

DAILY CLASS NOTES

Medieval History



Lecture - 01
**Post Gupta
Period**

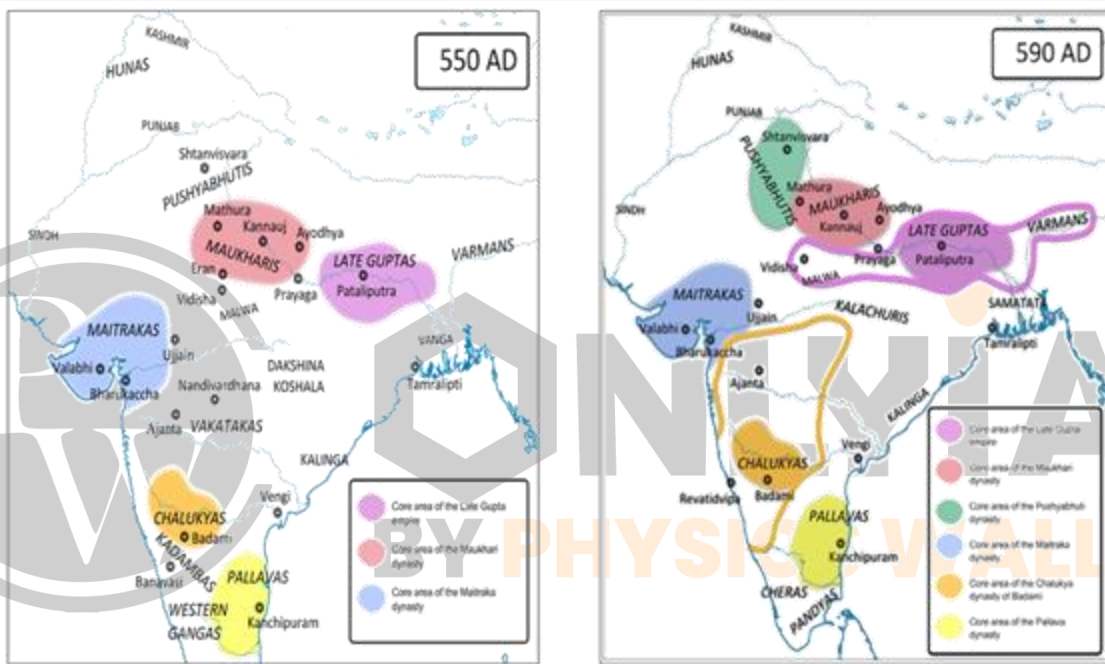
ONLYIAS
BY PHYSICS WALLAH



Post Gupta Period

What happened after the disintegration of the Gupta Empire?

- ❖ The fall of the Gupta Empire by 550 CE resulted in the rise and growth of numerous regional dynasties in the whole sub-continent.
- ❖ With the coming of **Kumaragupta III (530-540)** on the throne of Magadha, the weakness of the imperial Gupta had become a known fact to all.
- ❖ Taking advantage of the situation some feudatories of the Guptas raised their heads to grab the political power in north India to establish their own independent kingdoms.
- ❖ The given map of India in the 6th century AD depicts the political dispensations in the post-Gupta period:

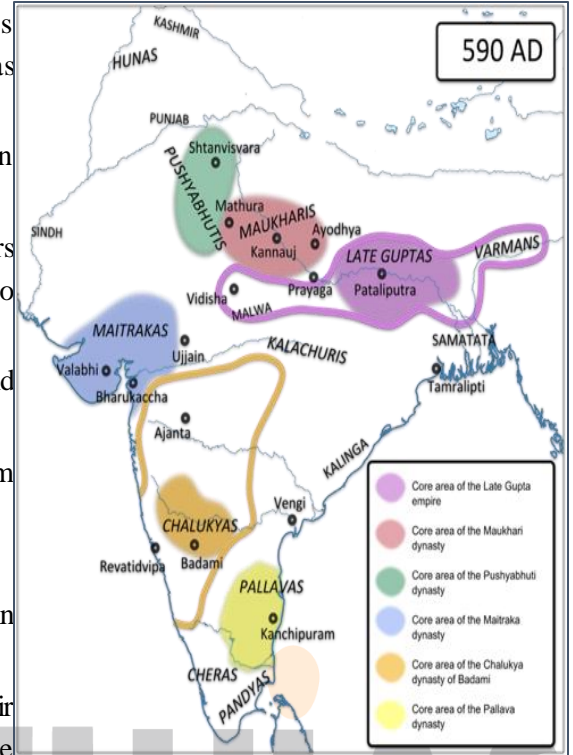


Gupta's Successors States in Northern India:

