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Mauryan Empire



Mauryan Empire

Sources

Kautilya's Arthashastra

- He was contemporary to Chandragupta Maurya.
- Arthashastra describes the administration and state policies of Mauryan Empire during Chandragupta Maurya's time.

Vishakadutta's Mudrarakshasa

It is a Sanskrit play that narrates the ascent of emperor Chandragupta Maurya to power in India. This play describes them as belonging to a lower caste.

Buddhist Literature

- Jataka tales
- Dipavamsa/Mahavamsa
- Divyadana.

Indica

It is written by Megasthenes. It includes all the detailed account of how things were run in Mauryan Empire.

Wooden architecture of Chandragupta Maurya found at Bulandibagh and Kumhrar ,discovered by LA Waddell.

Mauryan Dynasty

Chandragupta Maurya (322 BC-298 BC)

- He was the founder of Mauryan Dynasty and ascended the throne by defeating the last ruler of Nanda Dynasty → Dhanananda, with the help of Kautilya (also known as Chanakya/Vishnugupta) in 322 BCE.
- He defeated Seleucus Nicator (Frontier of Alexander The Great).
- Son: Bindusara. (Not Bimbisara)
- He built a department "Kosthagara": For storage of grains (mentioned in Sohgaura (Gorakhpur) Copper Plate inscription).

About Seleucus Nicator



- Seleucus Nicator founded Seleucid Dynasty (member of Macedonian Greek Dynasty) ruling in Northwestern parts of the Indian subcontinent.
- Megasthenes was in the court of Seleucus Nicator.
- Chandragupta Maurya defeated Seleucus Nicator and was married to his daughter Helena.

Bindusara (297 BC-273 BC)

- Mother : Durdhara
- He is also known as "Amitrochates" by the Greek meaning "Destroyer of Enemy"
- He asked for sweet wine, dry figs and a philosopher from Antiochus I of Syria.
- He is known for conquering the land between the two seas.
- He patronised Ajivikas.
- He was visited by Greek ambassador Deimachus.
- Son: Ashoka.

Ashokan Edict

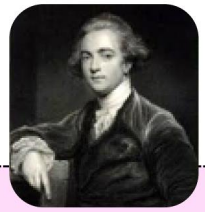
- Edicts of Ashoka are found in Rocks and Pillars.
- Rock Edicts: There are 14 Major Rock Edicts of Ashoka meaning a maximum of 14 lines are engraved in Rocks.

Major Rock Edicts

- Total: 14
- Total languages: 3 (Prakrit, Greek, Aramic)
- Total scripts used: 4
- Most inscriptions were in: Prakrit language in Brahmi script
- Script used in Afghanistan: Greek and Aramaic
- Script used in Northwestern parts of India: Kharosthi
- In inscriptions he is mentioned as: Devanami Piyadassi (Meaning: Devon ka Priya → Beloved of God)

Ashoka (268 BC-232 BC)

- Ashoka ascended the throne with the help of Radhagupta (Minister).
- He fought Kalinga War (261 BCE), 8 years after his coronation.
- He replaced Berighosha (physical conquest) with Dhammagosha (cultural conquest) after the Kalinga War.
- He sent his son Mahendra and daughter Sanghamitra to Ceylon (now known as Sri Lanka) to spread Buddhism.



- William Jones (founder of Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1784) was also involved in deciphering of major Ashokan Rock Edicts.
- This institution played a key role in promoting Oriental Studies, including later work on ancient Indian Inscriptions
- James Princep was the 1st to decipher Ashokan inscriptions in 1837.

10 Places where Ashokan Rock Edicts have been Found

1. Kandahar Bilingual Inscription : Kandahar, Afghanistan
2. Shahbazgarhi in Kharoshthi script : Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan
3. Mansehra Rock Edicts : Mansehra, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, Pakistan
4. Kalsi Dehradun : Uttarakhand
5. Girnar : Gujarat (14 lines are inscribed in Girnar major Rock Edicts)
6. Sopara : (Maharashtra)
7. Dhauli : Bhubaneshwar, Odisha
8. Jaugada : Odisha
9. Sannati : Karnataka
10. Yerragudi : Kurnool district, Andhra Pradesh

14 Major Rock Edicts

Edict - 1

Prohibits animal slaughter. Ban festive gatherings and the killing of animals. Only two peacocks and one deer were killed in Ashoka's kitchen. He wished to discontinue this practice also.

Edict - 2

Providing care for man and animals describes Chola, Pandaya, kingdoms of south India.

Edict - 3

Generosity to Brahmans.

Edict - 4

Dhammaghosa over bherighosa.

Edict - 5

Concerns over policy towards slaves.

