

Dynasties in India

India has a long history of many different kingdoms that emerged and eventually saw their downslide. There were several dynasties that ruled over India throughout the Ancient Age, but the Mahajanapada, Nanda, Maurya, Pandya, Chera, Chola, Pallava, and Chalukya kingdoms, among others, reigned for the longest periods of time. The **Indian dynasties** form a very significant part of Indian history and also for the UPSC aspirants.

The list of empires in India is long and contributes to the glorious past of Indian history. India as a country saw many developments, changes & different kinds of culture throughout the reign of different kings and their kingdoms. We have discussed the details of all the royal dynasties in India below which give us a peek into the rich culture and heritage of India.

Oldest Dynasty in India

The Maurya Dynasty is considered the oldest dynasty in India. It was the first dynasty to have made its mark in the country around 321 BC. Chandragupta Maurya was the first ruler of this famous dynasty.

Chandragupta Maurya dethroned Dhananand, the last Nanda ruler, and took over Patliputra. He was succeeded by Bindusara, who was then followed by Ashoka the great. He is well-known for his Dhamma administration and Dhamma Principles.

Dynasties in India

The ancient Indian kingdoms date from prehistoric times to 700 AD. Important Ancient Indian dynasties were:

- Haryanka dynasty (544-413 BCE)
- Shishunaga dynasty (413-345 BCE)
- Nanda dynasty (343-321 BCE)
- [Mauryan Empire](#) (321 BC- 185 BC)
- Gupta Empire (240 BC-550 AD)

The medieval period is an important era in Indian History for the development in the field of art, languages, culture, and religion. The major dynasties during Medieval India were:

- Rashtrakuta Dynasty
- [Pala Dynasty](#)
- Chola Dynasty
- [Slave Dynasty](#)
- [Khilji Dynasty](#)
- [Tughlaq Dynasty](#)
- Lodhi Dynasty
- Vijayanagar and Bahmani Kingdoms
- [Ahom Dynasty](#)
- Mughal Dynasty
- Maratha State and Maratha Confederacy

Top 10 Longest Ruling Dynasty in India

India is known to have a rich and famous history of royalty and culture. There have been many invasions that led to the rise of many kingdoms and powerful Indian dynasties. *Below we have listed the top 10 longest ruling dynasty in India:*

- Chola Dynasty
- Ahom Dynasty
- Mughal Dynasty
- Maurya Dynasty
- Shishunga Dynasty
- Rashtrakuta Dynasty
- Haryanka Dynasty
- Nanda Dynasty
- The Kushans/ Yeuchi Dynasty
- The Sunga Dynasty

Indian Dynasties: List of Empires in India

The dynasties of Ancient India form a significant part of the extensive Indian history.

All Dynasty of Indian History

Indian Dynasties	Dynasties of India Timeline	Founder	Capital
Maurya Empire	(321 BC- 185 BC)	Chandragupta Maurya	Pataliputra
Haryanka dynasty	(544-413 BCE)	Bimbisara	Rajgir (Girivraja)
Shishunaga dynasty	(413-345 BCE)	Shishunaga	(Girivraja)
Nanda dynasty	(343-321 BCE)	Mahapadma Nanda	Pataliputra
Indo-Scythians Kingdom (The Shaka)	150 BCE–400 CE	Maues alias Moga	Sigal Taxila Mathura
The Sunga Dynasty	185 BC- 75 BC	Pushyamitra Sunga	Pataliputra

The Kanva Dynasty	75 BC- 30 BC	Vasudeva	Pataliputra
The Satavahanas	1st century BCE–2nd century CE	Simuka	Pratishthana Amaravati
The Chola Dynasty	300s BCE–1279 CE	Vijayalaya	Poompuhar, Uraiyur, Tiruvapur, Pazhayarai, Thanjavur Gangaikonda Cholapuram
Pandyan Dynasty	4th century BCE– 1345 AD	-	Korkai Madurai Tenkasi Tirunelveli
Chera Dynasty	3rd century BCE– 12th century CE	Vanavaramban	Mahodayapuram Quilon Karuvur
Pallava Dynasty	275 CE–897 CE	Bappadevan	Kanchipuram
Chalukya Dynasty	543–753	Pulakesi I	Badami

Important Dynasties of India

India is famous for its glorious past and rich heritage. Many kingdoms and dynasties of India are part of Indian history. Each of these ancient kingdoms of India contributed in its own way and introduced India to a rich and royal culture. Some Indian dynasties like **Mahajanpada, Maurya Dynasty, Nanda Dynasty, Pandya Dynasty, Chera Dynasty, Chola Dynasty**, etc. held reigns of India for the longest period of time. Let us discuss these dynasties of India in detail.