- ❖ There were four major kingdoms in north India between the period in which the Guptas declined and the rise of Harsha (i.e., in the beginning of 7th century), namely –
 - Guptas of Magadha;
 - Maukharis of Kannauj;
 - Maitrakas of Valabhi (Saurashtra); and
 - Pushyabhutis of Thaneswar.
- ❖ These four kingdoms competed with each other to succeed to the past glory of the Guptas. Other powers were:
 - Malwa under Yashodharman
 - Gaudas of Bengal
 - Kamarupa Kingdom of Assam

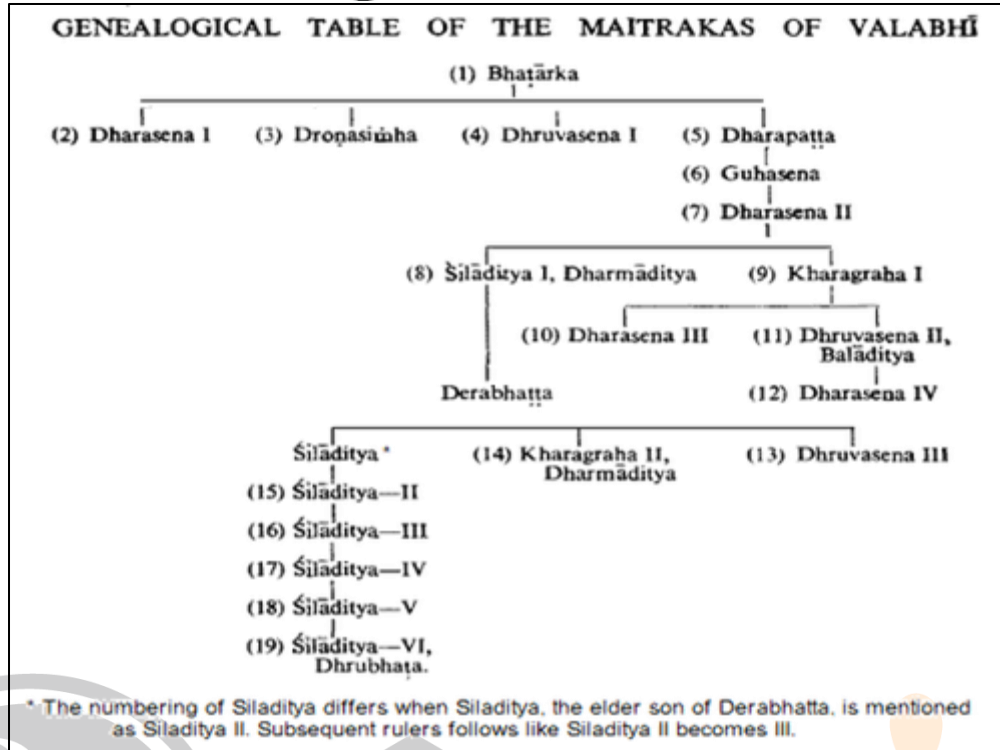
Later Guptas of Magadha:

- ❖ After the decline of the Gupta Empire, the Later Guptas succeeded them as the rulers of Magadha. **Krishnagupta** was the founder of the **Later Gupta dynasty**.
- ❖ The **Later Gupta Dynasty** ruled the Magadha region in eastern India between the **6th and 7th centuries**.
- ❖ The Later Guptas succeeded the **imperial Guptas** as the rulers of Magadha, but there is no evidence connecting the two dynasties; these appear to be two distinct families.
- ❖ They were probably **feudatory to imperial Guptas** and **asserted their independence after their fall**.
- ❖ Most of the information of the Later Guptas is derived from the:
 - **Aphsad Inscription of Adityasena** located in Gaya.
 - **Deo-Barnark inscription of Jivitagupta II**, located in the Bhojpur district of Bihar.
- ❖ The Later Guptas are so-called because the names of their rulers ended with the suffix "**Gupta**", which they might have adopted to portray themselves as the legitimate successors of the imperial Guptas.
- ❖ But some of the kings of this Gupta family were very **powerful and ruled up to as far as the Brahmaputra River**.



Maitrakas of Vallabhi:

- ❖ Towards the middle of the 5th century A.D., the Gupta empire **started to decline**.
- ❖ **Senapati Bhatarka**, the Maitrak general of the Guptas, took advantage of the situation in 470 AD and **laid the foundation of his kingdom of Vallabhi**, which came to be known as the Maitrak kingdom.
- ❖ He shifted his capital from **Girinagar to Vallabhipur, near Bhavnagar**, on Saurashtra's east coast.
- ❖ Maitrak of Vallabhi became very powerful and their writ prevailed over large parts of Gujarat and even over adjoining Malwa.
- ❖ The **Eran Stone Pillar Inscription of Bhanugupta** mentions a "very big and famous battle" between the Guptas and the Maitrakas.
- ❖ The Maitrakas were tributary chiefs of the Guptas, who established an independent kingdom in western India.
- ❖ They developed Vallabhi as their capital and it became an important center of learning.
- ❖ Being on the Arabian Sea, it was also a **port town** having flourishing trade and commerce.



