

Pallava Dynasty

The first level of Pallavas was noted in Prakrit (an easy and famous form of Sanskrit) records. It explains King Vishnugopa, who was vanquished and then removed by Samudra Gupta, the emperor of Magadha, about the middle of the 4th century CE.

A later Pallava king, Simhavarman, is cited in the Sanskrit Lokavibhaga as ruling from 436 CE. They were members who developed as indigenous associates of the Satavahanas in the Deccan and later migrated to other states to become rulers.

Founder of Pallava Dynasty

Simha Vishnu is known to be the Pallava dynasty founder. He was a victorious conqueror and leader who founded his capital at Kanchi, also named Kanchipuram. He was also famous as Avanisimha, son of Simhavarman III, and was one of India's renowned Pallava kings. His reign was between 556-590 CE.

Origin and History of Pallavas

The Pallava Dynasty's origin have always been mysterious. Historians have presented many approaches, and some stated that Pallavas are a chapter of the Parthian individuals (an Iran tribe) who slowly relocated to the Southern part of India.

- Few historians declared them a native dynasty which emerged from the Southern part and comprised a mixture of tribes.
- Another view expressed them as the offspring of a Naga queen of Manipallavam and a Chola prince.
- It was believed that the Pallavas were Satavahanas feudatories.
- The initial Pallava rulers governed during the start of the 4th century AD.
- Experts suggested that Pallavas originated in Naga, who first inhabited the Tondaimandalam province of Madras.
- Southern India had three empires competing for power around the 7th century AD: the Pandyas of Madurai, the Pallavas of Kanchipuram, and the Chalukyas of Badami.

Pallava Dynasty Rulers from 4th Century - 668 AD

Mentioned are the most prevalent Pallava Dynasty rulers, along with the era during which they ruled and their contributions as rulers.

Pallavas Time Period	Pallava Dynasty Ruler	Contribution
4th Century AD	Sivaskanda Varman	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• He was the earliest and strongest ruler.• In 283 CE, the alliance was issued by Sivaskandavarman of Kanchi, a Pallava king.• He carried out Ashwamedha and additional Vedic surrenders.
575-600 AD	Simhavarman/Simhavishnu	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simhavishnu was the line's first ruler.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He overthrew the Kalabhras and founded the "Age of the Imperial Pallavas." • He worshipped Vishnu with the tag Avanishimha (earth's lion). • He dethroned the Pandya, Chera, and Chola kingdoms' rulers.
600-630 AD	Mahendravarman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mahendravarman I, Simhavishnu's son, succeeded him. • His titles included Chitrakarapuli, Gundabhara, Lalitankura, Vichitrachitta, and Mattavilasa. • Pulakesin II defeated Mahendravarman I in the Pullalur battle.
630-668 AD	Narasimhavarman I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He was one of the greatest Pallavas, encouraging the power and importance of the dynasty. • He was known as Mamalla or Mahamalla, which implies "great wrestler." • He continued the Pallava-Chalukya conflict, which his father initiated. • He overthrew Pulakesin II. • Narasimhavarman took the title "the conqueror of Vatapi".

Extent of the Pallava Dynasty

The capital of Pallava was Kanchipuram. In the seventh century, Pallava's administration reduced the Cholas to a borderline state.

- The most important among the Pallava kings, Narasimhavarman, conquered the Chalukyas and colonized Vatapi (Badami).
- Pallavas, along with Pandyas and the Chalukyas, served together to destroy the revolution of Kalabhra.
- The Pallavas of Kanchi extended their territories as soon as their power increased, from Andhra Pradesh (North) to River Kaveri (South).

Important Literary Works of Pallava Dynasty

The Pallava Dynasty extensively supported education. The old central hub for learning was the Pallavas capital, Kanchi.

- The most common literature that evolved during this era was Tamil.
- Dance and music prospered during the Pallava Dynasty, which the Tamil devotional saints used to obtain the "vision of compassionate God" to life.
- Mahendravarman I wrote the Sanskrit skit Mattavilasa Prahasana.
- The great Sanskrit intellectual, Bharavi, existed during Simhavishnu's reign, while another Dandin, a Sanskrit writer, graced the tribunal of Narasimhavarman II.
- To complement dance and music, several divine hymns were chanted.

Art and Architecture Contributions of Pallava Dynasty

The Pallavas were famous for making immense contributions to Indian architecture and art. In South India, they were considered the ancestors of the Dravidian style of architecture.

- It slowly advanced from cave temples to monolithic Rathas, topping in structural temples.
- The Pallavas also assisted in the improvement of sculptures creation.
- Mandapas' walls were decorated with astonishing sculptures.
- One of the classical art masterpieces was the statue at Mamallapuram illustrating the "Penance of Arjuna or the Descent of the Ganges".
- Under the custom of the Pallava dynasty, painting, music, and dance flourished.
- The most popular painting, Sittannavasal caves, belongs to the Pallava period.

Decline of Pallava Dynasty

The termination of Pallava Dynasty over South India was initiated during the invasion and transient work of Kanchi by Vikramaditya II. The Pallavas empire was bombarded by the western Gangas, Rashtrakutas, and Pandyas.

- Nandivarman was defeated by the founder of the Rashtrakuta Kingdom, Dantidurga.
- To protect the Pallava Dynasty from falling, Nandivarman offered his daughter Reva to Dantidurga for marriage.
- Pallava control was observed only till the end of the ninth century CE.
- Some notable rulers were Dantivarman (795 – 846 CE), Nandivarman III (846 – 869 CE), and Nripatunga (869 – 899 CE).
- The last king of the Pallavas was Aparajitavarman in 903 CE.
- Aditya I, the Chola ruler, overpowered Aparajitavarman and seized authority in the Kanchi area.
- As a result, Pallava supremacy over South India ended.