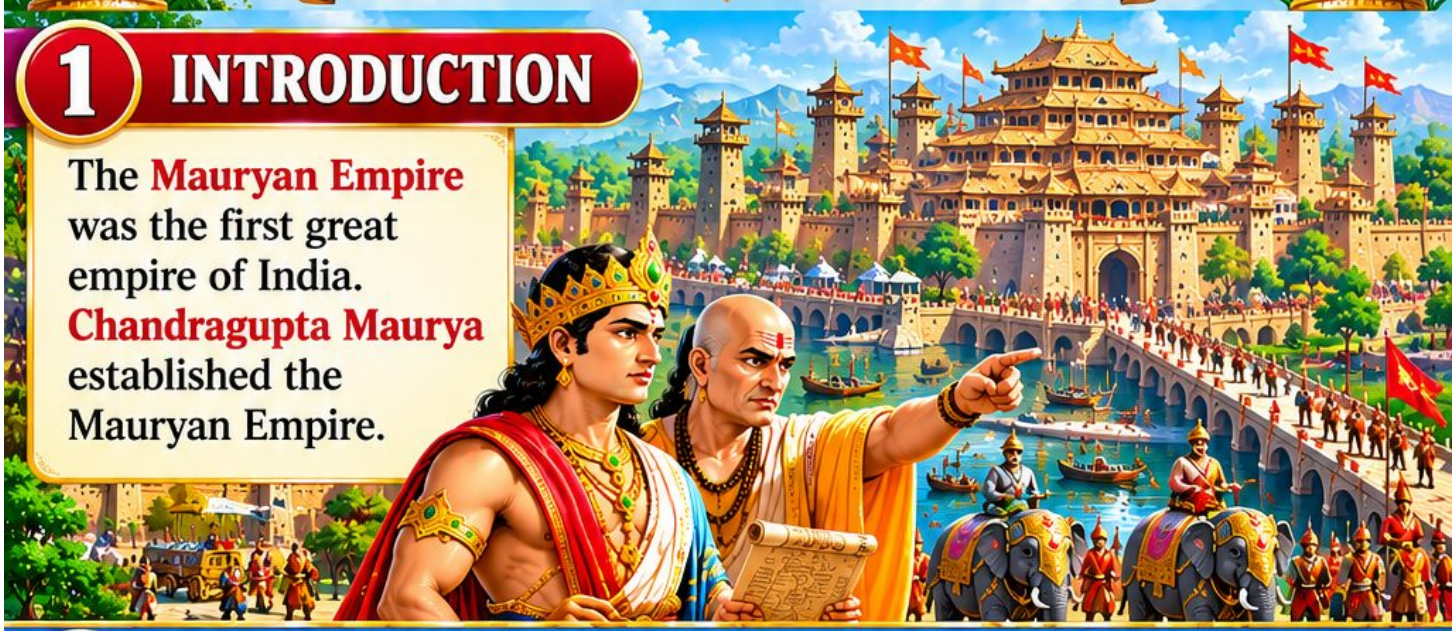
THE MAURYAS

THE FIRST EMPIRE OF INDIA

1 INTRODUCTION

The **Mauryan Empire** was the first great empire of India. **Chandragupta Maurya** established the Mauryan Empire.



2 THE MAURYAN EMPIRE

Pataliputra was the capital of the Mauryan Empire. It is present-day Patna in Bihar.





3 ASHOKA CHAKRA

The wheel at the centre of the Indian National Flag is called the **Ashoka Chakra**. It symbolizes progress.



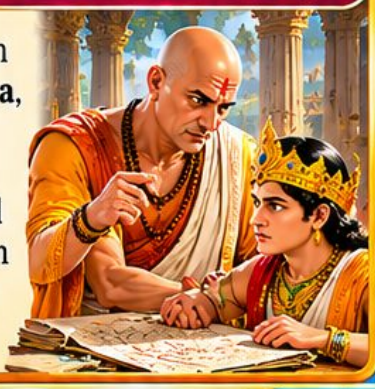
Chandragupta Maurya

Founder of the Mauryan Empire



1 Chanakya – The Great Strategist

Vishnugupta, also known as **Chanakya** or **Kautilya**, was a wise scholar and expert strategist from **Takshashila**. He trained Chandragupta Maurya in warfare and helped him establish his empire.



