an oral literary tradition.
- **History** is the **study of the past after writing was invented** and the study of societies based on written and archaeological sources.

PREHISTORIC PERIOD

The **Indian Stone Age** is divided into **three main categories**. These are:

1. Old Stone Age, or Palaeolithic Age
2. Late Stone Age, or Mesolithic Age
3. New Stone Age, or Neolithic Age

PALAEOLITHIC AGE (APPROX 3.3 MILLION YEARS TO 10,000 BP)

Introduction

- **'Palaeolithic'** means **"Old Stone Age"** and begins with the **first use of stone tools**. It extends from the earliest known use of stone tools by **Hominins** (immediate ancestor of **Homo Sapiens**) 3.3 million years ago to the end of the **Pleistocene**, or **Ice Age**, 11,650 BP (before the present period).
- Human ancestors are likely to have **first evolved in Africa** and **later migrated** to different parts of the world. The **earliest human ancestor** species to **migrate out of Africa** was **Homo erectus.**
- They were **hunters and gatherers** who lived in **caves and rock shelters.** They also learned to **use fire** later in this phase.
- They used unpolished stones like hand axes, cleavers, choppers, blades, burin, and scrapers. They are also called **Quartzite men** in India because they used **quartzite** for their tools.

The Palaeolithic Age is further divided into **three phases** according to the nature of the stone tools used by the people and the nature of change in the climate.

- **Lower** Palaeolithic Age (20,00,000 – 60,000 BP)
- **Middle** Palaeolithic Age (3,85,000–40,000 BP)
- **Upper** Palaeolithic Age (40,000 – 10,000 BP)

Lower/Early Palaeolithic Age (20,00,000 – 60,000 BP)

During this phase, the human ancestor species **Homo erectus** is believed to have lived in India.

The **Narmada Valley** yielded a partial **hominid skull cap** in a **basal conglomerate** deposit in **1982.**

- This fossil is the **oldest hominin fossil** found in India and is known as the **Narmada Man,** or **Sivapithecus sivalensis.** It was found at **Hathnora** near **Hoshangabad** in **Madhya Pradesh.**
- It is considered to represent the **Archaic Homo sapiens.**
- It is the only existing **fossil find of human ancestors in India.**
- It provides direct evidence of the presence of early human ancestors on the subcontinent.

- **Distribution:** Lower Palaeolithic tools are found in most parts of India, **except** a few regions of the Ganges valley, southern Tamil Nadu, and in the hilly areas of the Western Ghats.

  Some of the prominent sites include:
  - **River Soan Valley** in Punjab (now in Pakistan), **Belan Valley** (Mirzapur district, UP).
  - **Athirampakkam**, **Pallavaram** and **Gudiyam** near Chennai.
  - **Hunsgi Valley** and **Isampur** in Karnataka, and **Bhimbetka** in Madhya Pradesh.
- **Lifestyle:**
  - The early humans of this age were primarily **hunters** and **gatherers** and lived a nomadic lifestyle.

- They hunted animals and gathered roots, nuts, and fruits. They fed on the flesh and bones of animals killed by predators.
  - In the Narmada valley, animal fossils of **Elephas namadicus** (giant tusked pre-historic elephant)**, Stegodon Ganesa** (a giant pre-historic elephant)**, Bos namadicus** (wild cattle) **and Equus Namadicus** (extinct great horse like animal) have been recovered.
  - At **Attirampakkam** teeth of **Equus,** evidence of **Water Buffalo** and **Nilgai,** as well as 17 **animal hoof prints** have been uncovered.

Equus refers to the genus of animals, including horses, asses and zebras.

- Homoerectus lived near the river valleys in caves and rock shelters, as seen from evidence in **Bhimbetka** in **Madhya Pradesh** and **Gudiyam** near **Chennai.**
- **Homo Erectus did not** have a **complex language culture** like Homo Sapiens. They may have expressed a few sounds or words and used **sign language.**

- **Tools:**
  - The **first** Palaeolithic tools were identified at the site of **Pallavaram** near Chennai by **Robert Bruce Foote** in 1863.
  - Tools included **hand axes, choppers**, and **cleavers**, similar to tools used in Western Asia, Europe, and Africa. The tools had **physical symmetry,** highlighting pre-historic human's high-quality cognitive (perception) skills and capabilities.

Acheulian and Sohanian Tradition

- The Acheulian and Sohanian cultures represent **two distinct prehistoric technological traditions** that emerged during the **Early Palaeolithic Age**. Both cultures are characterised by their **distinctive stone tool assemblages**.
- **Sohan tradition** is considered to have used only **choppers** and **chopping tools.**
  - It is more confined to the northwestern part and gets its name from the **Sohan river valley of Pakistan.**
- **Acheulian tradition** used mainly **hand axes** and **cleavers**. These sites are well-documented across various parts of India and found more in **Central India** and in the **south-eastern part of India** (near Chennai), but are **absent** in the **Western Ghats**, **coastal areas** and **north-eastern India** due to heavy rainfall.

Middle Palaeolithic Age (3,85,000–40,000 BP)

- During this phase, changes took place in **lithic technology**, and the species of human ancestors diverged due to behavioural modernity.
- In India, this phase was first identified by **H.D. Sankalia** on the **Pravara River** at **Nevasa (Ahmadnagar, Maharastra).**
- While the African Middle Stone Age is associated with the **Homo sapiens**, it is associated with the **Neanderthals** in Europe.
  - **No hominin fossil bone** evidence has been found in **India** during this time.

Neanderthals

- They lived in **Eurasia** from approximately 400,000 to 40,000 years ago.
- They were a **species of archaic humans** closely related to modern humans, sharing a common ancestor.

- **Distribution:** Found in Narmada, Godavari, Krishna, and Yamuna areas and south of the Tungabhadra River and Soan River Valley.
- **Ways of Life:** the human ancestors were **hunter-gatherers** and lived in **open-air**, **cave,** and **rock shelter sites**.
- **Tools:** Prominent tools include hand axes, cleavers, choppers, chopping tools, scrapers, projectile points or shouldered points, and knives on flakes; the **flake industry** was predominant with tools like scrapers, points, and borers.
  - The **tools became smaller,** and there was a decrease in the use of hand axes in relation to other tools.
  - **Chert**, **jasper, chalcedony**, and **quartz** were used to make tools.

Upper Palaeolithic Age (40,000 – 10,000 BP)

- **Modern humans** evolved in Africa around 300,000 years ago, migrated to Asia by 60,000 years ago, and possibly introduced the Upper **Palaeolithic** culture in India.
- This period is marked by **innovation in tool technology** and increased **cognitive capability** in humans.
- **Distribution:**
  - **Meralbhavi** in Karnataka, **Kurnool** caves in Andhra Pradesh, and **Godavarikhani** in Telangana.
  - **Baghor I and Baghor III of Son Valley** in Madhya Pradesh.
  - **Patne** in Maharashtra, Bhopal, Chotanagpur Plateau, and Bhimbetka.

Ostrich egg shells from the Upper Palaeolithic sites of **Bhimbetka and Patne (Jalgaon, Maharashtra)** have been dated to 25,000 years before the present.

- **Way of Life:**
  - The people of this period used **caves** as well as the **open-air space** for living.
  - Evidence of art appears in the form of paintings, beads and ornaments. Some of the **Green colour** paintings of **Bhimbetka** date to this period.
  - Incised ostrich eggshell, shell and stone beads of this period, have been found at **Jwalapuram** in **Andhra Pradesh**, **Patne in Maharashtra**.

Upper Palaeolithic Shrine

A shrine-like structure is found at **Baghor, Uttar Pradesh**, it is the earliest known evidence of a shrine in India.

- It is indicated by a **block of sandstone** surrounded by a **rubble circle**, similar to the contemporary shrines.

- **Tools:** It was based on **blade and bone** tool technologies. Bone tools and faunal remains have been found in **Kurnool caves** in **Andhra Pradesh.**
  - **Microliths** (tiny stone tools) were introduced, and these tools were made using different varieties of silica-rich raw materials.

MESOLITHIC AGE (10,000-1,000 BC)

The Mesolithic Age in India is believed to have **started** around the **end of the last Ice Age** and continued till the inception of the Neolithic Age.

The date of the Mesolithic culture varies in different parts of the world. This culture is assigned to **pre-agricultural times** in certain areas. In the **Levant** (Eastern Mediterranean), they are dated between 20,000 and 9500 BC.

- **Climate:**
  - After the Ice Age, with the advent of global warming, human groups became highly mobile and began to occupy various ecozones.
  - Monsoon pattern emerged, with some regions witnessing higher rainfall. Freshwater lakes were known to exist at **Didwana** in western Rajasthan.
  - The animal bones from this period suggest a **dry, deciduous type of forest** during the Mesolithic period.
- **Geographical Distribution:** Mesolithic locations can be discovered throughout India, spanning a range of eco-zones from the coastline to the mountains.
  - **Sites**: Paisra (Bihar); Langhnaj (Gujarat); Baghor II, Chopani Mando, Sarai Nahar Rai, Mahadaha and Damdama (all in Uttar Pradesh); Sankanakallu and Kibbanahalli (Karnataka).
  - **Rock shelter sites** are found in **Lekhakia and Baghai Khor** in Uttar Pradesh; **Adamgarh and Bhimbetka** in Madhya Pradesh.
  - **Coastal sites** are seen at Mumbai; **teri** sites (a **coastal landscape** caused by **sand dunes**) of Thoothukudy in Tamil Nadu and Vishakapatnam.
- **Life-Styles:** Subsistence **hunting** and **gathering**.
  - **Agriculture** was **not practised** in the early stages, but at the end of the Mesolithic period, humans domesticated plants and animals (paving the way for the Neolithic way of life).
  - The people **used fire** and perhaps **roasted food.**
  - **Domestic animal bones** of cattle, sheep, goats, pig and dog have been found at **Kanewal**, **Loteshwar** and **Ratanpur** in **Gujrat** and from **Adamgarh** and **Bhimbetka** in **Madhya Pradesh**.
  - **Camel bones** have been found from **Kanewal.**
  - The Mesolithic people were **highly mobile.** They moved in search of animals and plant food. They made temporary huts and also used caves and rock shelters.
  - Traces of **oval and circular huts** and possible wattle daub are found in **Chopani Mando** and **Damdama** in Uttar Pradesh and **Bagor** and **Tilwara** in Rajasthan.
- **Characteristic Tools:** They used **microlithic tools** to suit the changes in flora and fauna. These tools enabled them to hunt smaller animals and birds.
- **Art and Culture:**
  - A **chert stone** with **geometric engravings** was found in **Chandravati in Rajasthan**, bone objects and **human tooth** engraved with **geometric design** from **Bhimbetka.**
  - **Rock paintings** are found in the **rock shelters** of Madhya Pradesh and Central India. They show people hunting, trapping animals and fishing and dancing.
  - **Bhimbetka** near **Bhopal**, **Raisen** and **Pachmarhi** in **Madhya Pradesh** and **South Mirzapur** in **Uttar Pradesh** are some of the sites with evidence of art.
  - Bhimbetka paintings show that various animals were hunted and for this men and women went together.
- **Burials:** People buried the dead, which suggests their beliefs.
  - Human skeletons have been found in **Mahadaha**, **Damdama**, and **Sarai Nahar Rai** in Uttar Pradesh.
  - At **Mahadaha**, a man and a woman were buried together.
  - They buried the dead along with **grave goods**. One burial had an **ivory pendant** as the grave good.

THE NEW STONE AGE OR NEOLITHIC AGE

The period started around 10,000 BC and marked the **beginning of agriculture** and **animal domestication.**

- Early evidences of **Neolithic culture** are found in the **fertile region** of **Egypt** and **Mesopotamia**, **Indus region**, **Ganges valley** of India and also in **China.**

Neolithic Revolution

- The **development of agriculture** led to **surplus food production**, resulting in the rise of civilisations.
- Large villages came to exist, alongwith the **development of pottery** and the **building of permanent residences.**

- **Characteristic Tools:** Polished stone, stone axes, microlith blades.

Neolithic Sites and their Characteristics

The Neolithic culture of north-western India is the earliest to have evidence of plant and animal domestication in India. Neolithic sites in **Northwest India: Mehrgarh, Rana Ghundai, Sarai Kala and Jalilpur.** These sites are now situated in Pakistan.

Mehrgarh has produced evidence of early Neolithic times, dating to 7000 BC. **Wheat** and **Barley** were

- cultivated and sheep, goat and cattle were domesticated. This culture preceded the Indus Civilisation.
- **1st cultural phase (7000-5500 BC) of Mehergarh** - cultivated crops and domesticated animals, but did **not** use **pottery**.
  - They cultivated six-row barley, emmer and einkorn wheat, jujube, ilanthai, and dates.
  - They were semi-nomadic, pastoral groups, built their houses with mud and buried the dead.
  - They used sea shells, limestone, turquoise, lapis lazuli, and sandstone ornaments.
- **2nd cultural phase (5500-4800 BC) and 3rd phase (4800-3500 BC) of Mehergarh**
  - They practised **long-distance trade** (revealed by Lapis Lazuli, which is available only in **Badakshan).**
  - Evidence for pottery during these periods.
  - Terracotta figurines and glazed faience beads have been found.

Early Dentistry in the Neolithic Mehrgarh

From the Neolithic period, people began to eat ground grain and cooked food, which caused dental and other health problems. The earliest evidence for **drilling human tooth** (of a living person) has been found at **Mehrgarh**. It is seen as a prelude to dentistry.

Valley of Kashmir

- **Burzahom**, an important site of this culture, provides evidence for the **Megalithic** and **Early Historic Periods**.
- People lived in **pit dwellings** to escape the **cold weather**. The houses were **oval** in shape, wide at the bottom and narrow at the top.
- They used bone & stone tools. There was evidence of **menhirs** (standing stone) and the use of **redware pottery** and metal objects. They used **copper arrowheads.**
- The people **practised agriculture** and **domesticated animals**.
- Seeds of wheat, barley, common pea and lentil have been recovered from the excavations. The **use of lentil** suggests that they had contacts with **Central Asia.**
- They were **contemporary** to **Harappa civilization** and **traded** with them.
- **Two phases** of **Neolithic culture** have been identified. They are termed **aceramic** and **ceramic phases.** Aceramic phase did not have evidence of ceramics. The ceramic phase shows evidence of pottery.
- They also used **black ware pottery**, beads of **agate** and **carnelian and painted pottery**.
- A burial site produced **wild dog bone and antler horn**. An engraving of a hunting scene is depicted on a stone with dog and sun.

Ganges Valley and Central India

- **Lehuradeva, Chopani Munda, Koldiwa and Mahagara in Uttar Pradesh; Chirand and Senuwar in Bihar** are major sites.
- The site of **Lehuradeva (Uttar Pradesh)** has produced **early evidence of rice cultivation** dated to 6500 BC.
- These sites also have evidence of pottery and plant and animal domestication. These sites are characterised by **cord-marked pottery.**
- Evidence for the **cultivation of hulled and six-rowed barley**, several types of wheat, rice, pea, green gram, and gram/chicken pea, mustard, flax/linseed and jackfruit have been found.
- Sheep, goat and cattle bones have been found besides bones of wild animals.

East India

- The Neolithic sites are found at many sites in **Bihar** and **West Bengal**.
- **Birbhanpur, Chirand, Kuchai, Golbaisasan, and Sankarjang** are important sites.
- Tools like pointed butt, celts, chisel and shouldered axes have been found.

South India (Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and the North-western part of Tamil Nadu)

- **Tools used** include stone axes and blades.
- **Fire-baked earthen figurines** are found suggesting cattle keeping.
- These sites have **ash mounds** in the centre with settlements around them. **Utnur** and **Palvoy in Andhra Pradesh** and **Kodekal, Kupgal** and **Budihal** in **Karnataka** feature ash mound sites.
- These sites are found near the **granite hills with water sources.**
- These sites are found in the **river valleys** of Godavari, Krishna, Pennaru, Tungabhadra and Kaveri.
- **Major sites include:**
  - **Karnataka:** Sanganakallu, Tekkalakota, Brahmagiri, Maski, Piklihal, Watkal, Hemmige and Hallur;
  - **Andhra Pradesh:** Nagarjunakonda, Ramapuram, and Veerapuram;
  - **Tamil Nadu:** Paiyyampalli.

North East India (Assam and Garo Hills)

- The culture dates from **2500-1500 BC.**
- Tools like **shouldered axes and splayed celts** were found at the sites in Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh.
- **Daojali Hading** and **Sarutaru** are important sites bearing evidence for **shifting cultivation**.
- The cultivation of yams and taro, **building stone and wooden memorials** for the **dead**, and the presence of **Austro-Asiatic languages** are the marked features of this region.

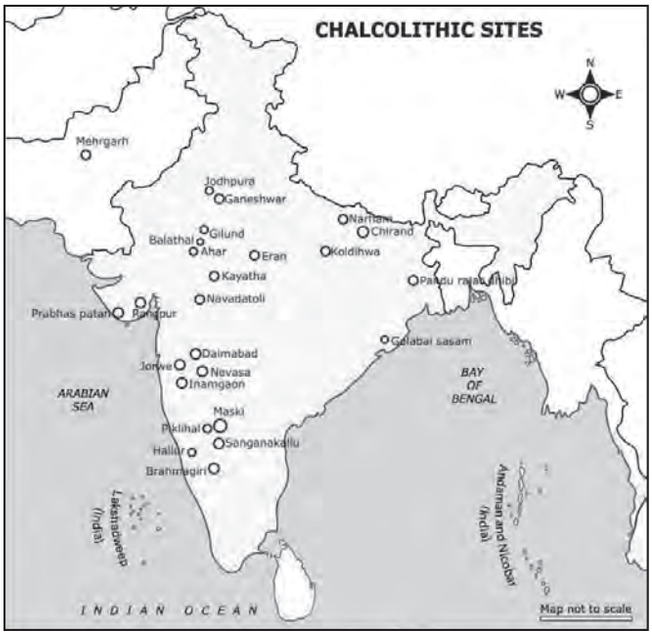
- **Rice cultivation** in the **sixth millennium BC** was found in northern Vindhya spurs, Mirzapur, Allahabad, and Balochistan, suggesting ancient agriculture.
- The later Neolithic settlers were **agriculturists** who lived in circular or rectangular houses made of mud and reed, leading a settled life.
  - **Agricultural produce** includes **Ragi** and **horse gram** (kulathi).
- Hand-made pottery is found in the early stages. Later, they used foot wheels to turn up pots.

On the northern spurs of the **Vindhyas in the Belan Valley** all three phases of the Palaeolithic, followed by the Mesolithic and Neolithic phases, have been found in sequence.

CHALCOLITHIC PERIOD (2600-1200 BC)

Towards the end of the Neolithic period, the use of metals began, with the **first metal being copper**. **Chalcolithic** period witnessed the combined use of stone and copper tools.

- The **Pre-Harappan cultures** are the **earliest Chalcolithic cultures** of India which were found in the time before the beginning of the mature phase of the Harappan culture and continued to exist even after the decline of Harappan civilization.
- In the **northwestern and western regions** of India, the **early farming** cultures are associated with the **Chalcolithic cultures** rather than the Neolithic cultures. Their traces are found all over the country, except for the **alluvial plains** and **thickly forested areas**.
- **Tools:** They used **small tools and weapons**, such as stone axes, and the stone blade industry flourished. **Copper objects** such as flat axes, bangles, rings, antimony rods, knives etc. were found.



Early Chalcolithic Sites
South-eastern Rajasthan (dry regions of Banas Valley). Important sites: **Ahar** (absence of stone axes or blades), **Gilund** (Stone-blade industry) and **Ganeshwar.** • **Ganeshwar** principally **supplied copper objects** to Harappa **[UPSC 2021]**. Their subsistence was based largely on **hunting and agriculture**.
Western Madhya Pradesh: Important sites are **Kayatha** and **Eran** in Malwa and **Navdatoli** on Narmada.
Uttar Pradesh: It had proximity to the **Vindhyas** and had multiple sites in the **Allahabad** region.
Western Maharashtra: Important sites inclede **Jorwe** (evidence of flat and rectangular copper axes), **Nevasa**, and **Daimabad** (in the Ahmadnagar district), **Chandoli** (evidence of Copper chisels), **Songaon**, **Inamgaon** (in the Pune district).
Eastern India: Important sites are **Chirand** on the Ganga River; **Pandu Rajar Dhibi** and **Mahishdal** in **West Bengal**
Andhra Pradesh: Some elements of Chalcolithic are present, but there is an **absence of copper objects.** Important sites are **Kodekal, Utnur, Nagatjunikonda, and Palavoy.**

Pottery:

- Mainly **black-and-red ware**, that was wheel-based, and painted with white linear designs are found.
- People living in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra produced **channel-spouted pots**, dishes-on-stand and bowls-on-stand.

Ochre Coloured Pottery Ware culture (2600-1200 BC)

It is found in **northern India** in the **Indo-Gangetic plain** dating to the Chalcolithic period.

- The sites produced copper figures and objects, and therefore it is also known as "**copper hoard culture.**"
- It is a **rural culture** and has evidence of **agriculture and animal rearing**.
- The villages had **wattle-and-daub houses.**
- They used **copper and terracotta ornaments**. Animal figurines have also been found.

Domestication of Animals and Food Grains

- **Animals:**
  - The Chalcolithic people **domesticated animals** in addition to **agriculture.**
  - Their **acquaintance with horses** is **not clear.**
  - In eastern India, **fish hooks** have been found in Bihar and West Bengal.
- **Food grains**
  - Wheat, rice, bajra, and pulses such as the lentil (masur), black gram, green gram, and glass pea were cultivated.
  - Eastern India produced **rice**, Western India cultivated **barley and wheat,** Deccan India produced **cotton** in the black soil and lower Deccan produced ragi, bajra and several other millets.

Houses

- Their settlements were **sedentary or semi-sedentary** and their construction featured **mud bricks** (rarely burnt bricks), **wattle and daub**, and **thatched houses.** They were built on a **stone foundation**.
- **Silos** (well-prepared pits) meant for storage of grains have also been found.
- In an earlier Chalcolithic phase at **Inamgaon**, large mud houses and circular pit houses were discovered.
- The **Jorwe culture** (near the **Pravara** River, Maharashtra) had a cluster of houses of varying shapes, highlighting **village settlements.**
- Settlements like **Inamgaon, Eran, and Kayatha** had fortifications and moats, but **urban civilization was absent.**

Arts and crafts: The people were proficient **coppersmiths** with skill in **stonework** and produced numerous microliths (tiny stone tools). They had knowledge of spinning and weaving and expertise in **cloth manufacturing**.

Burial Practises (regional variation): In **Maharashtra**, burials occurred under house floors in **north to south position,** whereas in South India, the position was **east to west.**

- Almost complete or **extended burial** (lying flat with arms and legs straight, or with the arms folded upon the chest) was obtained in **Maharashtra**. Post-extraction or **fractional burial** prevailed in **West Bengal**.

Religious Worship: Terracotta figurines, such as **female figurines** (indicate reverence for the **mother goddess),** stylized bull terracottas **in Malwa and Rajasthan,** symbolised a religious cult.

Society: Emergence of **social inequalities**.

- Graves at **Chandoli and Nevasa** in western Maharashtra revealed differences in burial goods for children.

Importance of the Chalcolithic Phase	Limitations of Chalcolithic Cultures
• Proficiency in **copper smelting** • First to use **painted pottery** for cooking, eating, and storage. • Founded the **first village in India** and had surplus food production.	• High infant mortality observed in western Maharashtra, despite a food-producing economy. • It was predominantly rural with limited copper supply and pliant copper tools; ❍ **Bronze-tools** were practically **absent** in the chalcolithic phase in the major part of India.

IRON AGE (1100-800 BC)

The iron age witnessed **two different cultures** flourishing in the northern and southern parts of the Indian subcontinent.

Aspect	Iron Age in North India	Iron Age in South india / Megalithic
Time Period	1100 to 800 BC	**No distinctive timeline** as the Neolithic burial practices continued into the Megalithic period.
Pottery	**Painted Grey Ware** pottery, primarily in Ganga-Yamuna valley.	Presence of **black-ware** pottery, mainly in burial mounds in Tamil Nadu. Black-ware pottery is not found in **human habitations.**
Subsequent Culture	Followed by **Northern Black Polished Ware culture**, associated with the Mahajanapada and Mauryan periods.	End of **Megalithic burial** practices around the 2nd-3rd centuries CE.
Social and Economic Development	Reflects **agricultural and pastoral development**, leading to the growth of settlements and population.	

Megalithic Sites in Tamilnadu

Adichanallur: burial mound at Adichanallur

Paiyampalli in Vellore: black and red ware pottery, urn burials

Kodumanal: Pit burials, urn burials and chamber tombs

2 Indus Valley Civilization

Introduction

The Indus Valley Civilization, or the **Harrapan Culture,** appeared in the **northwestern** part of India and Pakistan in the **third millennium BC** and represents the **first phase of urbanisation** in India. This civilisation appeared gradually with the beginnings of the **Neolithic villages** in the region dating back to about 7000 BC at the **Mehrgarh (Balochistan, Pakistan)**.

Harappan culture is divided into various **phases:**

Phase	Important sites	Features
Early Harappan or **Regionalisation** (3300- 2600 BC)	Harappa, Kot Diji, Amri	Fortification, grid planning, development of incipient trade network and craft specialisation
Transitional Phase	Kunal, Dholavira, Harappa	An increasing level of craft specialisation, an organised irrigation system, a partly standardized repertoire of pottery designs and forms.
Mature Harappan or **Integration** (2600- 1800 BC)	Mohenjo-Daro, Harappa, Kalibangan, Dholavira	Full-scale urbanisation, the emergence of writing and uniformity in artefacts, a full-fledged trade.
Late Harappan or **Localisation** (Post 1800- 1300 BC)	Cemetery at Harappa, Siswal, Rojdi, Rangpur	Decline and abandonment of some sites, rise of pastoral mode.

Geographical Extension

- **North:** Shortugai (Afghanistan)
- **East:** Alamgirpur (Uttar Pradesh, India)
- **West:** Sutkagendor on the Pakistan–Iran border
- **South:** Daimabad (Maharashtra, India)

Its core areas were in Pakistan, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Haryana.

IMPORTANT SITES AND FEATURES

Site	Features
Harappa **State -** Punjab (Pakistan) **River-** Ravi	• **First archaeological site** of the Indus Valley civilization to be discovered, that's why the civilization is named after it. • Two rows of six **Granaries**, Male torso (Red sandstone), Stone symbols of lingam and Yoni, Mother Goddess and Dice, Mother goddess.
Mohenjo-daro **State -** Sindh (Pakistan) **River -** Indus	• **Largest site** of the Indus Valley civilization • Post cremation burial, Great Granary, Great Bath (largest building), Seal with **Pashupathi** and mother goddess, **Bronze** statue of the dancing girl, Bronze buffalo, bearded man. • It had a **planned town** built on a platform, having two distinct areas. One is identified as a **citadel** and the other as the **lower town**.
Chanhu-daro **State -** Sindh (Pakistan) **River -** Indus	Exclusively devoted to **craft production**, including bead-making, shell-cutting, metal-working, seal-making and Weight-making, dog's paw imprint on brick, Terracotta model of bullock cart, and Bronze toy cart.

Lothal **State -** Gujarat **River -** Confluence of Bhogava and Sabarmati river	• Important **naval trade site,**Port and Dockyard, Granaries, **Rice husk**, Double burial (male and female together). • The **Citadel** was **not walled off** but was built at a height. • The entire settlement was fortified, and sections within the town were also separated by walls.
Dholavira **State -** Gujarat **River -** Luni	• UNESCO World Heritage Site. • Unique **water harvesting** and **system** and its **stormwater drainage system**, Megalithic stone circle, specialised drill, giant water reservoirs **[UPSC 2021]** • **Stone** was used in **construction.** • An **ancient signboard** had been found with **letters engraved** on it. • Only site is divided into **3 parts** (Citadel, Middle town and Lower town). • The entire settlement was fortified, and sections within the town were also separated by walls.
Surkotada **State -** Gujarat	Oval grave, Pot burials.
Kalibangan **State -** Rajasthan **River -** Luni	Bangle factory, Ploughed field surface, Camel bones, Fire altars, Bronze figure of a **bull.**
Banawali **State -** Haryana **River -** Rangoi	• Centre of Pre-Harappan, Mature and Late Harappan civilisation. • Oval-shaped settlement, Barley grains, Lapis Lazuli (blue gem), Fire altars. • **Lack of systematic drainage** and the **only city** with **Radial streets.**
Ropar **State -** Punjab **River -** Sutlej	• First site to be excavated after independence. • Dog buried with human; oval pit burials. • A **copper axe** was found.
Rakhi Garhi **State -** Haryana	• **Largest Indian site** of the Indus Valley Civilization. • Shows all three phases of Harappa Culture.
Rangpur **State -** Gujarat **River -** Madar	Remains of both pre-Harappan and mature Harappan culture: **Yellow** and **grey colour pots** of pre-Harappan people.
Alamgirpur **State -** Uttar Pradesh **River -** Hindon	• Late Harappan Culture. • A broken copper blade and an impression of cloth on a trough.
Daimabad **State -** Maharashtra **River -** Pravara	Bronze images (charioteer with chariot, ox, elephant and rhinoceros).
Kot-Diji **State -** Sindh (Pakistan) **River -** Sindh	• The fortification was made of mud bricks and stone. • **'Wellfired red and buff wares'** pottery is found with common motifs like horned deity, pipal leaves and fish scales executed in black.
Amri **State -** Sindh (Pakistan) **River -** Sindh	Pre-Harappan settlement; Transitional culture between pre and post-Harappan culture; actual remains of **rhinoceros.**
Suktagendor **State -** Sindh (Pakistan) **River -** Dasht River	• Ash-filled pot, copper axe, earthen bangles & pottery. • Originally a port later cut off from sea due to coastal upliftment; had trade links with Babylon.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1826	Harappa was first visited by **Charles Mason**.
1875	Report of **Alexander Cunningham** on Harappan seals. (the **first surveyor (1861)** of the Archaeological Survey of India.)
1921	**M.S. Vats** begins excavations at Harappa
1925	Excavations begin at **Mohenjodaro**
1946	**R.E.M. Wheeler** excavates at Harappa
1955	**S.R. Rao** begins excavations at Lothal
1960	**B.B. Lal** and **B.K. Thapar** began excavations at Kalibangan
1990	**R.S. Bisht** begins excavations at Dholavira

Alexander Cunningham visited the site in **1853, 1856 and 1875.**
Sir John Marshal took over as the **Director General of ASI** and initiated research at Harappa Site. He played an important role in the development of archaeology in India.

POLITY

- **Central authority** may have contributed to uniform cultures like pottery, seals, weights, bricks, script and labour mobilisation.
- Some archaeologists were of the opinion that there were no rulers and everybody enjoyed equal status. Others feel there was **no single ruler but several**, that Mohenjodaro had a separate ruler, Harappa another, and so forth.
- Rulers were possibly the **class of merchants**. Priests were not the rulers as they were in the cities of lower Mesopotamia.

TOWN PLANNING AND STRUCTURES

Harappan civilisation was distinguished by its system of **civic** planning. **Harappa, Mohenjo-Daro, Dholavira, Lothal, Surkotada, Kalibangan, Banawali, and Rakhigarhi** were the **major cities** in the Harappan period. In most cases, the cities were divided into two parts:

- **Lower Part** – The common citizenry lived and carried on their professional lives in this part of the city.
- **Citadel or Acropolis/Raised Part** – This part occupied a smaller area and was frequently situated west of the city. It contained public buildings, granaries, and essential workshops.

Lower Towns

- City planning followed a **grid pattern,** with streets cutting at **right angles**.
- Planning also involved **laying streets first**, then building houses along them.
  - The streets were broad, dividing the town into rectangular and square blocks.
- For construction, they used **burnt bricks and stones.**
  - The houses were built of mud bricks and drainages of burnt bricks.
  - The **bricks** were of identical 1: 2: 4 ratio in terms of thickness, width, and length across all Harappan structures.

The contemporary buildings in **Egypt** mainly used **dried bricks** for construction. We find the use of **baked bricks** in contemporary **Mesopotamia**, but they were used to a much larger extent in the Harappan cities.

- The houses had **bathrooms** paved with **burnt bricks** and proper **drains**.
- **Houses** varied in size, with **two or more stories** and **multiple rooms**, but were quite **monotonous**.
- Many of the houses had a **central courtyard** with rooms all around.
- The **courtyard** was the centre of the **residential building**, with rooms on all sides. It was the centre of activities such as cooking and weaving.
- In **Kalibangan** many houses had **wells,** often in a room that could be reached from the outside and perhaps used by passers-by.

Drainage System

Every house was connected to the street drains. The main channels were made of bricks set in mortar and were covered with loose bricks or limestone that could be removed for cleaning. House drains first emptied into a sump or cesspit into which solid matter settled while wastewater flowed out into the street drains. Very long drainage channels were provided at intervals with sumps for cleaning.

Citadel

- It was constructed on a **mud-brick platform** and was **physically separated** from **Lower Town** through a wall.
- It had important **residential structures,** possibly occupied by members of the ruling class.
- It contained structures that were used for particular public purposes. These include the **Great Bath** and the **Warehouse (Granary).**

The Great Bath (Mohenjo-daro) - It was meant for some kind of special **ritual bath**.

- It was a large rectangular tank in a courtyard surrounded by a corridor on all four sides.
- The floor of the bath was made of burnt bricks.
- There were side rooms for changing clothes.
- The bricks were laid watertight with gypsum mortar.

- **Granaries:** They constituted an important part of the Harappan sites**.**
  - The **Great Granary** was the **largest** building in **Mohenjo-daro.**
  - There were **six granaries** in the citadel of **Harappa**. Circular brick platforms were evidently meant for threshing grains because wheat and barley have been found in the crevices of the floors.
  - At **Kalibangan**, the southern part of the brick platform may have been used for granaries.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

- It was a **secular civilisation,** and the religious element, though present, did not dominate the scene. **[UPSC 2011]**
- No temples were found; worship was inferred from statues and figurines. **[UPSC 2013]**
- The Harappans looked upon the **Earth as a fertility goddess**. (inference from a plant growing out of the embryo of a woman in one of the terracotta figurines).

Only from the sixth century AD various mother goddesses, such as Durga, Amba, Kali, Chandi etc, came to be regarded as goddesses in the Purana and in the Tantra literature. In the course of time, every village came to have its own separate goddesses.

- The **male deity** is represented on a seal with **three heads and three horns** represented in the sitting posture of a **yogi**. He is surrounded by **elephants**, **tigers**, **rhinoceros**, and **buffalo** below his throne. The seal can be recalled as the traditional image of **'Pasupati Mahadeva'** (Proto-Shiva).
- **Religious Practices** include Yoni worship, Phallic (lingam) worship, zoolatry (animal worship), use of **fire altar** and tree worship (especially **pipal tree**).
- **Amulets** have been found in large numbers, probably to ward off **ghosts** and **evil forces.**

HARAPPAN SCRIPT

- The oldest script in the Indian subcontinent, written from **right to left.**
- The script has **not been deciphered** so far and does not show any connection with the **West Asian script**.
- Most **inscriptions** were recorded on **seals** and contain only a few words. They did not write long inscriptions, unlike the Egyptians and Mesopotamians.
  - The longest text has about twenty-six signs.
- It was **not alphabetical** (where each sign stands for a vowel or a consonant), as it had just **too many pictographs** (between 250 and 400).
- It enabled the recording of private property and the keeping of accounts.