Maurya Dynasty

The Maurya Dynasty is referred to as the **oldest dynasty of India**. The first ruler of the Maurya dynasty was Chandragupta Maurya who defeated the last ruler of the Nanda dynasty and took control of Patliputra in 322 BC.

- He also defeated Seleucus Nikator in 306 BC.
- The other two great rulers of the Maurya dynasty were Bindusara & the world-famous Ashoka, the great.
- Ashoka was known for his great administrative skills and his Principle of Dhamma.

Mahajanapadas

The dynasty called [Mahajanapadas](#) ruled from 600 BC to 325 BC in India. It was one of the 16 great ancient kingdoms of India.

The title itself means “great realm” deriving from the word “maha” - great and “janapada” - a country or foothold of a tribe.

Haryanka Dynasty

The Haryanka Dynasty was also one of the famous dynasties of India. It spanned from 544 BC - 492 BC.

- One of the famous rulers of the Haryanka Dynasty was Bimbisara, who was the founder of this dynasty.
- Bimbisara was considered the contemporary of Gautam Buddha.
- Other great rulers of this dynasty were Ajatashatru and Udayin.
- Udayin was the one who set the foundation of Patliputra.

Shishunaga Dynasty

The Shishunaga Dynasty was founded by king Shishunga, thus the name. He was a minister to one of the kings of the Haryanka Dynasty.

- This dynasty of India is most famous for its biggest achievement which was the destruction of Avanti.
- Another important event during the reign of the Shishunaga Dynasty was the second Buddhists Council that happened in Vaishali (383 BC).

Nanda Dynasty

The Nanda Dynasty was founded by **Mahapadma** who was also known as the Sarvakshatrantak & Ugrasena, which meant the uprooting of all the Kshatriyas & the owner of a large army respectively.

- Mahapadma is famously referred to as the first person to build an empire in the history of India.
- He is also known as Ekkrat, according to the Puranas.

Kushan Dynasty

Kanishka was the greatest ruler of the Kushana Dynasty. According to an old theory, he is also said to have started the Saka Era in 78 AD. Alternatively, the ascension of king Chashtana is also considered the beginning of the Saka Era leading to the establishment of the [Saka Dynasty](#).

A number of scholars like Nagarjuna, Vasumitra, Asvagosha, Charak, Parsva, and Mathara were a part of Kanishka's court.

Sunga Dynasty

The Sunga Dynasty was formed by Pushymitra Sunga, the Commander-in-Chief of the last Maurya ruler.

- Patanjali, the great priest, is famous at this time for being a part of two Asvamedha Yajnas that was performed by Pushymitra Sunga.
- Patanjali was also the author of 'Mahabhasya'.
- The most famous monument of this dynasty of India is the **Bharhut Stupa**.

The Pandyas

The mention of the Pandyas was done by the famous Megasthenes who was an ancient Greek historian, diplomat, and Indian ethnographer. He has described India in one of his books.

- The Pandyas are known to have attempted trade with the Roman Empire.
- They also sent embassies to Augustus.

The Chola Dynasty

The [Chola Dynasty](#) is also one of the oldest dynasties in India. It is also referred to as Cholamandalam.

- It was located in the North-East direction of the kingdom of Pandyas.
- The capital of Cholamandalam was Kaveripattanam or Puhar.

Gupta Dynasty

The Gupta Dynasty or the Gupta Empire existed around the early 4th century CE to the late 6th century CE. The Gupta Empire spread its wings in India from 319 CE to 467 CE which is considered the **Golden Age of India**.

- The Gupta Dynasty was founded by Chandragupta I (319 - 334 AD).
- He began the Gupta Era in 319 AD - 320 AD.
- The other great ruler of this dynasty was Samudragupta who reigned from 335 AD - 380 AD.
- Samudragupta was known as the Napoleon of India.
- Other important rulers of this dynasty were Chandragupta II, Kumaragupta I, and Skandagupta.

Rashtrakutas Dynasty

The [Rashtrakutas Dynasty](#) was founded by Dantidurg. The Rashtrakutas are famous for their creation of the cave shrine - Elephanta, which is dedicated to Lord Shiva.

- The first Kannada poetry is also attributed to this dynasty. Amogvarsha wrote the poetry Kaviraj Marg.
- The Kailasha temple was built during the reign of Rashtrakutas by Krishna I at Ellora.

Pallavas Dynasty

The [Pallava Dynasty](#) of India was founded by Simhavishnu. Other achievements of this dynasty were the creation of the rock-cut Ratha and pagoda.

- Narsimhavarman was the greatest king of the Pallava Dynasty of India.
- He also founded the town of Mamallapuram.

