

### Magadhas

- Magadha was an ancient Indian kingdom located in what is now west-central Bihar state in northeastern India.
- Between the sixth and eighth centuries BCE, it served as the foundation for numerous bigger kingdoms or empires.

### Magadha Empire

- Over time, the Magadha Empire was ruled by **three dynasties**: the Haryanka Dynasty, the Shishunaga Dynasty, and the Nanda Dynasty.
- The Magadha Empire is thought to have existed from 684 BCE to 320 BCE.
- From the sixth to the fourth centuries BCE, the four Mahajanapadas - Magadha, Kosala, Avanti, and Vatsa – vied for power.
- Finally, Magadha emerged triumphant and gained statehood.
- It rose to supremacy as the most powerful state in ancient India.
- Magadha is located in modern-day Bihar.
- Jarasandha, a descendant of Brihadratha, established the empire in Magadha, mentioned in the Mahabharata.

### Magadha Empire - Haryanka dynasty

- Magadha rose under the Haryankas, expanded under the Sisunagas and Nandas, and reached its height under the Mauryas.

### Bimbisara (558 BC – 491 BC)

- Bimbisara, the ruler of Haryanka, was a contemporary of the Buddha.
- Bimbisara was the first monarch to maintain a permanent army, also known as Seniya or Sreniya.
- Bimbisara's father was beaten by an Anga monarch, thus Bimbisara conquered the Anga king Brahmadatta in retaliation.
- He bolstered his status via marriage partnerships.
- Was the first monarch to command a permanent army.
- Under his guidance, Magadha rose to prominence.
- He had a feud with Avanti king Pradyota, but they eventually became friends, and Bimbisara even dispatched his royal minister Jivaka to Ujjain, when Pradyota had a conflict with him.

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- He began to use marriage ties to boost his political standing.
- Magadha became the dominant force in the 6th century B.C. as a result of his conquests and diplomacy, so much so that Magadha is reported to have comprised 80,000 villages.
- According to Buddhist records, Bimbisara reigned from 544 to 492 B.C.
- There is no definitive answer as to whether Bimbisara practised Jainism or Buddhism, yet both religions claim him as a supporter.

**Ajatashatru (492-460 B.C)**

- Bimbisara was succeeded to the throne by Ajatashatru (492-460 B.C.).
- It is stated that Ajatashatru murdered his father in order to take the kingdom.
- He pursued an ambitious growth strategy.
- Ajatashatru's murder of his father caused Mahakosaladevi pain, therefore, Prasenjit, King of Koshal, renounced Kashi, resulting in a battle in which Koshal was vanquished.
- Despite the fact that his mother was a Lichchhavi princess, Ajatashatru waged war against Vaishali.
- It took him 16 years to demolish Vaishali and include it in his dominion.
- He utilised a war engine to launch stones, much like catapults.
- He also owned chariots with maces attached, allowing for mass murders.
- Rajagriha responded to Avanti's warning by preparing for an invasion that never happened.
- Udayin (460-444 B.C.) succeeded Ajatashatru, and for strategic reasons, he erected the fort at the confluence of the Ganga and Son at Patna.

**Magadha Empire - Sisunaga Dynasty**

- Udayin was replaced by the Shishunaga dynasty, which briefly relocated the capital to Vaishali.
- They crushed Avanti's strength, putting an end to the conflict between Magadha and Avanti.
- Kalasoka (Kakavarin), a Sisunaga monarch, moved the capital from Vaishali to Pataliputra.
- The Sisunagas were eventually displaced by the Nandas.

### Sisunaga

- Shishunaga established this dynasty.
- He was an amatya / official / governor of Nagdasaka, the last Haranyaka king.
- Girivaraja was the capital.
- Shishunaga's most significant accomplishment was the downfall of Avanti's power, which had its capital in Ujjain.
- This effectively ended Magadha and Avanti's 100-year conflict.
- Avanti became a part of the Magadha empire and remained so until the end of the Mauryan dynasty.
- Later, the capital was relocated to Vaishali.

### Kalasoka

- Sisunaga's son. Kakavarna is another name for him.
- The capital was relocated to Pataliputra by Kalasoka.
- He was assassinated during the palace revolt that brought the Nanda dynasty to power.
- In 383 BC, Kalasoka convened the second Buddhist Council in Vaishali.
- This council was called by a Buddhist monk named Yasa, who witnessed the Vaishali monks ignoring the doctrine.

### Magadha Empire - Nanda Dynasty

- The Nandas were formidable monarchs.
- Mahapadmananda, also known as Ekarat, Eka-Chchhatra, or Sarvakshatrantaka, was a great conqueror.
- Eka — Chchhatra indicated that he united the entire planet under one canopy.
- Sarvakshatrantaka indicated that he annihilated all of the Kshatriya kingdoms at the period.