Dhruvasena I:

- ❖ He was the third son of Bhattarka.
- ❖ He reigned during c. 519 - c. 549 CE.
- ❖ He formed a matrimonial alliance with Harisena, the Vakataka king of Avanti. He married Queen Chandralekha.
- ❖ During his reign, Yashodharman of Malwa defeated Harisena of the Vakataka dynasty, as well as the Huna king Mihirakula (in 528 CE).
- ❖ Dhruvasena I probably had to acknowledge the overlordship of Yashodharman.
- ❖ Dhruvasena I called himself 'Paramabhāgavata', the great Vaishnava.
- ❖ He was liberal in religious beliefs. This is evident as in 535 CE, he had made a grant for the arrangement for a Buddhist monastery at Valabhi built by his Buddhist niece Duḍḍā.
- ❖ He also made several grants to Brahmanas of Vadnagar.
- ❖ The Jain council at Vallabhi was probably held during his rule which was arranged by his wife Chandralekha.

Vallabhi University - The government has decided to revive this ancient center of Great Learning:

- ❖ Vallabhi University was established in the 6th century and flourished for 600 years till the 12th century.
- ❖ It was built in the Saurashtra region of modern-day Gujarat. It was an important center of Buddhist learning and championed the cause of Hinayana Buddhism between 600 CE and 1200 CE.
- ❖ This University was very famous for the quality education it gave to its students. All the graduates from this esteemed university held higher executive posts.

- ❖ Chinese travelers named **Itsing and Hiuen Tsang** who visited Valabhi University during the 7th century described this university as a **great center for learning**.
- ❖ **Cause of Destruction:** In a war, the king of Vallabhi was defeated due to all ill politics and in that war, all the buildings, monuments, towns etc. were destroyed.

In News: Times of India (24th September 2017)

Ancient Vallabhi University to be revived

PRASHANT RUPERA / TNN / Sep 24, 2017, 04:00 IST






- ❖ In 2017 the Government of India proposed to revive the ancient seat of learning Vallabhi University which had flourished as a world-renowned Buddhist learning center during the Maitraka Empire.

Dhruvasena II:

- ❖ He was the most important ruler of the **Maitrakas**.
- ❖ He was also known as **Baladitya, the "rising son"**.
- ❖ He reigned from c. 627-641 CE. He was well-versed in grammar and the science of polity.
- ❖ He was a **contemporary of Harshavardhana** and was married to his daughter.
- ❖ Hsuan Tsang tells us that Dhruvasena II attended Harsha's assembly at Prayaga (Allahabad).
- ❖ The Maitrakas continued to rule until the middle of the 8th century when Arab attacks weakened their power.
- ❖ **Coinage:**
 - They issued **coins (drachms)** in the style of Western Kshatrapas.
 - Though one can't see any artistic talents of their own, **excellent minting techniques** could be observed in the Maitraka kingdom.
 - The obverse of their coinage carried a stylised bust presenting military characteristics on the face of the ruler, and the reverse carried their name and the title in Brahmi legend.



Religion Under Maitrakas of Vallabhi:

- ❖ The Maitrakas were **followers of Shiva** except for Dhruvasena I who was Vaishnava and Dharapatta who was a sun-worshiper.
- ❖ They all used the title of '**parama-maheshwara**' before the names of the king except those two. It is evident from the use of symbols like **Nandi, the Bull and Trishula, the trident in their coins and inscriptions**.
- ❖ Maitraka is derived from Mithra, the Sun or solar deity. There was the presence of Vaishnavism and Goddess worship under their rule.
- ❖ Maitrakas continued to rule **until the middle of the eighth century** when **Arab attacks** weakened their power.
- ❖ There were a large number of **Buddhist Viharas** in the Maitraka kingdom.

- ❖ Jains held their important Vallabhi council here. The **third Jain council** was held at Vallabhi during the reign of Dhruvasena I (519-549 CE).
- ❖ The Maitrakas were tolerant to all religions and made donations and grants to all of them **without partiality**.

Maukharis:

- ❖ They were one of the feudatories that became independent in the post-Gupta period. They assumed the title of **Samanta**.
- ❖ This knowledge about the Maukharis comes from the seals and inscriptions discovered in the modern districts of Farrukhabad, Gorakhpur, Jaunpur and Barabanki of Uttar Pradesh, Patna district of Bihar, Nimar district of Madhya Pradesh and from the literary work like **Banabhatta's Harshacharita**.
- ❖ Maukharis made Kannauj a center of **political and administrative activities**.
- ❖ They gradually replaced Pataliputra as a political center of north India.