Weights and Measures

- Since Harappans were involved in commercial transactions, they needed standard measures.
- Weights were usually made of **chert stone** and were generally **cubical** with no markings.
- Units of **weight** were in multiples of **16;** for instance, 16, 64, 160, 320 and 640 were used.
  - The tradition of 16 has continued in India with 16 annas making one rupee.
- They used a binary **numbering system** (1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, etc.).
- For **measurement**, sticks inscribed with measure marks were found; one was made of bronze.
  - They also used a measuring scale in which one inch was around 1.75 cm.

SOCIETY

- The society was predominantly **urban**, mainly comprising the **middle classes**.
- Three distinct social groups were rulers, wealthy merchants, and poor labourers in the city's lower parts.

Burials: Fire altars have been identified at **Kalibangan**. They **buried the dead.** Burials were made elaborately and evidence of cremation is also reported. The Harappan

burials have pottery, ornaments, jewellery, copper mirrors and beads. These suggest their belief in an **afterlife**.

- Jewellery has been found in burials of **both** men and women.
- The dead were generally laid in pits. Sometimes, there were differences in how the burial pit was made in some instances, the hollowed-out spaces were lined with bricks.

Lifestyle:

- Men and women wore separate attire, similar to the **dhoti** and **shawl**.
- **Cinnabar** was used as a cosmetic, and facepaint, lipstick, and **collyrium** (eyeliner) were also known to them.

Artefacts:

Rare objects made of **valuable materials** are generally concentrated in large settlements like Mohenjodaro and Harappa and are rarely found in smaller settlements.

- Miniature pots of faience, perhaps used as perfume bottles, were found mostly in Mohenjodaro and Harappa.
- All the gold jewellery found at Harappan sites was recovered from hoards.

Agriculture

It was an important source of subsistence for the Harappans. The agricultural surplus was an important stimulus for a number of developments.

- **Evidence of Agriculture:**
  - Terracotta models of **ploughs** were found at **Cholistan** and **Banawali**.
  - The **ploughed field** at **Kalibangan** had two sets of furrows at right angles, suggesting that **two different crops (double cropping** system**) were grown together.**
  - Evidence of **rice cultivation** in **Lothal** (1800 BC) and **Rangpur** (Gujarat).
  - Bull representations on **seals** and **terracotta sculptures** indicate that they were used for ploughing.
- **Other features:**
  - Main crops include wheat, barley, lentils, chickpeas, sesame, mustard, and millets.
  - Used **animal-drawn** wooden plough and stone sickles.
- **Irrigation:** They used both canal and well irrigation.
- Cereals were received as **taxes** from peasants and stored in **granaries** for **wage payments** and emergencies, similar to Mesopotamia.

Animal Domestication

Pastoralism was also practised by the Harappans.

- The Harappan cattle are called **Zebu**. It is a large breed, often represented in their seals.
- They domesticated **oxen, buffaloes, goats, sheep, fowl, pigs**, **dogs, cats, asses,** and **camels**. However, **humped bulls** were particularly preferred.
- **Fish** and **birds** were part of the diet.
- Evidence has been found of boar, deer, and gharial.
- **Horse** was not known to them.
- **Elephants** and **Rhinoceros** (from Amri) were known, but the **lion** was unknown.
- A Mesopotamian myth mentions the **haja-bird**, with some archaeologists terming it **Peacock**.

Trade and Commerce

- **Evidence of Trade:**
  - The Harappan seals and materials have been found in Sumerian (in Oman, Bahrain, Iraq and Iran) and **Mesopotamian** sites, and Harappans imitated some cosmetics used by the urban people of Mesopotamia.
  - The **Cuneiform Inscriptions** mention:
    - Trade contact between **Mesopotamia** and **Harappans**.
    - "**Meluha** (land of seafarers in Mesopotamian text)", referring to the **Indus region**.
  - The Mesopotamian texts mention two intermediate trading stations, **Dilmun** (Bahrain) and **Makan** (Makran coast), which lay between Mesopotamia and Meluha.
  - The discovery of a **dockyard** in the port city of **Lothal** (Gujarat) suggests the long-distance trade of the Harappans.
- **Means of transport:** included **bullock carts** and **boats**.

The use of **wheels** and **Carts** with solid wheels were known to them. Their carts were similar to modern ekka (Horse carriage).

- No **metallic money** was in circulation, and trade was conducted by means of **barter**.
- **Import:** Minerals from Iran and Afghanistan, lead and copper from parts of India, jade from China, and cedarwood from the Himalayas and Kashmir region.

Harappan Imports Sources		
Gold: Afghanistan, Iran, Kolar (South India)	**Bitumen:** Balochistan, Mesopotamia	**Copper**: Khetri (Rajasthan) and Oman.
Tin: Afghanistan, Iran	**Lead**: South India	**Lapis lazuli:** Shortughai (Afghanistan)
Jade: Pamir	**Steatite**: Tapi Chahya (Iran)	**Turquoise:** Iran

- **Exports:** Agricultural products, cotton goods, terracotta figurines, beads from Chanhudaro, conch-shell from Lothal, ivory products, carnelian, lapis lazuli, copper, gold, and varieties of wood.

ART AND CRAFT

Strategy for Procuring Material

The Harappans procured materials for craft production in various ways:

Material	Site or Source
Carnelian	Lothal
Shell	Nageshwar and Balakot
Steatite	South Rajasthan
Lapis lazuli (blue stone)	Shortughai
Copper	Rajasthan and Oman

Trade with other areas

a. Khetri region of Rajasthan (**for copper**) and South India (**for gold**).

b. **Barter exchange** with other civilizations like Sumer (at present southern Iraq, from around Baghdad to the Persian Gulf) and Mesopotamia (presently eastern Syria, southeastern Turkey, and most of Iraq; land between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers).

Ganeshwar-Jodhpura culture had distinctive non-Harappan pottery and a huge amount of copper objects. The inhabitants of this region may have supplied copper to the Harappans.

- The people were highly skilled in various crafts—metal casting, boat-making, stone carving, pottery, and making terracotta images using simplified motifs of animals, plants, and birds.
- **Sculptures** of stone, bronze, or terracotta were found.
  - Two male figures are made of stone—one is a **torso in red sandstone (Harappa),** and the other is a bust of a **bearded man in soapstone (Mohenjodaro)**.
- **Terracotta:** compared to the stone and bronze statues, the terracotta representations of human form are crude. They are more realistic on Gujarat sites and Kalibangan.
  - The **mother goddess** terracotta figure found in Harappa.
- **Seals** are mostly made of **steatite** and occasionally of **agate, ivory, chert, copper, faience, and terracotta**, with figures such as **Pashupati** Seal, unicorn bull, rhinoceros, tiger, elephant, bison, goat, buffalo, etc.
  - These seals might have been used as an **identity marker** on the transported materials, indicating their ownership.
- **Pottery** consists chiefly of **wheel-made wares,** with very few being hand-made. Plain pottery, generally made of red clay, is more common than painted ware.
  - Pottery was **well-fired** and had a **deep red slip** and **black paintings**.
  - **Motifs on pottery** include pipal leaves, fish-scale design, intersecting circles, zigzag lines, horizontal bands and geometrical motifs with floral and faunal patterns.

Textiles and Ornaments

- They had knowledge of **cotton** and **silk**. The image identified as a **priest** is depicted wearing a **shawl-like cloth with flower decorations.**
- Spinning of **cotton** and **wool** was very common.
- **Beads and ornaments** are made of carnelian, jasper, crystal, steatite, and metals like copper, bronze, gold, shell, faience, terracotta, or burnt clay.

The red colour of **Carnelian** was obtained by firing the yellowish raw material (Chalcedony) and beads at various stages of production.

  - Excavated Mesopotamian sites provide evidence of these artefacts, indicating exports from Indus Valley sites.

- A cemetery found at **Farmana (Haryana)** reveals dead bodies buried with ornaments.

Metal, Tools and Weapons

The Harappan civilisation belongs to the **Bronze Age civilisation,** and Harappans knew how to make **copper bronze tools.** Bronze was made by **mixing tin with copper.**

- **Tools:** The Harappans used chert blades, copper objects, and bone and ivory tools. The tools of points, chisels, needles, fishhooks, razors, weighing pans, mirrors and antimony rods were made of copper.
- The chert blades made out of **Rohri chert** were used by the Harappans. Their weapons include arrowheads, spearheads, celts, and axes.

Rohri chert: The chert, a fine-grained sedimentary rock, was found in the region of Rohri in Pakistan. It was used by the Harappans for making stone blades and tools.

- **Bronze Casting** was practised on a wide scale using the '**lost wax**' or **Cire Perdue technique**.
  - The statue of **Dancing Girl (Mohenjo-daro)** and the **Bronze figure of a bull** from **Kalibangan**
- They did not have knowledge of **iron.**

Cultural Contributions of IVC

Several groups, including **pastoral people**, **farmers** and **hunter-gatherers,** lived in the Indus region. The Indus region had **villages** and **large towns**. The population of that time was **mixed**, several cultures were developing in different parts of India:

1. The **southern part** of the subcontinent, Kerala and Sri Lanka, were given to **hunting and gathering.**
2. Karnataka and Andhra region had **Neolithic cultures**, engaged in pastoralism and plough agriculture.
3. **Chalcolithic cultures** were prevalent in Deccan and western India.
4. **Neolithic cultures** permeated northern India, including **Kashmir, Ganges Valley** and **central** and **eastern** India.

Thus India was a **cultural mosaic** during the time of the Harappans.

Decline of Harappan Civilization

The civilisation declined around **1900 BC,** and various theories have been proposed in this regard; important ones include:

- Climate change resulting in **continuous drought** and drying of the river and water resources.
- **Floods** and shifting of river course
- Decreasing fertility of soil caused by the expansion of neighbouring deserts.
- Decline of the trade with Mesopotamia
- Invasion by the Aryans

In the course of time, the people **shifted to the southern and eastern directions** from the Indus region.

3 Vedic Age

Introduction

- The Vedic Age lasted from **1500 to 600 BC** in the **late Bronze Age** and early **Iron Age** of the history of India. The period lies between the **end of the urban Indus Valley Civilisation** and the **second urbanisation,** which began in the central Indo-Gangetic Plain around 600 BC.

Agricultural surplus, the growth of crafts and trade, and the growing population led to the emergence of towns in the Gangetic plains. This is called the **second urbanisation** in Indian history after the **first urbanisation** evident in the Harappan Civilization.

- It is named after the **Vedas**, a collection of sacred texts composed during this time. The composers of Vedic texts described themselves as **Aryans**.
- This era is split into the **Early Vedic (1500-1000 BC)** and **Later Vedic Periods (1000-600 BC).**

Sources to Study Vedic Age

- **Literary Sources:**
  - **Vedic texts:**
    - Early Vedic Text: Rig Veda
    - Later Vedic Texts: Samaveda, Yajurveda, Atharvaveda and other texts
  - **Zend Avesta** (Iranian text, 14 century BC)

Zend Avesta mentions the lands and gods of the Indo-Iranian speakers, referring to regions in **northern and north-western India**. Its **linguistic similarities with the Vedas** suggest the early Aryans originated outside the Indian subcontinent.

  - **Iliad** and **Odyssey** (written by **Homer**, 8th century BC)
- **Inscriptions:**
  - **Kassite inscriptions (1600 BC)** and **Mitanni inscriptions (1400 BC)** of **Iraq-Syria** suggest that a branch of **Aryans** moved from Iran towards the west in Iraq.
  - **Boghazkoi Inscription:** The oldest inscription with names of Vedic Gods was discovered in the Turkey-Syria (Bogazkoi) area dated around 1400 BC.
- **Archeological Sources:**
  - **Andronovo culture** (2000–1150 BC) of Southern Siberia provides archaeological evidence of the migrations of Aryans. They entered India from the Hindukush (**Bactria–Margiana Archaeological** Complex) region.
  - Excavations conducted in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, and northern Rajasthan, along the Indus and Ghaggar rivers, dated from 1700 BC to 600 BC.

INDO-ARYANS

A **linguistic term** that refers to speakers of a subgroup of the **Indo-Iranian branch** of the **Indo-European** family of languages.

- **Arya:** A cultural/ethnic term etymologically derived from '**ar**' meaning to cultivate, literally meaning **kinsmen** or **companion** or **noble**.
- The **original home of Aryans is debated,** and different theories have been postulated on it.

Theories	Description/Evidence
Migration from Europe (William Jones; Morgan)	• Semi-nomadic Aryans migrated to India from **Eastern Europe**, particularly from regions north of the **Black Sea**. • Linguistic similarities between Indo-European languages like Greek, Latin, German, and Sanskrit. Eg: **Suryyas** and **Maruttash** of the Kassite (Mesopotamia) inscriptions are equivalent to the Vedic **Surya** and **Marut.**
Central Asian Theory (Max Muller & E. Meyer Herzfeld)	• Linguistic parallels between the **'Avesta**,' an Iranian text, and the **'Vedas.'** • Both texts display not just word similarities but also shared concepts. Eg: Interchangeable use of 'h' and 's' in words like Ahura (asura), Haoma (soma) etc.

Arctic Region Theory (Bal Gangadhar Tilak)	• Tilak argued that the North Pole was the original home of Aryans during the **pre-glacial period**, which they left due to climate changes. • References in the Vedas about six months of long days and nights, a phenomenon unique to the Arctic region.
Tibet Theory (Swami Dayanand Saraswati)	• **Sun** and **fire** were worshipped in **Tibet** due to extreme cold, and the flora and fauna mentioned in Rig-Veda were found in Tibet.
Indian Theory (Dr.Sampurnanad and AC Das)	• **Literary evidence** from the Vedas, particularly the Rig Veda, emphasises the **Sapta Sindhu** as their primary homeland. • **Linguistically,** Sanskrit, with its vast array of original Indo-European terms, suggests a closer relationship to the ancestral Aryan language than other European languages. • **Rituals** detailed in the Vedic texts reflect practices rooted in India.

EARLY VEDIC PERIOD/RIG VEDIC PERIOD (1500-1000 BC)

The primary source of information about this age is the **Rig Veda**.

Geographical Expansion

- Aryans were mainly confined to the **Indus region**, referred to as **Saptasindhu** or the land of **seven rivers** in the Rigveda.
  - Seven Rivers are Jhelum (**Vatista**), Beas (**Vipasa**), Chenab (**Askini**), Ravi (**Purushni**), Sutlej (**Sutudri**), Saraswati (**Ghaggar** or **Hakra**), and Indus (**Sindhu**).
- Their region covered present-day parts of Afghanistan, Punjab, and Haryana.
- **Sindhu** (Indus) is the most mentioned river, and **Saraswati** is the most revered (holy) river.
- Saraswati Valley was called **Brhmavarta**, the Himalayas were called **Himavant**, and the Hindu Kush was called **Munjavant**.

Political Structure

- **Bharatas, Matsyas, Yadus and Purus** were **tribal kingdoms** of that time.
- **Tribal Chief** or **Rajan** was the protector of his tribe, safeguarding the cattle, leading wars, and performing religious duties on behalf of the tribe.
  - The Tribal Chief was also called **Gopati** or **Gopa** (protector of cows), and the **queen** was called **Mahisi**.
  - The king's position **appeared hereditary**, but some traces of election by the tribal assembly (**samiti**) were present to exercise check.
- **Tribal assemblies** like the **Sabha, Samiti, Vidatha,** and **Gana** had deliberative, military, and religious roles. **Women** could attend the **sabha** and **vidatha**.

Sabha: Assembly of elders or the elites.	**Samiti:** Assembly of people.
Vidatha: Assembly of tribe.	**Gana:** Probably a clan organisation

Governance

- **Formal judicial system** was **absent** with no specific officer for **administering justice**.
- **Spies** were used to check **theft** (especially of cows) and burglary.
- **Official titles** didn't directly signify territorial administration, but some roles were territorially anchored. Some official titles were:
  1. **Purohita -** Motivated tribal chiefs and praised their deeds in return for rewards in cows and slaves.
  2. **Senani** - Skilled in **weaponry;** Senani was the **chief of army**.
  3. **Vrajapati -** In charge of pasture grounds/officer who controlled the territory; further, they led the "**Kulapas**" (heads of families) or the"**Gramanis**" (leaders of fighting units) into battle.
- Over time, the roles of the **Gramani** and the **Vrajapati** became synonymous.

Military Structure and Conflicts

- The king did not maintain a **standing army** and relied on tribal units assembled during the war. Military functions were performed by **tribal groups** called **Vrat, Gana, Grama, and Sardha.**
- Aryans were engaged in conflicts with pre-Aryans and had internal tribal disputes. The Aryans split into five tribes or "**Panchajana.**"
  - The **Bharatas and Tritsu** were dominant Aryan clans backed by priest Vasishtha.
- The **Bharatas**, led by **Sudas,** defeated a **coalition of ten rulers** (a mix of Aryan and non-Aryan leaders) in the **Battle of Ten Kings (Dashrajana)** on the banks of the **Parushni (Ravi) river**. Bharatas and Puru joined to form **Kurus**. Both **Pandava** and **Kauravas** belonged to the Kuru clan. Later the Kurus allied with Panchalas and established their control over the Upper Ganga Valley.
- The **Dasa** and **Dasyu** conquered by Aryans were treated as slaves and sudras.

- Dasas (mentioned in ancient Iranian texts) seem to have been a **branch** of **early Aryans**, while Dasyus were possibly **original inhabitants** of the country. Aryan chief **Trasadayu** overpowered them.
- The Aryan chiefs were soft towards Dasas but hostile towards Dasyus.
- The Dasyus possibly worshipped the **phallus** and did not keep **cattle**.

The **Indo-Aryans** introduced **chariots driven by horses** into West Asia and India and used better arms and coats of mail called **Varman**. **[UPSC 2017]**

- A coat of mail was an armoured coat made of chain mail, interlinked rings, or overlapping metal plates.

"**Bharatavarsha**" is believed to be named after the **Bharata tribe**, a term first appearing in the Rig Veda.

Society

- Initially, society was differentiated on the basis of **"Varna"** or colour: **Aryans** (fair-skinned) and **non-Aryans** (darker and spoke a different language).
  - **Non-Aryans (Dasyus)** include **Avrata** (non-followers of divine ordinances) and **Akratu** (non-performers of sacrifices).
- Society was **egalitarian** and **not caste-driven**; occupations weren't determined by birth. There was an absence of a strict social hierarchy.
- The **Varna System** was introduced at the end of the Rig Vedic age, as it finds mention only in **Purusashukta** (Tenth Mandal of Rig Veda).
  - **Inequality** started to develop in society, with **tribal chiefs** and **priests** acquiring a larger share of the booty, leading to the division of society into three groups- **warriors**, **priests**, and the **people.** (on the same pattern as in Iran.)
- Rig Vedic people were familiar with **slavery**. There were mainly women slaves used for domestic purposes & not for agriculture.
- Evidence of cereals as a gift was rare, but evidence of land as a gift was absent.

Family structure

- Social structure was rooted in brotherhood. The primary unit was the **'Kula'** (Mother, father, son, slaves, and others) headed by a **Kulapa**.
- The basic unit of society was the **family** or **Griha**, headed by **Grihapati,** and his wife was known as **Sapatni.** It was perhaps a **joint** and **patrilineal** family.
- Several families formed a **'vis'** or clan. Multiple **'vis'** constituted a '**Jana**,' representing the largest social unit. The term **'Jana' & 'vis'** occurs in the Rig Veda but **'Janapada'** is nowhere mentioned in the Rigvedic text.
- Vis was divided into **Grama** or smaller tribal units meant for **fighting**. When Grama clashed with one another, it caused **Samgrama** or **war**.
- Marriages were primarily **monogamous**, but polygyny and polyandry were also observed.
- In Rig Veda, no desire is expressed for daughters, though the desire for children and cattle is a recurrent theme in the hymns.

Status of women

- Though society was **patriarchal**, women were given equal opportunities as men for their spiritual and intellectual development like **Upananaya (Investiture ceremony)**, education; selecting life partners, widow remarriage, etc.
- Notable women poets were **Apala**, **Viswavara**, **Ghosa**, and **Lopamudra**.
- Practices like **child marriage**, **sati** and **purdah** were absent, and the marriageable age seems to have been 16 to 17.

Economy

- Society was predominantly **pastoral,** with cattle-rearing as the primary occupation, and wealth was gauged by the number of **cows** owned.
- Though trade and commerce were limited, **Barter-system** was prevalent, with the cow being a key exchange item.
- **Land ownership,** as a concept of private property, didn't exist. Clans collectively shared resources. Individuals, including Rajan, purohits, and artisans, were part of **clan networks.**
- **Primitive agriculture**, using fire-clearing techniques and wooden ploughs **(langala** and **sura),** was in practice. The term '**sita'** meant the furrow created by ploughing. They cultivated Barley **(yavam)** and wheat **(godhuma).**
- Water for irrigation was probably drawn from wells by cattle-driven water-lifts using pulleys.
- Craftspeople engaged in various trades like carpentry, weaving, and chariot-making, the latter holding particular prestige due to the popularity of chariot-racing.
- References to **Siri** or yarn, indicating spinning, which was done by women and to carpenters, **Takshan** in the Rig Vedic texts.

Taxation and Exchanges

- The economy depended on **voluntary or compulsory contribution (Bali)** from the **people (vis)** and war bounties.
- **Social exchange** involved gift redistribution, extending courtesies, offering hospitality, and providing military aid.

- **Iron technology** was **absent** and had limited metallurgical pursuits.
  - Metal called **Ayas**, either **Copper** or **Bronze** was known.
  - **Karmara**, smith, is mentioned in the Rig Veda.
  - The Rigveda has mentioned **Hiranya**, the oldest Sanskrit word for **gold**. **[UPSC 2017]**

Religion

- The Rig Vedic Aryans worshipped **natural forces** like earth, fire, wind, rain, and thunder, primarily through **yajnas**. **[UPSC 2012]**
- A distinct characteristic was **Henotheism or Kathenotheism**, where each hymn elevated a specific deity to supreme status temporarily.
- Distinctive aspect of **Fire Cult** was associated with both **Indo-Aryans** and **Indo-Iranians.**
- Magic and omens were not prevalent.
- Meat consumption and sacrificial killing of animals were found, except for cows deemed **Aghnya** (not to be killed).
- This period saw recognition of **various deities**, **demigods**, and other spiritual entities in their religious observances.

Some Important Deities

Deities	Characteristics
Indra	• The greatest god of the Aryans, **250 hymns** are attributed to him. • Known as **Purandhar** (Breaker of forts), **Urvarajit** (winner of fertile fields), **Maghavan** (bounteous), and **Vritrahan** (Slayer of Vritra, chaos).
Agni	• 2nd most important god, the god of fire, **200 hymns** are attributed to him. • Serves as an intermediary between gods and men.
Varuna	• 3rd most important god, the god of **water**, responsible for maintaining cosmic order **(Rita)**.
Soma	• God of plants**.** Soma is also seen as the deity who inspires poets to compose hymns. • The entire 11th mandala of the Rig Ved**a** is dedicated to him.

- Other **Gods** mentioned are **Rudra** (God of Destruction, Later merged with Shiva in later Vedic Phase), **Yama** (Lord of death), **Pushan** (God of Sudras, Look after cattle)**, Surya** (Son of Dyaus), **Vishnu** (Benevolent and Gentle God), **Maruts** (God of Storms), **Ashvinis** (Twin Gods of war and fertility).
- **Goddesses** mentioned are **Savitri** (Solar deity, famous Gayatri Mantra is attributed to her in the 3rd mandala of Rigveda), **Aditi** (Goddess of Eternity, Mother of Gods), **Usha** (Goddess of Dawn), **Sinivali** (Goddess of Fertility).

Demi-gods:

Gandharvas (Divine musicians)

Apasaras (Mistress of Gods)

Vishwadevas (Intermediate deities)

Aryaman (Guardian of compacts and marriages)

LATER VEDIC PERIOD (1000-600 BC)

The history of this age is primarily derived from Vedic texts **compiled after the Rig Vedic age**. This era witnessed significant changes in social, economic, political, and religious aspects of society.

- The Later Vedic culture is also called the **Painted Grey Ware (PGW) Culture of Iron age**.
- The **Kurus, Panchalas, Vashas** and **Ushinaras** are the tribes of this period.

Geographical Expansion

- In this phase, Aryans moved to eastern areas (up to Bengal), the core area being the Kuru-Panchala region (Indo-Gangetic divide and the upper Ganga Valley). The Kuru-Panchalas became one major ethnic group and Hastinapur became their capital.
- Eastern-most tribal kingdoms: Magadha, Anga, and Vanga.
- The **Kurus** (clans of **Bharatas** and **Purus** combined to form the Kurus) lived between the **Saraswati** and **Drishadvati** and later moved to occupy the upper portion of Doab (Kurukshetra). References to the Saraswati and Dhristavati rivers occur in the later Vedic texts also besides Rig Veda.
- Later Vedic texts refer to the three divisions of India: **Aryavarta** (Northern India), **Madhyadesa** (Central India), and **Dakshinapatha** (Southern India). Western Ganga-Valley was called 'Aryavarta'.

Political Structure

- **Rig Vedic tribal assemblies**: Their significance diminished with increased royal power. **Vidatha** completely disappeared.

- **Janas** (kin-based) evolved to become **Janapadas** (territory-based) units. The term janapada, referring to territory, is found in the Brahmanas dated to 800 BC.

The term '**Nagara**', referring to **commercial quarters**, is found in the later Vedic texts. However, large towns appeared only at the end of the Vedic period. The sites of **Hastinapura** and **Kausambi** are considered proto urban (urban-like) settlements.

- **King: The authority of the Rajana** became more evident. Kings assumed titles: **Rajavisvajanan**, **Ahilabhuvanapathi** (lord of all earth), **Ekrat**, and **Samrat** (sole ruler). The concepts of **Samrat/ Samrajya** developed.
- Hereditary kingship was emerging, but traces of the election of the king appeared in Later Vedic Texts.
- The terms such as **rashtra**, denoting territory, and **rajya**, denoting sovereign power appeared.
- The king received **assistance** from key functionaries like the **priest, commander, and chief queen** in discharging his duties.
  - **Local matters** were handled by **village assemblies** under the control of dominant clan chiefs.
- **Army**: The king did not maintain a **standing army,** and tribal units were mobilised in times of war.
- **Wars**: The wars were no longer fought for **cows** but for **territories** as society became **agricultural**.
- Chiefs grew at the expense of the **tribal peasantry** and rewarded the priests who helped them maintain their authority through rituals such as the **Rajasuya** sacrifice, **Ashvamedha**, and **Vajapeya**. These rituals reinforced territorial aspects of the polity by inviting people from across the kingdom.

Ashvamedha: Unquestioned control over an area where the royal horse ran uninterrupted.

Vajapeya: Chariot race in which a royal chariot was made to win against all kinsmen.

Rajasuya: Royal consecration and conferred supreme power on the king.

- **Srauta** sacrifices (sacrifices to achieve some benefits) were carried out to control the resources.

The development of state level political organization emerged only after 500 BCE, and the Later Vedic society was therefore in transition.

Society

- **Social stratification** through the **varna system became more established**. It categorised people into **four** main varnas: Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras.
  - Teaching was seen as the occupation of the Brahmanas. The wives of Brahmanas and cows were given important status.
  - **Rajanya** refers to kshatriyas, and they were the warriors and rulers who received 'Bali' as tax.
- **Striking changes** took place in the **Varna System**. There was an **increase in the privileges** of the Brahmanas and the Kshatriyas.
  - In the **Panchavimsa Brahmana**, the Kshatriya is placed first, higher than the Brahmana, but in the **Satapatha Brahmana**, the Brahmana is placed higher than the Kshatriya.
  - The king asserted his authority over the three varnas. The **Aitreya Brahmana** refers to the Brahmana as the seeker of support, and he could be removed by the king from his position.
  - Emphasis on **sacrificial rituals** increased, which enhanced the influence and power of the **Brahmanas**.

The **Kshatriyas challenged Brahmanical supremacy** and their exclusive privilege of entering the ashrams, a regulated four-stage life, namely Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha and Sanyasa. **The outcome of this was the birth of Jainism, Buddhism and Ajivakam.**

- The **concept of ashramas**, referring to various stages of life, **was not well established** at this time. While brahmacharya, grihastha and vanaprastha are mentioned, **sannyasa had not developed**.
- The concept of **Dvija (twice-born)** developed during this period.
- **Upanayana (sacred thread)** was limited to the upper sections of society. This ceremony marked the **initiation of education**. **The fourth varna was denied this privilege**, and the Gayatri mantra could not be recited by the Sudras. Women were also denied the upanayana and Gayatri mantra.
- Certain craft groups managed to attain higher status:
  - The **Rathakaras**, the chariot makers, had the right to wear the sacred thread.
  - Vaisya referred to the common people. They were involved in agriculture, cattle breeding and artisans. Later, they became traders. Vaisyas paid taxes to the kings.
  - Some social groups were placed in ranking even below the Sudras.

Chandala were a group within **Panchamas (fifth varna)** who were excluded from the varna system. They were considered the **untouchable** class.

- The society was **predominantly rural,** but urbanism began to show traces towards the end. Mentions of towns (nagar) can be found in texts like **Taittiriya Aranyaka.**

Family Structure

- The family was an important social unit. The family was **patriarchal** with patrilineal descent. The relations within the family were **hierarchical**. Polygyny (taking many wives) was prevalent.
- The **household became more structured**, which means it became more organised. Several household rituals were also developed for the welfare of the family. The married man with his wife was the **Yajamana**.
- **Joint families** with three or four generations residing together.
  - Western Uttar Pradesh sites of **Atranjikhera** and **Ahichchhtra** reveal communal food preparation with large family units.
- The **idea of gotra** emerged in the later Vedic period. Gotra literally meant **'cowpen'**, and it referred to a group of people from a common ancestor. Persons of the same gotra were considered brothers and sisters and could not intermarry.
- Several unilineal descent groups existed with common ancestors. Several related clans formed the tribe.
- **Marriages** between individuals of the same gotra were prohibited. **Chandrayana** was a **penance** for men marrying women of the same gotra.

Status of Women

A decline in the societal stature of women compared to the Rig Vedic age was witnessed.

- No longer permitted to attend the **assemblies**.
- Though women had participated in rituals in the Rig Vedic period, they were excluded in the later Vedic period.
- **Patriarchal** family structure: Women's roles became limited to **domestic tasks**.
- Practices of **Sati** and **Child Marriage** were prevalent.
- Daughters were even labelled as a source of sorrow **(Aitreya Brahmana)**.
- However, women like **Gargi** and **Maitreyi** excelled in the domain of knowledge; Gargi outwitted **Yajnavalkya** in a philosophical discourse.

Economy

- **Agriculture**, though **primitive**, emerged as the **primary livelihood** practice.
  - Tree clearing through **burning** and **plough-based** cultivation were elaborated in **Satapatha Brahmana**.
  - Few agricultural tools made of iron have been found, but **wooden plough** was extensively used.
- The Vedic people cultivated barley, rice and wheat.
  - Wheat was the staple food of the Punjab region.
  - The Vedic people began to use rice in the Ganga-Yamuna doab.
  - The use of rice, rather than wheat, is noticed in the Vedic rituals.
- **Mixed farming** (a combination of **cultivation and herding**) was practised.

Barley (Yava) production persisted, but **rice (Vrihi)** and **wheat (Godhuma)** became primary crops along with **lentils**.

- **Oxen-drawn wagons** were a prevalent mode of transport.
- Land was owned by a community over which the '**vish**' (clan) had **participatory rights.**
- **Grahpati** (head of the household) was the owner of the land.
- Exchange continued through **barter**. "**Nishka**" was a gold or silver ornament used in barter.
- **Shreni** was an association of traders, merchants, and artisans that was headed by a **Shreshthi.**
- **Taxation**: Unlike the Rig Vedic Age, collecting taxes and tributes was made **mandatory**, primarily from the **Vaishyas,** facilitated by **Sangrihitri** (tax collector).
- **Trade and exchange had developed** in the Later Vedic age. The material culture found in the archaeological sites reveals the movement of commodities and materials. **Specialised caravan traders** existed.

No evidence of coins has been found, and therefore, **barter** must have been the medium of exchange. The introduction of coins took place after about 600 BCE.

Knowledge of Metals

- **Use of iron** was started around **1200 BC,** and it was termed **Krishna Ayas/Shyama Ayas.**
  - Around **1000 BC,** it was used in the **Gandhara** area, eastern Punjab, western UP, MP, and Rajasthan.
  - Excavations reveal the use of iron weapons by the **Aryans**, like arrowheads and spearheads, in **western UP** from about **800 BC** onwards.
  - The **iron axe** was used to clear the forests in the **upper Gangetic basin**. Towards the end of the Vedic period, knowledge of iron spread in **eastern UP** and **Videha (Mithila region).**
- Metals such as **copper, tin, gold, bronze and lead** are mentioned.
  - The **copper objects** were used for making weapons for war and hunting.
- **Glass manufacturing** was known to them.

Arts and Crafts

- Four main types of **pottery** were prevalent during this period: (1) Painted Grey Ware; (2) Black and Red Ware; (3) Black-slipped Ware; (4) Red Ware

- They **hardly knew** the use of **burnt bricks.**
- Weaving, leatherwork, pottery, and carpentry were well known.
  - Terms such as **Kulala,** referring to potters and **Urna sutra,** referring to wool, appear.
- Bow makers, rope makers, arrow makers, hide dressers, stone breakers, physicians, goldsmiths, and astrologers are some of the specialised professional groups mentioned in the texts.
- Professions such as physicians, washermen, hunters, boatmen, astrologers and cooks are mentioned.
- The **performers of Vedic sacrifices** were also a type of service provider.
- References to the **elephant** are often found in the **Atharva Veda**, along with the elephant keeper.

Religious Trends

- During the Later Vedic period, the **upper Ganga Doab** was the **centre of the Aryan culture**. This region is described as the **land of Kuru-Panchalas.**
- Signs of the emergence of **idolatry** can be observed.
- Changes in material life brought about a **shift in the reverence towards gods and goddesses**.
  - Rig Vedic Gods like **Indra and Agni were replaced** by **Prajapati** (the creator), **Vishnu** (preserver and protector), and **Rudra** (the god of rituals).
  - The **Satapatha Brahmana** lists the names of Rudra as **Pasunampatih, Sarva, Bhava and Bahikas. Vishnu** was conceived as the **protector of people**. There is **no reference to Vishnu's incarnations**.
- Increased importance of **animal sacrifices** shadowed the importance of prayers in placating Gods.
- The **correct performance of rituals** was stressed. Stress was laid on **paying Dakshina.**
- The rituals became more **complex**, required more resources, and **took longer time.** The resort to rituals and sacrifices as a solution for problems led to the view that material wealth could achieve anything.

The ideas in the **Upanishads** argue **against such a view** and stress the importance of **realising the atman** or inner self. Such **degeneration of rituals** and the **material-oriented nature of the priests** created **dissension** and led to the **development of heterodox faiths such as Buddhism** and **Jainism,** which emphasised correct human behaviour and discipline.

- **Each varna had its own deities**, reflecting the societal divisions of the time.
  - **Pushan** (supposed to look after cattle) was the God of the Shudras.
- Cows, gold, cloth and horses were given as **sacrificial gifts**. Sometimes, the priests claimed portions of territory as **Dakshina**, but the grant of land as a sacrificial gift was not well established.
- Agricultural produce began to be offered in the rituals.
  - The items of **Dana** and **Dakshina** included **cooked rice** (wheat was rarely used).
  - **Til**, from which the first widely used vegetable food oil was derived, came to be used in rituals.
- Towards the end of the Later Vedic age, **resistance** emerged against **priestly dominance**, cults, and sacrificial practices, particularly in regions like **Panchala** and **Videha**.