Edict - 6

Welfare Measures

Edict - 7

Requests tolerance for all religions

Edict - 8

Describes Ashoka's first Dhammayatra to Bodh Gaya and Bodhi tree

Edict - 9

- Condemns popular ceremonies.
- Stress on ceremonies of dhamma.

Edict - 10

Condemns the desire for fame and glory. It stresses the popularity of Dhamma.

Edict - 11

Elaborates dhamma.

Edict - 12

Directed and determined requests for tolerance among different religious sects.

Edict - 13

Ashoka's victory over Kalinga

Edict - 14

Describes engraving of inscriptions in different parts of the country.

Minor Rock Edicts

Four Edicts where Ashoka has been mentioned by his name.

1. **Maski** → Karnataka
2. **Nettur** → Andhra Pradesh
3. **Brahmagiri** → Karnataka
4. **Gujjara** → Madhya Pradesh



Name "ASHOKA" mentioned on Maski Stone Slab

Mahamatta associated with women welfare.

Pillar Edicts

Total: 7 (meaning: 7 lines)

I Delhi Topra Pillar Edicts

- It comprises all the 7 Ashokan Pillar Edicts and only the 7th Edict is considered as the longest amongst them all.
- Only one language (Prakrit) and only one script (Brahmi) is used.
- Delhi Topra Pillar was transferred from Haryana to Delhi by Firoz Shah Tughlaq.



2 Lauriya Areraj
- Located in Bihar

3 Lauriya Nandangarh
- Located in Bihar

4 Rampurva Bull
- Placed in President House

5 Ashoka Pillar, Sarnath
- It was adopted as the National Emblem on 24th Jan 1950 and it shows Dhammaparivartan of Ashoka.
- Here, Ashoka commemorated the first Sermon of Buddha.
- Animals: Lion, Elephants, Horse, Bull



6 Nigali Sagar Inscription
- Located in Nepal

7 Rummindei Pillar Inscription
- Also known as Lumbini Pillar Edict) in Nepal
- It depicts that Ashoka traveled to the Buddha's birthplace. He reduced the taxes of the people living in that area.



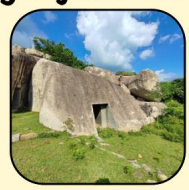
Caves and Stupas

Barabar Hill Caves

- Located in Bihar
- Built by Ashoka for Buddhist monks.

Lomas Rishi Caves

- Located in Bihar

Nagarjuni Caves

- Located in Bihar
- Built by Dasrath Maurya (grandson of Ashoka).

Konagamana/Kanakamuni Stupa

- Konagamana/Kanakamuni Stupa
- Rebuilt by Ashoka (after he visited Nigali Sagar).

Mauryan Administration

Saptanga theory by Kautilya : He mentioned 7 elements to rule an administration effectively.

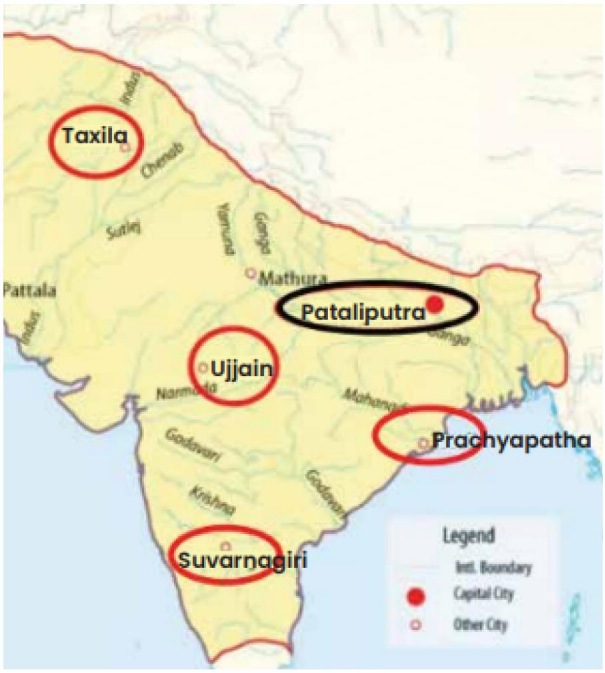
1. King: **Raja**
2. Secretary: **Amatya**
3. Territory: **Janpada**
4. Fort: **Durga**
5. Treasury: **Kosha**
6. Army: **Danda**
7. Friend: **Mitra**



The last ruler of Mauryan Dynasty: Brihadratha (who was defeated by Pushyamitra Shunga).