Important Maukhari Rulers:

Hari Varhmana Maukhari (mid-6th century CE):

- ❖ He was the progenitor of the Kanauj Maukharis.
- ❖ He adopted a simple **title - Maharaja**, indicative of his feudatory position.
- ❖ He was a **contemporary of Krishnagupta**, the founder of the Later Gupta dynasty.

Advaita Varmana:

- ❖ He succeeded his father and assumed the title of Maharaja.

Ishanavarmana (c. 554 CE):

- ❖ He was considered the **real founder of the Maukhari Dynasty**.
- ❖ He adopted the title '**Maharajadhiraja**' (mentioned in **Asirgarh Copper Plate Inscription** of Madhya Pradesh).
- ❖ His kingdom had stretched to Andhra Pradesh (Probably Visnukundin family), Orissa and Gauda.
- ❖ He **fought against the Hunas**, resulting in the defeat of the Hunas possibly fought as **feudatories of Baladitya** of the Imperial Gupta family.
- ❖ Harsha's inscription claims that Ishanavarmana had also defeated the **Sulikas (probably Chalukyas)**.
- ❖ He faced opposition from the later Guptas and prolonged struggle with the later Guptas and had to suffer crushing defeat at the hands of **Kumaragupta**.
- ❖ His **seals and coins** indicate that he was a learned person, a just ruler, a brave warrior and a patron of education.

Sarvavarmana (c. 560-585 CE):

- ❖ He was probably the **son of Ishanavarmana**.
- ❖ He succeeded after his father's death.
- ❖ He maintained his hold on Magadha and kept the later Guptas under subordination.

- ❖ **Asirgadh Inscription** in Nimar district of Madhya Pradesh narrates his victory over Damodargupta, and describes Nimar as a '**Maukhari outpost in the Deccan.**'

Avanti Varmana (c. 585-600 CE):

- ❖ **Nalanda Seal** mentions that Sarvavarmana was succeeded by his son Avantivarmana
- ❖ He assumed the title **Maharajadhiraja**.
- ❖ He extended the boundary of the kingdom by transferring the capital to Kannauj.
- ❖ It was under him that the **Maukhari empire reached its peak.**

Grahavarmana (around c. 600 CE):

- ❖ He succeeded Avantivarmana and was **married to Rajyashri**, the daughter of **Prabhakar Vardhana** of the Pushyabhuti family of Thaneswar.
- ❖ Grahavarmana was killed by Deva Gupta of Malwa of the later Gupta lineage.
- ❖ Later Harsha Vardhana merged the Maukhari kingdom with the Pushyabhuti kingdom.
- ❖ Gradually the Maukhari family disappeared into obscurity.

Relationship between Pushyabhutis and Maukharis:

- ❖ Harshavardhana's sister **Rajyashri** was married to Grihavarman.
- ❖ Shashanka, the ruler of Bengal (Gaud), and Dev Gupta (Malwa ruler), the Later Gupta ruler jointly attacked Grihavarman and killed him.
- ❖ After the successful expedition of **Harsha Vardhana**, the kingdom of Kanauj was then merged with that of the Pushyabhutis and Harsha shifted his capital from Thaneswar (Kurukshetra) to Kannauj.

Rise of Pushyabhutis of Thanesar:

Conditions After Guptas:

- ❖ Until the middle of the 6th century CE, the Gupta Empire had **provided stability** to northern India. The decline of the Gupta Empire had, however, resulted in the splitting of northern India into several kingdoms.
- ❖ From the 5th century CE onwards Kashmir, Punjab and north-west India had come under the sovereignty of the **white Hunas**, whereas from the middle of the 6th century CE, north and western India was ruled by different feudatories of the Guptas.
- ❖ An important ruling family to gain prominence after the fall of the Gupta was that of the **Pushyabhutis**, who had their capital at Thanesar which is near Kurukshetra, Haryana.
- ❖ Pushyabhutis were originally feudatories of the Guptas.

Sources of Information of Pushyabhutis:

- ❖ **Harshacharita**, a biography of Harsha written by Harsha's court poet Banabhatta,
- ❖ The travelogues of the Chinese pilgrim **Hsuan Tsang** and **Si-Yu-Ki**.
- ❖ Not much is known about the first three kings of the dynasty.
- ❖ The dynasty came into prominence with the accession of **Prabhakar Vardhana**, who was able to defeat the Hunas and strengthen his position in the regions of Punjab and Haryana.