Education

- The disciplines of **philosophy, literature** and **science** developed in this period. Various branches of learning such as **literature, grammar, mathematics, ethics** and **astronomy** developed.
- The development of Vedic texts and the importance given to **pronunciation, grammar** and **oral transmission** suggest training in utterances and memorisation as part of the Vedic system of education.
- **Upanishads** were composed during this period. They were also referred to as **Vedanta** since they were attached as the **last part of the Vedic texts**.
- Education was limited to males.
- The **teacher-pupil relationship** was cultivated through person-oriented training.

Other Aspects of Life

- Music instruments such as lute, **flute** and **drum** are referred to in the texts.
- Use of **silk** and ornaments of metal, gold and copper is found. Fabrication of **glass beads** and **metal mirrors** can also be seen.

VEDIC LITERATURE

- The word **'Veda'** is derived from the root **'vid,'** which means to know, signifying **'superior knowledge.'**
- Vedic literature consists of:
  - Four Vedas: **Rigveda, Samaveda, Yajurveda, and Atharvaveda.**
  - **Brahmanas** are prose texts that elucidate mantras and describe **sacrificial rituals**.
  - The **Aranyakas (forest treatises)** and **Upanishads (sitting down beside)** are appendices to the **Brahmanas** and are often referred to as **Vedanta or "end of the Veda"**, focusing on philosophical discussions.
- Despite their oral tradition, the Vedas were eventually transcribed in written form, with the earliest surviving manuscript dating back to the **11th century**.

Shruti	Smriti
• Texts '**that are heard**' or product of **Godly revelation** to the great **sages** (Rishis) during meditation ('Dhyaan'). • It includes four **Vedas** and **Samhitas**.	• **Recollected** by **normal humans**. • Detailed commentaries/explanations on the Vedas (Brahmanas, Aranyakas, and Upanishads), 6 Vedangas, and Upavedas.

The Four Vedas

Rig Veda: It is the oldest surviving text which mentions the concept of the **Origin of the Universe.**

- It is divided into **10 Mandals** (books):
  - Books **II to VII** constitute the earliest sections.
  - Books **I and X** were later additions, incorporating the **Purusashukta** that explains the concept of the four varnas.
  - Book **VIII** – mainly related to Kanva's family.
  - Book **IX** – compilation of Soma hymns.
- It is a collection of **hymns and prayers** dedicated to various deities and **natural forces** such as Agni, Indra, Mitra, and Varuna, presented by different families of poets or sages **(family books)**.
- Tradition of Vedic chanting was included in the intangible heritage list of **UNESCO.**
- Although composed in Sanskrit, it contains numerous **Munda and Dravidian words**, likely integrated through the languages of the Harappans.

Sama Veda: Earliest book on music (Sama means melody; ragas and raginis).

- These are poetic texts derived from **Rig Veda**.
- It contains the famous **Dhrupada raga**, later sung by **Tansen**.

Yajur Veda: Contains sacrifices and rituals, composed in prose and poetry.

- It is further divided into:
  - **Shukla Yajur Veda**/White Yajur Veda/**Vajasaneya** (contains only the **Mantras**). It contains the Madhyandina and Kanva recensions.
  - **Krishna Yajur Veda**/Black Yajur Veda (contains both mantras and prose explanations/ commentary).

Atharva Veda: contains magic, charms, omens, agriculture, industry/craft, cattle rearing, cure for diseases.

VEDAS	UPAVEDA	BRAHMANA	UPANISHAD	ARANYAKAS	MANTRA	PRIEST
Rig Veda	**Ayurveda** (Medicine)	Aitareya, Kaushi-Tiki/ Sankhyana	Aitareya, Kaushitiki	Aitareya, Kaushitiki	1028	Hotri/Hotar
Sam Veda	**Gandharva Veda** (Music)	**Panchvimsh**/ Tandya, Jaiminiya	Kena, Chandogya	Jaiminiya, Chandogya	1810	Udgatar
Yajur Veda	**Dhanurveda** (Warfare)	**Taittiriya**, Shatapatha	Taittiriya, KathaIsa, Brihadaranyaka	Taittiriya	-	Adhvaryu
Atharva Veda	**Sthapatya Veda/ Shilp Veda** (Architecture)	**Gopatha**	Mandukya, Mundaka Prashan	-	6000	-

Other Texts

Brahmanas

- They describe the **rules for the performance** of sacrificial ceremonies and explain the hymns of the Vedas in an orthodox manner.
- Each Veda has several Brahmanas attached to it.
- The most important and exhaustive Brahmana is the **Satpatha Brahmana** (attached to the Yajur Veda).

Aranyakas

- They are called the **'forest books'** as they were written mainly by hermits living in the forests for their pupils. They deal with mysticism and philosophy and **oppose sacrifice**.
- They were composed during the **later Vedic period**.
- They **emphasise meditatio**n and philosophically interpret rituals.

Upanishads

- The literal meaning of 'Upanishad' is '**to sit near someone'**. They are records of **philosophical dialogues** and discourses between teachers (Gurus) and students (Shishyas).
- There are **108 Upanishads**, of which **13** are the most prominent.
  - **Mandukyopanishad,** the largest of all Upanishads, mentioned "**Satyamev Jayate** ". **[UPSC 2014]**
  - **Chhandogya Upanishad** – Refers to the first **three ashrams**.

Dara Shukoh, the Mughal prince, **translated the Upanishad**s into Persian in 1657, much before the colonial scholars developed any interest in ancient Indian literature.

Jabala Upanishad mentions a 4-fold ashram (stages) for 4 Purusharthas (goals). It was not applicable to women or Shudras.

- **Brahmacharya** (Celibate Student) for knowledge, i.e. **Dharma**.
- **Grihastha** (Householder) for wealth and progeny, i.e. **'Artha'** and **'Kama'**.
- **Vanaprastha** (hermit in retreat) for spiritual wisdom.
- **Sanyasa** (Renunciation) for liberation i.e. **Mukti/Moksha**.

Vedanta

- These are the **philosophical** and **spiritual** traditions that evolved from the Upanishads, the concluding part of the Vedas, which signifies the final objective of the Vedas.
- It criticises sacrifices and rituals, representing the concluding phase of the Vedic era.

Vedanga

- They translate to '**limbs of the Vedas**,' serving as supplementary texts to aid in proper recitation and comprehension of the Vedas.
- They are **not** classified as **Shruti** since they are considered to be of **human origin**, not revealed by Gods, and are in the form of Sutra or condensed statements conveying various ideas.
- These are 6 in number:
  - **Siksha**: Pronunciation of the words; education.
  - **Nirukta**: Origin of the words.
  - **Chhanda**: Metrics used in Sanskrit verses.
  - **Jyotish**: Astrology
  - **Vyakaran**: Sanskrit grammar.
  - **Kalp**a: Knowledge of rituals (Dharma sutras).

TERMS USED IN VEDIC PERIOD

TERM	MEANING	TERM	MEANING	TERM	MEANING
Govikartana	Forest chief	**Vap**	To sow	**Madhyamasi**	Mediator in Disputes
Gavyuti	Measure of distance	**Gojit**	Winner of cows/ Hero	**Soma/Sura**	Intoxicating drink
Duhitri	Daughter (one who milks cow)	**Srini**	Sickle	**Sthapati**	Chief Judge
Godhuli	Measure of time (Dusk)	**Sabhavati**	Women who attended the assembly	**Nishka**	Gold or silver ornament
Takshan	Carpenter	**Spasa**	Spy	**Ghrita**	Butter
Gana	Troops	**Dhanya**	Cereals	**Gavisthi**	Search/War for cows
Varthaka	Business People	**Akshvapa**	Accountant	**Kshata**	Keeper of the King's household
Gauri	Buffalo	**Panis**	Traders or caravan trader	**Niyoga**	Special type of widow-remarriage
Gaun	Places where cattle are kept	**Suta**	Charioteer	**Goghna**	Guest/one who is fed on cattle
Jivagribha and Ugra	Police Officers	**Bhagadugha**	Tax Collector	**Palagala**	Messenger

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4 Buddhism and Jainism

ORIGIN OF BUDDHISM AND JAINISM

Buddhism and Jainism were among the major **heterodox** sects that emerged during the **post-Vedic era**. Major reasons for their emergence were:

- Spirit of scepticism was on the rise, questioning every custom and orthodoxy.
- Response to the Kshatriya opposition against the dominance of Brahmin rituals.
- The Vedic practise of killing cattle indiscriminately in sacrifices stood in the way of the progress of the **new agricultural economy**, which required the **use of cattle**.

These religions received support from the **Vaisya community** because:

- They supported **non-violence,** thus reducing the scope for wars and thereby facilitating trade and commerce.
- Dharmasutras decried lending money on interest. It was rejected by these religions.
- Initially, they did not attach any importance to the existing varna system favouring improvement in the position of Vaisyas.

BUDDHISM AND GAUTAMA BUDDHA

Introduction

Gautama Buddha, or Siddhartha, was born in **563 BC** into the **Sakya Kshatriya** family in **Lumbini** near Kapilavastu (Nepal). He was a contemporary of Mahavira.

Ashoka erected a **pillar at Lumbini** to mark his visit.

- His father, **Suddhodhana,** was the **elected ruler of Kapilavastu**, leading the Sakya republic and his **mother, Mahamaya,** was a princess from the kingdom of **Koshala.**
  - Mahamaya dreamt of a **white elephant** entering her womb.
- He was brought up by his foster mother, **"Mahaprajapati Gautami"** —the **first woman** (Bhikkhuni) to be included in his **Sangha**.
- He married **Yashodhara** and had a son named **Rahula**.
- One day, while riding in his chariot, he encountered **four sights: an old man, a sick man, a corpse,** and **a religious mendicant.** These encounters deeply affected him, leading to his realisation of the pervasive suffering in the world.

Buddha's Road to Nirvana

- At the age of 29, he departed the city on a chariot with his beloved **horse Kanthaka** and **Channa, the charioteer,** in search of **eternal truth.** This is known as **MAHABHINISHKRAMANA or the Great Departure.**
- He wandered for **seven years.** After that, he reached **Uruvela** (modern-day Bodh Gaya), situated on the banks of the **Niranjana River** (Falgu River).
  - In between, Siddhartha sought the guidance of **Alara Kalama** and **Uddaka Ramaputta.** He was not satisfied with their path and practised severe austerities, which left him nearly dead.
- He sat under a **peepal tree (Bodhi tree)** and attained **NIRVANA (enlightenment)** at the age of 35**,** earning the title **"Buddha"** or **"the enlightened."**

Life of Buddha After Nirvana

- He delivered his **first sermons** at **Sarnath (Deer Park)** in Varanasi. This event is described as **DHARMACHAKRA-PRAVARTANA** or setting in motion the '**wheel of great law**'.

The **Mauryan pillar** capital, found at Sarnath, popularly known as the **Lion Capital,** symbolises Dhammachakra Pravartan.

- He spoke about the **Four Noble Truths** and **the Middle Path** and established **Sangha** to spread his ideas far and wide.
- The prominent disciples of Buddha were **Sariputta, Mahamoggallana, Mahakaccayana and Ananda.**
- Buddha had a huge following among both royalty and lay persons.
  - Asoka adopted ideas from Buddhism in his state policy.

Gautama Buddha passed away at the **age of 80** in **483 BC at Kushinagar**, in eastern Uttar Pradesh. This is known as **Parinirvana/MAHAPARINIRVANA.**

According to Buddhist tradition, his last words to his followers were: "**Be lamps unto yourselves as all of you must work out your own liberation.**"

Buddhist Art representation of the 5 stages

EVENTS	SYMBOLIC FORM	PHYSICAL FORM
Birth	**Elephant** /Lotus	Maya's dream
Renunciation	**Horse**	Buddha (in monk dress) along with Horse
Enlightenment	**Peepal Tree**	**Bhumisparshamudra**
First Sermon	**Wheel** (8 spokes showing 8 paths)	**Dharmachakrapravartana**
Death	**Stupa** (holy relics are buried there)	**Mahapariniravana mudra** Lying on one side and head resting on the palm.

DOCTRINES OF BUDDHISM

Philosophy of Buddha

- World is transient or 'Impermanence' (**anicca**).
- It is also soulless (**anatta**) with nothing permanent in it.
- Sorrow (**dukkha**) is intrinsic to human existence.

Thus, following the path of **moderation** between **severe penance** and **self-indulgence,** human beings can rise above these worldly troubles.

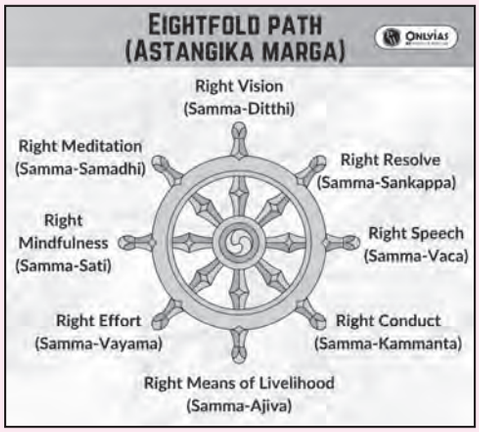
Other Beliefs:

- He neither accepted nor denied the existence of **God**.
- He addressed worldly issues and was not concerned with debates about the soul (atman) and Brahma.
- He **questioned** the authority of the **Vedas.**
- Condemned the **Varna system** and advocated **equality**.

Four Noble Truths of Buddha:

1. The truth of **Suffering (Dukkha):** Birth, age, death, separation, unfulfilled wish.
2. Truth of **Origin of Suffering (Samudaya):** Arises from desires **(Trishna)** for pleasure, power & long life.
3. Truth of **Cessation of Suffering (Nirvana):** Achieving freedom from sorrow.
4. Truth of **Path Leading to Cessation of Suffering (Magga),** which can be attained through the Noble **Eightfold Path** or the **Middle Path.**

Eightfold path (Astangika marga)



Buddhism incorporates **karma** and **rebirth**, where past actions shape one's current life. Liberation from karma and rebirth leads to **nirvana,** attainable **via the Middle Path.**

CODE OF CONDUCT	
COMMON PEOPLE	**MONKS**
(To stay away from) 1. Coveting the property of others. 2. Committing violence. 3. Using intoxicants. 4. Speaking a lie. 5. Indulging in corrupt practices.	• Restrictions on monks' food, attire, and sexual conduct. • Prohibition from accepting gold, silver, or engaging in buying and selling. • Resembled a form of primitive communism.

Special Features of Buddhism

- Three main elements **(Triratna)** in Buddhism: **Buddha, Sangha** and **Dhamma.**
- **Spread of Buddhism:**
  - Magadha, Kosala, Kausambi, and various **republics** turned to Buddhism due to Brahmin discrimination, drawn by its **perceived liberalism and democracy** in contrast to Brahmanism.
  - Emperor Asoka promoted its global spread, particularly in Central Asia, West Asia, and Sri Lanka.
- **Sangha, or religious order:**
  - Open to everybody**, irrespective of caste and sex.**
  - Initially, **only men joined the sangha**, but later, **it admitted women**, facilitated by **Ananda**.
  - Monks should faithfully observe the **rules** and **regulations of the sangha.**
  - **Debtors** and **Slaves** were **not** permitted to be members of the sangha without the permission of their masters/superiors.
- The **first human statues** to be worshipped in India were probably those of the Buddha.
- Buddha didn't name his successor. He said his teachings would be the guide for his followers.
- It promoted **rationalism,** thus encouraging critical thinking and logic over superstition.

Buddhist texts mention the term '**Kutagarashala',** which literally means a hut with a pointed roof or groves where travelling mendicants halted. It was a place of intellectual debate and discussion**.**

BUDDHIST COUNCILS

DATE	PLACE	KING	PRESIDENT	EVENTS
1st Buddhist Council (483 BC) (just after Buddha's death)	Sattapani cave at Rajagriha	Ajatashatru	Maha Kassapa	Upali recited **Vinay Pitaka**; Ananda recited **Sutta Pitaka**.
2nd Buddhist Council (383 BC) (a century after Buddha's death)	Vaishali	Kalashoka	Sabbakami	Buddhist order split into **Sthaviravadin** (Believers in the Teachings of the Elders) and the **Mahasamghika** (Members of the Great Community).
3rd Buddhist Council (250 BC)	Patliputra	Ashoka	Moggaliputta-Tissa	The last section, called **"Kathavatthu",** was added to **Abhidhamma Pitaka.** Sthaviravadins established themselves firmly and expelled the heretics.
4th Buddhist Council (72 AD)	Kundalvana, Srinagar	Kanishka	**Vasumitra** (Monk of Sarvastivada school) **Ashwaghosh** (Vice President)	Commentaries on Pitaka were written. **Sarvastivadin** doctrines were compiled in **Mahavibhasa.** Division of Buddhism into **Mahayana & Hinayana.**

Buddha **taught orally**, and none of the Buddha's speeches were written down during his lifetime.

BUDDHIST SECTS

Sthaviravada or Theravada

Theravada in Pali means **"Way of the Elders".** It is considered an **orthodox form** of Buddhism with the **primary goal** of achieving the **cessation of Kleshas (defilements) and attaining Nirvana.**

- Theravada adheres to **Vibhajjavada (the teaching of analysis).** This doctrine says that insight must come from **experience, critical investigation**, and **reasoning** of an individual instead of blind faith.
- This branch is prevalent in Southeast Asian countries like Myanmar, Cambodia and Sri Lanka.
- **Thervada Text: Visuddhimagga** (The Path of Purification) written by **Buddhaghosa** in 5th Century BC in Sri Lanka.

- A subdivision within the Sthaviravadins emerged in the 3rd century BC when the **Sarvastivadins** (school of realistic pluralism) broke away from the **Vibhajyavadins** (analytical school). **[UPSC 2017]**
- Other prominent offshoots of the Sthaviravadins were the **Sammatiyas** and **the Vatsiputriyas**, both known for their theory of the **Pudgala** (person). **[UPSC 2017]**

Mahasanghikas

The **first division** in the Buddhist community occurred during the **Second Buddhist Council** when the **Acariyavadins** (followers of the traditional teaching) split away from the **Sthaviravadins** (followers of the Way of the Elders) and formed their own school, known as the **Mahasanghikas.**

- The Mahasanghikas's views on the nature of the Buddha and the **Arhat (saint)** foreshadowed the development of the Mahayana form of Buddhism.
- Further subdivisions of the Mahasanghikas over the next seven centuries included the **Lokottaravadins, the Ekavyavaharikas, and the Kaukkutikas. [UPSC 2020]**

Hinayana (Lesser Vehicle)

It is a **conservative** and **orthodox** form of Buddhism prevalent in Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, and Southeast Asia.

- Adherents aim to become **Arhats**, individuals **who attain self-nirvana** and **cease rebirth.** This has been **criticised by the Mahayana sect as being self-centred.**
- Emphasises **gradual nirvana**, where individuals help others through example, advice, self-discipline, and meditation, **achieving salvation individually.**
- **Rejects the deification of Buddha,** viewing him as a regular human being, leading to **symbol worship rather than idol worship.**

Emperor **Asoka** famously patronised Hinyana Buddhism. **Hiuen Tsang,** who visited Tamil country, mentions in his travel accounts about several **Buddhist Stupas** built by **Asoka** in **Kanchipuram**.

Mahayana Buddhism (Greater Vehicle)

- It considers **Buddha as a God** and focuses on the **Law of Karuna** or compassion over and above the law of Karma.
- The deification of Buddha started the practise of idol worship. **[UPSC 2019]**
- Concept of **Bodhisattvas** emerged:
  - They were seen as compassionate beings who, instead of attaining Nirvana, accumulated merit to help others in the world. **[UPSC 2017].** Those who completed this goal were called **Samyaksambuddha.**
- Its main centre was Nalanda University (under Pala Patronage). **Dinnaga** and **Dhammapala**, eminent Buddhist scholars from Kanchipuram, headed the famous Nalanda University.
- It spread to China & Japan.

BODHISATTVA	ATTRIBUTES AND ROLES
Avalokiteshwara	Known as "The Lord Who Looks Down", **Padmapani** (Sanskrit), **Lokesvara** (Theravada Buddhism). Manifests Buddha's Compassion.
Manjusri	**Male Bodhisattva,** Interlocutor on ultimate truth. Also known as **Wenshu** (China) and **Jampelyang** (Tibet). **Wields a flaming sword** (to destroy falsehood) & holds a book.
Tara	**Female Bodhisattva in Mahayana, Female Buddha in Vajrayana.** Also known as **Jetsun Dolma** (Tibetan Buddhism). Represents compassion and protection.
Ksitigarbha	Means "**Earth Womb**," guardian of children.

Maitreya [UPSC 2018]	Also known as **Ajita Bodhisattva**, the **future Buddha.** Accepted by both Mahayana and non-Mahayana traditions;		
Samantabhadra	Associated with meditation.	**Amitabha**	Great saviour buddha.
Vajrapani	Manifests Buddha's Power.	**Akasagarbha**	Associated with elements of space.
Vasudhara	Associated with wealth, prosperity, and abundance.		
Skanda	Guardian of Viharas and Buddhist teachings.		

Mahayana's Schools of Thought

Madhyamika (Sunyavada, i.e. all is void)	Yogacara (Practice of Yoga)

• **Thinker**: **Nagarjuna** from 2nd century AD.
• **Basic Tenet:**
  ❍ Follows middle path i.e., neither nihilism (nothing exists) nor realism (everything self-exists & is permanent).
  ❍ It believes that there is no difference between Samsara and Nirvana.
• Its basic text is called **Mula Madhyamika karika.**
• Middle position between **Sarvastivada school (Doctrine That All Is Real)** and **Yogacara (mind-only) school.**
• **Sunyavad** is the core of the Tibetan School of Buddhism.
	• Also known as **Vigyanavada** (Doctrine of Consciousness), propounded by **Asanga** and his brother, **Vasubandhu.**
	• It focuses on consciousness & knowledge (idealism).
	• The only reality is "**suchness**" (**tathata**), also known as **Dharmadhatu**.
	• Its basic text is called **Sutralankara**.
	• **Vasubandhu** (converted from **Sarvastivada to the Mahayana**) wrote commentary on the **Abhidhamma** from the perspectives of the Sarvastivada and Sautrāntika schools. **[UPSC 2017]**

Vajrayana (Vehicle of the Thunderbolt)

It is an offshoot of Mahayana Buddhism and referred as **Mantrayana** (emerged after the 5th century AD.)

- It was practised in regions of **Bengal, Bihar, Nepal** and eventually spread to **Tibet** in the 11th century AD. Its main centre was **Vikramasila University** in Bihar.
- Monks in this tradition distanced themselves from mainstream society and transitioned from **Pali (the People's Language)** to **Sanskrit (an intellectual language).**
- This branch emphasised **Tantrism**, incorporating rituals, chanting, and tantric techniques.
- **It incorporates a strong female element**, and sculptures like the 10th-century Bihar statue of the **Buddhist goddess Marichi** exemplify this.
- Worship of deities like **Tara** is intended to cultivate inner qualities for a better understanding of the external world.

BUDDHIST LITERATURE

The Buddhist texts were compiled in **Pali**, the language of common people, contributing to the spread of Buddhism. The Pali canons are called the **Tripitakas (Three Baskets):**

1. **Vinaya Pitaka:** Focuses on monastic rules and moral disciplines.
2. **Sutta Pitaka:** Dwells upon discourses and teachings of Buddha.
   - It is divided into five Nikayas **(Digha, Majjhima, Samyutta, Anguttara, and Khuddaka).**
   - They contain popular works such as **Theragatha** and **Therigatha** (Hymns of the Elder Monks and Nuns) and **Jataka tales** (Buddha's deeds in previous births as Bodhisattva).
3. **Abhidhamma Pitaka:** Expounds Buddhist philosophy.

Other Buddhist Literature

BOOKS	AUTHOR	BOOKS	AUTHOR
Manimekalai (one of the twin epics of post-Sangam age)	Sattanar	**1. Buddhcharita** **2. Saudaranand** **3. Sariputra Prakaran**	Ashwaghosh
Kundalakesi	Nagakuthanaar	**Abhidhmma Kosh**	Vasubandhu

Madhyami Kakarika	Nagarjuna	**Pramāṇasamuccaya**	Dignāga

- **Vishuddhimagga** was written by **Buddhaghosh**.
- Ceylonese chronicles [**Dipavamsa** (Island Chronicles), **Mahavamsa** (Great Chronicle) and **Culavamsa** (Lesser Chronicle)] contain regional histories of Buddhism.
- **Milinda Panha:** Conversations between King **Menander** and monk **Nagasena**.
- **Netti Pakarana:** It is a Buddhist scripture, sometimes included in the Khuddaka Nikaya of Theravada Buddhism's Pali Canon. **[UPSC 2022]**
- **Avadana literature** is an anthology in Sanskrit of one hundred Buddhist legends.
- **Lalitavistara** is a biography of the Gautama Buddha, written in a combination of Sanskrit and vernacular.
- **Samannaphala Sutta:** It is the second sutta of the Digha Nikaya and is related to the conversation between Buddha and Ajatasatru.

VARIOUS MUDRAS UNDER BUDDHISM

Dhyana Mudra	This mudra symbolises meditation, concentration, and inner peace.
Anjali Mudra	Represents respect, greeting, and gratitude.
Vitarka Mudra	This mudra is also known as the "teaching mudra" or "gesture of discussion" and represents the transmission of knowledge and the communication of the Buddha's teachings.
Varada Mudra	Represents generosity, compassion, and the granting of wishes.
Abhaya Mudra	Represents fearlessness, protection, and the dispelling of negativity.
Bhumisparsha Mudra	Represents the moment of the Buddha's enlightenment, and the gesture symbolises the earth witnessing his attainment of enlightenment.
Uttarabodhi Mudra	This mudra represents the union of wisdom and compassion, the balance of masculine and feminine energies, and the attainment of enlightenment through the integration of all aspects of thyself.
Dharma Chakra Mudra	Dharmachakra in Sanskrit means the wheel of Dharma. This mudra represents the setting into motion of the wheel of the teaching of Dharma.
Karana Mudra	Represents depictions of the Buddha or bodhisattvas as a symbol of protection and dispelling of negativity. The index finger is said to represent the energy of wisdom and the ability to overcome obstacles.
Jnana Mudra	Represents the unity of individual and universal consciousness and the connection between the practitioner and the teachings of the Buddha.
Tarjani Mudra	Represents a symbol of warning or protection against evil forces.

BUDDHIST SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY

There are four principal Buddhist philosophical schools, which are the four pillars of Buddhist doctrine.

1. **Vaibhashikas**: Believes that relative truth is that which can be broken down into parts, whereas ultimate truth is indivisible.
2. **Sautrantikas**: Accept the selflessness of persons but not the selflessness of phenomena.
3. **Cittamatrins**: Accept the selflessness of both self and phenomena, but believe in the true existence of mind.
4. **Madhyamikas**: It claims that things appear to be real and substantial but are actually without inherent true existence.

CAUSES OF THE DECLINE OF BUDDHISM

1. Buddhism declined throughout the phase of **Bhakti** movement, absorbing Hindu aspects, with some lineages regarding Buddha as an **avatar of Vishnu**.
2. Adoption of **Sanskrit** over **Pali.**
3. Corrupt practices in monastries like deviation from Buddha's teachings.
4. Buddhism lost its royal patronage after Harshavardhana.
5. The Turks invasion of monasteries for their riches.

Important Facts Related to Buddhism

- **Upasaka** are lay followers of Buddhism who are not monks. **[UPSC 2020]**
- **Parivrajaka** literally means **male renunciant** & wanderer. Eg: Buddhist Bhikkhu. **[UPSC 2020]**
- **Shramana** is a **wandering monk** in certain ascetic traditions, including Jainism, Buddhism & Ajvikas. **[UPSC 2020]**
- **Paramita (perfection)** in Buddhism is associated with noble qualities that are found in Buddha-like enlightened beings. **[UPSC 2020]**
- **Chaitya:** It was the place of worship and congregation.
- **Vihara:** It was the place of residence of Buddhist monks.
- **Stupa**: Relics of the Buddha, such as his bodily remains or objects used by him, were buried here.
- Kingdoms associated with Buddha are **Kosala, Magadha, Vaishali, Rajgir** etc**. [UPSC 2015]**
- **Uposatha:** Ceremony held on full moon and new moon.
- **Upasampada:** Ordination ceremony when the novice becomes a full-fledged member of the monastic community.
- **Pravrajya:** Ceremony to mark a person's going forth from home into homelessness and his/her becoming a novice under a preceptor. Involved shaving the head and donning ochre robes.
- **Gajalakshmi/Maya (mother of Buddha)**: Women surrounded by Lotuses and elephants (Used as a symbol in Sanchi Stupa).

JAINISM

Introduction

Jainism or Jaina is derived from the word '**Jina'**, which means **conqueror**. Jain monks were also known as **Nirgranthas** (free from bonds). **Risabhnath** was the **1st Tirthankara** and **founder** of the sect. Mahivara was the last Tirthankara of Jainism and is considered its most influential figure.

VARDHAMANA MAHAVIRA

- Vardhamana Mahavira (referred to as **Nigantha Nataputta** in Buddhist texts) was born in **540 BC** in **Kundagrama near Vaishali** (identical to Basarh), North Bihar.
- His father, **Siddhartha,** was the chief of the **Jnatrika clan,** and his mother, **Trishala,** was a **Lichchavi princess**. They were **connected with the royal family** of Magadha, Anga and Videha.
- Mahavira left worldly life at the age of 30 to become an ascetic. He practised **severe austerity** and discarded his garments.
- For 12 years, he wandered continuously, during which he met **Gosala** and spent **six years** with him before they parted due to differences.
- In the 13th year of his wandering**, at the age of 42,** Vardhamana attained **enlightenment or Kaivalya (complete knowledge/intellect).** Through Kaivalya, he conquered **misery** and **happiness**. He then became a Tirthankara and came to be called a **Jina** or **Mahavira (the Great Conqueror),** and his followers were known as Jaina.
- Mahavira propagated Jainism for 30 years, travelling to regions like **Kosala, Magadha, Mithila, and Champa.**
- He **died** at the age of 72 in **468 BC** at **Pavapuri**, near Rajgir.

DOCTRINES OF JAINISM

Jains uphold three principles known as **Triratnas** or **Three Gems:**

1. **Right faith (Samyag-Darshana):** It is the belief in the teachings and wisdom of Mahavira.
2. **Right knowledge (Samyag-Jnana):** It is the acceptance of the theory that there is no God, and the world has existed without a creator, and all objects possess a soul.
3. **Right conduct (Samyag-Mahavrata)**: It refers to the observance of the five great vows.

Five Great Vows (Pancha-Mahavrata of Monks)

(1) Not to kill or injure **(Ahimsa)**

(2) Not to steal **(Asteya)**

(3) Not to lie **(Satya)**

(4) Not to possess property **(Aparigraha)**

(5) Celibacy **(Brahmacharya)**

Mahavira introduced the fifth vow in Jainism; the other four were inherited from previous teachers.

TIRTHANKARA	SYMBOL
Rishabhadeva also known as Adinatha (1st)	Bull
Neminatha(22nd)	Conch
Parsvanatha(23rd)	Snake
Mahavira(24th)	Lion

Yajur Veda mentions three of the **Tirthankaras**, viz., **Risabha**, **Ajitanatha** and **Aristanemi**.

Tenets of Jainism

- Householders were expected to observe the milder form of the practise of these virtues called **anuvrata** (small vows) in comparison to the monks.
- Mahavira **rejected Vedic authority.**
- Jainism **denies the existence of God.**
- According to Jainism, the world has no beginning or end. It goes through a series of progress and decline according to an eternal law.
- According to Jaina teachings, the cycle of birth and rebirth is shaped through karma.
  - Asceticism and penance are required to free oneself from the cycle of karma. This can be achieved only by renouncing the world; therefore, monastic existence is a necessary condition of salvation.
- Jainism is an egalitarian religion that rejects inequality based on birth. It rejected the strict Varna order and Vedic rituals. It believes that "by one's action one becomes a Brahmin, a Kshatriya, or a Vaishya, or a Sudra."
- Women were allowed into the monastic order, but they cannot achieve salvation directly instead, they can accumulate merit through good deeds and be reborn as men to pursue salvation.

DIVISION OF JAINISM

About 500 years after Mahavira's death, in about 79 or 82 CE, a schism occurred in Jainism.

- Magadha was affected by **severe famine,** and some of the Jaina monks under **Bhadrabahu** went South to maintain their strict discipline. They remained without garments and were known as **Digambaras (space-clad or naked)**.
  - The major Sub-Sects of Digambaras are **Bisapanth**, **Terapanth, and Taranapanth (Samaiyapantha)**
  - The minor Sub-sects are **Gumanapantha** and **Totapantha**
- Other monks who stayed back under the leadership of **Sthulabhadra** and adopted a white garment were known as **Svetambaras (white-clad)**.
  - The Sub-sects of Svetambaras are **Murtipujaka, Sthanakvasi, Terapanth. [UPSC 2018]**
- The schism weakened Jainism in Magadha, but it found ardent followers in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Karnataka.

SHWETAMBARA	DIGAMBARA
• People of this sect wear white clothes. **Beliefs:** • Attainment of liberation (Moksha) is possible for a woman. • Mahavir Swami was married. • 19th Tirthankara **Mallinath** was a woman.	• The people of this sect don't wear clothes and perform austerity (Tapsya). **Beliefs:** • Salvation (Moksha) is not possible for a woman. • Mahavir Swami was unmarried. • The 19th Tirthankara, **Mallinath** was a man.

PHILOSOPHIES OF JAINISM

- Jainism promotes **dualism,** making the distinction between **soul (jiva)** and **matter (ajiva).** The coming together of jiva and ajiva creates **karma** (action), which leads to an **endless cycle of birth and rebirth.** To free oneself from karma, one has to practice **severe austerities** and **self-mortification**.
- Although Jainism recognises the soul, it rejects the notion of an ultimate, universal soul.

"Souls are not only the property of animal and plant life, but also of rocks, running water and many other natural objects not looked on as living by other religious sects."**[UPSC 2023]**

- Jainism propagates the theory of '**The Doctrine of Relativity of Knowledge and Judgments.**'
- Jainism divides all knowledge into two classes:
  - the **Mediate** (**Paroksa**, which can be sensed through sensory organs) and
  - the **Immediate** (**Aparoksa**, which can be obtained without sensory organs).
- Immediate knowledge is divided into **Avadhi, Manahparyaya,** and **Kevala.**
- Mediate knowledge is divided into **Mati** and **Shruta.**

Avadhi (Clairvoyance)	Knowledge is limited.
Manahparyaya (Telepathy)	Direct knowledge of the thoughts of others.
Kevala (Omniscience)	Absolute knowledge.
Mati (Sensuous Cognition)	Sensory comprehension.
Shruta	Knowledge obtained from authority.

- **Philosophy of Syadavada** (**Syad**: relative to some standpoint, **vada**: doctrine, theory, view)
  - Knowledge is **partial** and always **relative** to some particular point of view and about particular aspects of objects.
- **Philosophy of Anekantavada (theory of plurality):** Ultimate truth and reality are complex and have multiple aspects/perspectives.

JAIN COUNCIL

1. **First Jain Council**
   - Held at **Patliputra in 300 BC** and was presided over by **Sthulbhadra.**
   - Compilation of 12 Angas (limbs).
2. **Second Jain Council**
   - Held at **Vallabhi in 512 AD** and was presided over by **Devardhi Kshmasramana.**
   - Added **12 Upangas** (minor sections).