Five Provinces under Mauryan Administration

Province	Capital
Prachyapatha (East)	Tosali
Avantipatha (West)	Ujjain
Uttarapatha (North)	Taxila
Dakshinapatha (South)	Suvarnagiri
Prachi (At present: UP + Bihar)	Patliputra



Tax System

- Tax paid in gold: **Hiranya**.
- Emergency tax: **Pranaya**.
- Taxes paid in kind by villages: **Pindakara**.
- Army maintenance tax: **Senabhaktam**.
- Extra tax: **Parsvam** (surchage)

Two Types of Courts

1. **Dharmasthiya Nyayalaya**: Presided by Vyavaharika (personal disputes).
2. **Kantakasodhana Nyayalaya**: Presided by Pradeshta (disputes between state and people).

Officer

- **Sannidhata**: Chief treasury officer (CTO)
- **Samaharta**: Collector general of revenue
- **Gopa**: Responsible for account
- **Akshapatalik**: Accountant General/Audit Officer
- **Nagaraka**: Responsible for city administration
- **Sitadhyaksha**: Superintendent of Agriculture
- **Samsthadhyaksha**: Responsible for market
- **Navadhyaksha**: Superintendent of ships
- Ashwadhyaksha: Commanding officer of the cavalry (Ghode wali fauj)
- **Shutkadhyaksha**: Superintendent of Toll Tax
- **Dhamma** Mahamatta: New post created by Ashoka to check if people are following the concepts of Dhamma

According to Megasthenes

Administration consisted of (as mentioned in Indica)

- Municipal administration of 6 committees with 5 members each.
- Army of 6 Committee with 5 member each.
- Kautilya proposes a seven-part structure for the state including the king, ministers, territory, forts, treasury, military, and allies (also known as Saptanga Theory).

According to Arthashastra

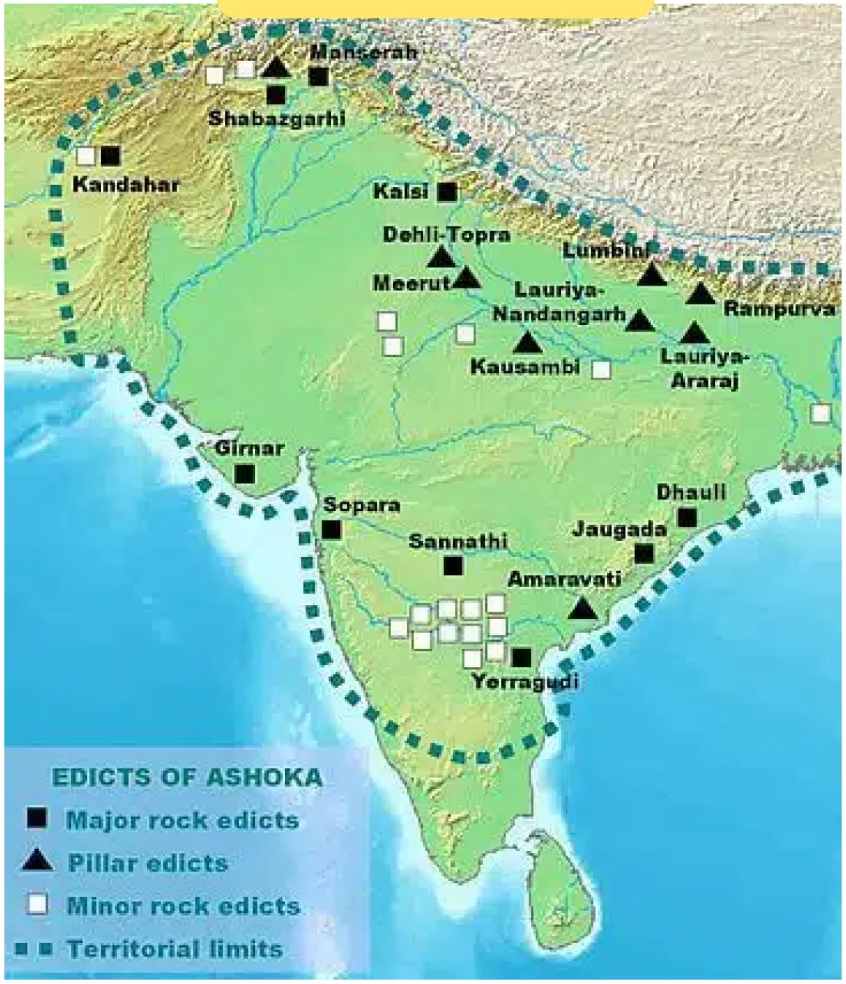
Women occupied a high position in society and were a part of Army

- Povincial Head : Kumara / Aryaputra
- Mahamatya : Senior Administrative Officers
- Amatya : Executive Officers
- Yukta : Revenue Assesment
- Rajjuka : Judicial Officers and Land measurment.