Pushyabhuti Rulers (possibly mythical):

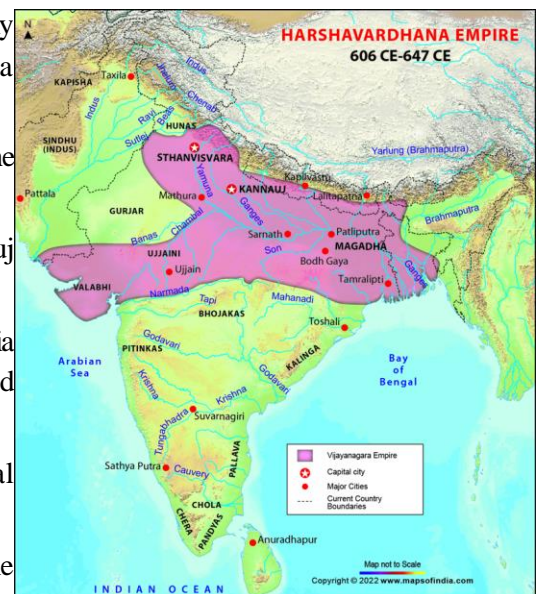
- ❖ Naravardhana: 500-525 CE
- ❖ Rajyavardana I: 525-555 CE
- ❖ Adityavardhana: 555-580 CE
- ❖ **Prabhakara-varadhana:** 580-605 CE
- ❖ Rajya-varadhana: 605-606 CE
- ❖ **Harsha-varadhana:** 606-647 CE

Pushyabhutis of Thanesar:

- ❖ An important ruling family to gain prominence after the fall of the Gupta was that of the Pushyabhutis who had their capital at **Thanesar** (Thanesvara in Kurukshetra).
- ❖ The dynasty became influential with the accession of **Prabhakarvardhana (580-605 CE)**:
 - He was able to **defeat the Hunas**, and he was a great general with many military victories.
 - He was the fourth king and is **considered as the real founder of the Pushyabhuti dynasty**.
 - He strengthens his position in the regions of Punjab and Haryana.
 - He advanced his rule as far as Malwa and Gujarat.
 - He formed an important matrimonial alliance with his neighbors to the east, the Maukharis of Kanyakubja or Kannauj by marrying his daughter Rajyashri to the Maukhari ruler Grahavarman.
 - He was the first ruler of the dynasty, who assumed the title of Parama-bhattaraka Maharajadhiraja.
 - After his death, his elder son **Rajyavardhana** came to the throne but he was treacherously killed by Shashanka, the king of Bengal and Bihar.

Harsha's Era (c. 606-647 CE):

- ❖ Harshavardhana ascended the throne in **AD 606**. He was only sixteen years of age at that time. Still, he proved himself to be a **great warrior** and an **able administrator**.
- ❖ Harsha made **Kannauj** his seat of power, and from there he extended his authority in all directions.
- ❖ By the seventh century, Pataliputra lost its importance and Kannauj came to the fore.
- ❖ Some historians consider him as the **last great Hindu king** of India on account of his allegiance to Shaivism before he adopted Buddhism.
- ❖ He supported Buddhism to a great extent and made liberal donations to Buddhists.
- ❖ He is popularly known as **Harsha** and was also described as the **Lord of the North - Sakalauttarapathanatha**.



Circumstances at the Time of Harsha's Accession to the Throne:

- ❖ **Rajya Vardhana**, elder brother of Harsha, had succeeded Prabhakar Vardhana.
- ❖ When **his sister Rajyashri** was imprisoned after killing her husband Grahavarman, ruler of Kannauj, by the ruler of Malwa, Devagupta and Shashanka, the ruler of Gauda, Rajya Vardhana undertook a campaign to release her sister.
- ❖ Rajya Vardhana defeated the Malwa army and killed Devagupta, but was unfortunately killed by Shashanka. It is important to note that **Shashanka also cut the Bodhi tree in Bodh Gaya** and occupied Kannauj.
- ❖ It was under these circumstances that Harsha then ascended the throne. He was only **16 years** of age at that time, but he still proved himself to be a great warrior and an able administrator.
- ❖ Harsha immediately marched towards Kannauj and rescued his sister **Rajyashri**, who was believed to be on the verge of committing Sati.
- ❖ Kannauj subsequently came under the sovereignty of Pushyabhutis.

Harsha's Military Conquests:

- ❖ Harsha gained many military victories. He brought most of north India under his control.
- ❖ He brought the **five 'Indies (regions)'** - Punjab, Kannauj, Bengal, Orissa, Mithila and assumed the title of 'Siladitya' as per **Si-Yu-KI of Hsuan Tsang**.
- ❖ He was victorious against the ruler of Sindh in the north west and also **defeated the Vallabhi king, Dhruvasena II**, as mentioned in the **Nausasi Copper Plate Inscription**.
- ❖ However, he was defeated by king Pulkesin II of Badami Chalukyan Dynasty on the banks of the river Narmada.