LITERATURE OF JAINISM

- The earliest important works of Jainas were composed in **Apabhramsa.**
- They abandoned Sanskrit and adopted **Prakrit** to preach their doctrines and **Ardha-Magadhi** (the language of the common people) to compose their religious texts.
- The adoption of Prakrit influenced regional languages like **Sauraseni**, which gave rise to **Marathi**.
- Jain literature is called '**Aagam**' (Principle). It consists of **12 Angas, 12 Upanga, 10 Prakiran, 6 Ched Sutras, 4 Mool Sutra, 2 Chulika Sutra.**

12 Angas are Acharanga-Sutra, Sutrakrtanga, Sthananga, Samavayanga, Bhagavati Vyakhyaprajnapti. Jnatrdharmakatha, Upasakadasah, Antakrddasah, Anuttaraupapatikadasah, Prasnavyakarana, Vipaksruta and Dristivada.

- Every Anga has **Upanga,** which provides the description of the universe, classification of beings, astronomy, time division, description of posthumous life, etc.
- 10 Prakirna are the supplements to major texts.
- **Ched Sutra** contains a compilation of rules for Jain monks.
  - Six Ched Sutra are- **Jitakalpa, Brihatkalpa, Nishith, Mahnishith, Vyavhar (Behavior) and Aachar Dasha.**
- **Mool Sutra** contain sermons of Jainism, life in the forest, duties of the monks, rules of Yam, etc.
  - The four Mool Sutra are - **Dashvaikalik, Utaradhyayan, Shadavshayak and Pindniryukti or Pakshik Sutra**.
- The two **Chulika Sutras (Nandi-sutra** and **Anuyagadvara-Sutra)** are independent texts of Jains, which are a kind of encyclopaedia. In these texts, moral stories have been written for monks.
- **Tamil Literature: Naladiyar**, **Palamoli**, **Jivaka Chinthamani**, Yapperunkalam Karikai, and **Neelakesi** are some of the prominent Jaina works.

BOOK	AUTHOR	BOOK	AUTHOR
Kalpa Sutra	Bhadrabahu	**Lilavatisara**	Acharya Jinaratna
Tattavartha Sutra	Umaswami in Sanskrit	**Samayasara**	Acharya Kundakunda
1. Yogasastra **2. Parishishta Parvan** **3. Arhanniti**	Hemachandra	**Ratnakaranda Sravakacara**	Samantabhadra Swamy Swamy

Shatkhandagama	Pushpadanta and Bhutabali	**Sarvarthasiddhi**	Pujyapada
Trishasthilkshana Mahapurana	Jinasena	**Syadvadmanjari**	Mallisen
Dravya Sangrah	Nemichandra		

PATRON KINGS OF JAINISM

Magadh Empire	Bimbisara, Ajatasatru, Samprati, Chandragupta Maurya, Bindusara		
Kharavela(Kalinga)	**Hathigumpha** inscription in the **Udayagiri** hills near Bhubaneswar provides an account of support for Jainism**.**		
Kadamba dynasty	King Kakusthavarman	**Rashtrakuta dynasty**	Amoghavarsha
Ganga dynasty	King Shivamara I; King Butuga **II**	**Chalukya (Solanki) dynasty**	Kumarapala

Decline of Jainism in India

- Absence of royal patronage.
- Internal division between Digambaras and Swetambaras
- Limited missionary efforts.
- Factionalism within the Jain community
- The rigorous and austere practises associated with Jainism

Important Facts Related to Jainism

- **Sallekhana or Santhara:** A ritual fast to death which Jains regard as the "culmination of our lives as ascetics".
- During the reign of Ganga ruler Rachamall IV (Panchamalla), Prime Minister **Chamundaraya** built a huge Jain statue of **Bahubali (Gomateshwar)** in 981 AD. It is situated in **Shravanabelagola** (Karnataka).
  - Bahubali is considered the son of Rishabhdev, the first Tirthankar.
  - **Mahamastak-abhishek** is an important festival held at Shravanabelagola in Karnataka State every 12 years.
- **Chandragupta Maurya (322-298 BC)** played a role in Jainism's spread in Karnataka by embracing it, abdicating his throne, and living as a Jaina ascetic.
- Epigraphic evidence of Jainism in Karnataka dates back to the third century AD, and from the sixth century AD, **Basadis (Jaina monastic establishments)** proliferated, receiving royal land grants for support.
- Jainism's **strict adherence to non-violence** limited engagement in other occupations, **including agriculture**, due to the prohibition against intentional or unintentional killing. Hence, they adopted occupations like **trading** and **money-lending**. As a result, they were closely associated with urbanisation.

Jain Temples

- **Ranakpur temple (Rajasthan)**: Built by Darna Shah in 1437 AD. It is a Svetambara Jain temple dedicated to Tirthankara Rishabhdev.
- **Mount Mangi Tungi (Maharashtra)**: It enshrines images of Tirthankaras in several postures, including Padmasana and Kayotsarga.
- **Shikharji (Jharkhand)**: It is located on **Parasnath Hill**. It is an important Jain Tirtha for both Digambara and Svetambara. It is where twenty of the twenty-four Jain Tirthankaras attained Moksha.
- **Khajuraho Group of Monuments (Madhya Pradesh)**: The Jain temples are located in the southeast region of the Khajuraho monuments.
- **Dilawara Jain temple** of **Mount Abu** is made of marble. It was built by the Samanta **Vimalshah** of Chalukya (Solanki) ruler **Bhimdev I** of Gujarat.
- **Sittanavasal Paintings**: These represent the theme of Jain Samasvasarana.
- **Ellora Caves (Maharashtra), Udaygiri Caves (Odisha), and Sittanavasal Caves (Tamil Nadu)** also depict Jain influence.

Important Terms Related to Jainism

- **Basadis:** Jaina monastic establishment
- **Avadhijnana**: Superhuman cognition
- **Ganadharas**: Chief disciplines of Mahavira
- **Siddha**: Fully liberated
- **Pudgala**: Aggregates of atoms that have form, colour, taste and smell, and can be touched and felt.
- **Chaitanya**: Consciousness
- **Mohaniya**: Delusion
- **Gunasthanas**: Stages of purification
- **Arhat**: Who has entered the stage of Kevalajnana.
- **Tirthankara**: Arhat, who has already acquired the capability of teaching the doctrine

Differences Between Jainism and Buddhism

- Buddhism **neither accepted nor denied** the existence of **God,** whereas Jainism **does not believe in a personal God or a creator God**.
  - According to Jainism, God is that soul who has completely removed all the Karmas. The defining characteristic of Godhood is identical to that of liberation itself.
- Jainism **did not condemn the varna system** as Buddhism did.
- Mahavira believed a person's varna in this life was determined by their past-life virtues and sins, extending liberation prospects to lower caste members.
- Buddhism advocated a middle path, i.e., avoidance of extremities of penance and enjoyment, whereas **Jainism advocated extreme penance and asceticism.**
- Jainism believes **in the transmigration of the soul,** while **Buddhism does not.**

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5 Magadh Empire

RISE OF MAHAJANAPADAS

The **Later Vedic Period** (900–600 BC) witnessed transition from a tribal polity based on **lineage (Jana)** to a **territorial state (Janapada).**

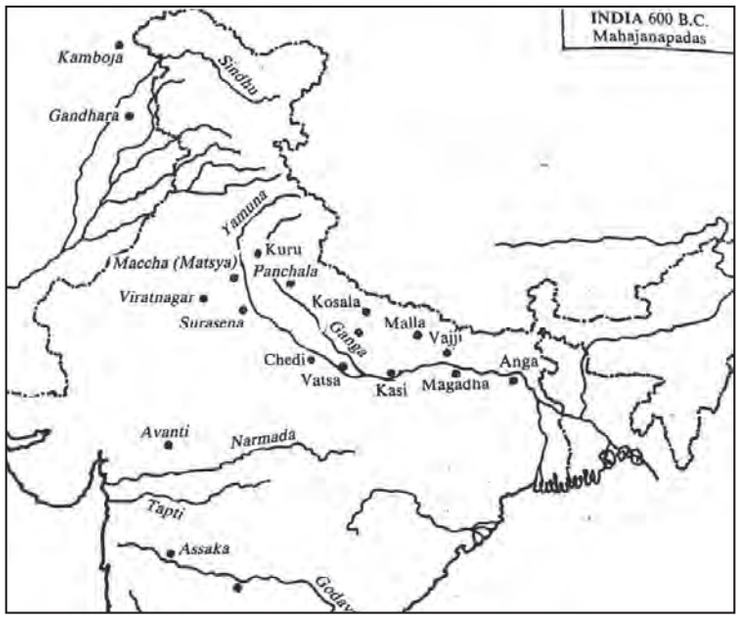
- **Janpadas** used to fight among themselves for resources and political dominance. Some Janapadas extended their territories and brought various janas within their jurisdiction. Such Janapadas grew into **Mahajanapadas** (a large empire)**,** which were either **monarchical** or **republican** in the nature of their polity.

Janapada means the land where a Jana (people, clan or tribe) sets foot or settles.

MONARCHIES	REPUBLICS (GANA SANGHA)
• Their **administration was centralised** and governed by the kings. • The kingship was **hereditary**, and the succession was mainly based on the **law of primogeniture**.	• There was **no single decision-making** authority. • The tribal chiefs were **selected** by a larger group.
• The king was assisted by councils called **parishad** (consisting mostly of Brahmins) and **sabha** as advisory bodies.	• Decisions were taken **collectively** by the heads (often collectively called Rajas) of the **different clans**.
• The king claimed sole **revenue rights**.	• Each tribal ruler (Raja) had such rights.
• Vedic **orthodoxy** was practised, with the **priestly class** enjoying a **pre-eminent status.** The Brahman priests provided legitimacy to the king through various rituals.	• The influence of the priestly class was not prominent.
• They had a **central standing army.**	• Tribal rulers maintained their armies under a **Senapati.**

Reasons for the Rise of Large States

- **Favourable location:** Ganga plains were **fertile** and closer to the **iron production centres**.
  - **Iron technology** improved agriculture, which resulted in **surplus collection** . It helped to sustain their military and administrative requirements and, thus, facilitated **stable settlement**.
- The rise of large states, with towns as their administrative centres, promoted a **sense of allegiance** to the **Janapada** rather than to their jana or tribe.



MAHAJANAPADAS

The Buddhist text **Anguttara Nikaya** (part of the **Sutta-Pitaka**) lists **sixteen** Mahajanapadas.

STATE	CAPITAL	RULERS/IMPORTANT FEATURES
Magadha (Modern Patna and Gaya)	**Rajagriha** or **Girivraja**	**Haryanka** Dynasty ruled Magadha.
Anga (Modern districts of Monghyr and Bhagalpur, Bihar)	**Champa** (located at the confluence of the Ganga and Champa rivers)	Champa was an important commercial centre, and merchants sailed from here to **Suvarnabhumi** (Southeast Asia).
Vajji (North of Ganga in the division of Tirhut)	**Vaishali** (Modern Basarh in North Bihar)	**King: Chetaka** • It was a **confederacy** including Lichchhavis, Jnatrikas, and Vajjis. • Mahavira belonged to the Jnatrikas Clan.
Mallas (Gangetic Plains U.P.)	**Kushinara** and **Pava**	Buddha took his last meal and was ill at **Pava** and attained **Mahaparinirvana** at **Kusinara.**
Kashi (Varanasi U.P.)	**Varanasi** (between the Varuna and Assi rivers)	Kashi was incorporated into **Kosala** by King **Kansa.**
Gandhara (north-western Pakistan)	**Takshashila** (Major centre for trade and learning)	The **Behistun Inscription** of the Achaemenid Emperor **Darius** mentions that the Persians conquered Gandhara in the later part of the **6th century BC**.
Kosala (Eastern U.P., including Ayodhya)	**Sarayu River** divides the state into two parts. • Northern Kosala: **Shravasti** • Southern Kosala: **Kushavati**	**King: Prasenjit** (Buddha's contemporary) Lumbini, included in the tribal republic of the Shakyas, is the birthplace of Gautama Buddha.
Ashavaka/Assaka (Located between the rivers Godavari and Manjira)	**Potali** (Modern Bodhan, district Nizamabad, and parts of Adilabad in Telangana)	Only Mahajanapada, situated **south** of the **Vindhya Range**, was in Dakshinapatha.
Cheti or Chedi (Eastern part of Bundelkhand region)	**Shuktimati** or Sotthivatinagara	**King: Shishupala**
Vatsa (on the banks of river Yamuna)	**Kaushambi** (at the confluence of the Ganga and Yamuna, near Allahabad)	• **King: Udayana** • Vatsa was known for its fine cotton textiles.
Kuru (Western U.P.)	**Indraprastha**	Mahabharata elaborates on the conflict between two branches of the reigning Kuru clan.
Panchala (Western U.P.)	**Ganga River** divides the state into two parts: • Northern Panchala: **Ahichchhatra** (Bareilly, U.P.) • Southern Panchala: **Kampilya** (Farukkhabad, U.P.)	**Kanauj** was situated in the kingdom of Panchala.
Matsya (Jaipur, Alwar and Bharatpur area of Rajasthan)	**Viratanagara**	**Founder**: **Virata**
Shurasena (Braj region in U.P.)	**Mathura** (on the banks of river Yamuna)	**King**: **Avantipura** (Disciple of Buddha)
Avanti (Central Malwa)	Divided by the **Vindhyas** North Avanti - **Ujjain** South Avanti - **Mahishmati**	**King**: **Pradyota** (Father-in-law of Udayana)

Kamboja (Rajouri and Hajra (Kashmir) and NorthWest Frontier Province of Pakistan)	**Pooncha**	Famous in ancient times for their excellent **breed of horses** and as remarkable horsemen located in the **Uttarapatha** or North-West.

Among the 16 Mahajanapadas, a **power struggle** broke out between Magadha, Kosala, Vrijji and Avanti, leading to the **emergence of Magadha** as the most powerful state. Magadha's rise to political supremacy began with **Bimbisara,** who belonged to the **Haryanka dynasty**.

THE RISE AND GROWTH OF THE MAGADHA EMPIRE

Introduction

The Magadha Empire was one of the great kingdoms of the **second urbanization** period (the period between the 6th and 3rd century BC). Prominent dynasties that ruled the Magadha region were **Haryanka**, **Shishunaga** and **Nanda**.

Agricultural surplus, the growth of crafts and trade, and the growing population led to the emergence of towns in the Gangetic plains. This is called the **second urbanisation** in Indian history after the

first urbanisation evident in the **Harappan Civilization.**

Sources of Information

Vedic texts	**Brahmanas** and **Upanishads** refer to many Janapadas and Mahajanapadas.
Buddhist texts	**Vinaya Pitaka**, **Sutta Pitaka**, and **Abhidhamma Pitaka.**
Jainism text	**Bhagawati Sutra** provides a list of Mahajanapadas of that time.
Archaeological Evidence	**NBPW** (Northern Black Polished Ware) pottery. Discovery of the archaeological remains from areas like **Ahichchhatra, Hastinapur, Kausambi, Ujjaini,** etc.

HARYANKA DYNASTY

They were the **first dynasty** to rule **Magadha**, with its capital at **Rajagriha.** The **dynasty's founder** is **unknown**, but most scholars believe the founder to be the **grandfather of Bimbisara**.

Important rulers:

BIMBISARA (544- 492 BC)

- He was a **contemporary** of **Buddha** and **Mahavira**.
- **Conflicts:**
  - Earlier, he had a rivalry with **Avanti's king, Pradyota**, but later they became friends. He sent his royal physician **Jivaka to Ujjain** (through Dakshinapatha to Avanti) when Pradyota had jaundice.
  - Conquered **Anga** (East Bihar) by defeating **Brahmadatta.** Anga and its capital, **Champa**, were essential for **inland** and **maritime trade**.
- He used **matrimonial alliances** to strengthen his position in westward and northward directions.
  - 1st wife: **Mahakoshala** (sister of Prasenjit), from **Kosala**, brought **Kashi** as a dowry.
  - 2nd wife: **Lichchhavi Princess Chellana** from **Vaishali**, who gave birth to **Ajatashatru**.
  - 3rd wife: Daughter of the chief of the **Madra clan** (Punjab).
- He was killed and succeeded by his son **Ajatashatru**.

AJATASHATRU (492- 460 BC)

- He was the most potent and **aggressive ruler** of the Haryanka dynasty and followed his father's **expansionist policy** through military conquest.
- King **Prasenajit** took back **Kashi**, which he had handed out as dowry to **Bimbisara**, leading to a military confrontation between **Magadha** and **Kosala.**

- **Conflicts:**
  - **Annexed Kosala** and **retained Kashi** by defeating **Prasenjit** (his maternal uncle).
  - **Annexed Vaishali** (Lichchhavis) by defeating his maternal grandfather, **Chetak**.
  - He also defeated the **Mallas**.
- **Military weapons:**
  - War engines like catapults (**Mahashilakantaka**) used to throw stones.
  - Chariot with mace for mass killing (**Rathamusala**).
- Began the **fortification of Rajgriha** to counter the threat of invasion posed by the ruler of **Avanti** (who had earlier defeated the **Vatsas of Kaushambi**).
- He met **Buddha** during his lifetime.
  - **Buddha** gained Parinirvana (death) during his reign **(483 BC),** and he arranged the first Buddhist council.
- He was succeeded by his son **Udayin.**

UDAYABHADRA (UDAYIN) (460- 444 BC)

- He founded the **new capital at Pataliputra** (modern Patna), situated at the confluence of the Ganga and Son rivers.

SHISHUNAGA DYNASTY (~413- 345 BC)

Important Rulers

SHISHUNAGA

- He was initially an **Amatya** or **"minister"** of **Nāgadāsaka** (the last **Haryanka dynasty** ruler) and **founded the dynasty** in **413 BC.**
- He temporarily **shifted the capital** to **Vaishali.**
- He defeated **Avanti** and made it a part of Magadha, thus **ending the 100-year-old rivalry** between Magadha and Avanti.
- He was succeeded by his son, **Kalasoka.**

KALASOKA

- He was also known as **Kakarvarna** (according to the Puranas).
- Conducted the **Second Buddhist Council** at Vaishali.

Mahapadma Nanda usurped the throne by murdering the last king of the Shishunaga dynasty.

NANDA DYNASTY (345 BC – 321 BC)

Important Rulers

MAHAPADMA NANDA

- He was also called **Ugrasena** because of his large army.
- **Lineage:**
  - According to **Brahmanical texts**, he belonged to a **non-Kshatriya caste**.
  - **Buddhist texts** describe the Nandas as belonging to **Annatakula** (of unknown lineage).
- He was the **first empire builder** of India and claimed to be **Ekarat** (sole sovereign who destroyed all other ruling princes), and **Sarva-kshatrantaka** (uprooter of the Kshatriyas).
- He added **Kalinga to Magadha** and brought an image of **Jina** as a victory trophy. He also acquired **Kosala** to crush his rebellions.
- **Tax collection:** Methodical collection of taxes was made by regularly appointing officials that helped in supporting a large army.
- **Irrigation:** He also built **canals** for strengthening irrigation work.
- He was succeeded by his **eight sons**, and they were together known as the **Navanandas** or the nine Nandas.

DHANA NANDA

- He was the **last significant king**, having a **vast army** and was referred to as **Agrammes or Xandrames** by Diodorus (Greek historian).
- Credited with the invention of **Nandopakramani** (a particular measuring standard).
- **Alexander** invaded north-west India **(327–325 BC)** during his reign.

Hathigumpha (elephant cave) inscription at **Udayagiri** near Bhubaneshwar, Odisha, had records of the aqueduct built by Mahapadma Nanda.

Causes of Magadha's Success

- Ambitious rulers like **Bimbisara**, **Ajatashatru**, and **Mahapadma Nanda** adopted both **diplomatic** and **military** means to expand the empire.
- **Geographical Advantages:**
  - Magadha's access to **abundant iron ore** allowed its rulers to equip themselves with effective weapons.
  - **Magadha's capitals, Rajgir** and later **Pataliputra**, occupied strategic positions.
  - **Pataliputra** was surrounded by rivers, and thus functioned as a **water fort** (**Jala Durga**).
  - **Rajgir**, surrounded by **five hills**, was impregnable in its time.
- **Central Position in Gangetic Plains:** Forests in southern areas provided timber and elephants, which gave a particular military advantage.
  - Magadha was the **first state** to use elephants **on a large scale** against its neighbours.
  - Timber resources aided **boat manufacturing**, promoting Magadha's expansion.

ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MAGADHA EMPIRE

Officials and Ministers

- **Higher officials**, known as **Mahamatras/Amatyas**, held multiple roles, such as **ministers** (mantrin), **commanders** (Senanayaka), **judges**, **chief accountants**, and **heads of the royal harem**, and were assisted by **Ayuktas**.
  - They were recruited from the Brahmanas and yielded considerable authority.
  - The Buddhist text **Mahaparinibbana Sutta** mentions **Vassakara of Magadha**, who enabled **Ajatashatru** to conquer the **GanaSangha** of **Vajjis**.

Laws and Regulations

- **Legal** and **judicial** systems **replaced tribal laws.**
- The **social hierarchy** influenced **civil and criminal laws**.
  - Crimes committed by **Shudras** against the upper varnas were **severely punished**, but those against Shudras were treated more leniently.
- Royal agents administered law based on the **Dharmashastras**.
  - **Punishments** for **criminal offences** included scourging, beheading, etc.

SOCIETY UNDER THE MAGADH EMPIRE

Social Hierarchy

- The society was divided into **four varnas: Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas,** and **Shudras**.
- **Shudras** were excluded from high positions and were often designated as **slaves**, **artisans**, and **agricultural labourers**.
- A new social category, **untouchables**, emerged during this period.

Untouchables were **placed below** the **Shudras** in the social hierarchy.

- They were forced to **live** on the **fringes of the settlements**, subsisting on hunting and gathering.
- They were marginalised and given only **menial jobs**.
- They had their **own language**, which was **different** from that spoken by the **Indo-Aryans.**

Family Relations

- **Kinship ties** were considered **important** and were incorporated into the caste hierarchy.
- **Kula** denoted extended patrilineal family, while **Natakas** included both mother's and father's relatives.
- Extended kin groups were referred to as **Nati** and **Nati-Kulani.**

Status of Women

The society was **patriarchal,** and women were accorded **inferior status.**

- Endogamous **caste system** led to increased **subjugation of women**.
- Preference for sons over daughters continued as bearing sons was considered necessary for the continuation of lineage and the **performance** of the **funerary rites.**

ECONOMY UNDER THE MAGADH EMPIRE

Towns and Cities

Agricultural surplus, the growth of **crafts and trade**, and the **growing population** led to the emergence of towns in the Gangetic plains. This is called the **second urbanisation.**

- Towns were classified as **Pura or Nagara** (Fortified town or city), **Nagarka** (Small town), **and Nigama** (Market town).
- Different types of towns came into being:
  - **Political and administrative centres** such as Rajgriha, Shravasti, Kaushambi and Champa.
  - **Centres of trade and commerce** such as Ujjain and Taxila.
  - **Holy centres** such as Vaishali.

Village Settlement

The **Pali texts** (especially the **Vinay Pitaka**) suggest **three types** of villages (grama):

- **Typical villages:** These were inhabited by various caste communities and headed by **Gramabhojaka, Gramini, or Gramakas**.
- **Suburban villages** (craft villages): Carpenter's village (**Vaddhaki-grama**), Reedmaker's village (**Nalakara-grama**), and Saltmaker's village (**Lonakara-grama**).
- **Border villages** (Aramika-grama)

Trade and Transportation

- **Towns** were **strategically located** on the riverbanks and trade routes.
- Two major **trans-regional routes** were:
  - **Uttarapatha** (from the north-west across the **Indo-Gangetic** plains to the port city of **Tamralipti** on the Bay of Bengal).
  - **Dakshinapatha** (from **Pataliputra** in Magadha to **Pratishthana** on the Godavari and connected to ports on the western coast).
- **Maritime trade:** Pali texts also mention sea travel and trade throughout the subcontinent.
  - **Eastern regions:** Trade between **Bengal** and **Myanmar.**
  - **Western regions: Taxila** had trade relations with **Afghanistan**, **Iran,** and **Mesopotamia**.
  - **Rajabhatas** were **royal officials** to safeguard the lives and property of travellers.

Items Imported	Gold, lapis lazuli, jade, silver, etc.
Items Exported	Finished crafts, textile goods, sandalwood, pearls, etc.

- **Use of Money:**
  - **Panini's Ashtadhyayi** (which provides guidelines for writing and speaking Sanskrit) mentions **wage (Vetan)** and **wage-earners (Vaitanika),** denoting the use of money.
  - The **earliest coins** were **punch-marked** (metal pieces punched with marks of hill, tree, bull, fish, crescent, elephant, etc.) and made of **silver and copper.** They were issued around the 6th century BC by the Mahajanapadas.

Taxation

- The taxes were paid both in **cash** and **kind.**
- **Warriors** (Kshatriya) and **Priests** (Brahamana) were **exempted** from paying taxes, and the tax burden fell on the peasant class which comprised **Vaishyas** or **Grihapatis**.
  - **Bali became a compulsory tax,** with peasants paying **one-sixth** of the produce as tax.
- Generally, there were **no intermediaries** between peasants and the state.
  - **Taxes** were **assessed** and **collected** by **royal agents (Balisadhakas)**, often with the assistance of village headmen.
- **Peasants** were subjected to **forced labour** for royal projects and works, and **Artisans** were **obliged to work** for one day each month for the king.
- **Kammikas** (customs officials) and **Shaulkika/ Shulkadhyaksha** (toll officials) levied taxes on merchandise.
- Some villages were granted to **Brahmanas** (known as Brahmadeyas) and **Setthis** (big merchants). They had only revenue authority and did not have administrative authority over these villages.

Agriculture:

- It was the main economic activity in the villages.
- **Paddy transplantation** and the **use of iron ploughshare** substantially increased the yield.
  - **Rice** was their **staple cereal**. They also grew **barley**, **pulses**, **millets**, **cotton**, and **sugarcane**.
- **Grihapatis** (rich landlords) employed labourers called **Dasas** or **Karmakaras**.
- The smaller landowners were known as **Kassakas** or **Krishakas**.
- **Iron** played a **crucial role** in opening up forested and hard soil areas of the **mid-Gangetic basin** for cultivation and settlement. Iron tools have been discovered from **Kausambi.**
- Access to rich iron mines like **Mayurbhanj** and **Singhbhum** ensured a steady supply of tools.

Guild System

- **The Guild system** led to the **specialisation of crafts**. Guilds were led by a headman. These crafts were often **passed down hereditarily**.
- Artisans and merchants lived in **fixed localities in towns**.
  - Merchant Street was also known as **'Vessa'**

IRANIAN INVASION AND CONTACT

In the 6th century BC, fertile and rich natural resources attracted invaders from the north-west. **Weak leadership** and **political disunity** existed among the **small principalities** like Kambojas, Gandharas etc. They offered minimal resistance to the invaders, who later penetrated the area through **the Hindu Kush mountains.**

Achaemenian/Iranian Invasion

- **The Achaemenid king Cyrus (558–529 BC)** was the first ruler to invade the sub-continent.
- Later, **Persian king Darius** annexed the **Punjab** in **516 BC.**
- North west Indian subcontinent remained under Iranian rule until the invasion by Alexander the Great.

Takshashila or **Taxila** was part of the **Achaemenid Empire** of Persia.

- It was excavated in the 1940s by **Sir John Marshall**.
- **Panini** compiled his well-known work, **Ashtadhyayi** (written during **6th to 5th century BC**), in Taxila.

Results of Indo-Iranian Contact

Indo-Iranian contact lasted for almost two centuries and had both **economic and cultural impacts**.

- **Economic Impacts**
  - Trade and commerce enhanced between the regions evident from the **finding of Persian coins** in the **North West Frontier Province** region.
  - **Persian sigloi** (silver coin) were **imitations** from **Persia.**
  - The Indian word for coin **karsa** is of **Persian origin**. The coins might have been inspired by the Persian coins.
- **Cultural Impacts**
  - The introduction of the **Kharoshthi script**, which was derived from **Aramaic** (the official script of the Persian empire, written **right to left**). The two major rock edicts of Ashoka viz. **Mansehra** and **Sahbazgarhi** are in Kharosthi script.
  - **Iranian** artistic and **architectural** influence is evident in Maurya sculpture. Ashoka's **bell-shaped capitals,** especially the **Lion capital** of **Sarnath** and **Bull capital** of **Rampurva** pillars.
  - Specific terms and phrases in Ashoka's edicts reflect Iranian influence. **Eg:** for the **Iranian** term **"dipi,"** the Ashokan scribe use **'lipi.'**
- The **Greeks** learnt about **India's great wealth** through Iranians, contributing to Alexander's invasion of India.

Linguistic similarities between **Rig Veda** and **Avesta**.

- According to Indologist **Thomas Burrow**, only phonetic change had occurred over time.
- The **Bogaz Koi** (in North-East Syria) **Inscription** dating back to **1380 BC** records a **treaty** between a **Hittite and a Mitanni King**.
  - It mentions the names of **Rig Vedic gods**, such as Indara, Uruvna (Varuna), Mitira and Nasatiya (Ashvins).

ALEXANDER'S INVASION OF INDIA (327-326 BC)

Reason for Invasion

- **Greek-Iranian Conflict:** In the 4th century AD, the Greeks and Persians fought for world supremacy. After defeating the **Persian army**, the Macedonian conqueror **Alexander** marched towards India.
- **Disunity in North-West India** as it was divided into/ with numerous independent monarchies and tribal republics like **Taxila**, **Punjab** (Kingdom of **Porus**), and **Gandhara**. Thus, the **Khyber Pass** remained unguarded, thus an accessible route for invaders.
- **Wealth of India**, as described by Greek writers like **Herodotus**.

Alexander's Campaign

- Alexander's invasion of India **began in 326 BC** (during **Dhanananda's** reign) when he crossed **Khyber Pass** to enter India.
  - The **Jhelum River** marked the first strong **resistance from Porus**, an Indian prince.
  - Although Alexander **defeated Porus** in the **battle of Hydaspes** (on the bank of **Jhelum**), he was impressed by Porus's valour and **restored his kingdom**.
- Alexander **continued eastward** up to the **Beas River**, but his army refused to go further due to formidable power of **Magadha,** war-weariness, disease, and homesickness.
- Thus, Alexander was forced to retreat, ending his dream of an **eastern empire**. During his return, he died of typhoid in **Babylon**.

Effects of Alexander's Invasion

- **Political:**
  - Establishment of **Greek satrapies** in the north-western Indian subcontinent.
  - The number of **Greek** settlements **increased** in the conquered regions. **Eg:** Cities like **Alexandria** in the **Sindh** and **Kabul** region and **Boukephala** on the **Jhelum** (Peshawar in Pakistan).
  - Alexander's invasion **weakened the small states** in northwest India, paving the way for the expansion of the Maurya Empire.
- **Trade and Communication:** Established direct contact between **ancient Europe and South Asia**, particularly **India**, by opening up **four distinct routes** – three by land and one by sea.
- **Cultural development:** Establishment of **Gandhara school** of arts

6 Mauryan Empire

Introduction

The Maurya period started around **321 BC** and declined by **185 BC**. It marks the establishment of the **first subcontinental empire** and the development of innovative and stable governance strategies.

Sources to Study

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOURCES	LITERARY SOURCES
• Punch marked coins, Northern Black Polished Ware (**NBPW**). • Wooden Palace of Chandragupta Maurya in Pataliputra. • Ashokan inscriptions and Edicts. • **Junagarh Inscription** of Rudradaman I.	• **'Indika'** by Megasthenes. • **'Arthashastra'** by Kautilya. • Visakha Datta's '**Mudra Rakshasa**' • Dharmashastra texts, Puranas. • Buddhist Text (Jataka Stories, **Deepvamsa**, **Mahavamsa**, **Divyavadan**).

IMPORTANT RULERS

Chandragupta Maurya

- He **overthrew** the **Nanda dynasty** and established Maurya rule in **321 BC** with the help of **Chanakya** (Kautilya).
- Greek historians mention him as '**Sandrakottus**', a modified form of **Chandragupta.**

Chanakya

- He is also known as **Kautilya** and **Vishnugupta**.
- Contemporary Jain and Buddhist texts did not mention him, but **popular oral tradition** ascribes his wisdom and genius.
- He was the **author** of the **Arthasastra**, a treatise on political strategy and governance.
- The play **Mudrarakshasa** by **Visakhadatta** (**written during the Gupta period**) narrates Chandragupta's accession to the throne of the Magadha Empire and the exploits of his chief advisor, Chanakya.

War and Conquest

- He defeated the **Greek prefects** (military officials) left behind by **Alexander.**
- He defeated **Seleucus** (**Alexander's general**, who established his kingdom extending up to Punjab after the death of Alexander) in a battle around **301 BC,** driving him out of the Punjab region.
  - As per the peace agreement, Seleucus gave him **eastern Afghanistan**, **Baluchistan**, and the area west of the Indus.

Megasthenes

He was a Greek ambassador, sent by **Seleucus Nikator** to the court of **Chandragupta Maurya**. He lived in the **Mauryan capital** of **Pataliputra**.

- **He wrote Indica**, which describes the subcontinent's physical, administrative and cultural features.
- **Megasthenes** mentioned that **famine has never visited India**, and there has never been a general scarcity in the supply of nourishing food, even during the war.
- He states that there were **seven castes in Mauryan society**: artisans, farmers, warriors, philosophers, herders, magistrates, and council members.

Territorial Expansion

- He ruled the whole subcontinent, including Bihar, portions of Orissa and Bengal, western and northwestern India, and the Deccan except Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and parts of northeastern India.
- **Justin**, a **Greek writer**, claimed Chandragupta **conquered India** with a vast army.

Administration

Indica and the **Arthasastra** (compiled a few centuries after the Maurya rule) provide insights into the administration.

- The **Central government** had about two dozen departments controlling social and economic activities, particularly near the capital.
- The empire was divided into **several provinces** led by **royal family** members. **Provinces** were further divided into **smaller units**.

Army

- Their military might was **greater than Nandas**. **Pliny** (a Roman writer) mentions a **massive army** containing foot soldiers, cavalries, elephants, chariots, and the navy**.**
- The armed forces were managed by a board of **30 officers** divided into **six committees**, each overseeing different military branches - army, the cavalry, the elephants, the chariots, the navy, and transport.

Taxation

- **Agriculture** on newly cultivated land was **state-controlled.** It was done with the help of cultivators and sudra labourers, and taxes were collected on it.
- Taxes on peasants ranged from **one-fourth** to **one-sixth** of their produce, with the state charging for irrigation and levying tolls on commodities at town gates.
- The state **monopolised** mining, liquor sales, and arms manufacturing.

He probably renounced the world, and according to the **Jain tradition**, he spent his last years as an ascetic in **Chandragiri**, near **Sravanabelagola**, in **Karnataka**.

The Junagadh Inscription

It was carved during the reign of **Rudradaman** near **Girnar in Gujarat** and dates back to **130–150 CE**.

It refers to **Pushyagupta**, the provincial governor (Rashtriya) of Emperor Chandragupta.

It provides insights into:

- The **extent of the Mauryan Empire**, which had expanded as far west as Gujarat.
- It records the construction of **Sudarshana Lake** in the 4th century BC during the reign of **Chandragupta Maurya**. It was completed during the reign of Ashoka. The **Shaka ruler Rudradaman I** repaired the lake around 150 AD.

Bindusara

He succeeded his father, Chandragupta Maurya, in **297 BC**.

- He continued his father's tradition of **close interaction** with the **Greek states** of **West Asia**.
- Chanakya and other competent ministers continued to counsel him.
- He died in **272 BC,** and was succeeded by his son **Ashoka,** though he was **not his chosen successor.**

Ashoka

Ashoka succeeded the throne only **four years later, in 268 BC**. This indicates a **succession dispute** between Bindusara's sons.