2 The Rise of Chandragupta

Dhanananda was the ruler of the **Nanda dynasty**. Chandragupta Maurya overthrew him and established the Mauryan Empire with Chanakya's guidance.



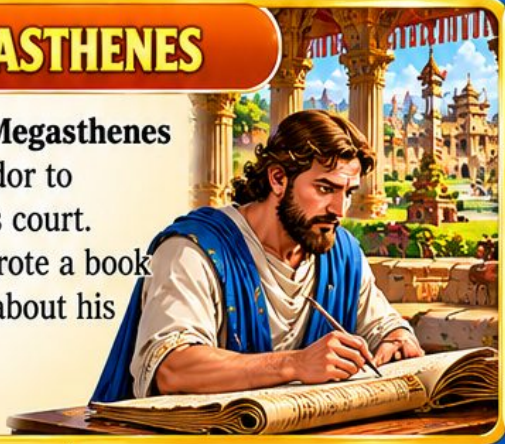
3 The Selucus Treaty

Seleucus, a representative of **Alexander's** former territories, entered into a peace treaty with Chandragupta. He surrendered territories in Afghanistan, Baluchistan and western Sindh. Chandragupta gifted **500 elephants** to Seleucus.



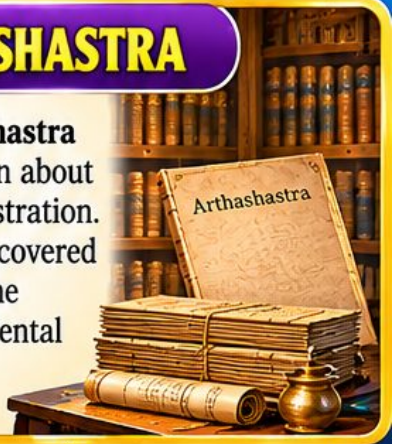
4 Megasthenes

Seleucus sent **Megasthenes** as an ambassador to Chandragupta's court. Megasthenes wrote a book called **'Indica'** about his experiences.



5 Arthashastra

Chanakya's **Arthashastra** contains information about politics and administration. **R. Shamasastry** discovered the manuscript in the collection of the Oriental Library, Mysuru.



EMPEROR ASHOKA

From War to Dharma



1 EMPEROR ASHOKA

Ashoka, the son of **Bindusara**, ascended the Mauryan throne after him. He believed that subjects should be treated like children.



2 THE KALINGA WAR

Ashoka fought the **Kalinga War** in the eighth year of his reign. Thousands of people lost their lives and many were injured. The suffering deeply affected Ashoka, and he decided to give up aggressive warfare and follow the path of Dharma.



3 ASHOKA'S INSCRIPTIONS

Ashoka's inscriptions were mainly written in Brahmi script and Prakrit language. They help us understand his life, achievements and empire.



4 MASKI INSCRIPTION

The **Maski inscription** in present-day Raichur district is important because it mentions Ashoka by name. The titles Devanampriya and Priyadarshi refer to Ashoka.





5 PLACES OF ASHOKA'S INSCRIPTIONS IN KARNATAKA

- Raichur
- Koppal
- Chitradurga
- Ballari
- Kalaburagi
- Maski
- Sannati





Ashoka's Dharma, Administration and Architecture

1 Propagation of Dharma

Ashoka was influenced by Buddhism and propagated its teachings. He encouraged obedience to teachers, elders and parents, compassion, generosity and truthfulness. He opposed violence, anger and jealousy.



2 Buddhist Council and Missionaries

Ashoka held the third Buddhist council at Pataliputra. He sent ambassadors to spread the message of Buddhism within India and abroad.