Boundaries of Harsha's Empire:

- ❖ Harsha's empire probably included - Thaneswar, Kannauj, Ahichchhatra, Shravasti and Prayag, and he extended his empire into Magadha and Orissa.
- ❖ The capital of Harsha was **originally Thaneswar, but he shifted it to Kannauj**.
- ❖ **Pulakesin II bestowed the title** of 'Sakalauttarapathanatha', meaning 'Lord of the entire North', upon him.
- ❖ The Narmada formed the southern boundary of his empire.
- ❖ In the east, the king of Kamrupa, Bhaskaravarman and Dhruvabhata accepted his overlordship, while in the west, the king of Vallabhi also did the same.
- ❖ The forest tribes of the Vindhyas too regularly paid tribute to Harsha and also helped him with military support.
- ❖ Some samantas and rajas used the Harsha era of 606 CE, which was the year of accession of Harsha Vardhana.

Harsha's Administration:

- ❖ Harsha administered his empire on the same line as Gupta did except that administration under Harsha had become more feudal and decentralized.
- ❖ The leading feudatories of Harsha were:



- Bhaskaravarmana of Kamarupa
- Dhruvabhatta of Vallabhi
- Purnavarman of Magadha and
- Uditā of Jalandhara.
- ❖ Harsha personally supervised the administration.
- ❖ **Army:** It is said that Harsha had 1,00,000 horses and 60,000 elephants. However, Mauryas who ruled over practically the whole country had only 30,000 horses and 9000 elephants.
- ❖ Such a large strength of Harsha's army is possible only when every feudatory contributed his quota of foot soldiers and horses to the imperial army.
- ❖ His imperial army was supplemented by contributory forces from feudatories in the times of need.
- ❖ The army consisted of infantry, cavalry, chariots and elephants. The power shifted to **military camps** known as **skandhavaras**.

Land Grants:

- ❖ Land grants to priests in lieu of their **special services** continued in his administration.
- ❖ It is generally presumed that **land grants to officers by charters in lieu of their salary** probably began with Harsha. The evidence for this is that Harsha issued a lesser number of coins in his time.
- ❖ These grants contained the same privileges as enjoyed by Brahmadeya lands.
- ❖ There were three types of land grants: Brahmadeya - Devadana - Agrahara.
 1. **Brahmadeya:** Land grants to religious institutions (i.e., donated to Brahmins)
 2. **Devadana:** Land donated to Gods
 3. **Agrahara:** Settlement of priests.
- ❖ These lands donated to the temples and monasteries apart from being used as normal tenancy also carried a right vested with the temple authorities to call for **unpaid labor (called Vishti)** as a religious service to the temple from the tillers on the donated lands.

Taxation/Revenue:

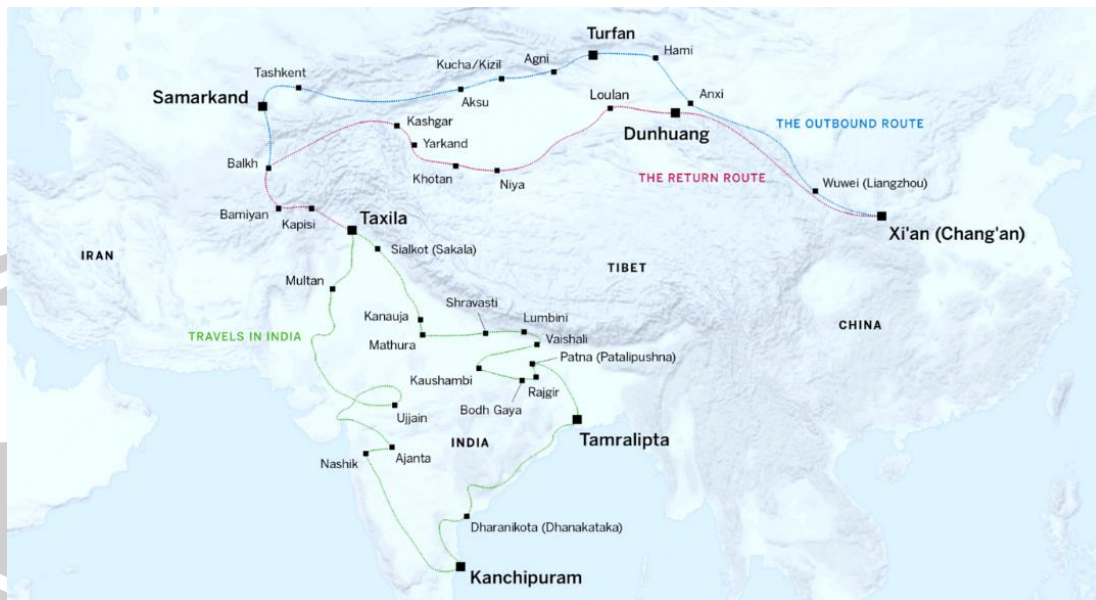
- ❖ Hsuan Tsang states that people were **taxed lightly**.
- ❖ The revenues were divided into four parts:
 1. One part for the **king**
 2. Second part reserved for **scholars**
 3. Third part for the endowments of **officials and public servants**
 4. Fourth part for **religious purposes**.