- He converted to **Buddhism** and adopted a **pacifist policy.**
- Buddhist texts referred to him as **Chakravartin**.
- His reign marked **political unification** through one dharma, one language (**Prakrit**) and one script (**Brahmi**).

Inscriptions

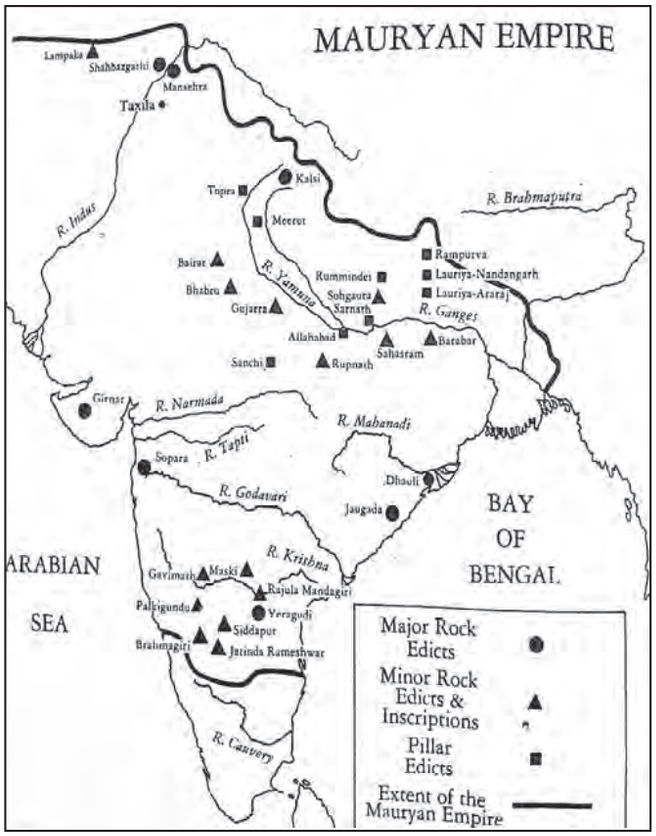
He was the first Indian king to speak directly to the people through inscriptions. They were generally placed on ancient highways and provided details about the empire's policies and extent.

- They were **engraved on rocks**, polished **stone pillars**, and **caves** and are found in the Indian subcontinent and Kandahar in Afghanistan.
- Inscriptions were primarily written in the **Magadhi** and **Prakrit languages** and in the **Brahmi** script. The Kandahar inscriptions are in **Greek and Aramaic languages**, while the two inscriptions in northwest Pakistan were in **Kharosthi script**.
- There are **33 edicts** comprising **14 Major Rock Edicts**, two known as **Kalinga edicts**, **7 Pillar Edicts**, some Minor Rock Edicts and a few Minor Pillar Inscriptions.
- The **Major Rock Edicts** extend from **Kandahar** in Afghanistan, **Shahbazgarhi** and **Mansehra** in north-west Pakistan to Uttarakhand in the north, **Gujarat** and **Maharashtra** in the west, **Odisha** in the east and as far south as **Karnataka** and Kurnool district in **Andhra Pradesh.**
- Minor pillar inscriptions were as far north as **Nepal** (near Lumbini).
- All the edicts began with a reference to the great king, **Devanampiya** (beloved of the gods) and **Piyadassi** (of pleasing looks). It referred to **Ashoka**.
- **James Prinsep** deciphered the **edicts of Ashoka in 1837**. He deciphered Brahmi and Kharosthi scripts used in the earliest inscriptions and coins. **[UPSC 2016]**

ROCK EDICTS	THEME
Major Rock Edict 1	Prohibition of animal sacrifice and holiday on festive gatherings.
Major Rock Edict 2	One of the functions of the state was to provide **medical care**. He ordered **hospitals** to be set up to treat **human beings** and **animals.**
Major Rock Edict 3	Officials, like the **Yuktas** (subordinate officials) and **Pradesikas** (heads of the districts), were to go on tours every five years to instruct people about **dhamma.**
Major Rock Edict 6	It expresses King's desire to be constantly informed about the people's conditions.
Major Rock Edicts 7 and 12	All religions should co-exist, and the ascetics of all religions should be honoured. **[UPSC 2020]**
Major Rock Edict 13	• It mentions the **war** with **Kalinga**. • It is important to understand the Asokan policy of Dhamma, which pleads for **conquest by Dhamma instead of War.**
Kalinga Rock Edict 1	The officials should recognise their responsibilities and strive to be impartial and just. He would send an officer every five years to verify if his instructions were carried out.
Maski edict	It mentioned that Ashoka had the inscriptions carved under '**Devanampiya**'.

Major Rock Edict [UPSC 2022]	State	Major Rock Edict [UPSC 2022]	State
Dhauli	Odisha	**Jaugada**	Odisha
Erragudi	Andhra Pradesh	**Kalsi**	Uttarakhand

Preventing **unnecessary slaughter** of animals and showing **respect for all living beings** was a recurrent theme in his edicts.



Kalinga War

The Kalinga War was a **punitive war** against Kalinga, which had broken away from the **Magadha Empire** (Hathigumpha inscription speaks of Kalinga as a part of the Nanda Empire).

Effects of War on Ashoka

- The war's brutality deeply affected him leading him to shift from physical occupation (**Bherighosha**) to cultural conquest and the promotion of dharma (**Dhammaghosha**).
- He now tried to conquer foreign dominions **ideologically** rather than **militarily** by taking steps for the welfare of men and animals in those areas.
  - He did not **wage any war** post-Kalinga war despite having sufficient resources.
  - He sent **ambassadors of peace** to Greek kingdoms in Western Asia and Greece.
- Though his approach appeared **pacifist**, he **did not abandon** the army or give up his claim on the acquired territory of **Kalinga**.
- He is known for his **peace policy**, non-aggression and cultural conquest. No one in Indian history had followed such a policy before him.

Contemporary Rulers of Ashoka with whom he had Exchanged Missions

- **Antiochus II Theos** of Syria (260-246 BC) was the grandson of **Selecus Nikator**.
- **Ptolemy III Philadelphus** of Egypt (285–247 BC)
- **Antigonus Gonatus** of Macedonia (276–239 BC)
- **Magas of Cyrene**, and **Alexander of Epirus**.

Religious Policy

- He followed a **tolerant religious policy** and did not impose Buddhism on his subjects. He made gifts to non-Buddhist and anti-Buddhist sects. **Barabar caves** were donated to **Ajivika** sects.
- Ashoka visiting Buddhist shrines is mentioned as **Dharmayatras** in his inscriptions.
- He convened the **Third Buddhist Sangha** (council) in **250 BC** in the capital **Pataliputra**.
  - An essential outcome of the sangha was to expand the reach of Buddhism to other parts of the region by sending missionaries.
- Many religions, castes and communities lived harmoniously in the Mauryan society.

Missionary Activities

- He sent missionaries to countries like Sri Lanka, Burma and Central Asia.
- He sent his children, **Mahinda** and **Sanghamitta**, to Sri Lanka to propagate Buddhism. They took a branch of the original **bodhi tree** to Sri Lanka.
- Brahmi inscriptions from the **2nd** and **1st centuries BC** have been found in Sri Lanka.

Ashoka's Administration

- He followed **paternal kingship** (King looked upon the subjects as his children).
- He made an appeal to all to follow **Dhamma**. The **Kandahar inscription** mentions the success of his **policy of Dhamma.**
- Appointed a class of **officers** (**Rajukas**) for the **administration of justice** and **Dharma-mahamatras** for propagating dharma among various social groups.
- He forbade the **killing of certain birds** and **animals** and altogether **prohibited the slaughter** of animals in the capital.
- His **Dhamma** had the broad objective of maintaining the **social order**. These include **obeying the parents**, **respecting the Brahmanas** and **Buddhist monks**, and showing **mercy to slaves and servants**.
  - He held that if the people behaved well, they would attain heaven, but never mentioned **nirvana**, which was the goal of Buddhist teachings.
- To check the oppressive rule, he introduced the **rotation of officers** in **Tosali** (Kalinga), **Ujjain** and **Taxila**.

Rumendei Pillar Inscription of Ashoka (Lumbini, Nepal): The inscription is in **Brahmi script** and **Prakrit language**. Ashoka visited and worshipped the place, as Shakyamuni was born there.

Ashoka died in **231 BC**. After his death, the Mauryan Empire slowly disintegrated and died out. **Pushiyamitra Sunga** (a Mauryan general) killed the **last Mauryan king**, **Brihadratha** and usurped the throne of Patliputra.

Causes of Decline

- **Brahmanical reaction:** The **anti-sacrifice** attitude of **Ashoka** and **Buddhism** resulted in a loss to Brahmans as they received gifts during sacrifices.
- **Financial strain** due to the vast **army**, **bureaucracy**, and **large grants** to Buddhist monks.
- Oppressive rule in provinces led to revolts. During **Bindusara**'s reign, citizens of **Taxila** complained about the misrule of **Dushtamatyas** (wicked bureaucrats).
- Ashoka's focus on **missionary activities** led him to overlook the importance of protecting the **northwest frontier**. As a result, the **region was left vulnerable** to potential threats and attacks.
- Economic advancement and the spread of material culture led to the rise of new kingdoms.

MAURYAN ADMINISTRATION

Brahmanical law books emphasise that kings should follow **Dharmasastras** and **local customs**.

- Kautilya called the king **Dharmapravartaka** (promulgator of social order) and advised him to promote dharma when the varnas and ashram-based social order crumbled.
- Ashoka, in his inscriptions, affirmed the **supremacy** of royal orders.

Central Administration

- The **capital region** of **Pataliputra** was directly administered. The rest of the empire was divided into **four provinces** based at **Suvarnagiri** (near Kurnool in Andhra Pradesh), **Ujjain** (Avanti, Malwa), **Taxila** in the north-west, and **Tosali** in Odisha in the south-east.
- They had an **extensive bureaucracy**. Each department had a **large staff** of **superintendents** and **subordinate officers** linked to the central and local governments.
- The king headed the administration, assisted by a council of ministers, a **purohita** or priest, and **secretaries** known as **mahamatriyas**.
- **An espionage system** was established to gather intelligence and oversee officers.
  - The **Arthashastra** recommends that the **spies** work in disguise.
- **Hierarchy and Salaries**

- Important officials called '**tirthas**' received salaries in cash.
- Enormous disparities existed in salaries, with high-ranking functionaries like **Mantrin** (ministers), high priests (**Purohita**), commanders-in-chief (**Senapati**), and crown princes (**Yuvaraja**) earning as much as 48,000 panas and lowest officers receiving 60 panas or as little as 10 or 20 panas.

Pana equals three-fourths of a tola.

Provincial Administration

- **Governors**, who were typically royal princes, oversaw the provinces.
- In each region, the revenue, judicial administration and bureaucracy of the Mauryan state were replicated to achieve a **uniform system of governance**.

SEVEN ELEMENTS OF KAUTILYA'S SAPTANGA THEORY	
Svamin	The King
Durg	Fortified Capital
Janapada	Territory and Population
Danda/Bala	Army Or Force
Amatya	The Secretary
Kosha	The Treasury
Mitra	Ally

District and Village Administration

- The **district** was under the command of a **Sthanika**, and **Gopas** were in charge of five to ten villages.
- Villages were **semi-autonomous** and were under the authority of a **Gramani** (appointed by the central government) and a council of village elders.
- **Urban administration** was handled by a **Nagarika**.

Judicial Administration

- Justice was administered through courts established in all the major towns. **Two types of courts** existed:
  - The **Dharmasthiya courts** dealt with **civil law** relating to marriage, inheritance, etc. They were presided over by **three judges** well-versed in **sacred laws** and **three Amatyas** (secretaries).
  - **Kantakasodhana** (removal of thorns) **courts** were also presided over by three judges and three Amatyas. They were established to clear society of **anti-social elements** and crimes. It functioned like the **modern police** and relied on a network of spies.
- **Punishments for crimes** were usually **quite severe**.

ECONOMY

The economy had developed **beyond subsistence production** to a sophisticated level of commercial craft production.

- The state appointed **superintendents** (**Adhyakshas**) to regulate economic activities like agriculture, trade, crafts, mining, etc..

Source of Revenue

- State control over **agricultural production** and marketing.
- Additional levies included **customs and tolls** on goods carried for **commerce**, taxes on land (**Bhaga**), taxes on irrigation (if supplied by the state), taxes on **urban homes**, and coinage earnings.
- The state held a monopoly over lands owned by the king (**Sita-**revenue from crown land), forests, mines and salt.

Taxation System

- They introduced a complex system of taxation and **emphasised** on the **assessment of revenue**. An elaborate machinery for assessment **first appear** in the Mauryan period.
- Revenue collection was the responsibility of a **Samaharta** (collector-general) who was also in charge of the exchequer. He had to supervise all the **provinces**, **fortified towns**, mines, forests, trade routes and others, which were the sources of revenue.
- The **Samaharta** was the highest officer in charge of assessment, and **Sannidhata** was the chief custodian of the state treasury and storehouse.
- Taxes were also collected in kind, with rural storehouses serving as famine relief.

Currency and Market Exchange

- **Uniform currency** facilitated market exchange across regions.
- **Punch-marked Silver coins (Pana)** were the imperial currency which aided **tax collection** and **payments of officers in cash.**
- Silver coins were known as **Karshpana**. They do not specify the issuing authority or carry any symbols associated with Mauryan kings.
- **Pana** and its sub-divisions were the most commonly used currencies.

Agriculture

- It had the highest **share in total revenue** to the state and **employment**.
- The **Greeks** mentioned **growing two crops** annually in India because of the fertility of the soil.

- **Food grains** and **commercial crops** such as sugarcane and cotton were grown. **Megasthenes** mentions a reed that produced honey (sugarcane) and a tree on which wool grew (cotton).
- The state provided **irrigation** and managed water distribution. **Magasthenes** mentions that officers measured the **land** as in **Egypt** and inspected the channels meant to distribute water.
- **Arthasastra** mentions that the **employment of slaves in agriculture** emerged during this period.
  - State-maintained farms on which slaves and hired workers were employed. **War captives** of the **Kalinga War** were employed in agriculture.
  - Labour (slaves and hired labour) was provided by the **dasa-karmakaras.**

Arthashastra on Slaves [UPSC 2022]

- When a child is **begotten on a female slave** by her master, both the child and its mother shall at once be recognized as free.
- If a son born to a female slave was fathered by her master, the son was entitled to the legal status of the master's son.

  - However, **Megasthenes did not** notice **slaves** in India.

Crafts and Goods

- **Spinning** and **weaving**, mostly of cotton fabrics was the second most crucial occupation after agriculture.

The **Arthasastra** refers to the **regions** producing distinctive and specialised varieties of fabrics. These include – **Kasi** (Benares), **Vanga** (Bengal), **Kamarupa** (Assam), **Madurai** and others.

- The king and royal court members wore clothes embroidered with **gold** and **silver**. **Silk** was generally referred to as **Chinese silk,** indicating the **extensive trade carried** on in the Mauryan Empire.
- Metalworks include the use of iron, copper and other metals.

Iron smelting was known for many centuries; however, there was a great technological improvement after about 500 BC, making it possible to **smelt iron** in **furnaces** at very high temperatures.

- **Woodwork** includes ship-building, making carts and chariots, house construction and so on.
- **Luxury goods** like gold and silver articles, jewellery, perfumes and carved ivory, were produced.

Crafts were urban-based **hereditary occupations** with sons usually following their fathers. Craftsmen mostly worked as individuals, though **royal workshops** also existed.

- Each craft had a **head** called **Pamukha** (pramukha or leader) and a **Jettha** (jyeshtha or elder) and was organised in a **Seni (sreni or a guild)** to ensure institutional identity which superseded the individual in craft production.
- Disputes between **Srenis** were resolved by a **Mahasetthi**.

Trade

- Trade occurred in a **hierarchy of markets** - village market, between villages and towns within a district, across cities and kingdoms.
- Transportation of goods:
  - Throughout **northern India,** the **rivers** in the Gangetic plains were major means for transporting goods. **Roads** carried goods overland even further west and connected cities and markets in the **southeast** and **southwest**, passing through towns like Vidisha and Ujjain.
- Merchant groups travelled together as a **caravan** for security, led by a caravan leader (**Mahasarthavaha**), undertaking long-distance **overland trade**.
- To prevent fraud, urban markets and craftsmen were monitored and controlled.
- **Overseas trade** by **ships** was carried with countries like Sri Lanka, Burma and the Malay Archipelago. The ships, however, were probably **relatively small**. **Buddhist Jataka** tales refer to the long voyages undertaken by merchants.
- The **Arthasastra** has a list of the goods both agricultural and manufactured, which were traded in internal and foreign trade.
- **Greek sources** confirm the trade links with the west through the Greek states to Egypt. Indigo, ivory, tortoise shell, pearls and perfumes and rare woods were all exported to Egypt.

Spread of Material Culture

- The new material culture was reflected through the intensive **use of iron**, **punch-marked coins**, **Northern Black Polished Ware pottery, burnt bricks** and **ring wells** and the rise of towns in northeastern India.

New settlements were established with the help of **cultivators** (Vaisyas) and **Sudra labourers** who were taken from overpopulated areas to bring the virgin soil under cultivation.

- They were allowed **remission in tax** and supplied with **cattle**, **seeds** and **money**.

- The use of **soak pits** and **ring wells** allowed settlements to shift away from the river. This appeared

first under Mauryas and spread to other parts of the empire.

- These conditions led to the flowering of towns in the different parts of the empire.
- **Arrian** (a Greek writer) provied an account of the existence of multiple cities

Pataliputra was a large and wealthy city situated at the **confluence** of the **Ganga** and **Son rivers**.

- There were many **grand palaces** in the city, which had a large population.
- The **city administration** had **six committees**, each with **five members**, overseeing functions like sanitation, care of foreigners, birth and death registration, and weights and measures regulation**.**
- It had monumental architecture, like the many-pillared hall made under the Ashoka.
- **Megasthenes** mentions the wooden structures at Pataliputra and states that **Patliputra** was as splendid as the **capital of Iran**.

Art and Culture

The Mauryas introduced **stone masonry** on a large scale.

- **Stonework** (stone carving and polishing) had evolved as a highly skilled craft, as seen in the stone sculptures in the **stupa** at **Sanchi** and the highly polished **Chunar stone** used for Ashoka's Pillars.
  - Fragments of stone pillars and stumps indicate the existence of an 80-pillared hall, which was discovered at **Kumrhar (Patna).**
  - **Shining** of **polished stone pillars** were identical to Northern Black Polished Ware. Each pillar was made of a single sandstone, and their capital was joined with a pillar on top.

Literature

- Most of the literature and art of the period have not survived.
  - **Buddhist** and **Jain** texts were primarily written in **Pali.**
  - **Sanskrit language** and **literature** were enriched by **Panini** (500 BC) and **Katyayana** (contemporary of the Nandas; wrote a commentary on Panini's work).
- The **Arthasastra** notes the **performing arts of the period**, including music, bards, dance and theatre.
- **Pictorial representation of cities** is found in the sculptures in Sanchi, portraying royal processions and cities.

Important Officers

Sitadhyaksha	Supervised agriculture	**Bandhanagaradhyaksha**	looked after the jail
Pautavadhyaksha	Superintendent of weight and measure	**Panyadhyaksha**	Incharge of trade and commerce
Lohadhyaksha, Sauvarnika	Looked after goods manufactured in the centres.	**Dandapala**	Head of Police
Nava Adhyaksha	Superintendent of ships	**Sulkaadhyaksha**	Collector of tolls
Annapala	Head of Food Grains Department	**Durgapal**	Head of Royal Fort
Koshadhyaksha	Treasury Officer	**Akaradhyaksha**	Mining Officer
Nayaka	City Security Chief	**Vyabharika**	Chief Judge
Karmantika	Head of Industries and Factories	**Ayudhagaradhyaksha**	Look production and maintenance of a variety of armaments
Swarn Adhyaksha	Officer of Gold Department	**Kupyadhyaksha**	Officer of Forest

7 Central Asian Contact

Introduction

The post-Mauryan period witnessed many historical, political, and cultural changes, marked by a shift in political focus from **Magadha** to **North-Western India.**

- In India's **eastern** and **central** regions, Mauryan rule was succeeded by native dynasties like the **Shungas, Kanvas,** and **Satavahanas.**
- In **north-western** India, **Central Asian** ruling dynasties took the stage, with the **Kushans** becoming prominent.

INDO-GREEKS

Early Greek Contact with India

- India's interaction with the Greeks began with the invasion of north-western India by **Alexander** (327–325 BC).
- **Selucus Nicator** (Alexander's general) established his rule from **Turkey** to the **Indus** River. Later, **Chandragupta Maurya** defeated Seleucus and they entered into a **marriage alliance.**
- **Bindusara** maintained relations with the **Antiochus of Syria.**
- **Asokan Rock Edict 13** mentions **five Yona/Yavana kings,** indicating deep ties with the Greeks.
- It is argued that the elaborate **administrative institutions of the Mauryan Empire** drew inspiration from the administrative systems of the **Persians** and **Greeks**.
- Luxury items like **ivory, pearls, indigo**, aromatic substances like **spikenard** (a fragrant oil from the Gangetic region) and **malabathrum** (leaf of cinnamon) were exported from India.

The Indo-Greek Kingdom

- They were also known as the **Indo-Bactrians** or **Yavana Kingdom**.
- It covered the Northwestern part of the Indian Subcontinent, which included some parts of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran.
- The Indo-Greeks were the **first** to invade India and advanced as far as **Ayodhya (Saketa)** and **Pataliputra.**

Causes of Indo-Greek Invasion

- The **Seleucid Empire** began to weaken and disintegrate after 250 BC. Seleucid emperor **Antiochus III** moved down to the Kabul River and defeated the local Indian king, **Subhagasena,** paving the way for their Indian invasion.
- With the building of the **Great Wall of China**, the **Scythian** tribes pushed towards the Greek and Parthian regions. This forced the Bactrian Greeks to move towards India.

Indo-Greek Coins

Coinage was the distinguishing feature of the Indo-Greeks.

- Indo-Greeks were the **first** to issue **gold coins.**
- Indo Greeks were the **first** to issue coins which can be **definitely attributed** to the **kings**.
  - The coins carried the **portrait of the reigning king** on one side with his name.

Important Rulers

DEMETRIUS II (180 BC)

- **Demetrius II** probably, was the first known Indo-Greek king.
- He attacked India in **180 BC** and probably had a conflict with **Pushyamitra Shunga**.
- He extended Bactrian rule to the **south** of the **Hindu Kush.**
- He issued **bi-lingual square coins** with **Greek on the obverse** and **Kharosthi** on the **reverse**.

MENANDER (165/145–130 BC)

- He is considered the most important Indo-Greek ruler, ruling a large part of northwest India, ranging
- from the valleys of the Kabul and Indus rivers to as far as western Uttar Pradesh.
- On coins, he was described as **"king"** and **"soter" or saviour**, not a great conqueror.
- He embraced **Buddhism** under the guidance of **Nagasena.** Buddhist work **'Milinda Panho'** is a discussion between **Menander** and **Nagasena.**
- He had his capital at **Sakala** (modern Sialkot, Pakistan).
- **Conquests:**
- Successfully attacked Patliputra but did not consolidate.
- **King Kharavela** of **Kalinga** failed to stop him **as per the Hathigumpha Inscription.**

ANTIALCIDAS:

- His emissary, **Heliodorus,** was sent to the court of **Bhagabhadra,** where he erected a pillar (Garuda-Dhvaja) in **Vidisha** with its capital adorned by a figure of **Garuda,** in honour of **God Krishna.**
- Later, Heliodorus adopted **Vaishnavism.**

Arrival of Central Asian Tribes

The Indo-Greeks were ousted by nomadic tribes, the **Sakas (Scythians), Parthians (Pahlavis)** and **Kushanas (Yueh-chi** or **Yuezhi tribes in Chinese)** from Central Asia.

- This was due to a complex sequence of migrations and political developments in Central Asia.
  - The **Yueh-Chi,** in the eastern part of Central Asia, were pushed westward after the **Chinese** built the **Great Wall** to protect their villages.
  - The Yueh-chi turned westward and **pushed the Sakas towards eastern Iran**, where the Parthians had become rulers following the collapse of the Seleucid empire.
  - In 58 BC, the independent **Parthian kingdom of eastern Iran** was established by **Vonones.**

THE SHAKAS

The Shakas were **pushed back** from eastern Iran by the Parthian ruler **Mithradates** (188–123 BC). Thus, they **turned** to **north-western India** and settled between the Indus Valley and Saurashtra.

- The Shakas were organised into **five branches** with different power centres. These were **Afghanistan**, **Punjab**, **Mathura**, **Western India** and **Upper Deccan.**
- The **first** Saka ruler in India was **Maues, or Moa/ Moga** (20 BC to 22 AD). He occupied Gandhara, but it was his successor, **Azes,** who finally destroyed the Indo-Greek kingdoms and extended Saka rule as far as Mathura.

Administration

- Provincial governors (**Kshatrapas or Satraps**) were appointed to administer territories, many of whom became **virtually independent** rulers.
- **Rudradaman I (130–150 AD)** was an important **Shaka Kshtrapa.** He governed **Sindh, Gujarat, Konkan, Narmada Valley, Malwa**, and **Kathiawar.**
  - He repaired the **Sudarshana Lake** (Kathiawar), which was used for irrigation.
  - The rock **inscription** of **Junagadh (Gujarat)** mentioned that he **defeated the Satavahanas** in battle.
  - He was the **first** to issue a **long inscription in Sanskrit**, indicating his fondness for the language.

Society

- They adopted Hindu names and religious beliefs, and their **coins** represented **Hindu Gods** on one side.
- **Patanjali** in his **Mahabhasya** refers to the **Shakas as 'Anirvasita (pure) Shudras'**.

Decline: The King of Ujjain expelled the Shakas around 57-58 BC, after which he adopted the title **Vikramaditya** (for the **first time**). This victory commences the era of **Vikrama Samvat in 57 BC**, making "Vikramaditya" a prestigious title.

THE PARTHIANS (PAHLAVAS)

They originally resided in **Iran** and migrated to India. The Parthians succeeded the Shaka rule, with both groups mentioned as **Shaka-Pahlavas** in ancient Indian Sanskrit texts. Their **presence** in India was **limited** compared to the Greeks and Shakas.

Gondophernes

He was an important **Parthian king** during the 1st century AD.

- He **displaced Shakas** and conquered **Kabul** (43 AD) but later lost it to the Kushanas.

THE KUSHANAS

Kushans were one of the five clans of the Yuechi tribe. They were also known as **Yuechis or Tocharians**, who succeeded the Parthians and Scythians.

Geographical Expanse

- Originating from north Central Asia near China, they occupied **Bactria (North Afghanistan)** by displacing the Shakas.
- Their empire encompassed territories from the **River Oxus (Amu Darya) to the Ganges,** spanning Khorasan (Central Asia), Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and northern India.

Dynasties within Kushanas

There were two successive Kushan dynasties:

- The **first Kushana Dynasty** was under **Kadphises I** (issued coins south of Hindukush and **minted copper** coins) and **Kadphises II** (issued a large number of **gold coins** and spread the kingdom east of the Indus River). They ruled from about 50 AD.
  - **Khujula Kadphises** was the first Kushan king who conquered Afghanistan. He was followed by **Wima Kadphises**.
  - These two kings extended their territory to Gandhara, Punjab and as far to the east as the **Ganga-Jumna doab** up till Mathura.
  - **Mathura** was their second capital in India (the **first being** Purushpura or **Peshawar**).
  - The **early Kushan** kings issued **gold coins with even higher gold** content than is found in **the Gupta coins.**
- The **second Kushana Dynasty** was founded by **Kanishka,** who extended Kushan power to upper India and lower Indus basin.

KANISHKA

- He was the **son of Kadphises II** and was the most famous Kushana king, under whose reign the Kushana empire reached its zenith.
- The **Rabatak Inscription** (in modern Baghran province, Afghanistan) presents valuable information on Kanishka. It mentions that he adopted the title of **'Devputra'** and has been shown wearing a **'peaked helmet'** on some coins.
- Kanishka's coins and his **headless statue** found near **Mathura** show him dressed in a **belted tunic** along with an overcoat and wearing boots, testifying to his **Central Asian origins**.
- He started an era around 78 AD, which is now known as the **Shaka era.** This era is used in the **Indian National calendar.**

Geographical Expanse

- The empire expanded from Central Asia to Afghanistan and north-western India, further east into the Ganga valley and southwards into the Malwa region, and included Varanasi, Kaushambi, and Shravasti in Uttar Pradesh and Sanchi in Madhya Pradesh.
  - The **centre** of this huge empire was **Bactria,** as evident in the use of the Bactrian language in Kanishka's coins and inscriptions.

The Decline of the Kushan Empire: In the mid-third century, the **Sassanians** from **Iran** overtook the Kushan Empire in Afghanistan and west of the Indus. With the decline of the empire, the **satraps** set themselves up as **independent rulers.**

SOCIO-CULTURAL IMPACT OF CENTRAL ASIAN CONTACT

Polity

- **Feudal organisation** developed as they imposed their rule on various native princes. **The Sakas,** along with the Parthians, introduced the **Satrap system of government,** which was similar to that of the Achaemenid and Seleucid systems in Iran, under which the empire was divided into numerous **satrapies.**
- Unusual practises like **hereditary dual rule** developed, where two kings ruled jointly.
  - Evidence of father and son ruling jointly had been found, which also indicates a lesser degree of centralisation.
- The practice of **military governorship** was also **introduced** probably by the Greeks. These governors were known by the title of **Strategos.**
  - They were important for two reasons : (a) for maintaining the power of the rulers over the indigenous people and (b) for blocking invasions from the northwest.
- In the coins, Kushana rulers are referred to titles as **'king of kings', 'Caesar', and 'lord of all lands',** signifying their collection of tributes from numerous small princes.
  - They reinforced the notion of the **divine origin** of kingship by adopting titles like '**sons of God'** to legitimise royal authority.

Economy

- India received a significant amount of **gold** from the **Altai mountains** in Central Asia. Trade with the Roman Empire may have also brought gold to India.
  - Indo-Greeks were the **first rulers in India to issue gold coins** widely.

- Their coins were of the **highest quality** and conformed to the weight standards of Roman coins.

- **Kushan copper coins** in India imitated Roman coins.
- Greek coins were **better shaped and stamped,** marking an **improvement over punch-marked** coins.
- **Kushan** controlled the **Silk Route** (a trade route spanning China, Central Asia, Afghanistan, Iran, and Western Asia) and **toll collection** along this route was a **substantial source of income**.
- The Kushans **promoted agriculture**, with early traces of **large-scale irrigation** in regions like Pakistan, Afghanistan, and western Central Asia.

Karakoram Highway

- The artefacts found along the **Karakoram Highway** establish that this was the route taken by **Buddhist monks travelling to China** to spread Buddhism. Merchants followed the missionaries, so this became a major commercial route **for importing Chinese silk and horses** from the West into India.
- The **rock of Hunza** (on the Karakoram highway project) mentions the first two **Kadphises** and the Kusanadevaputra **Kaniska**.
  - This inscription confirms that Kanishka's empire stretched from Central Asia to eastern India.
  - Buddhist sources record that he had conquered Magadha, Kashmir and Khotan in Sinkiang.

Improved Warfare: The Shakas and Kushans introduced better cavalry and the use of the **riding horse** on a large scale.

- They also introduced **turban, tunic, trousers,** and **long coats**. They also brought **caps, helmets, and boots** for warriors. This gave them an advantage in warfare in Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India.

Society: Central Asian Rulers became **entirely Indianized** and **absorbed into Indian society as a warrior class (Kshatriyas)**. Manu explained their status as second-class kshatriyas, having deviated from their duties.

Religious Developments

Kushan rulers showed reverence to **Shiva, Vishnu and Buddha.**

- Images of Shiva and Vishnu appeared on the Kushan coins, with some explicitly worshipping Vishnu, like the Kushan ruler **Vasudeva,** a synonym for Krishna.
- The Origin of **Mahayana Buddhism**
  - Buddhism in its original form was too puritanical and abstract. It evolved into Mahayana, in which the **image of Budhha was worshipped.** This was due to increased trade and the arrival of Central Asians.

Kanishka and Buddhism

- He hosted the **fourth Buddhist council at Kundalvana in Kashmir (conducted in Sanskrit)**, where Mahayana Buddhism's doctrines were finalised and Buddhist literature in copper inscriptions was preserved and enclosed in a stupa to commemorate the Buddha's teachings.
  - He also supported the **missions sent to China** to preach Buddhism.
- He patronised Buddhist philosophers such as **Asvaghosha, Parsva,** and **Vasumitra,** as well as the great Buddhist teacher **Nagarjuna.**
- Kanishka constructed a massive **stupa** in **Peshawar (Purushpur).**
- His coins reflected his **religious tolerant** nature. These coins featured a mix of Indian, Greek, and Zoroastrian deities.

Art and Architecture

- Art flourished partly due to **royal patronage** and partly due to **factors** like the growing ascendancy of **Mahayana Buddhism**, which allowed the representation of the Buddha in human form. The Kushana empire brought together artisans trained in various schools, resulting in the emergence of art schools like **Gandhara,** and **Mathura**.
  - The **influence of Gandhara art extended to Mathura.** Buddha's sculptures and the **famous headless statue** of **Kanishka** found in **Mathura** were inspired by it.
- Distinct plain and polished **redware pottery** was prevalent.

Language and Literature

They patronised **Sanskrit** literature.

- The earliest specimen of the **Kavya style** (written in pure Sanskrit) was found in the **Junagarh inscription** of **Rudraman** in Kathiawar in about **150 AD**.
- **Ashvaghosha** composed the **first Sanskrit play, Sariputraprakarana**, in nine acts, **Buddhacharita** and **Saundarananda**.
- The great dramatist **Bhasa** (his work '**Urubhanga**' deals with story of Duryodhana during and after his fight with Bhima) most probably belonged to this period.
- Among the Hindu treatises, we find the **Manusmriti, Vatsyayana's Kamasutra** and **Kautilya's Arthasastra** taking final shape by the **second century AD.**
- Mahayana Buddhism led to the composition of **Avadanas** (centring on the Buddha's explanations of events by a person's worthy deeds in a previous life)**, texts written in Buddhist-hybrid Sanskrit** to

convey Mahayana teachings. Some books of this genre include **Mahavastu** and the **Divyavadana**.

- Indian **theatre** possibly borrowed elements like **indoor** and **outdoor theatres, curtains (Yavanika)**, and a **rest house for actresses.**

Science and Technology

- Greek terms related to **planetary movements** were incorporated into Sanskrit texts.
- **Charaka** and **Sushruta** were notable Indian scholars in medicine and surgery, respectively. Charaka's **Charakasamhita** contained numerous **plant and herb names** used for medicinal purposes.
- **Glass-making** made significant progress during this period, influenced by foreign ideas and practices.

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8 The Satavahanas

Introduction

Satavahanas rose in the **1st century BC** in the **Deccan** region. They were the **native successors** of the **Mauryans** in Deccan and Central India.

- They are believed to be identical to the **Andhras** mentioned in the Puranas. The Satavahana kings are referred to as "**Andhrabhrityah**." This term likely referred to an Andhra tribe.
- They ruled over parts of **Andhra, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Madhya Pradesh.**
  - The Satavahanas started to rule in the Telangana area and then moved to Maharashtra to rule in the Godavari basin, with **Prathistan** (**Paithan** in Maharashtra) as their **capital**. Later, they moved eastwards to control **coastal Andhra**.

