

General Awareness

Mauryan Empire (322 BCE - 185 BCE)

Aspect	Details
Founder	Chandragupta Maurya (322 BCE)
Capital	Pataliputra
Source Texts	Arthashastra (by Kautilya), Indica (by Megasthenes), Buddhist & Jain texts
Dynasty Duration	~137 years
Extent at its peak	From Afghanistan in NW to Karnataka in South and Bengal in East
Administration	Centralized, highly organized bureaucracy under Kautilya's guidance
Army	Standing army with infantry, cavalry, elephants, and navy
Revenue System	Land tax as main source; state control over resources
Provincial Administration	Provinces ruled by princes or governors
Decline Cause	Successors weak; financial burden; invasions; pushback after Ashoka's Dhamma

Major Mauryan Rulers

Ruler	Reign	Notable Contributions
Chandragupta Maurya	322–297 BCE	Overthrew Nandas, founded Maurya dynasty; converted to Jainism
Bindusara	297–273 BCE	Conquered South India (except Kalinga); known as "Amitraghata" (Slayer of enemies)
Ashoka the Great	273–232 BCE	Kalinga War; embraced Buddhism; spread Dhamma; rock and pillar edicts
Dasaratha, Samprati etc.	232–185 BCE	Successors of Ashoka; relatively weak; last ruler Brihadratha assassinated by Pushyamitra Shunga

Ashoka's Dhamma (धम्म)

Features	Explanation
Non-violence (Ahimsa)	Avoidance of war and animal sacrifice
Respect for elders and tolerance	Promoted religious harmony and social ethics
Welfare measures	Hospitals, roads, rest houses, veterinary clinics
Edict Inscriptions	Found in Brahmi script (north), Kharosthi (northwest), Greek & Aramaic
Edict Locations	Sanchi, Sarnath, Dhauri, Kalsi, Girnar, Shahbazgarhi, Kandahar

Post-Mauryan Dynasties (After 185 BCE to ~300 CE)

Dynasty	Founder	Time Period	Capital	Key Rulers / Contributions	Religion/Art
Shunga	Pushyamitra Shunga	185–73 BCE	Pataliputra	Overthrew last Maurya king; revived Brahmanism; patronized Sanskrit drama (Kalidasa: <i>Malavikagnimitram</i>)	Supported Brahmanism; resisted Buddhism (as per texts)
Kanva	Vasudeva Kanva	73–28 BCE	Pataliputra	Minister of last Shunga king; weak dynasty, ended by Satavahanas	Supported Brahmanism
Satavahana	Simuka	~1st century	Pratishthana (Paithan)	Gautamiputra Satakarni: resisted Shakas; promoted trade and Buddhism	Patronized Prakrit, Amaravati art, Buddhist stupas

		BCE–3rd CE			
Indo-Greek	Demetrius I (in India)	2nd BCE – 1st BCE	Taxila	Menander (Milinda): converted to Buddhism (text: <i>Milindapanha</i>)	Hellenistic influence; Greek coins; Gandhara art
Shaka (Western Kshatrapas)	Maues (or Chashtana)	1st BCE – 4th CE	Ujjain	Rudradaman I: Junagadh rock inscription in Sanskrit; repaired Sudarshana Lake	Used Sanskrit; mix of Iranian-Greek-Indian elements
Kushana	Kujula Kadphises	1st CE – 3rd CE	Peshawar, Mathura	Kanishka the Great: patron of Mahayana Buddhism; started Saka Era (78 CE); 4th Buddhist Council in Kashmir	Supported Gandhara & Mathura schools of art

Gupta Empire Rulers & Key Facts (319 CE – 550 CE)

Ruler	Reign Period	Important Facts & Achievements
Sri Gupta (Founder)	~240–280 CE	Founded the Gupta dynasty; little known about his rule
Ghatotkacha	~280–319 CE	Son of Sri Gupta; ruled as Maharaja
Chandragupta I	319–335 CE	Assumed title of <i>Maharajadhiraja</i> (Great King of Kings); began the Gupta Era (319 CE)
Samudragupta	335–375 CE	<i>Napoleon of India</i> ; Allahabad Pillar Inscription by Harisena; military genius and poet
Chandragupta II (Vikramaditya)	375–415 CE	Defeated Shakas; patron of Kalidasa and Aryabhata; Ujjain as second capital
Kumaragupta I	415–455 CE	Founded <i>Nalanda University</i> ; performed Ashvamedha yajna
Skandagupta	455–467 CE	Repelled Hun invasions; last great Gupta ruler
Later Guptas	467–550 CE	Decline began due to Hun invasions and weak successors

Other Important Facts of Gupta Period

Aspect	Details
Administration	Decentralized but efficient; provinces known as <i>Bhuktis</i> , districts as <i>Vishayas</i>
Coinage	Gold coins called <i>Dinaras</i>
Literature	Kalidasa's <i>Abhijnanasakuntalam</i> , <i>Meghadutam</i> ; Sanskrit revived
Science	Aryabhata (mathematician & astronomer); invention of zero
Art & Architecture	Ajanta caves, Dashavatara Temple (Deogarh), Iron Pillar (Mehrauli)
Religion	Flourishing of Hinduism; revival of Brahmanism; tolerance to Buddhism

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