Harshavardhana's Diplomacy:

- ❖ He had diplomatic relations with the Chinese as his contemporary T'ang Emperor sent three embassies to his court.
- ❖ The last of these, under Wang-Hiuen-Tse, came to India in 647 CE when Harsha was no longer alive.

Religious Patronage of Harsha through the Eyes of Hsuan Tsang:

- ❖ Hsuan Tsang (also known as Hiuen Tsang) was a Chinese pilgrim who visited India during 629-644 CE. He visited India during the reign of Harsha **to study in the Buddhist University of Nalanda**, Bihar and to collect Buddhist text from India
- ❖ He was known as the **“Prince of Travellers”**.
- ❖ He authored **‘Si-Yu-Ki’** which means ‘My Experiences’. It is also called Records of the Western World.
- ❖ He spent many years in Harsha’s court and traveled widely in India.
- ❖ Under his influence Harsha became **a great supporter of Buddhism** and made generous endowments.
- ❖ He earned Harsha's friendship and left a vivid account of the beauty, grandeur and prosperity of Kannauj.



- ❖ Hsuan Tsang gives a detailed account of a **grand assembly held at Kannauj** in 643 CE.
- ❖ It was attended by the representatives of Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism, in which Hsuan Tsang along with others **gave discourses on Mahayana doctrines**.
- ❖ It was also attended by various subordinate kings including those of Vallabhi and Assam.
- ❖ A huge tower with a **golden statue of the Buddha** was constructed for the occasion, which was later worshiped by Harsha himself.
- ❖ He also used to celebrate a festival at Prayag at the end of every five years.
- ❖ He held the **Maha Moksha Parishad at Prayag** to uplift the spiritual life of people.
- ❖ The images of the Buddha, the Sun and Shiva were worshiped and gifts of valuable articles and clothing were distributed in charity.
- ❖ Hsuan Tsang visit is important as he shed light upon the socio-economic condition prevalent during Harsha’s era.
- ❖ His account shows that Pataliputra was in the state of decline and so was Vaishali.
- ❖ Prayag and Kannauj had become important.

Why did Pataliputra Lose its Relevance?

- ❖ Pataliputra owed its power and importance to **trade and commerce**, and the widespread use of money.
- ❖ **Tolls** could be collected from the traders who came to the city from the east, west, north, and south across four rivers.
- ❖ However, once **trade declined**, money became scarce, and officers and soldiers were paid through land grants, the city lost its importance.
- ❖ Power shifted to military camps (skandhavaras), and places of strategic importance which dominated long stretches of land.
- ❖ **Fortification of places** in the plains was far more difficult, but Kannauj was situated on an elevated area which was easily fortifiable.
- ❖ Therefore, to exercise control over the eastern and western wings of the doab, soldiers could be moved by both land and water routes.

❖ Hsuan Tsang Reports:

- Brahmins and Kshatriya led a simple life,
- The nobles and priests led a luxurious life.
- ❖ The majority of people who were Brahmins and Kshatriya had taken up agriculture.
- ❖ Hsuan Tsang called **Shudras as agriculturists** which is significant. Earlier texts represented them as serving the three varnas.
- ❖ He also mentions untouchables such as scavengers, executioners, etc. They lived outside the village. They used to announce their entry into the town by shouting loudly so that the people might keep away from them.

❖ His other Observations:

- He was amazed at the **Prosperity of India**, people had a high standard of living, and Pataliputra was replaced by Kannauj as the major city.
- Caste system prevailed in the Hindu society.
- In food, onion & garlic were rarely used.
- **Sati** was prevalent during this time.
- He left a detailed account of **Nalanda University**.
- Also wrote about various kinds of cloth manufactured in India at that time.
- The **criminal law was stricter** than it was during the Gupta era.
- The most **common punishments** were exile and body part amputations. Life in prison was the penalty for breaking the law and for conspiring against the king, and trial by ordeal was frequently used.
- Harsha built **charitable institutions** for the stay of the travelers, and to care for the sick and the poor.
- According to Hsuan Tsang, the **occupations of the four divisions of society** continued to be in practice as in the previous times, however, there was no social conflict among the various sections of the society.

- **Women wore purdah.** However, the purdah system was not followed among the higher class.
- **Duties were to be paid at trade barriers** without fail. It was a source of income for the kingdom.