The **earliest Satavahana inscriptions** date to the **1st century BC** when they defeated the **Kanvas** and established power in parts of central India, mainly **north Maharashtra** and the **upper Godavari valley**.

IMPORTANT RULERS

Simuka	**Founder** of the Satvahana dynasty.
Gautamiputra Satakarni (106-130 AD)	• He defeated Shaka ruler **Nahapana** and reissued Nahapana's coins with his royal insignia. • **Nashik inscription** of his mother, Gautami Balashri**,** calls him the conqueror of Shakas, Pahlavas, and Yavanas. • He performed the Vedic **Asvamedha sacrifice.** • He assumed the **titles of Raja-Raja** (King of Kings) and **Maharaja** (Great King) and was described as the **Lord of Vindhya**.
Vasishthiputra Pulumavi (130-154 AD)	• He was the son and successor of Gautamiputra Satakarni. • He established his **capital at Paithan** on the **Godavari**.
Yagnashri Satakarni (165-194 AD)	• He was the brother of Vashishtiputra Satakarni and the **last significant Satavahana king**. He recovered north Konkan and Malwa from the Shakas. • Issued **coins** with a **ship motif**, indicating the importance of overseas trade during his reign.
King Hala	Wrote **Gatha Sattasai** (Prakrit), a collection of 700 love poems with a theme similar to Sangam poetry.

MATERIAL CULTURE OF SATAVAHANA

Metallurgy

- They used **iron tools** and extracted Iron ores from **Karimnagar** and **Warangal** in Telangana**.**
- They have used **gold as bullion** as they **didn't issue gold coins.**
  - They mainly **used Lead, Potin**, **Copper**, and **Bronze for making coins.**
  - Evidence of ancient **gold workings** is found in the **Kolar fields**.

Potin is a base metal alloy used in coins. It is typically a **mixture of copper, tin and lead** (in varying proportions) and does not typically contain significant precious metals.

AGRICULTURE AND ECONOMY

- **Paddy transplantation** and **Cotton production** in the area between the Krishna and the Godavari.
- The increase in trade was reflected by numerous Roman and Satvahana coins found in the region. This brought many merchants and artisans to the forefront.

They made **generous donations to the Buddhist cause** and set up small memorial tablets.
    - **Gandhikas** or the perfumers were repeatedly mentioned as donors. At a later stage, the term **Gandhika** denoted all kinds of shopkeepers.
- **Towns developed** in Maharashtra by **the first century BC** and later in eastern Deccan.

Pliny (Italy) mentioned that Andhra included 30 walled towns and numerous villages.

SOCIAL ORGANISATION

The Satavahanas originally seemed to have been a **tribe** of the **Deccan.** However, they were **Brahmanized,** as evident from the claims of **Gautamiputra Satakarni** to be a **Brahmana.** He boasted of **re-establishing the four-fold varna system**.

Matrilineal Aspects

- King's names were often **derived from their mothers**, like **Gautamiputra** and **Vashishthiputra**.
- Some inscriptions were issued under the authority of both the king and his mother.
- While exhibiting **matrilineal elements**, the Satavahana ruling family had a **patriarchal succession** to the throne.

ADMINISTRATION

Satvahanas followed the ideals of **Dharmashastras**. The **king** was portrayed as the **upholder of dharma**, having **divine attributes**.

Administrative Structures

- Some administrative structures from Ashokan times were retained.
    - Officials were known as **Amatyas** and **Mahamatras**.
    - High officials were called **Maharashtrikas**.
- New administrative divisions called **Rashtra** were introduced, while the districts were called **Ahara.**

Feudatories and Local Authority

- The kingdom had **three grades** of feudatories:
    - Primary among them was the **Raja,** who had the right to strike coins.
    - Others included **Mahabhoja** and **Senapati**.
    - The **Senapati** (commander-in-chief) was appointed as **provincial governor** to control tribal areas.
- Administration in the **rural areas** was under **Gaulmika**, who was the head of a military regiment.
- **Kataka** and **Skandhavara** denoted **military camps and settlements**. These served as administrative centres so long as the king was there. It represented the **military character** of their rule.

Pliny mentioned that the Andhra kingdom had a **large army** consisting of infantry, cavalry and elephants.

Land Grants and Tax-Free Villages

- They started the practise of granting **tax-free lands to Brahmanas and Buddhist monks** that helped priestly groups attain higher status.

Naneghat inscriptions (Maharashtra) refer to **tax exemptions** given to the lands granted to Buddhist monks.

- The land donations resulted in creating a group of people who did not cultivate but owned land, leading to the development of **land-based social hierarchy** and **divisions in the society**.
- The **Brahmans** helped to enforce the rule of the varna system, making society stable.

RELIGION

- They **performed Vedic sacrifices** like "**Ashvamedha**" and "**Vajapeya**," and worshipped **Vaishnava Gods**, including Krishna and Vasudeva.
- **Promotion of Buddhism**
    - **Mahayana Buddhism** gained a **significanct following**, particularly among the artisan class.
    - **Nagarjunakonda** and **Amaravati** in Andhra Pradesh became **important Buddhist centres** under the Satavahanas and their successors, the Ikshvakus.
    - Buddhism also flourished in western Deccan areas like **Nasik** and **Junar** in Maharashtra, possibly with the support of traders.

ARCHITECTURE

Rock-Cut Chaityas and Monasteries

- **Numerous chaityas** (sacred shrines) and **monasteries** were carved out of **solid rock** in north-western Deccan or Maharashtra, like **Karle chaitya** in western Deccan.
- Three **viharas in Nasik** carry **Nahapana** and **Gautamiputra inscriptions**, dating around 1st to 2nd century AD.

Buddhist Stupas in Andhra

- **Construction of Amaravati** Stupa started around **200 BC** but was fully reconstructed in the latter half of the second century AD.
- **Nagarjunakonda** thrived during the second and third centuries under the patronage of the Ikshvakus, successors of the Satavahanas.

- This site contained both **Buddhist monuments** and **early Brahmanical brick temples**.
- The Satavahanas contributed greatly to the **embellishment of the Buddhist stupa of Sanchi**. It was repaired under King Satakarni II.

LANGUAGE

- They used **Prakrit** as their official language. All their **inscriptions were composed in Prakrit** and **written in the Brahmi script**.
- The **Gathasaptasati**, a **Maharshtri Prakrit text** consisting of 700 love poems, had themes similar to Tamil Sangam poetry, and is attributed to a **Satavahana king** named **Hala**.

DECLINE OF THE EMPIRE

The Satavahana Empire declined around the **3rd century AD** and was replaced by the **Ikshvakus**, followed by the **Pallavas** in Andhra and the **Kadambas** in northern Karnataka.

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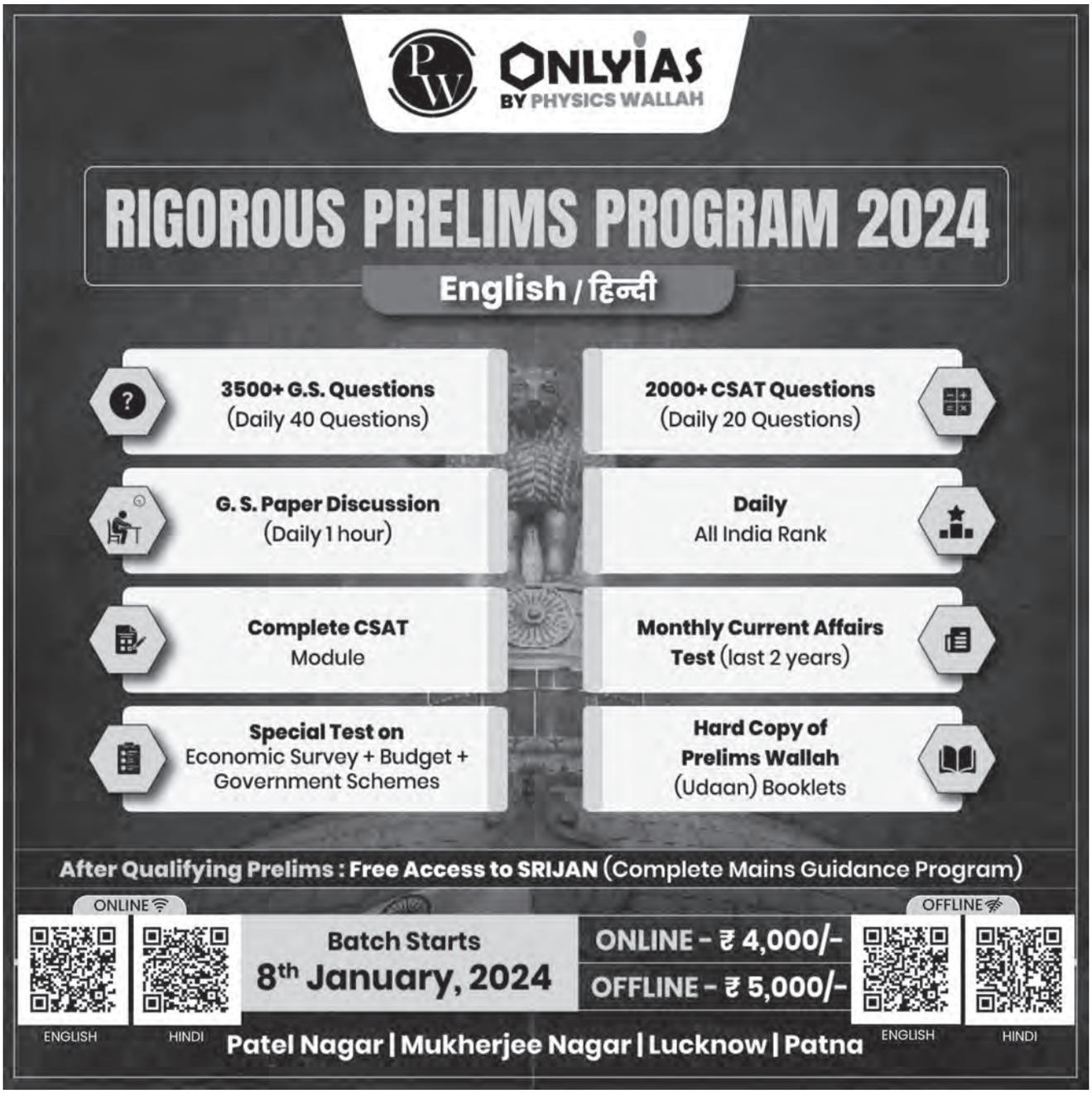
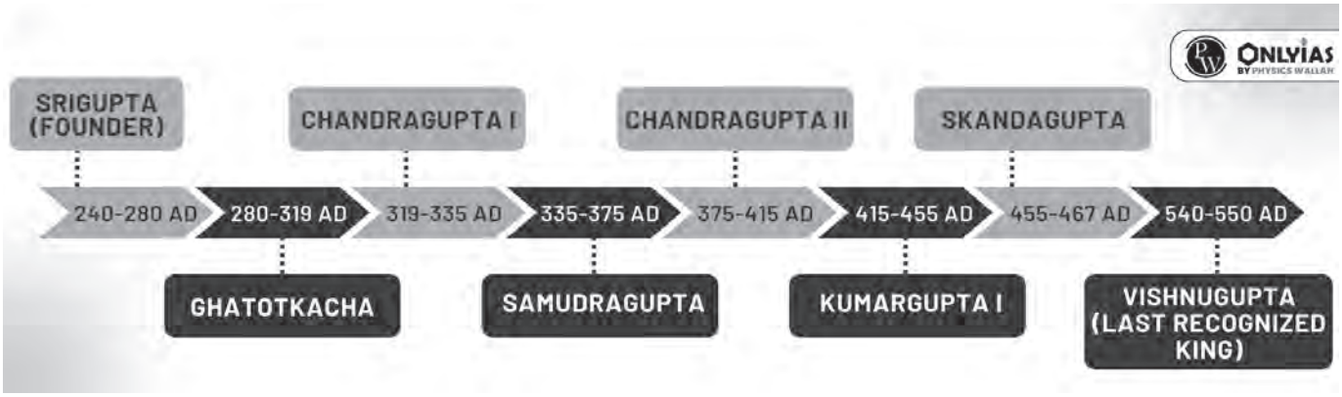


9 The Gupta Empire



Introduction

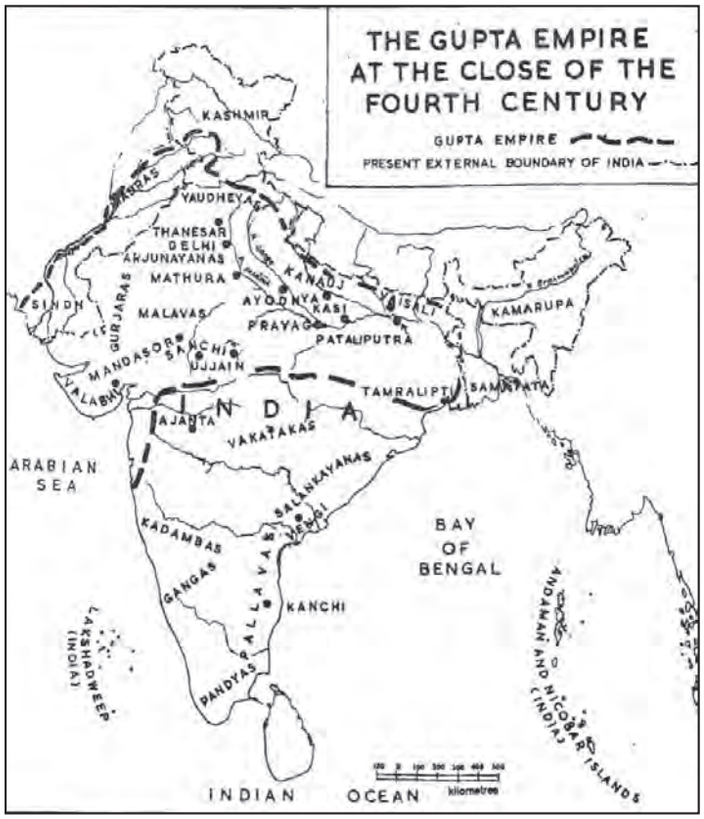
The Gupta Empire rose in the middle of the **3rd century AD** after the decline of **Satavahanas, Kushans** and **Murundas**. Guptas were possibly the **feudatories of Kushans** in Uttar Pradesh**,** with centre of power in **Prayaga.**

Murundas were kinsmen of Kushans who ruled central India from 230 AD to 250 AD after the decline of Kushans in North India.

- It is mostly believed that Guptas were of **Vaisya** origin.
- Though the Gupta Empire was not as large as the Mauryan Empire, it kept North India united for more than a century. It featured a strong central government, bringing many kingdoms under its hegemony.
  - The rule of the Guptas extended over **Anuganga** (middle Gangetic Basin), **Prayag**, **Saketa** (modern Ayodha) and **Magadh**.
  - It also covered major parts of the **West** and **Northwest** and reached the **East coast of Deccan** as far as the **Pallava Kingdom.**

Reasons for the Rise of the Gupta Empire

- Availability of **fertile land** in **Madhyadesha** region covering Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.
- They had access to **iron ores** from south Bihar and Central India.
- They had proximity to areas in North India which were carrying **Silk trade** with the Byzantine Empire.



IMPORTANT RULERS OF THE GUPTA EMPIRE

The Gupta dynasty was founded by **Sri Gupta (240–280 AD)** who was succeeded by **Ghatotkacha (280–319 AD)**. These two kings adopted the titles of '**Maharajas'.**

Chandragupta I (319-335 AD)

He started the **Gupta era** in **319-20 AD** and was the first to be called **Maharajadhiraja** (the great king of kings). This title indicates his extensive conquests.

- Being a vaishya, he married the Kshatriya **Princess** of **Licchavi** from Nepal**, Kumaradevi,** to increase the prestige of the dynasty and spread his political power.
  - **Lichchavi** was an established **Gana-sangha** lying between the **Ganges** and the **Nepal Terai.**
- **No inscriptions** or **coins** have survived from his reign.

Samudragupta (335-375 AD)

He was Chandragupta I's son and successor. He followed the policy of **conquest** (opposite to Ashoka's policy of peace).

- **Allahabad pillar inscription** (same inscription on which Ashoka's policy is engraved)**,** composed by **Harisena** in **Sanskrit,** refers to his **military campaigns**

Conquests

The place and countries conquered by him can be divided into five groups:

1. Ganga-Yamuna doab.
2. Himalayan and frontier states like Assam, Nepal, Bengal, Punjab, etc.
3. Forest kingdom of the Vindhyan region (known as **Atavika Rajya**).
4. **Dakshinapatha Expedition** against **12 rulers** of eastern Deccan and South India. He reached up to Kanchi (Tamil Nadu), where **Pallavas accepted his suzerainty.**
5. Against the **Sakas** and **Kushans**, some of which were ruling in **Afghanistan**.

- Nine Republics in Rajasthan, including the **Malavas** and **Yaudheyas**, were forced to accept Gupta's suzerainty under his reign.
- **Meghavarman** (ruler of Sri Lanka) sent a **missionary** to Samudragupta for permission to build a **Buddhist temple at Gaya.**
- He is called **'Napoleon of India'** by V.A. Smith, in the sense that he never knew any defeat.
- He performed the **Asvamedha** sacrifice and issued **gold** and **silver coins** with the legend **'restorer of the Asvamedha'.**
- In spite of being an ardent follower of **Vaishnavism**, he was **tolerant** of other sects too. He was also the patron of the great **Buddhist scholar 'Vasubandhu'**.
- As a lover of poetry and music, he was given the title **'Kaviraja'.**

Chandragupta II (375 - 415 AD)

He was the son of Samudragupta and came to power after a succession struggle with his brother **Ramagupta.**

- His reign saw the **highest watermark of the Gupta Empire** and formed the **peak of Gupta's territorial expansion.**

Alliance and Conquest

- Extended his empire through **marriage alliances** and **conquests**
  - He married **Kuberanaga**, a Naga princess of **Central India.**
  - He gave his daughter **Prabhavati** in marriage to the **Vakataka** prince **Rudrasena II,** who occupied a strategic position in **Deccan**. This alliance served a useful purpose when Chandragupta-II undertook his campaign in western India against the Sakas.
  - He defeated and **killed the last ruler of Saka satrap** and assumed the title **'Sakari'** (meaning the **destroyer of sakas)**. With this victory, the territories in the western Malwa and Kathiawar peninsula were annexed into the Gupta empire.
- As a result of the conquest of Western India, the empire gained access to **Broach, Sopara, Cambay** and other **seaports**, enabling the Gupta Empire to control trade with Western countries.
- After establishing himself in eastern and western India, Chandragupta II defeated northern rulers like the **Huns, Kambojas** and **Kiratas.**
- The **Mehrauli Iron Pillar inscription** mentions his extensive conquests.

- He adopted the title **Vikramaditya,** which had been **first** used by a **Ujjain ruler in 58 BC.** His other names include **Vikrama, Devagupta, Devaraja** and **Simhavikrama.**
- **Ujjain** seems to have been made the **second capital** by him.
- He was the **first Gupta ruler** to issue **silver coins.**
- The Chinese traveller **Fa Hein** visited the empire during his era.
- He is credited with maintaining in his court **nine luminaries or great scholars.**

Nine Luminaries or 'Navaratnas'

NAME	WORK	NAME	WORK
1. Dhanvantari	Physician	**6. Varahamihira**	Panchasiddhantika
2. Kalidasa	Abhijnana Shakuntalam, Vikaramorvashiyam etc.	**7. Amarasimha**	Amarakosha (Sanskrit lexicography)
3. Vararuchi	Vyakarana	**8. Kshapanaka**	Jyotishya sastra (Astrology)
4. Sanku	Silpasastra (Architecture)	**9. Harisena**	Allahabad pillar inscription
5. Vittal Bhat	Mantra Shastra (Music)		

Fa Hein's Visit (399-414 AD)

- He was a **Chinese Pilgrim** who visited India during the reign of **Chandragupta II.**
- He came to India by the land route through Khotan, Kashgar, Gandhara and Punjab and returned by the sea route, visiting Ceylon and Java.
- He visited Peshawar, Mathura, Kanauj, Sravasti, Kapilavastu, Kusinagara, Pataliputra, Kasi and Bodh Gaya, among other places.
  - He described the people of **Mathura** as numerous and happy and the people of **Pataliputra** as rich and prosperous.
- The **main purpose of his visit** was to see the land of the Buddha and to **collect Buddhist manuscripts** from India.
- His accounts provided valuable information on the **religious, social** and **economic** condition of the Gupta empire.
- His primary interest was religion, and was not interested in political affairs.

Kumaragupta I (415-455 AD)

He was also called **Sakraditya** and was the son of Chandragupta II.

- His reign was marked by **general peace** and **prosperity.**
- He issued a number of coins and also performed the Asvamedha sacrifice.
- He laid the **foundation** for the **Nalanda university.**
- During his reign, a branch of Huns from Central Asia made attempts to cross the Hindukush mountains and invade India.

Skandagupta (455-467 AD)

He was the son of Kumargupta and the **last great king** of the Gupta dynasty.

- He was able to **repulse an attack by the Huns**, but the recurrence of the Huns' invasion strained his empire's coffers.
- The **Bhitari monolithic pillar** inscription gives an account of **Skandagupta's** reign.

ADMINISTRATION

- During the Gupta age, political hierarchies can be identified by the titles adopted. Kings assumed the titles **Paramabhattaraka, Maharajadhiraja, Parameswara, Samrat** and **Chakravartin**.

Some historians have suggested that the Gupta Kings **claimed divine status**. For example, **Samudragupta** was compared to **Purusha** (Supreme Being) in the **Allahabad inscription**.

- It featured a **strong central government**, bringing many kingdoms under its hegemony.
- **Feudalism** as an institution began to take root during this period.

King

- King was looked upon as **God Vishnu, the protector** and **preserver.**
  - They were connected with Gods through epithets like **Parama-Daivata** (the foremost worshipper of the gods) and **params-bhagavata** (the foremost worshiper of Vasudeva Krishna) and **Parameshvara.**
- Kingship was **hereditary,** but there was the **absence of a firm practise of primogeniture.**

Ministers and Officials

- The king was assisted in his administration by a council consisting of a **chief minister**, a **Senapati or commander-in-chief** of the army and other important officials.
- The king maintained close contact with the provincial administration through a class of officials called **Kumaramatyas** and **Ayuktas**.

Kumaramatyas

- The term **'Kumaramatya'** occurs in six Vaishali seals, and he was associated with an office **(Adikarana)** of his own.
  - He seems to be important among Amatyas and equivalent in status to princes of royal blood. Kumaramatyas were attached to the king, crown prince, revenue department or province
  - Individuals holding the rank of Kumaramatya had additional designations as well. E.g., **Harisena** (son of Dhruvabhuti, a mahadandanayaka) was a **Kumaramatya, Sandhivigrahaka** and **Mahadandanayaka.**

- The Gupta rulers did not require as many officials as the Mauryas because of the lower participation of the State in economic activities and the **presence of guilds** to administer.
- **Recruitment** to various posts was **not only confined to the upper varnas.**
- Most posts became **hereditary,** weakening royal control.
- The most important officers of the empire were **Kumaramatyas,** who were possibly **paid in cash.**

Officers in the Gupta Empire

DESIGNATION	ROLE	DESIGNATION	ROLE
Mantriparishad	Council of ministers	**Akshapataladhikrita**	Keeper of royal records.
Amatyas or Sachivas	Executive officers in charge of various departments	**Saulkika**	Collector of customs and tolls
Sandhivigrahaka	Minister for foreign affairs, war and peace	**Uparikas**	Provincial Governor
Mahabaladhikrita and Mahadandanayaka	Superior posts in army	**Mahapratiara**	Chief of the palace guards
Mahashvapati	Commander of Cavalry	**Khadyatapakita**	Superintendent of the Royal kitchen.
Dandapashika	The chief officer of the police department.	**Dutakas**	Spies
Pilupati	head of the elephants department.	**Asvapati**	Head of the horse department.
Narapati: Head of footsoldiers			

"**Lokpala**", also possibly referred to as a provincial governor.

Army

- The king maintained a **standing army,** which was supplemented occasionally by the **forces of feudatories.**

The Guptas learned the use of **saddle, reins, buttoned coats, trousers** and **boots** from the Kushans. All these gave them mobility and made them **excellent horsemen**.

- In the Army, **chariots** and **elephants** took backstage. The **cavalry** and **horse archery** came to the forefront.
- Seals and inscriptions mention military designations such as **Baladhikrita** and **Mahabaladhikrita** (commander of infantry and cavalry).
- The standard term "**Senapati**" does not occur in Gupta inscriptions, but the term could be found in some Vakataka epigraphs.
- A **Vaishali seal** mentions the **Ranabhandagar-Adhikarana**, which was the office of the **military storehouse**.

Division of the Empire

Bhuktis →Vishyas→Vithi→Villages

Provinces

- The Gupta Empire was divided into provinces known as **Deshas** or **Bhuktis** (provinces), which were administered by **Uparikas** (governors).
  - The king directly appointed Uparika, who further appointed the head of the district administration and the district board.
  - Uparika carried on the administration with control over the military machinery as well.

Damodarpur plates mention Uparika with the title of maharaja, which indicates his high status and rank in the administrative hierarchy.

The **Eran pillar inscription of Budhagupta**, dated Gupta year 165 AD, refers to **Maharaja Surashmichandra** as a Lokpal, governing the land between the Kalinndi and Narmada rivers.

Vishayas

- The bhuktis or provinces were divided into districts known as **Vishayas**, which were headed by officers known as **Vishyapatis.**
  - The Vishyapatis seem to have been generally appointed by the provincial governor. Sometimes, even the kings directly appointed the Vishyapatis.
  - Prominent members of the town assisted the Vishyapati with administrative duties.
- In **Urban administration,** organised professional bodies called **Guilds** (also known as **Shrenis**) played an important role.
  - Guilds looked after their own affairs.
  - They punished the members for violations of the law of the guild.
- The administrative units below the district level included clusters of settlements known variously as **vithi, bhumi, pathaka** and **peta**.
  - **Ayuktakas** and **Vithi-Mahattaras** refer to officials **in these areas.**
- At the village level, villagers chose functionaries such as **Gramika** and **Gramadhyaksha**.
  - The **Damodarpur copper plate** of the reign of **Budhagupta** mentions an **Ashtabula-Adhikarana** (a **board of eight members**) headed by the **Mahattara** or village headman (sometimes also referred as the head of a family community).
  - The **Sanchi inscription** of the time of **Chandragupta II** mentions the **Panchmandali,** which may have been a **corporate body**.

Feudatory System of Gupta

The major part of the empire was held by **feudatory chiefs** or **vassals** (also known as **Samanta**).

- The charters issued for vassals living on the fringe of the empire had the **Royal 'Garuda' seal.**
- They had obligations like personal attendance to the king, paying him a tribute, and presenting daughters for marriage.

ECONOMY

Nitisara, written by **Kamandaka**, is a text like Arthasastra which emphasises the importance of the **royal treasury** and mentions various sources of revenue.

Agriculture

- Agriculture flourished because of the **expansion of irrigation.**
- Crops and fields were fenced, and those who indulged in damaging the crops were punished.
- The crops cultivated during the Gupta period were **rice, wheat, barley, peas, lentils, pulses, sugarcane and oil seeds**.
- According to **Kalidasa**, southern India was famous for **Pepper** and **Cardamom.**
- **Varahamihira** gave elaborate instructions on the **plantation of fruit trees.**

Paharpur Copper Plate Inscription:

- **The king** was the **sole proprietor** of the land, and
- An officer, **Ustapala,** maintained records of all the land transactions in the district.
- **Village accountant** preserved records of land in the village.

Irrigation

- In **Narada Smriti,** two kinds of **dykes** were mentioned:
  1. The **Bardhya,** which protected the field from floods.
  2. The **Khara,** which served the purpose of irrigation.
- **Jalanirgamah -** drains constructed to prevent inundation of fields
- Canals were constructed not only from rivers but also from tanks and lakes.
- The most famous lake was **Sudarsana Lake** at the foot of Girnar Hills in Gujarat.

LAND CLASSIFICATION DURING THE GUPTA PERIOD	
Kshetra	Cultivable land
Khila	Waste land
Aprahata	Jungle or Wasteland
Vasti	Habitable land
Gapata Saraha	Pastoral land

Land Grant System

- The practice of granting fiscal and administrative concessions to priests and administrators was started by Satavahanas**,** and it became a regular affair in Gupta times.
- The striking development of the Gupta period was the emergence of **priestly landlords** at the cost of local peasants.
- Religious functionaries were **granted land free of tax** forever, but **they could collect all the taxes** from the peasants.
  - This brought many new areas under cultivation.
  - The local peasants and tribals were subjected to **forced labour** and reduced to serfs because of caste classification.
- The priests can even **punish the criminals** in the lands granted to them.

Different Types of Land Grants

Agrahara grants	These were given to Brahmins. It was perpetual, hereditary and tax-free.
Devagraha grants	A land grant in favour of a Brahmin as well as gifts to merchants for the repair and worship of temples.
Secular grants	Grants made to feudatories of Guptas.

Different Land Tenure

TYPES OF TENURES	NATURE OF HOLDING
Nivi dharma	Endowment of land under a kind of trusteeship was prevalent in North and Central India and Bengal.
Nivi dharma aksayana	A perpetual endowment. The recipient could make use of income derived from it.
Aprada dharma	Income from land could be enjoyed, but the recipient was not permitted to gift it to anyone. The recipient had no administrative rights either.
Bhumichchi-dranyaya	Right of ownership acquired by a person who made barren land cultivable for the first time. This land was free from any rent liability.
• **Kulyavapa** and **Dronavapa** were different **measurements of land** during the Gupta period. **[UPSC 2020]**	

Taxation

- The land taxes, generally called **Baga** or **Bhoga,** increased, and those on trade and commerce decreased.
- Land taxes varied from **1/4th** to **1/6th** of the produce.
- In central and western India, villagers were also subjected to **forced labour** called **'Vishti',** which was considered a sort of tax paid by the people. **[UPSC 2019].**
- Gupta inscriptions mention the term **Iranyavesti** for **forced labour.**
- The inscriptions related to **Vishti** were found mostly in the **Madhya Pradesh** and **Kathiawar** regions.

Different Kinds Of Taxes

TAX	NATURE
Bhaga	King's customary share of the produce normally amounting to one-sixth of the produce paid by cultivators.
Bhoga	Periodic supply of fruits, firewood, flowers, etc., which the village had to provide to the king.
Kara	Periodic tax levied on the villagers (not a part of the annual land tax).
Bali	It was a voluntary offering by the people to the king but later became compulsory. It was an oppressive tax.
Udianga	Either a sort of police tax for the maintenance of police stations or a water tax. Hence, it was also an extra tax.
Uparikara	It was also an extra tax.
Hiranya	Literally, it means the tax payable on gold coins, but in practise, it was probably the king's share of certain crops paid in kind.
Vata-Bhuta	Different kinds of cess for maintenance of rites for the winds (Vata) and the spirits (Bhuta)
Halivakara	A plough tax paid by every cultivator owning a plough.
Sulka	A royal share of merchandise brought into a town or harbour by merchants. Hence, it can be equated with customs and tolls.
Klipta and Upaklipta	Related to the sale and purchase of lands.

Trade

Both **internal** and **external trade flourished** during the Gupta period. The internal trade was carried on by road and through rivers. Roads were kept safe for travellers, and there was no fear of thieves.

- The **Narada** and **Brihaspati Smritis** describe the organisation and activities of guilds, which played an important role economically as well as politically.
- Two distinctive types of traders called **Sresti** and **Sarthavaha** existed.
  - **Sresti** - settled at a particular place.
  - **Sarthavaha** - caravan trader who carried his goods to different places.
- **Usury** (lending of money at an **exorbitant rate of interest**) was in practise during the Gupta period
- As per **Fa Hien**, **Tamralipti** was an important **port** in **Bengal** that carried on trade with China, Srilanka, Java and Sumatra. He describes the perils of the sea route between India and China.
- Other **important ports** in the Gupta empire were **[UPSC 2020]**
  - **Calliena (Kalyan) and Chaul (Maharashtra).**
  - **Broach** and **Cambay (Gujarat).**
  - **Kadura** and **Ghantasala** in the Andhra region.
  - The markets of **Male (Malabar), Mangarouth (Mangalore), Salopatana, Nalopatana** and **Pandopatana** on the Malabar coast.

Export and Import Items

- **Exported items** included cotton clothes from Bengal, Indigo from Bihar, silk from Banares, the scents of the Himalayas, sandal and spices from the south, pearls, precious stones, coconuts, and ivory.
- **Imported items** included gold, silver, tin, lead, silk and horses.
- The Western traders brought **Roman gold** into India in return for Indian products.

- The **trade of silk** with the Eastern Roman Empire **declined** around 550 AD as the Roman Empire learnt from the Chinese the art of growing silk.

Mining and Metallurgy

- The rich deposits of **iron ore** from Bihar and **copper** from Rajasthan were mined extensively during this period.
- **Amarasimha**, **Varahamihira** and **Kalidasa** made frequent mention of the existence of mines.
- The list of metals used apart from iron were gold, copper, tin, lead, brass, bronze, bell-metal, mica, manganese, antimony, red chalk **(Sanssilajata)** and red arsenic.
- The **Mehrauli iron pillar** of King Chandra (identified with Chandragupta II) in the Qutb Minar complex in Delhi manufactured in the 4th century AD have not gathered any rust to date that showcases the craftsmanship of the Gupta era.

Coinage

- The Guptas **issued a large number of Gold coins.**
  - Guptas issued comparatively fewer silver and copper coins.
  - **Post-Gupta period saw a decline in the circulation of gold coins.**
- Majority of the Gupta coins contain legends and symbols.
- These coins provide interesting details about the titles and sacrifices performed by the Gupta monarchs.
- Goddess Lakshmi is represented as the wife of God Vishnu on the other side of the coins.
- In design, execution and artistic composition, they **closely resemble the Greek** and **Kushan coins.**
- The coins with the images of Kumaradevi and Chandragupta I were the earliest coins of the Guptas.
- **Samudragupta** issued **8 types of gold coins** and is represented on his coins playing **Lute** (veena).
- Chandragupta II and his successors issued **gold, silver** and **copper coins**.

After the middle of the fifth century, the Gupta king made desperate attempts to maintain their gold currency by reducing the content of pure gold in it, but this proved of no avail.

SOCIETY

The **Brahmana supremacy** continued, and on account of numerous land grants, Brahmanas accumulated wealth.

- The **castes became rigid** and **proliferated into numerous sub-castes** as a result of two factors:
  - Large number of foreigners assimilated and each group was considered a kind of Hindu caste. Huns came to be recognised as one of the clans of Rajputs.
  - Absorption of many tribes into Brahmanical society.

Position of Women

The position of **women had become miserable.**

- They were prohibited from studying religious texts like Puranas.
- The practice of **Swayamvara was given up,** and Manusmriti suggested early marriage for girls.
- The practice of **Sati gained social acceptance** during this period.
  - **Eran inscription** of Bhanugupta provides the **first evidence of sati.**

- Women were generally **denied property rights,** but the inscription of Prabhavati Devi indicates that she had possessed land in her name.
- The **change of women's gotra upon marriage** can be dated to the period after the 5th century A.D.

- **Sudras,** who earlier appeared as servants, slaves and agricultural labourers, now became agriculturists.
- The distinction between Vaishyas and Sudras got blurred.
- **Untouchability had slowly begun during this period,** and chandalas had increased in number. They were segregated from society.

RELIGION

Brahmanism gained prominence, and **worship of Shiva** and **Vishnu** came to the forefront. For the **first time,** we get the image of Vishnu, Shiva and some other god. Worship of a new god called **Krishna** started.