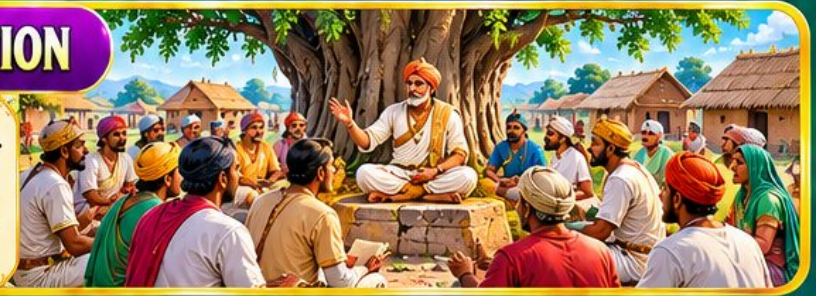
3 Mauryan Administrative System

The **king** was the head of administration. A council of ministers advised him. Special officers called **Dharma Mahamatras** promoted good conduct and cared for the welfare of orphans, widows and the elderly.



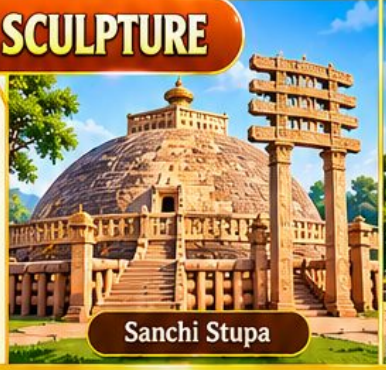
4 Village Administration

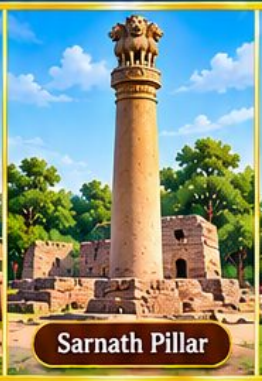
The empire was divided into provinces. In villages, the **Gramika** worked with village elders. The **Gram Sabha** helped settle village disputes.

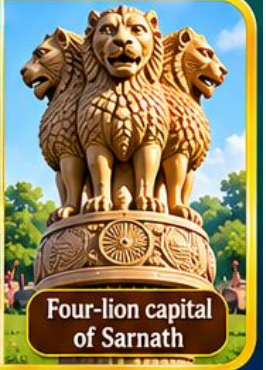


5 Architecture and Sculpture

Stupas and pillars were prominent examples of Mauryan architecture. The **Sanchi Stupa** and the **Sarnath** pillars are famous examples. The four-lion capital of **Sarnath** is the emblem of India.


Sanchi Stupa


Sarnath Pillar


Four-lion capital of Sarnath

THE KUSHANS

Emperor Kanishka, Art and Culture

1 THE KUSHAN EMPIRE

About 2,000 years ago, Gandhara, now in Afghanistan, was ruled by the **Kushan dynasty**. Under **Kanishka**, the empire expanded across parts of northern India, from Afghanistan towards Bihar.



2 KANISHKA AND BUDDHISM

Kanishka was a follower of **Buddhism.** He built stupas, sent Buddhist missionaries abroad and held the fourth Buddhist council in Kashmir.



3 ART AND ARCHITECTURE

The Kushan period saw the development of **Gandhara** and **Mathura** styles of art. Artists combined different artistic influences to create distinctive sculptures.

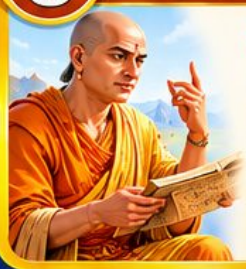


4 COINS AND LITERATURE

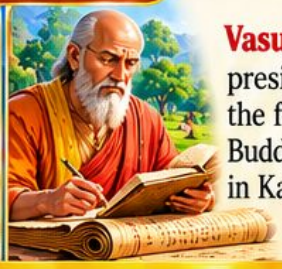
Many Kushan gold coins have been found. Kanishka patronised scholars and writers. **Ashvaghosha** wrote '**Buddha Charita**' in Sanskrit.



5 IMPORTANT SCHOLARS



Nagarjuna was a philosopher and scholar associated with Kanishka's court.



Vasumitra presided over the fourth Buddhist council in Kashmir.



Charaka was a renowned physician associated with this period.