Buddhism in Harsha Era:

- ❖ The Buddhists were divided into 18 sects during Harsha's period.
- ❖ The most famous Buddhist center at that time was **Nalanda** which hosted a great Buddhist university meant for buddhist monks. It had as many as 10,000 students.
- ❖ They were taught **Buddhist philosophy** relating to the Mahayana school.
- ❖ According to Hsuan Tsang, the monastery at Nalanda was supported by the revenue of 100 villages.
- ❖ Harsha was himself a Shaiva in early years. Gradually he became a patron of Buddhism.
- ❖ As a devout Buddhist, Harsha convened a grand assembly at Kannauj to widely publicize the doctrine of Mahayana.
- ❖ Apart from Hsuan Tsang and the Kamarupa ruler, the assembly was attended by the Kings of 20 countries and several thousand priests belonging to different sects.
- ❖ **A famous historical incident took place at this assembly:**
 - Here Hsuan Tsang dictated the virtues of Mahayana Buddhism and challenged the audience to refute his argument.
 - No one came forward for 5 days and then his rivals conspired to take his life.
 - Harsha threatened to assassinate anybody causing the least hurt to Hsuan Tsang.
 - Suddenly the great tower established in the middle of the assembly caught fire and an attempt to assassinate Harsha was made.
 - Harsha then arrested 500 brahmins and executed some of them.
 - Kannauj assembly was held in the **Honour of Hiuen-Tsang** and to popularize Mahayana sect of buddhism.
 - The Prayaga assembly was held at the beginning of the **Kumbh fair**.

I-Tsing Observations of Nalanda Monastery:

- ❖ A Chinese traveler I-Tsing visited India in **670 CE** and lived for ten years at the **Nalanda monastery**.
- ❖ He describes that Nalanda was supported by the revenues of 200 villages.
- ❖ There were around 3000 students on its rolls in Nalanda University.
- ❖ Nalanda University had an **observatory and a great library**.
- ❖ Nalanda University attracted scholars from various parts of the world.

Harsha as a Patron of Arts:

- ❖ Harsha was very talented himself and he wrote three dramas:
 - **Priyadarshika** (Romantic comedy)
 - **Ratnavali** (Romantic comedy)
 - **Nagananda** (based on Bodhisattva Jimutavahana).

- ❖ He also has to his credit a work on **grammar** and **two Sutra** works.
- ❖ He himself composed the text of the two inscriptions **Madhuban and Banskhera** (both in UP)*. These two inscriptions contain his **signature and exhibit his calligraphic skills**.
- ❖ According to Banabhatta, he was also an accomplished flute player.
- ❖ He established a large monastery at Nalanda.
- ❖ **Harsha's court Poets:**
 - **Banabhatta:** He was the author of **Harshacharita, Kadambari and Parvathi Parinayam**,
 - **Mayura:** He was the author of **Mayura Satakam**
 - **Grammarians Bhartrihari:** He was the author of **Vakyapadiya**.
 - **Matanga Divakara**

Harsha's Daily Routine:

- ❖ Harsha personally supervised the administration.
- ❖ According to the records of Hsuan Tsang, he divided his day into three parts:
 - Attending to **administrative duties** during the first
 - Devoting himself to **religious work** during the other two.
 - Work relating to **Law and order:**
 - ✓ He used to have frequent tours of inspection around his kingdom.
 - ✓ However, law and order conditions were not good.
 - ✓ Hsuan Tsang testifies this by stating that he was robbed in his reign.

Laws of the Land:

- ❖ The laws of the land were severe.
- ❖ Generally, robbery was considered as second only to treason, for which the right hand of robber was amputated.
- ❖ But later it appears under the influence of Buddhism, the severity of punishment was mitigated and criminals were punished for life.

After Harsha's Accession:

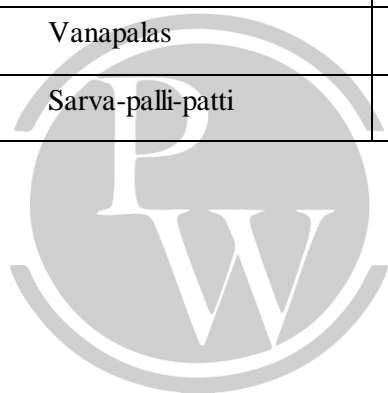
- ❖ Harshavardhana united his kingdom with that of his widowed sister Rajayashri and shifted his capital to Kannauj and is described as the Lord of the North (Sakalauttarapathanatha). He brought Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa under his control.
- ❖ Harsha wanted to extend his power in the Deccan. But he was **defeated by Pulakesin II**, the Chalukya ruler, on the banks of river Narmada. The river thus became the southern boundary of his kingdom.

After Harsha:

- ❖ The death of Harsha was followed by a **period of political confusion** that continued up to the 8th century, when the Gurjara-Pratiharas and the Rajput rulers emerged as a big force in northern India.

Important Officials during the Medieval period:

Officials	Description
Maha Sandhi Vighraha	Officer to decide about war and peace
Mahabaladhikrit	Highest official of the Army
Baladhikrit	The commander
Vrihadeshwawar	Head of Cavalry
Ayuktak	Ordinary officer
Katuk	Head of elephant brigade
Doot Rajastharuya	Foreign Minister
Uparik Maharaj	Provincial head
Vanapalas	The forest guards
Sarva-palli-patti	The chief of all villages



PW Web/App: <https://smart.link/7wwosivoicgd4>