- Most of the Gupta kings were **Vaishnavaites**. Religious literature like the **Puranas** was composed during this period. **Vishnu** emerged as the god of devotion and saviour of the varna system.
  - **'Vishnupurana'** and **'Vishnusmriti'**(a law book) were written in his honour.
  - **Bhagwadgita** appeared in the 4th century AD, which taught devotion to Lord Krishna and stressed the performance of function assigned to each varna.
- Fa Hein called Gangetic Valley **'the island of Brahmanism'.**
- **Idol worship** became a common feature.
- **Agricultural festivals** were given religious colour and became a source of income for the priests.
- **Buddhism** flourished in northwestern India but was in a state of neglect in the Gangetic Valley. Buddhism **no longer received royal patronage** like in the days of Ashoka and Kanishka.
- **Jainism** flourished in western and southern India. The great **Jain council at Valabhi** was held, and the **Jain canon of Svetambaras** was compiled during the Gupta era.
- Gupta Kings followed a **policy of tolerance,** and there is no evidence of persecution of followers of Buddhism and Jainism.

JUDICIAL SYSTEM

- It was far more developed than earlier times, and for the first time, **civil** and **criminal law** were clearly demarcated.
- Theft and Adultery came under criminal law, and property disputes came under civil law.
- Elaborate laws were laid down about inheritance.
- There were different courts like **Karana, Adhikarana, Aharmasana** etc.
- The King was the upholder of law and tried the case with the help of Brahamana priests.
- The guilds of artisans, merchants, etc., were governed by their own laws.
- Laws were based on differences in varnas, and culprits belonging to a higher Varna got less punishment.
- Punishments were **not severe,** and **imposing a fine** was a common punishment.

ART AND ARCHITECTURE

- The Gupta period is referred to as the **Golden Age** of ancient India in terms of **arts** and **cultural developments.**
- Art was **mostly inspired by religion,** and there were very few non-religious art forms.

Buddhist Art

Sculptures	• Bronze image of Buddha in **Sultanganj** near Bhagalpur. • Images of Buddha from **Mathura and Sarnath.**
Paintings	• **Ajanta paintings** are life-like and natural. They are marked by their brilliance of colours. They depict various life events in the life of Buddha. • The paintings are also seen at **Bagh caves** (Dhar, Madhya Pradesh). • Paintings at **Sigiriya** in Sri Lanka were highly influenced by the Ajanta style.
Stupas	Stupas were found in Samat (Uttar Pradesh), Ratnagiri (Orissa) and Mirpur Khas (Sind).

Temple Architecture

- Both **Nagara** and **Dravidian styles** of art evolved, but most architecture had been lost due to foreign invasions like that of the Huns.
- There was **no influence of the Gandhara style** in architecture.
- In the temples, images of Vishnu, Shiva and some other Hindu Gods were found.

- The leading God is large and represented in the centre, with subordinate gods smaller and around him.
- Only a few **brick temples** of this era remained. **Eg.** the temples of **Bhitargaon in Kanpur, Bhaitari in Ghazipur, Nachnakutara in Panna** and **Deogarh in Jhansi.**
- The sculptures in the temple at **Garhwas** near Allahabad remain important specimens of the Gupta art.
- The earliest brick structure of Nalanda University belongs to this period.

Stone and Metal Sculptures

- Stone sculpture of erect Buddha from Sarnath.
- Stone sculpture of the great **Boar** (Varaha) at the entrance of a cave at **Udayagiri**.
- Copper image of Buddha at Nalanda and the Sultanganj Buddha.

Terracotta and Pottery

- Clay figurines were used both for religious and secular purposes.
- The most distinctive class of pottery of this period is the "**red ware**".
- Remains of Gupta pottery were found at **Ahchichhatra, Rajgarh, Hastinapur** and **Bashar.**

Prayaga Prashasthi (Allahabad Pillar Inscription)

- It is engraved on the **Asokan pillar** and composed by **Harisena** in **classical Sanskrit using the Nagari script.**
- It describes the personality of Samudragupta, the circumstances of his accession, his military campaigns in North India and Deccan, his relationships with other contemporary rulers and his accomplishments as a poet and scholar.
- In this inscription, **Samudragupta** is compared to **Purusha (Supreme Being).**

Literature

This era is known for the production of various **secular** as well as **religious literature.**

- **Sanskrit** became the **official language,** and all their epigraphic records were written in it. The period saw the last phase of Smriti literature.
- The **Nagari script** evolved from the Brahmi script.
- The Gupta age witnessed the evolution of many **Prakrit** forms such as **Suraseni** used in Mathura and its vicinity, **Ardh Magadhi** spoken in Awadh and Bundelkhand and **Magadhi** in modern Bihar.
  - Prakrit had patronage outside the court circle.
- Characteristics of **plays** during the Gupta period:
  - They were all **comedies.**
  - The characters of the higher and lower classes do not speak the same language. **Women** and **Sudras speak Prakrit,** while others speak **Sanskrit**.
- **Bhasa** wrote 13 **plays**, which include:

1. Pratijna Augandharayana, 2. Svapnavasavadatta, 3. Charudatta, 4. Pancaratra, 5. Madhyama Vyayoga, 6.Pratima-nataka, 7. Duta Vakyam, 8. Duta Ghatotkacha, 9. Karnabharam, 10. Urubhanga, 11. Avimaraka, 12. Balacarita, and 13. Abhiseka

- The **Puranas** in their present form were composed during this period. There are 18 Puranas, the most important among them are the **Bhagavatha, Vishnu, Vayu** and **Matsya Puranas**.
- The **Mahabharatha** and **Ramayana** were written in the present form during this period.
- The earlier **Buddhist works** were in Pali, and the later ones in Sanskrit. Prominent Buddhist writers of the Gupta period were **Arya Deva, Arya Asanga, Vasubandhu and Dignaga. [UPSC 2022]**

The first regular Buddhist work on **logic** was written by **Vasubandhu**.

- The **Jain literature** first appeared in Prakrit and later shifted to Sanskrit.
  - Jain writer **Vimala** wrote the Jaina version of **Ramayana**.
  - **Siddasena Divakara** laid the foundation of logic among the Jainas.
- Accounts of the Chinese traveller **Fa Hien** provide valuable information on the **religious, social and economic conditions** of the Gupta empire.

AUTHOR	WORK	AUTHOR	WORK
Sudraka	Mrichchhakatika (The Little Clay Cart)	**Palakapya**	Hastayurveda or the veterinary science
Bharavi	Kiratarjuniya - story of conflict between Arjuna and Shiva.	**Vagbhata**	Astanga Samgraha (Summary of the eight branches of medicine).
Dandin	Kavyadarsa and Dasakumaracharitha	**Brahmagupta**	Brahmasphutasiddhanta and Khandakhadyaka

Subhandu	Vasavadatta	**Amarasimha**	Amarakosha (a thesaurus in Sanskrit) **[UPSC 2020]**
Vishnu Sharma	Panchatantra	**Chandrogomia**	Chandravyakaranam (Sanskrit Grammar)
Patanjali	Mahabhashya (Sanskrit Grammar)		

Patanjali wrote commentary on some selected sutras of Panini 's Ashtadhyayi which he named **Vyakaran Mahabhashya.**

Kalidasa [UPSC 2020]

- His Sanskrit drama **Abhijnanasakuntalam** was considered to be one of the best hundred literary works in the world. It was also one of the earliest Indian works to be translated into European languages.
- Plays - Malavikagnimitram and Vikramorvashiya**.**
  - Malavikagnimitram is the love story of King Agnimitra and the court dancer Malavika.
- Epics - Raghuvamsa and Kumarasambhava
- Lyrics - Ritusamhara and Meghaduta.

Vishakadatta

- **Devichandraguptam** and **Mudrarakshasa** provide details about the rise of the Guptas. **[UPSC 2023]**
  - Devichandraguptam is the story of Gupta King Ramagupta who decides to surrender his queen Dhruvadevi to a Shaka invader but his younger brother Chandragupta enters the enemy camp disguised as queen and kills the enemy. In the climax of the play, Chandragupta dethrones Ramagupta and marries Dhruvadevi.
  - Mudrarakshasa narrates the ascent of the king Chandragupta Maurya.

Other Sources of Gupta History

- **Narada, Vishnu, Brihaspati** and **Katyayana smritis.**
- Kamadandaka's **Nitisara,** a work on polity addressed to the king (400 AD).

Smritis are religious texts covering a wide range of subjects such as ethics, politics, culture and art. **Dharmasastras** and **Puranas** form the core of this body of literature.

SCIENCES DURING GUPTA

The invention of the **theory of zero** and the evolution of the **decimal system** were to be credited to the thinkers of this age.

Aryabhatta

- **Aryabhatiyam**: Deals with arithmetic, geometry and algebra.
- **Surya Siddhanta**: Examined the true cause of the **solar eclipses.**
- He was also the first to declare that the earth was spherical in shape and that it rotated on its own axis.

Varahamihira

- **Panchasiddhantika** - on five astronomical systems. It is a summary of Surya Siddhanta, Romaka Siddhanta, Paulisa Siddhanta, Vasishtha Siddhanta, Paitāmaha Siddhanta.
- **Brihadsamhita** - An encyclopedia on astronomy, physical geography, botany and natural history.
- **Brihat Jataka** - Astrology.

The **medical trio** of ancient India were **Vagbhata, Charaka and Susruta.**

- Charaka and Susruta lived before the Gupta age.
- The **Navanitakam** was a medical work during the Gupta age, which is a manual of recipes, formulation and prescriptions.
- **Hastyayurveda,** or the **veterinary science** authored by **Palakapya,** attests to the advances made in medical science during the Gupta period.

Nalanda University:

Kumargupta laid the **foundation** of **Nalanda university.**

- It was an acclaimed **Mahavihara** and a large Buddhist monastery.
- It is a **UNESCO World Heritage site** and was a centre of learning from the 5th to 12 century AD.
- Nalanda flourished under the patronage of the **Gupta Empire** in the fifth and sixth centuries and later under **Harsha**, the emperor of Kannauj.
- At its peak, Nalanda attracted scholars and students from **Tibet, China, Korea** and **Central Asia.**
- Archaeological findings also confirm the contact with the **Shailendra dynasty** of Indonesia, and one of the kings built a monastery in the complex.
- **Nalanda was ransacked** and destroyed by an army of the **Mamluk dynasty** of the Delhi Sultanate under **Bakhtiyar Khalji** in 1200 AD.

FALL OF THE EMPIRE

The successors of Chandragupta II had to face the **Hun invasion.**

- Though **Skandagupta tried effectively to stop the Huns.** However**,** his successors like Purugupta, Narasimhagupta, Buddhagupta and Baladitya proved to be weak and could not cope with the Hun invaders.
- By 485 AD Huns occupied eastern Malwa and central India, reducing the extent of the Gupta empire. Soon, **Yashodharman of Malwa** had overthrown the Huns and also challenged the power of the Guptas. His rule, though short, dealt a severe blow to the Gupta Empire.
  - Stone pillar inscriptions from **Mandasor** in **Madhya Pradesh**, one of which is dated in 532 AD refer to a powerful king Yasodharman.

Yashodharman set up **pillars of victory** in **532 AD** commemorating his conquest of almost the whole of northern India.

- The **rise of feudatories** in Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh weakened the central authority.
- The loss of Western India and the growing practices of land grants for religious and other purposes reduced revenues and crippled them economically.
- **Vishnugupta (540 to 550 AD)** was the last recognised ruler of the Gupta dynasty.

The **later Guptas of Magadh** established their power in Bihar. Alongside them, the **Maukharis** rose to power in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and had their capital at **Kanauj**. Although the rule of Imperial Guptas lingered till the middle of the 6th century AD, the imperial glory had ended a century earlier.

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10 Harshavardhana

Introduction

After the Gupta Empire's decline, North India fragmented into various kingdoms: **Maithriyas** (Gujarat, Capital - **Valabhi)**, **Maukharis** (Agra and Oudh states) and **Vakatakas** (western Deccan).

- **Pushyabhutis** established an independent state at **Thaneswar** (lying north of Delhi between Sutlej and Yamuna) and **founded the Vardhan dynasty.**
  - They initially held a military role under the Gupta Empire and ascended to authority following the Gupta's decline.
- **Prabhakara Vardhana** (580–605 AD) fought Gurjaras, Huns, and extended his influence upto Malwa and Gujarat.
  - He strategically formed an alliance by marrying his daughter, **Rajyasri**, to **Grahavarman**, the **Maukhari king of Kanauj**. This alliance bolstered his influence in the region.
- **Rajavardhana** (605-606 AD) succeeded his father Prabhakaravardhana.
  - He was treacherously murdered by **Sasanka**, the Gauda ruler of Bengal, after which Harshavardhana, his younger brother, assumed the throne.

Epigraphical Sources:

- Madhuban copper plate inscription.
- Sonpat inscription on copper seal.
- Banskhera copper plate inscription.
- Nalanda inscription on clay seals.

HARSHAVARDHANA (606-647 AD)

Harshavardhana, after becoming king, conquered and integrated the neighbouring kingdom into his empire. He was called the **last great Hindu ruler** of **Northern India.**

- The magnates of **Kanauj** (the capital of the Maukhari kingdom) invited Harsha to ascend the throne.
  - Harsha accepted the throne on the advice of **Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva** with the title of **Rajputra** and **Siladitya.**
  - The two kingdoms of Thaneswar and Kanauj became united under Harsha's rule. Consequently, Harsha **transferred** his capital to **Kanauj.**

MILITARY CONQUESTS

- He killed **Deva Gupta of Malwa,** who tried to covet **Rajyasri** (his sister). Rajyasri took to Buddhism and was instrumental in converting Harsha to Buddhism.
- Harsha issued an ultimatum to several regional rulers, which included:-
  - **Sasanka** (ruler of Gauda in Bengal).
  - **Maitrakas** (Valabhi), **Gurjara** (Broach region).
  - **Pulikesin II** (Chalukya king).
  - Rulers of Sindh, Nepal, Kashmir, Magadha, Odra (northern Odisha) and Kongoda (another geographical unit in ancient Odisha).
- He formed an alliance with **Kamarupa** (Assam) against **Gauda ruler Sasanka**. After Sasanka's death, Harsha **subjugated the Gauda Empire**.

- Harsha aimed to expand southward into the Deccan, but **Chalukya king Pulikesin II** thwarted his efforts. **Pulikesin II** took the title "**Parameswara**" to celebrate his victory. Inscriptions in **Pulikesin's capital, Badami**, confirm his triumph over Harsha.
- The hostilities between Harsha and the **Maitrakas** ended in the marriage of **Dhruvabhatta** with the daughter of Harsha. Thus, **Valabhi** became a subordinate ally of Harsha.

Extent of Harsha's Empire

- It is claimed that Harsha's Empire comprised Assam, Bengal, Bihar, Kanauj, Malwa, Odisha, the Punjab, Kashmir, Nepal and Sindh.
- His real authority, however, did not extend beyond a compact territory between the Ganges and Yamuna rivers.

Harsha's Relations with China

- Harsha maintained **friendly relations** with **China** and was the contemporary of the T'ang emperor, Tai Tsung. **Tai Tsung** sent an embassy to his court in 643 AD and again in 647 AD.

ADMINISTRATION

Harsha governed on the same lines as the Guptas, though it became more **feudal** and **decentralised.**

- The Emperor was aided by a council of ministers (Mantri Parishad). Key Officials were:

KEY OFFICIALS	ROLE	KEY OFFICIALS	ROLE
Avanti	Minister for Foreign Relations and War	**Skandagupta**	Chief Commandant of Elephant Force
Simhananda	Commander-in-Chief	**Dirghadhvajas**	Royal Messengers
Kuntala	Chief Cavalry Officer	**Mahaprathihara**	Chief of the Palace Guard
Banu	Keeper of Records	**Sarvagata**	Secret Service Department

Revenue Administration

- According to Hiuen Tsang, the traders had to pay duties at ferries and barrier stations. **[UPSC 2013]**
- Three types of taxes were collected:
  - **Bhaga** (land tax in kind, which was one-sixth of produce).
  - **Hiranya** (cash tax from farmers and merchants).
  - **Bali** (not well-documented).

Land grants to officials seem to have started during Harsha's rule. Crown land/revenue was divided into **four parts**:

- Part I - for carrying out the affairs of the state.
- Part II - for paying the ministers and officers of the crown.
- Part III - for rewarding men of letters.
- Part IV - for charity to religious institutions.

Judicial Administration

- Harsha's time saw **stricter criminal laws** than the Gupta era.
  - Punishments included banishment, limb cutting, trial by ordeal and life imprisonment (given for violations of the laws and for plotting against the king).
- **Mimamsakas** were appointed to dispense justice**.**
- **Observations of Hieun Tsang [UPSC 2013]**
  - Though he was robbed, law and order seemed perfect due to strong law enforcement.
  - Principal penalties included corporal punishment for serious offenses though it was avoided because of Buddhism's influence.
  - Maiming as punishment for offences against social morality and defiance of law.

Hieun Tsang (630-643 AD)

He was a Buddhist monk from China who visited India during the **reign of Harsha**. During his travels, he visited various sacred places in northern and southern India.

- Name of his account: **'Si-Yu-ki'** (Buddhist Records of the Western World).
- He was known as the "**prince of pilgrims**" because he visited important pilgrim centres associated with the life of Buddha.
- He spent about five years at the **University of Nalanda** and studied there.
- Harsha admired him for his deep devotion to Buddha and his profound knowledge of Buddhism.
- Hieun Tsang carried with him relics of Buddha, Buddha images and manuscripts.

Administrative Divisions

- The empire was divided into multiple **provinces**, each province further split into **Bhuktis**. Each Bhukti was divided into several **Vishayas**. Each Vishaya was further divided into **Pathakas**.

- Harsha Charita mentions officials like **Bhogapathi, Ayuktha, Pratpalaka-purusha,** etc., overseeing local administration.

Cities and Towns

- According to Hieun Tsang, India was the land of innumerable villages, numerous towns and big cities, and **Pataliputra lost its prominence, and its place was taken by Kanauj.**

Reasons for the Decline of Pataliputra and Rise of Kanauj:

- Trade and commerce, use of coins and tolls declined in Pataliputra during the reign of Harsha.
- Power shifted to military camps **(Skandhavaras)** and places of strategic importance.
  - Kanauj was situated in an elevated area which made it a place of strategic importance as it was easily fortified.
  - It was situated in the middle of the doab, which allowed the rulers to control both the east and west wings of the doab.

- Charitable initiatives like free hospitals, caring for the sick and poor, and rest houses **(Dharamshala)** for travellers were also established by Harsha.

Army

Hieun Tsang mentions the **four divisions (chaturanga)** of Harsha's army. He gives details about the strength of each division, its recruitment system and payment for the recruits.

- In the army:
  - **Chatas and Bhatas** were ordinary soldiers.
  - **Brihadisvaras** were Cavalry officers.
  - **Baladhikritas and Mahabaladhikritas** were the infantry officers.

SOCIETY

Religious Policy

Initially, he was a worshipper of Shiva but **embraced Buddhism** under the influence of his sister Rajyasri. He subscribed to the **Mahayana school of thought**.

- Harsha **summoned two Buddhist assemblies**, one at **Kanauj** and another at **Prayag** (known as (Mahamoksha Parishad).

  Buddhist Assembly at Kanauj:

  - The assembly at Kanauj was attended by 20 kings, including Bhaskaravarman of Kamarupa.
  - A large number of **Buddhist, Jain and Vedic** scholars attended the assembly.
  - A **golden statue of Buddha** was consecrated in a monastery.

  Buddhist Assembly at Prayag:

  - Harsha convened quinquennial assemblies known as **Mahamoksha Parishad at Prayag** (at the confluence of the Ganges and Yamuna).
  - He offered lavish gifts to Buddhist monks during the assembly.
- According to Hieun Tsang, Buddhism's principles deeply influenced Hindu society, and **social harmony** existed among followers of different faiths.
- Moreover, Harsha treated Vedic scholars and Buddhist monks equally, providing equal charities.
- Slaughter of animals and consumption of meat was restricted.

Caste System

According to Hieun Tsang:

- The four divisions of society continued to be in practice as in previous times.
  - The Brahmins and the Kshatriya led a simple life, but nobles and priests led a luxurious life.
  - Agriculturalists were considered Shudras.
- Untouchables, such as scavengers, executioners etc, lived outside the village. They have to announce their entry into town by shouting so that people might get away.
- The butchers, fishermen, dancers and sweepers were asked to stay outside the city.
- The caste system was rigid, and there **was no social conflict** among the various sections of the society.
- People were honest and not deceitful or treacherous in their conduct.

Status of Women

- **Women wore purdah,** but it was not followed by women of the higher class. (Rajyasri did not wear purdah)
- **Sati practice existed** (Yasomatidevi, wife of Prabhakara Vardhana, immolated herself after the death of her husband).

Dietary Habits

Hieun Tsang notes Indians were **mostly vegetarians**. The use of onion and garlic in the food preparation was rare. The use of sugar, milk, ghee and rice in the preparation of food or their consumption was common. Beef and meat of certain animals were forbidden.

Education

- Education was imparted in the monasteries and was mainly religious in character.
- The Vedas were taught orally and not written down.
- **Sanskrit** was the language of the learned people.

- The wandering **bhikshus** and **sadhus** were well-known for their wisdom and culture.

Cultural Progress Under Harsha

- Harsha was a patron of literature and culture. Many prominent authors, such as **Bana**, known for **"Harshacharita" and "Kadambari,"** was Harsha's court poet.
  - **Harshacharita** was the **first** formal biography of a king.
- Harsha himself was a notable writer. He wrote Sanskrit plays like **"Priyadarsika"**, **"Rathnavali," and "Nagananda."**
- Harsha gifted liberally for the promotion of education.
- Temples & monasteries were educational centres. Renowned scholars imparted education in the monasteries at Kanauj, Gaya, Jalandhar, Manipur and other places.
- Nalanda University achieved its peak during Harsha's reign.

Nalanda University

- **Hieun Tsang** documented Nalanda University, which attracted scholars from China, Japan, Mongolia, Tibet, and Central/Southeast Asia.
- Dharmapala, Chandrapala, Shilabhadra, Bhadrihari, Jayasena, Devakara, and Matanga were its esteemed teachers/scholars.
- In 670 AD, another Chinese pilgrim **I-Tsing** visited Nalanda.
- The monastery at Nalanda was supported by the revenue of 200 villages.

The kingdom of Harsha disintegrated rapidly into small states after his death.

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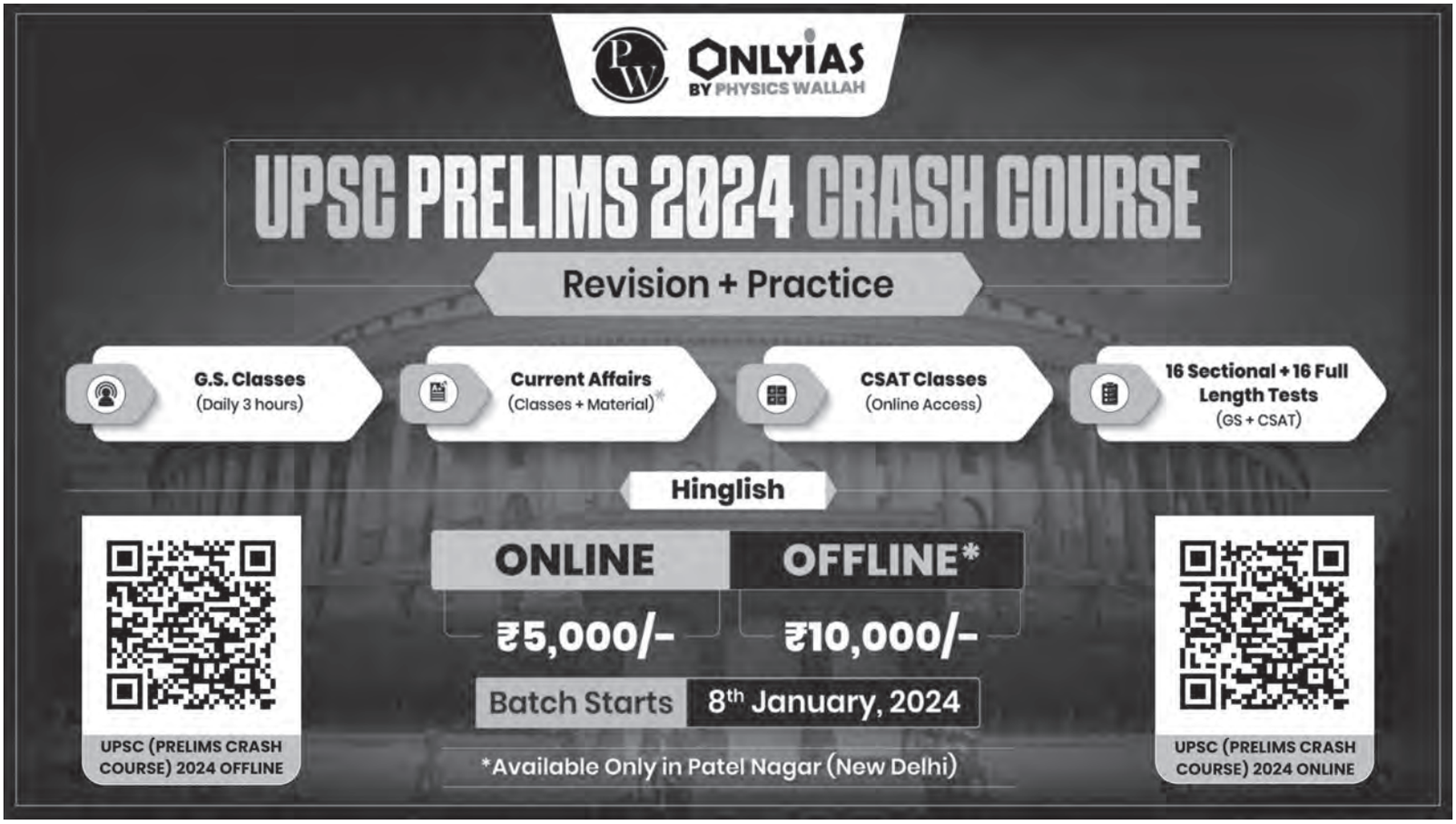

11 Kingdoms of South

Introduction

South India saw a lot of conflict between the **Chalukyas of Badami (Western Chalukyas)** and the **Pallavas of Kanchi** during the **6th to 9th centuries AD.** During this time, there were significant strides in culture, literature, and various art forms.

CHALUKYAS

Sources to Study

- **Inscriptions:** The **Allahabad Pillar inscription** of Samudragupta and the **Aihole inscription** of Pulikesin II provide details of the **Pallava - Chalukya** conflict.
- **Literature:**
  - Kannada work, including **Kavirajamarga** and **Vikramarjuna-vijayam** (also called **Pampa-bharata**, by Pampa)
  - **Nannaya's Mahabharatam** in Telugu.
  - The writings of Arab travellers and geographers such as **Sulaiman**, **Al-Masudi**, and **Ibn Hauka** provide information about the socio-political and economic conditions of India.
- **Poems:**
  - The poems of the **Vaishnavite Azhwars**, later compiled as the **Nalayira Divya Prabhandam**.
  - The **Saiva literature**, canonised as the **Panniru Tirumurai**.
  - The **Thevaram**, composed by **Appar** (Thirunavukkarasar), **Sambandar** (Thirugnanasambandar) and **Sundarar**; and **Thiruvavasagam** by Manickavasagar.

Important Rulers

RULERS	CONTRIBUTIONS
Pulikesin I (543-566 AD)	• Established the Chalukya dynasty by declaring independence from the **Kadambas**. • Performed Ashwamedha yagna.
Kirtivarman (566-597 AD)	Founded the capital, **Badami**.
Pulikesin II (609-642 AD) Defeated **Mangalesha** and proclaimed himself as king (described in the **Aihole inscription**). • He **defeated Harshavardhana** on the banks of river **Narmada.** • The kings of Malwa, Kalinga, and eastern Deccan accepted his suzerainty. • Defeated the **Kadambas of Banvasi** and **Gangas of Talakad** (Mysore). • An attempt to attack **Kanchipuram** was repelled by Pallava ruler **Mahendravarman**, sparking a prolonged war between the Chalukyas and the Pallavas. • He died in the battle with Pallava King **Narasimha Varman I.**	
In the **mid-eighth century**, the **Badami Chalukyas** were subdued and replaced by the **Rashtrakutas**.	

ADMINISTRATION

State

The **king** was the **head of the administration**.

- During succession, primogeniture was not strictly followed. The elder son was appointed as **Yuvaraja** while the king was in office.
- The rule was according to **Dharma-sastra** and **Niti-sastra**.
  - **Pulikesin I** was well-versed in Manu-sastra, Puranas, and Itihasas.
- Initially, they assumed titles such as **Maharajan, Sathyasrayan** and **Sri-Pritivi-Vallaban**.

- After defeating Harshavardhana, **Pulikesin II** assumed the title of **Parameswaran.**
- The kings took titles such as **Maharajadhiraja**, **Dharma Maharaja**, **Bhattarakan** etc.
- **Royal insignia**: The **wild boar** (Varaha avatar of Vishnu).
- The state was divided politically for the sake of administration into **Vishayam**, **Rastram**, **Nadu** and **Grama**.
- **Vishayapatis** exercised power at the behest of the kings. **Samantas** were feudal lords functioning under the control of the state.

Royal Women

The Chalukya dynasty of **Jayasimhan I** line appointed royal ladies as **provincial governors**. They also issued coins and inscriptions. Eg: **Vijya Bhattariga**, a Chalukyan princess, issued inscriptions.

Categories of Ministers were:

- **Pradhana** (head minister)
- **Mahasandhi-Vigrahika** (minister of foreign affairs).
- **Amatya** (revenue minister), and
- **Samaharta** (minister of exchequer)

Provincial, District and Village Administration

OFFICIALS	FUNCTIONS	OFFICIALS	FUNCTIONS
Grampohis and **Gramkudas**	Village officials.	**Nala-kavundas**	Traditional revenue officials of the villages.
Kamunda, or **Pokigan**	Central figures in village administration, appointed by the kings.	**Mahapurush**	Responsible for maintaining order and peace in the village.
Maha-Samanta	Provincial governors, with some of them maintaining troops.	**Mahajanam**	Maintain the Law and order of the village.
Mahatras	Prominent village men.	**Nagarapatis** or **Purapatis**	Officials of the towns.
Vishayapati	Chief of 'Vishaya' (district).	**Karana or Gramani**	Village accountant.

Religion

- They patronised both **Saivism** and **Vaishnavism.**
  - Brahmin groups were invited from the **Gangetic regions** to perform rituals and ceremonies in the temples.
  - Notable rulers like **Kirtivarman**, **Mangalesa**, and **Pulikesin II** performed yagnas.
  - They bore titles such as **Parama-Vaishana** and **Parama-Maheswara**.
  - They gave a prominent place to **Kartikeyan**, the war god, and the Saiva monasteries became centres for popularising Saivism.
- They also patronised heterodox sects like **Jainism** and donated lands to them.
  - **Ravikirti,** the poet-laureate of Pulakesin II, was a **Jain scholar**.
  - During the reign of **Kirtivarman II**, a Jain temple in **Annigere** was built.
  - The prince **Krishna** appointed **Gunapatra**, a Jain monk, as his master.
  - **Pujyapatar**, the author of **Jainentriya-Viyakarnam,** was a Jain monk, a contemporary of Chalukyan ruler **Vijayaditya**.
- **Hiuen Tsang** mentioned many Buddhist centres with followers of the Hinayana and Mahayana sects living there.

Literature

- They used **Sanskrit** in pillar inscriptions such as **Aihole** and **Mahakudam**.
- A seventh-century inscription mentions **Kannada** as the local language and **Sanskrit** as the language of **culture**.
- A chieftain of Pulikesin II authored a **grammar work, Saptavataram,** in **Sanskrit**.

Aihole Inscription of Pulakesin II

The **Megudi Jain temple** in **Aihole**, Karnataka, features a Sanskrit inscription (635 AD) composed by the poet **Ravikriti**.

- The inscription serves as a **Prashasti**, praising the Chalukya dynasty, with a particular emphasis on the reigning king **Pulikesin II,** also known as **Sathyasraya (the abode of truth)**.
- It outlines the dynasty's history, boasting victories over various adversaries, including the notable **triumph over Harshavardhana**.

Architecture

- Chalukyas introduced the technique of building **temples** using **soft sandstones.**
- Their temples are grouped into two: Excavated cave temples and Structural temples.

- **Badami** is known for both **structural** and **excavated cave** temples. There are four caves in Badami. The largest cave temple built by Mangalesa is dedicated to Vishnu.
- **Pattadakal** (Eg: **Virupaksha temple**) and **Aihole** (Eg: **Lad Khan temple**) are famous for their structural temples.

In Pattadakal, Chalukyas built more than ten temples, which demonstrate the evolution of Chalukya architecture.

Paintings

- Chalukyas adopted the **Vakataka style** in painting.
  - Many of the paintings are incarnations of **Vishnu**.
- The most popular **Chalukya painting** is in the palace built by **King Mangalesan (597-609 AD)**. It is a scene of the ball being watched by members of the royal family and others

PALLAVAS

Introduction

There is no scholarly consensus about the origin of the Pallavas. Some believed that Pallava was a variant of **Pahlava**, known as **Parthians**, others regard them as **native to south India** or "with some mixture of north Indian blood".

- Pallava means **'creeper'** (a Sanskrit version of the word '**tondi**').
- They were a pastoral local tribe who established their authority in the **land of creepers** called **Tondaimandalam** (the land between the north Pennar and north Vellar rivers), comprising southern Andhra Pradesh and northern Tamil Nadu, with their capital at **Kanchi**.
- Under them, **Kanchi** (modern Kanchipuram) became an important temple town and a centre of trade and commerce.

Sources to Study

- Buddhist sources (**Deepavamsa** and **Mahavamsa** - written in Pali) and the accounts of Chinese travellers **Hiuen Tsang** and **Itsing** provide details about the socio-religious and cultural conditions of the Pallava times.
- **Periyapuranam,** written by **Sekizhar**, and the **Mathavilasa** Prahasanam, written by **Mahendravarman I** in Sanskrit, are essential sources to study **Pallava period**.

Important Rulers

Shivaskandavarman
- Probably ruled in the early **4th century AD,** as mentioned in some inscriptions.
- The **Hirahadagalli plates** referred to Sivaskandavarman as 'Agnisttomavajapeyasvamedhayaji' (one who conducted the Agnistoma, Vajapeya and Asvamedha sacrifices).

Simhavishnu
- Ruled in the last quarter of the **6th century** and played a crucial role in the Pallavas' rise to power.
- He defeated the **Ikshvakus** and laid a firm foundation for the Pallava empire.
- He defeated **Kalabhras** and conquered the land up to the Kaveri.
- He established his **capital** at **Kanchi**.
- Bore the title of '**Avanisimha**' (Lion of the Earth).