Ports

- West: Bharuch, Sopara.
- East: Tamralipti (Bengal)

Edicts of Ashoka



- Districta are called Vishaya / Ahara
- **Sthanika** : Head of several villages
- **Gramika** : Head of Villages

In Mauryan Administration Society was divided into 7 varnas

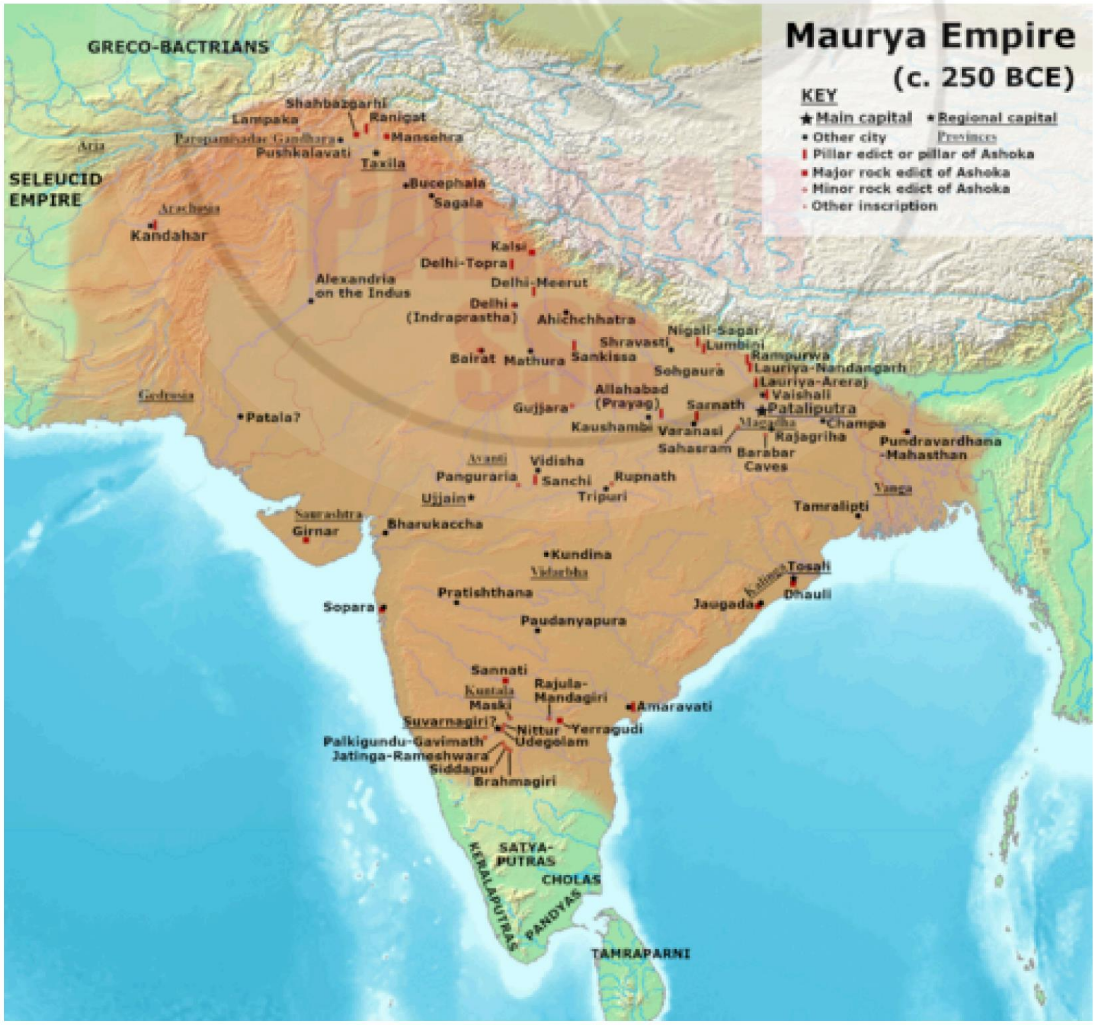
1. Philosphers
2. Cultivators / Farmers
3. Shepherd
4. Tradesman
5. Warrior
6. Officers / Megistrates
7. Councillors

MAURYAS & FORESTS

- The Mauryan State moved from exclusion to incorporation of forest tribes to ensure control, revenue and security
- The State recognised forest produce as the monopoly of forest people, but brought it under state supervision and taxation.
- Mauryan administration showed concern for forest conservation; burning of forests was prohibited, mainly to protect resources like timber, elephants and medicinal plants
- Forest tribes were recruited as troops, spies and assassins, owing to their knowledge of terrain and warfare skills

Snippets from Class






Bull
Horse
Elephant
Lion
Capital
Abacus
Inverted Lotus