Mahendravarman I (590–630 AD)
- He was defeated by Chalukyan ruler **Pulekshin II** at **Pullalur** (near Kanchi), who annexed the northern part of the empire and reached up to Kanchipuram.
- He was a poet**,** musician and a great patron of the art.
- He wrote the **Mattavilasa Prahasanna** and began construction of the **cave temple** at **Mahabalipuram**.
- He was earlier a **Jaina** but later took up **Shaivism** under the influence of **Appar**. **[UPSC 2020]**

Narasimhavarman I /Mahamalla (630–668 AD)
- He defeated **Pulkeshin II** and invaded the Western Chalukyan kingdom by capturing **Badami** with the help of the Sri Lankan prince, **Manavarma**.
- He claimed victories over **Cholas**, **Cheras**, and **Kalabhras**.
- He dispatched **two naval expeditions** to help **Manavarma**.
- An enthusiastic patron of architecture, he constructed the **port of Mamallapuram** and the **Rathas at Mahabalipuram.**
- It is in honour of **Narasimhavarman I** that **Mahabalipuram** is also known as **Mamallapuram.**

Mahendravarman II (668–670 AD)	The Pallava–Chalukya conflict continued for decades, and he died fighting the Chalukyas.
Parameshvaraman I (670–695 AD)	• Paramesvaravarman I was called **Ugradanda** and the **'destroyer of the city of Ranarasika'**. Ranarasika was a title of **Vikramaditya I**. • The **Kuram copper plates** record his military achievements.
Narsimhavarman II /Rajasimha (700–728 AD)	• Constructed Rajasimheshvara/**Kailashnatha Temple** and **Shore Temple** at **Mahabalipuram**. • Sent an ambassador to China.
Dantivarman (795–846 AD)	During his reign, **Rashtrakuta** king **Govind III invaded Kanchi.**
Nandivarman III (846–869 AD)	Defeated the Pandyas in the **Battle of Sripurambiyam** or Thirupurambiyam, aided by western Gangas and Cholas.
Aparajita (880–893 AD)	He died in a battle against Chloa king **Aditya I**, who invaded Tondaimandalam. This sealed the fate of the Pallavas.

Administration

- **Kingship** was considered to be of **divine origin** and **hereditary**. The king took high-sounding titles like **Maharajadhiraja** (borrowed from north India), who was aided by a **council of ministers**.
  - Some ministers bore **semi-royal titles** and may have been appointed from among the feudatories.

Officials and Their Roles

Amatyas	Counsellors
Mantrins	Diplomats
Rahasyadhikrita	Private secretary
Manikkappandaram-Kappan	Treasury officer
Kodukkappillai	Officer of gifts
Kosaadhyaksa	Treasury supervisor

- **Pallava queens did not take an active part in the administration** of the kingdom, but they built shrines, and installed images of various deities, and endowed temples.
  - The image of **Queen Rangapataka**, the queen of **Rajasimha**, is found in the inscription in the **Kailasanatha** temple in **Kanchipuram**.
- Judicial courts were termed **Adhikarna Mandapa**.
  - **Dharmadhikarins -** Judges.
  - Fines are mentioned in the **Kasakudi plates** of **Nandivarman** as:
    - **Karanadandam** (fines in superior court).
    - **Adhikaranadandam** (fines at district level).
- District officers **collaborated closely** with **local autonomous institutions** and **advised provincial governors.**
  - Local groups based on castes, guilds, crafts, etc. formed the basis for autonomous bodies.
- **Policy implementation** was done through a meeting between district representatives and assemblies of villagers.

Land Grants

Land ownership was vested in the king, who had the authority to grant revenue and land to officers and Brahmins. The most common practice was cultivating crown lands through tenants.

- Villages with **mixed-caste populations** were subject to land revenue payments.
- **Brahmadeya villages** were gifted to individual Brahmins or groups, exempting them from taxation and leading to increased prosperity.
- **Devadana villages** were donated to temples.
  - Revenue was directed to temple authorities rather than the state.
  - The temple authorities assisted the village by providing employment in the temple service.
  - In later centuries, temples became central to rural life, elevating the significance of **devadana villages**.

In **Urrukkattukottam**, near Puducherry, **eleven plates held together by a copper ring** and stamped with a **Pallava royal seal** (depicting a bull and a lingam) were discovered.

- It records a **grant of a village** made by **King Nandivarman (753 AD)**.
- The inscriptional text commences with a eulogy of the king in **Sanskrit**, followed by the details of the grant in **Tamil**, and a concluding verse in **Sanskrit**.

Village Life

- Village assembly, known as **Sabha**, dealt with various village matters, including land, irrigation, records, and crime.

- Sabha was subordinate to the **district council,** which worked with **Nadu** or district administration.
- Sabha was a formal institution but closely collaborated with the **urar (an informal village gathering).**
- The **village headman** served as a link between the village assembly and official administration.
- Brahman-populated villages maintained records on assembly and council operations.
- **Village courts** also handled minor criminal cases.
  - At a higher level, in towns and districts, courts were presided over by government officers, with the king as the supreme arbiter of justice.

Tank Irrigation

- **Eripatti,** or **tank land,** was a unique category of land found exclusively in South India.
  - It was **donated by individuals**, and the revenue generated from this land was reserved for maintaining the village tank. **[UPSC 2016]**
  - The tank was crucial for **storing rainwater** to irrigate the land during prolonged dry spells.
  - The tank, lined with brick or stone, was built through the **cooperative effort of the village**, and its water was **shared by all cultivators.**
- A **special tank committee** appointed by the village oversaw the irrigation water distribution.
- Water was **distributed by canals fitted with sluices** to regulate the water level and prevent overflowing at the source.

Revenue and Taxation

Revenue primarily came from rural sources, with urban and mercantile institutions being unplanned.

- Land grants recorded on **copper plates** give detailed information on land revenues and taxation in the Pallava period.
- Two taxes were imposed on villages:
  - Land revenue paid by cultivators to the state (**1/6th** to **1/10th** of the produce).
  - Local taxes for village services like repairing irrigation works and illuminating temples.
- **Additional taxes** were levied on various professions and activities like draught cattle, toddy drawers, potters, goldsmiths, etc., when state land tax fell short.
- **War loot** contributed to the state's revenue, underscoring the importance of warfare to the Pallavas.

Army

- State revenue was primarily allocated to maintain the **standing army**, with the King directly controlling the army, which included **foot soldiers, cavalry,** and **a small contingent of elephants**.
- **Chariots** were largely **obsolete** and ineffective in the hilly terrain where much fighting occurred.
- **Cavalry** was effective but costly, as **horses** needed to be **imported**.
- They established a **navy** and constructed **dockyards at Mamallapuram** and **Nagapattinam.** However, their navy was significantly smaller compared to the naval power of the Cholas.
- Sculptures at the **Vaikunta Perumal temple** in **Kanchipuram** depict significant events from the reign of Nandivarama Pallava, emphasising the importance of warfare in Pallava society.

Trade

- **Kanchipuram** held significant importance as a trading hub.
- The merchants had to obtain a **licence** to market their goods.
- Initially, a **barter system** was prevalent, but later, Pallavas **introduced gold** and **silver coins.**
- Merchant organisations like **Manigramam** were established to regulate trade. Traders formed **guilds**, identifying themselves as **Sudesi,Nanadesi, Ainurruvar**, and others.
  - The primary guild operated at **Aihole**.
  - Foreign merchants were called **Nanadesi**. They had a separate **flag** with the figure of a **bull at the centre**, and enjoyed the right to issue **vira-sasanas**.

Vira-Sasanas are inscriptions of guilds that began with a prasasti describing their brave and heroic deeds as traders and as a fighter.

Maritime Trade

- The Pallavas had **maritime trade with south-east Asia.**
- The guild's jurisdiction extended over Southeast Asia, with its **chief** known as **Pattanswamy**, **Pattnakilar**, and **Dandanayaka** in inscriptions and their members were referred to as **Ayyavole-Parameswariyar**.
- Foreign trade involved exporting spices, cotton textiles, precious stones, and medicinal plants to regions including Java, Sumatra, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, China, and Burma.
- **Mamallapuram** served as a crucial seaport for trade with Southeast Asia, which included three significant kingdoms: **Kambuja**(Cambodia), **Champa** (Annam), and **Srivijaya** (the southern Malaya peninsula and Sumatra).
- On the **West Coast**, trade was gradually dominated by foreign traders, mainly Arabs, with Indian traders becoming suppliers of goods rather than carriers.

Society

- The **caste system became firmly established**, and Sanskrit gained high regard.
- **Aryanisation** and northern influence on the south accelerated, evident from the royal grants issued by the kings.
- **Kanchipuram** remained a significant centre of learning.
- The followers of the Vedic religion were devoted to the worship of **Shiva**.
  - Notable Shaiva **(Nayanmars)** and Vaishnava **(Alwars)** poet-saints lived during Mahendravarman's time.
- Brahmins' status was elevated, and they received **substantial land grants**.
  - **Aryanisation** is reflected in the transformation of **educational institutions**. Initially, education was controlled by Jains and Buddhists, but gradually the Brahmins superseded them.
  - **Brahmins** served as royal advisers in literature, astronomy, and law and were engaged in teaching, agriculture, trade, and warfare.
  - Further, they enjoyed exemptions from taxes and capital punishment.
- **Sat-kshatryas** (a group within Kshatriya) played a significant role in ruling the state.
  - They were engaged in trading and warfare.
  - They also enjoyed the right to **read the Vedas**.
- **Lower strata of society** were engaged in **agriculture**, **animal husbandry**, and handicrafts.
- People engaged in **scavenging, fishing, dry-cleaning** and **leather works** were positioned outside the varna system.

Religion

- **Jains** initially used **Sanskrit** and **Prakrit** for their religious literature but later adopted **Tamil**.
  - Jainism was highly popular, but competition from Hinduism led to a decline in Jain followers over the succeeding centuries.
  - **Mahendravarman I** shifted his allegiance from **Jainism to Saivism**, leading to a loss of royal patronage for the Jains. He became **intolerant towards Jainism** and destroyed Jain monasteries.
- **Jains** established educational centres near **Madurai** and **Kanchi**, as well as religious centres like **Shravanabelagola in Karnataka**. However, many Jain monks tended to isolate themselves in small caves in hills and forests.

Monasteries and Mathas

- They served as the **core of the Buddhist educational system**, concentrated around Kanchi, the valleys of the Krishna and the Godavari rivers.
  - Buddhism faced decline due to the **lack of royal patronage** and conflict between **orthodox and heterodox sects,** giving an advantage to proponents of Vedic religions.
- In the **eighth century**, **Mathas** gained popularity, serving as a combination of a **rest house**, **feeding centre**, and **educational institution**.

Buddhism and **Jainism** experienced a **decline**, although **Hiuen-Tsang** reported witnessing numerous Buddhist monasteries and priests in Kanchi belonging to the **Mahayana school.**

Sanskrit Literature

Sanskrit was the **official language** at the royal court, leading to its adoption in literary circles.

- Alongside the renowned **university in Kanchi**, comparable to **Nalanda**, there were several other Sanskrit colleges
- **Mahendravarman I** composed **Mathavilasa Prahasanam** in Sanskrit.
- Two extraordinary works in Sanskrit set the standard for Sanskrit literature in the south:
  - **Kiratarjuniya** by **Bharavi** and **Dashakumaracharita** by **Dandin.**
- **Dandin of Kanchipuram**, author of the great treatise on **rhetoric Kavyadarsa**, seems to have stayed in Pallava court for some time.

ART AND ARCHITECTURE

- **Mahendravarman I** introduced **rock-cut temples** in the Pallava territory.
  - His rock temples are usually the **mandapa type,** with a pillared hall or mandapa in front and a small shrine at the rear or sides.
- **Mandagappattu inscription** mentions that shrines to Brahma, Isvara and Vishnu were made without using traditional materials such as brick, timber, metal and mortar.
- The image of **Queen Rangapataka**, the queen of **Rajasimha**, is found in the inscription in the **Kailasanatha** temple in **Kanchipuram**.
- The early Pallava rulers issued their charters in **Prakrit**. The second line of **Pallava rulers** issued their charters in **Sanskrit**.

Other Dynasties

IKSHAVAKU (225-350 AD)

- They arose after **Satavahanas declined** in the eastern part of the peninsula (especially in the **Krishna–Guntur** region), with **Nagarjunakonda** as their capital.
- They were probably a **local tribe** who adopted this name to demonstrate the antiquity of their lineage.

THE KADAMBAS OF BANAVASI

Introduction

- The Kadambas emerged prominent around **Talagunda** (modern Shimoga district) in north-western Karnataka around 345 AD.
- The dynasty was founded by **Mayurasharman**, who defeated the **Pallavas** with the help of **forest tribes**.
- They were absorbed into Chalukyan polity around the 6th century AD and became feudatories of the Chalukyas and Rashtrakutas.

Re-Emergence

- In the 11th century, there emerged two prominent groups claiming Banavasi Kadamba lineage:
  - The Kadambas of **Hangal** (in Dharwar district)
  - The Kadambas of **Goa** (Dharwar, Karwar and Belgaum districts).
  - Both claimed the title **Banavasipuravaradhisvara**, suggestive of their claims over the capital Banavasi (Karnataka).

The Kadambas of Goa

- They governed from **Chandrapura and Gopakapattana** and were prominent from the 11th century to the mid-13th century.
- They ruled over the north-western part of **Goa**, Belgaum, Dharwar and parts of northern Kanara (Konkana, present Ratnagiri) districts of modern **Karnataka**.
- The **founder** of the **Kadambas** of Goa was **Sheshtha-I**.
- They finally lost to the Chalukyas of Badami.

THE KADAMBAS OF HANGAL

- They retained their base at Banavasi and ruled around the mid-9th century to early 13th century with their **capital** at **Banavasi**.

Administration

- They assumed the title of **Konkanadhisa**, **Konkana Chakravarti** (Lord of Konkana), **Paschim - Samudradhisvara** (Lord of the western ocean) and Mahamandaleshvara.
- Shashthideva performed Tulapurusa and Ashvamedha sacrifices and visited the Somnath temple.
- The **region** was divided into **visayas** (districts) administered by **maneyas**. The lowest unit was a village **(grama)** governed by **grama mukhya**, **Urodeya** or **Gavunda**. They maintained their **army** and performed judicial functions.

Economy and Trade

- **Land Grants:**
  - References of **Tribhoga**, **Sarvanamasya** and **Talavritti** land grants suggest the presence of land holdings by individuals and religious groups.
  - They provided liberal grants to **Buddhists, Jainas and Shaivas**. Hiuen Tsang attests to several Buddhist monasteries and mathas at Banavasi.
- **Maritime Activities:**
  - The capital of the Kadambas of Goa – **Chandapur** – was an important maritime centre. Their important port, **Ganadevi** (in the modern Surat district), had contacts with the East African coast.
  - **Jayakesi I**, assumed the title of **Paschim-Samudradhishvara** (Lord of the Western Ocean), which suggests the importance of oceanic trade.

12 Sangam Age

THE SANGAM AGE

Sangam Age spans from the **3rd century BC to the 3rd century AD** in South India and Sangams were also called **Muchchangam.**

South India During Mauryan Times
Asokan **Rock Edict II** (270-30 BC), for the **first time,** mentions the political picture of South India. According to it, **Cholas, Pandyas, Keralaputras,** and **Satiyaputra** existed as independent Tamil kingdoms.

Sources to Study Sangam Age

Archaeological

- **Megalithic burials of South India:** Buried their dead in **urns** made of red pottery, which is different from cist burial.

Cist Burial: In this type of burial, a small stone-built coffin-like box is used to hold the bodies of the dead. These types of burials were completely underground.

Urn burial: After death, corpses are cremated, and the ashes are collected and put in an urn.

- **H**istoric ports & capitals like **Arikamedu, Kodumanal, Uraiyur** and **Alagankulam**.
- Buddhist stupas and chaityas in **Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda etc.**

Numismatic	• Pre-Satavahana and Satavahana coins in Andhra-Karnataka, Coins of Cheras, Cholas, Pandyas, Sangam chieftains, Roman copper, silver, and gold coins.
Epigraphic	• Asokan, Tamil-Brahmi, Satavahana and Buddhist inscriptions • Short inscriptions on pottery, rings, and stones in Tamil Nadu and international sites like Berenike and Quseir al Qadhim (Egypt)
Literary	• **Tamil texts** (Sangam, post-Sangam). • Kautilya's **Arthasastra** on economy, and statecraft. • Puranas with Andhras/Satavahana genealogy. • Buddhist Chronicles like **Mahavamsa**. • **Gatha Saptasati**, a Prakrit text by Satavahana king Hala. • **Tolkappiyam (Tamil text)** 5 epics belong to post-Sangam times (fourth to sixth century AD).

Foreign Accounts include The Periplus of Erythrean Sea, Pliny the Elder's Natural History, Ptolemy's Geography, Vienna Papyrus and a Roman Map called Peutingerian Table.

- **The Cheras, Cholas** and **Pandyas** ruled this age and are also known as **the Muvendar or three crowned kings.** They ruled the Indian peninsula **south of the Krishna River** and fought with each other as well as Sri Lanka.
- The **Pandyas** are believed to have **patronised the Tamil Sangams**, facilitating the compilation of Sangam poems.

THE THREE SANGAMS OVER THE YEARS

S. NO.	PLACE OF SANGAM	PRESIDENT	OTHER SCHOLARS	IMPORTANT WORKS
1	Madurai	Sage Agastyar	Agastya, Murugavel, Mudinagarayar and Murunjiyur	Agatiyam, Paripadal, Mudukurugu and Kalariyavirai.

Note:- No literary work of First Sangam is available.				
2	Kapadapuram	Agastya	Irundiyar, Tolkappiyar, Karungoli, Pandurangan, Tarainamaran, and Vellurkappiyanar.	Tolkappiyam Mapuram, Isainunukam, Bhutapuram, Kali, Kuruku and Vendali.
3	Madurai	Nakkiralu	Thiruvalluvar, Valluvar, Ilango Adigal, Seethalai Sathanar, Nakkiranar, Kapilar, Paranar, Auvaiyar, Mangudi Marudanar.	Pattupattu, Ettutogai, Pathinen Kilkanakku, and the Kural, Thirukkural.

SANGAM TEXTS

The Classical Sangam corpus consists of **Tholkappiyam, Ettuththokai (the eight anthologies), and Paththuppattu.**

- **Tholkappiyam,** attributed to **Tholkappiyar,** is the earliest **Tamil grammatical** text, dealing not only with poetry but also with the society and culture of the times**.**
- **Ettuthogai** and **Pathupattu** collections have about 2400 poems composed by **Panar** (wandering bards) and **Pulavar** (poets).

Ettuththokai (Eight Anthologies)	1. Natrinai 2. Kurunthogai 3. Aingurunuru	4. Patitruppathu 5. Paripadal 6. Kalithogai	7. Akananuru 8. Purananuru
Paththuppattu (Ten long songs)	1. Thirumurugatrupatai 2. Porunaratrupatai 3. Sirupanatruppatai 4. Perumpanatruppatai 5. Mullaipattu	6. Maduraikanchi 7. Nedunalvadai 8. Kurinjipattu 9. Pattinappalai 10. Malaipadukadam	

Women Poets of the Sangam:

There were **thirty** women poets who composed more than 150 poems. The most prominent poet was **Avvaiyar**. Others include Allur Nanmullaiyaar, Kaakkaipadiniyar, Kavarpendu, Nalveliyaar, Okkur Masaathiyar, and Paarimakalir.

Post Sangam Text

- The **Patinen Kilkanakku** (18 minor works) deals with ethics and moral codes. The most important of them are **Thirukkural** and **Naladiyar.**
- **Silappadikaram** by **Ilango Adigal** and **Manimekalai** by **Seethalai Sathanar** are two important epics useful for insights into cultural and religious history.
  - **Silappadikaram** deals with a **love story in** which a dignitary called **Kovalan** prefers a courtesan called **Madhavi** of Kaveripattanam to his wedded wife Kannagi from a noble family.
  - **Manimekalai** deals with the adventures of the daughter born of the union of Kovalan and Madhavi.

SANGAM POLITY

The Thinai classification reflects varying socio-economic developments in different localities during the Sangam Age.

- This classification also extended to political forms with **three levels of rulers**:

Kizhar	They were the heads of the villages or a small territory, later known as **nadu**. They were the chiefs of tribal communities living in specific areas.
Vendar	**Kings** who controlled larger and fertile territories. • They adopted titles like **Kadungo, Imayavaramban, Vanavaramban,** and **Peru Vazhuthi** to distinguish themselves from velir and common people. • Kings patronised **bards** and **poets**, entertaining them in their **courts (avaiyam)** to enhance their reputation and glorify their territories. • He had absolute powers over his subjects. Kings conducted Vedic sacrifices. • Hereditary monarchies didn't always follow primogeniture for succession. • King was advised by a committee known as "**Aimperunkulu** " which comprised Ministers (**Amaichchar**), Priests (**Anthanar**), Generals, Envoys (**Dutas or thuthar**), and Spies (**orrar**). • He was also advised by the imperial court i.e. **Orasavai or Vettavai** and court poets. • The kings of the Sangam age ruled with different titles, like **Vanavaramban, Vanavan, Villavar** (Chera rulers), **Senni, Valavan and Killi** (Chola rulers), **Thennavar and Minavar** (Pandya rulers).

Velir	• They controlled mainly hilly and forest areas which were located between the Muvendar's fertile territories. • Notable Chiefs like **Athiyaman, Pari, Ay, Evvi, and Irungo** ruled resource-rich regions • They patronised poets. • They held military might, often clashing and occasionally uniting against the main kings. • **Satiyaputra (Athiyaman)** in Asokan inscription is a Velir chief in Sangam poems.

Vattakirutal: A king who was defeated in a battle committed ritual suicide by starving himself to death **[UPSC 2023]**

SANGAM SOCIETY

There were sharp social **inequalities** during the Sangam era.

- The affluent dwelled in brick and mortar houses, while the poor lived in huts and simpler structures.
- Dominance of Brahmins and ruling caste was visible but clear-cut caste distinction was lacking in the early Sangam period. Though, references of slaves are also found.
- Brahmanas first appeared during the Sangam era in Tamil land. Many of them worked as poets. An ideal king would never hurt them.
- The **Kshatriya** and **Vaisya** do not appear as regular varna in sangam text. Though warrior class was not absent.
  - Captains of the army received the title of "**Enadi**" at a formal ceremony.
  - Civil and military offices were held by **Vallalas**, or rich peasants (under both Cholas and Pandyas).
- The ruling caste was referred to as **Arasar** and had marriage relations with **Vallalas (fourth Caste).**
- Large landowners were known as **vellalar,** ordinary ploughmen were known as **uzhavar**, and landless labourers, including slaves, were known as **kadaisiyar** and **adimai**.
- Low-class artisans (**Pulaiyans**) were responsible for crafting charpayis.

Tamil Eco-Zones

According to the **Thinai (landscape) concept**, Tamilagam was divided into **five** landscapes. Each region had its distinct characteristics – a presiding deity, people and cultural life according to the environmental conditions.

Kurinji	Hilly region characterised by hunting and gathering activities.
Marutham	Riverine tract, where agriculture was practised using ploughs and irrigation.
Mullai	Forest region where pastoralism was combined with shifting cultivation.
Neythal	Coastal land primarily used for fishing and salt production.
Palai	Arid and parched land unsuitable for cultivation, leading people to engage in cattle lifting and robbery.

SANGAM ECONOMY

Revenue

- Foreign and domestic trade was an important source of revenue.
- **Custom** and **Transit duties** were collected from merchants who moved their goods from place to place.
  - Custom officials functioned in **Puhar**.
- The Tamil literature mentions **irai** and **tirai** as two types of contributions received by the chieftains. While irai was a regular contribution, tirai was a tribute.
- **Spoils of war** were another source of income.
- Agriculture provided regular income, though the share of King was not specified.
- Evidence of taxation is found on highways and in the port of **Kaviripattinam**.

Agriculture

- Produced paddy, ragi and sugarcane.
- The Tamil region produced grains, fruit, spices (especially pepper) and turmeric.

Craft Production

- It includes making Bronze vessels, beads, goldwork, textiles, shell bangles, ornaments, glass, iron smithy, and pottery.
- Major **Urban centres** for craft production were Arikamedu, Uraiyur, Kanchipuram, Kaviripattinam, Madurai, Korkai, and Pattanam in Kerala.
- **Maduraikanchi** (written by **Mangudi Maruthanar**) describes day and night markets offering diverse crafted items.

Trade

- **Barter** was **common** in trade alongside the use of coins.
- Roman gold and silver coins are found in hoards in southern India, including Coimbatore.
- Evidence of Long distance trade**:**

- **Archaeological sites** demonstrate long-distance trade, including links to the Roman Empire, Egypt, Arabia, Malay archipelago and China.
- Early historic ports revealed **Roman amphorae, glassware**, indicating active maritime trade.
- **Pottery inscriptions** indicate non-Tamil-speaking traders in Sangam Age craft centres and towns.
- Sangam text **"Manimegalai"** mentions **Magadha artisans, Maratha mechanics, Malva smiths,** and **Yavana carpenters** working with Tamil craftsmen.

- Trade-related terms like **vanikan (trader), chattan, and nigama** appear in Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions.
- **Umanar,** or **salt merchants**, travelled in bullock carts with their families for trade.
- **Chattu** referred to mobile merchants or itinerant traders.
- Items of trade included Ivory, Pearls, precious stones, muslin, silk, cotton cloth etc.

Army

The state maintained a **regular army** from the taxes collected from the peasantry.

- It consisted of **chariots** drawn by oxen, Elephants, cavalry and infantry.
  - The nobles and princes or captains rode on elephants and the commander rode on chariots.

IDEOLOGY AND RELIGION

Buddhism

The earliest evidence of the appearance of formal religious activities appeared in the time of the Asoka when Buddhism reached south India and Sri Lanka.

- Asoka's daughter is considered to have taken the Bodhi tree to Sri Lanka.
- Legends suggest **Chandragupta Maurya's presence in Karnataka** before Asoka.
- Buddhism left a notable mark in South India, especially in the Krishna and Godavari delta of Andhra Pradesh. Sites like **Amaravathi and Nagarjunakonda** provide archaeological evidence.
- But compared to Jainism, the evidence for Buddhism is restricted to a few sites in Tamil Nadu.

Jainism

Jainism had a stronger presence in Tamil Nadu, as evidenced by numerous **cave shelters** with Tamil Brahmi inscriptions.

- Their influence on the common people is not known, but there is evidence of the merchants and devotees supporting Jain monks by providing rock shelters and offerings.
- In the post-Sangam era, Jains made significant contributions to Tamil literature.

Beginning of Brahminism

The **Satavahanas, Sangam kings,** and **Ikshvahus** supported **Vedic sacrifices**, as indicated in Sangam texts.

- The evidence of **Brahmin migration** and the performance of Vedic rituals exists in Sangam texts. Though the **varnasrama ideology** had not taken hold in Tamil Nadu.
- The worship of Vishnu is also mentioned.
- **Megalithic practice** of providing for the dead continued (people offered paddy).
- Cremation was introduced, but inhumation was not abandoned.
- Local god **Murugan** (also known as **Subramaniya**) was worshipped by people.

THE CHOLAS

They ruled central and northern Tamil Nadu, including the Kaveri Delta, later known as **Cholamandalam or Coromandel**. They were situated in the North-east of Pandyas between the **Pennar** and **Vellar** rivers.

- **Capital**: **Uraiyur**, near **Thiruchirapalli** town (Known for the **Cotton trade**).
  - The first monarch to rule from Uriyur was **Uruvappahrer Ilam Set Senni.**
  - **Puhar,** or **Kaviripattinam,** was an alternative royal residence and chief **port town**. **[UPSC 2023]**
- They kept an efficient **navy** that sailed as far as the mouth of **Ganga**, **Irrawady** and **Malay archipelago**.

KARIKALAN: The famous Chola king lived around 100 AD and was also known as **Tirumavalan**.

- He transferred the capital to **Puhar** (also called **Poompuhar**).
- Rewarded poets generously with cash, gold, land, chariots, horses, and elephants.
  - **Pattinappalai** by poet **Katiyalur Uruttirankannanar** described that trade prospered under him.
- **Military achievements:** He defeated Cheras (Perum Cheralathan) and Pandyas, with support from 11 Velir chieftains at the **Battle of Venni**.
  - In the 2nd **battle at Vagaipparandalai**, he defeated Nine Princes.
- He exerted pressure on the **Pallavas of Kanchi** and **Kurumbras**, making them acknowledge **Chola's suzerainty.**
- He converted forests into habitable areas.
- He built many irrigation tanks and the **Killanai dam (Grand Anicut)** across the **Kaveri River.**

- He also advanced agriculture via the **Kaveri embankment** and **built reservoirs**.
- Karikalan's **death** led to a succession dispute between the Puhar and Uraiyur Chola branches.

The Cholas weakened as the Cheras and Pandyas expanded. Pallavas further diminished their influence from the 4th to 9th century AD.

THE CHERAS

Cheras governed the central and northern Kerala and **Kongu regions** in Tamil Nadu.

- **Two main Chera branches:** The first branch ruled **Vanji,** and the second Poraiya branch ruled **Karur**.
  - Controlled west coast **ports** like **Musiri** and **Tondi**.
- **Pugalur inscriptions** near Karur mention 3 generations of Chera kings.
  - Prominent kings include **Imayavaramban, Nedun-cheralathan** and **Senguttuvan**.
- **Patitrupathu** provides a description of 8 Chera kings, their territories, and their fame.
- **Chellirumporai** minted coins in his name.
- Some Chera kings issued **copper** and **lead coins** with Tamil-Brahmi legends, imitating Roman coins.

Important Kings

Udiyan Cheral	He was the earliest Chera King who lived during the reign of Satavahana King **Satakarni II**.
Nedum Cheral Adan	• He had to confront the **Yavanas**, whom he defeated and earned the title "**Imayavaramban**" through their humiliation. • He had two sons: **Cheran Chenguttuvan** and **Ilango Adigal**. ❍ Ilango Adigal, the younger, became an ascetic and authored the **'Silappadikaram'**.

Senguttuvan (the Red Chera)

- According to the Chera poets, he was their **greatest king.**
- He defeated numerous chieftains and protected the port of **Musiri** from piracy.
- He led a great north Indian expedition, mentioned in Silappathikaram but not found in Sangam poems.
- He was contemporary to **Yagnasri Satakarni** of Satavahanas.
- He defeated the pirates known as **'Kadambas'** and earned the title **'Kadal-Pirakka Hiya'**.
- He ruled for 46 years and supported both orthodox and heterodox religions.
- He initiated the **first diplomatic mission to China** from South India.
- He introduced the **Pattini cult** in Tamil Nadu, venerating **Kannagi** as the exemplary wife.

After the 2nd century, the Chera kingdom declined.

THE PANDYAS

- Pandyas were first mentioned by **Megasthenes,** who said their kingdom was famous for **pearls**. He also described Pandyan society as being **matriarchal**.
- **Territory:** Southernmost and south-eastern parts of the Indian Peninsula, with the **capital** at **Madurai**. They invaded Southern Kerala and controlled the **port of Nelkynda** near Kottayam.
- **Main port: Korkai** (located near the confluence of **Tampraparani** with the Bay of Bengal) **[UPSC 2023]**
  - Korkai is mentioned in the **Periplus** as "**Kolkoi**", known for **pearl fishery** and **chank diving.**
- **Trade**: The Pandyas benefited from trade with Rome and sent **embassies** to the Roman emperor **Augustus.**
  - **Horses** were **imported** by sea into the kingdom.

Important Kings

Vadimbalambaninra	He is also known as **Nediyon** and was the earliest king of the Pandyas.
Padagasalai Mudukudumi - Peruvazhuthi	• A formidable warrior and poetry patron. • **Maduraikanchi of Mangudi Marudan** mentions him. • **Velvikkudi copper plates** of the eighth century mention land donated to Brahmans. • Issued coins with the legend **"Peruvazhuthi "** to commemorate his performance of Vedic sacrifices.

Nedunchezhiyan	• He is celebrated for his victory over a combined army of the **Chera, Chola,** and **five Velir chieftains** at **Talayalanganam.** • Took the title of **'Aryappadaikadanda'.** • He also captured **Milalai** and **Mutthuru** from a Vel chief.

The Pandyan rule began to decline due to the invasions of the **Kalabhras**.

Summary

DYNASTY	REGION	CAPITAL	IMPORTANT RULER	IMPORTANT PORTS	EMBLEM
Cheras	Kerala	Vanji	Cheran Senguttuvan	Musiri, Tondi	Bow and Arrow
Cholas	Tamil Nadu	Uraiyur	Karikala	Kaveripattinam/ Puhar	Tiger
Pandyas	Tamil Nadu	Madurai	Nedunchezhiyan	Nelkynda, Korkai **[UPSC 2023]**	Fish

AGE OF KALABHRAS (POST SANGAM PERIOD)

The period between the Sangam Age and the Pallava-Pandya era (approximately 300 AD to 600 AD) is known as the **Kalabhra age** in Tamil history.

- It was during this period that significant Tamil literary works were produced, including the **Tirukkural, Silappathikaram,** and **Manimekalai.**
- As **Jainism** and **Buddhism** gained influence, leading orthodox Vedic-Puranic scholars depicted the Kalabhra rulers negatively.
- The Kalabhra kingdom was eventually **overthrown by the Pandyas** in the mid-sixth century AD.
- Traditionally, it is **considered a 'dark age' or interregnum** due to the disappearance of the three traditional Tamil kingdoms. It was also supposed that many good traits of earlier Tamil culture disappeared in this interval. However, this idea of interregnum is no longer accepted as correct.
- Recent interpretations view this era as a transition period, with the emergence of larger state societies under the Pallavas in northern Tamil Nadu and the Pandyas in the south.

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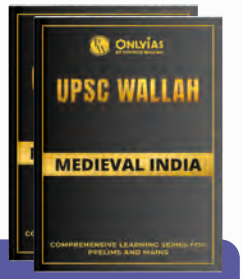

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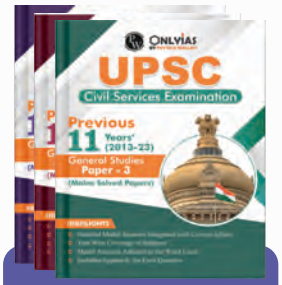

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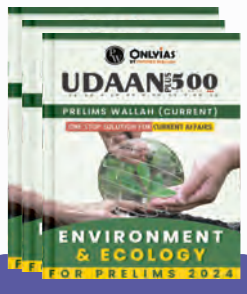

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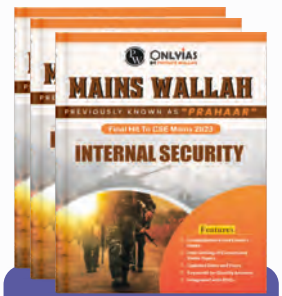

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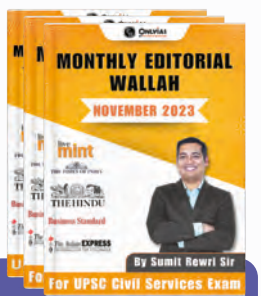

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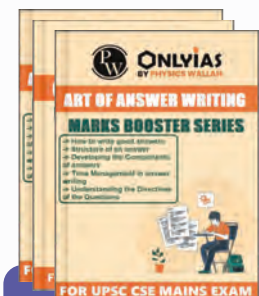

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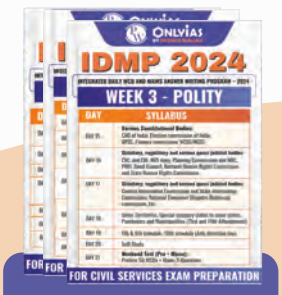

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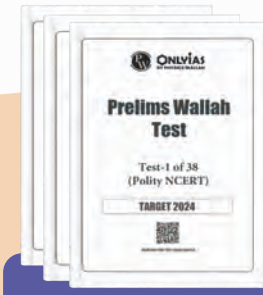

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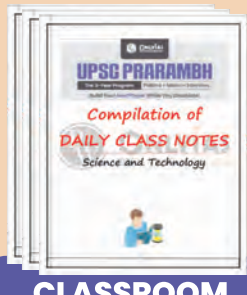

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