### Mahapadma Nanda

- He is known as India's "first historical emperor." (Chandragupta Maurya was India's first emperor.)
- He assassinated Kalasoka to become king.
- His origins are unknown.

- He was the son of the last Sisunaga monarch and a Sudra lady, according to the Puranas.
- He was the son of a barber and a harlot, according to certain Jain writings and the Greek writer Curtius.
- As a result, the Nandas were labelled adharmika (those who violate Dharma rules).
- The Nandas are described in Buddhist literature as belonging to annatakula (unknown lineage).
- His rule was twenty-eight years long.
- He is also known as "Sarva Kshatriyantaka" (Kshatriya slayer) and "Ekkrat" (sole sovereign who destroyed all other ruling princes).
- During his rule, the empire expanded.
- It went from the Kuru country to the Godavari Valley in the south, and from Magadha to Narmada in the east.
- He conquered numerous kingdoms.
- He annexed Kalinga to Magadha and carried a victory trophy of Jina.
- He also obtained Kosala, who had most likely revolted against him.
- Because of his enormous army, he is also known as Ugrasena in Pali scriptures.
- The Nandas were tremendously wealthy and influential.
- They kept 200,000 men, 60,000 cavalry, and 6000 war elephants on hand. Only an effective revenue system could sustain such a massive army.

#### Dhana Nanda

- He was the final emperor of Nanda.
- In Greek, he is known as Agrammes or Xandrames.
- During his reign, Alexander invaded North-Western India, but he was unable to advance to the Gangetic plains due to his army's resistance.
- Dhana Nanda inherited his father's vast wealth.
- He had 200,000 troops, 20,000 cavalry, 3000 elephants, and 2000 chariots on standby.
- As a result of this, he rose to become a great monarch.

- He is reported to be one of Mahapadma Nanda's 8 or 9 sons.
- He is credited with developing Nandopakramani (a particular measure).
- He became unpopular among his citizens as a result of his punitive taxation methods.
- Furthermore, his Sudra ancestry and anti-Kshatriya stance earned him a significant number of adversaries.
- Finally, he was deposed by Chandragupta Maurya and Chanakya, who used public animosity to establish the Maurya Empire in Magadha.

### Magadha Empire - Causes of Rise

- Advantages physical location, with Rajgir and Pataliputra being in crucial areas
- The use of natural resources, such as iron, enabled Magadhan monarchs to arm themselves with formidable weapons.
- The Gangetic plains' alluvial soil and enough rainfall were conducive to cultivation.
- Economic hegemony means control of the Ganga.
- The Ganga was vital to trade in North India.
- With Bimbisara's acquisition of Anga, the Magadha Empire gained access to the Champa River.
- Champa had a significant role in trading with South-East Asia, Sri Lanka, and South India.
- The rise of the city and the use of metal money increased trade and commerce. The princess might impose tolls.
- Because of its proximity to ancient Kalinga, elephants are used on a massive scale in conflicts.
- Magadhan society's unconventional nature
- Several enterprising and ambitious rulers contributed.
- Leaders who are ambitious and their agenda.
- The rise of Jainism and Buddhism ushered in a philosophical and intellectual upheaval.
- They improved on liberal traditions.

- The Brahmanas did not control society as much, and many of Magadha's monarchs were of 'poor' ancestry.

### Magadha Empire - Decline

- The epic **Mahabharata** has one of the first allusions to **Magadha**, in which the whole **Yadava clan** abandons their homes on the **Gangetic plains** to travel south-westwards towards the desert-ocean area in order to avoid continual clashes with their eastern neighbour, Magadha.
- **Despite Magadha's** tremendous riches and military prowess, its ruler was extremely hated due to his harshness and the enormous rates of taxes he imposed on the public.
- According to **Buddhist writings** from the time, the monarch was fond of digging up the Ganges riverbed and hiding his riches there.
- The traditions of the **Nandas'** enormous wealth lasted so long that Hieun Tsang, a Chinese pilgrim travelling the area in the 7th century CE, over 600 years later, mentions it.
- When **Alexander** left for Greece, he left a power vacuum in western India.
- **Chandragupta Maurya** stepped into this vacuum, conquered these countries, and then invaded Pataliputra, killing the Nanda monarch.
- The specifics of this coup are unknown, although it is likely that Chandragupta Maurya had popular and palace support.
- The formidable Magadha monarchy had given birth to an even more powerful state: the **Mauryan Empire**.

### Mauryas and Decline of Magadha

- The **Nanda dynasty** ruled from 322 to 321 BCE.
- **Dhanananda's** powerful army and might could keep his opponents at bay, but it did nothing to boost his popularity among his citizens (who had issues with heavy taxation and the personality of the ruler).
- However, in order to avenge his humiliation at the hands of the monarch, a scholar known as **Vishnugupta or Chanakya or Kautilya** (about 4th century BCE) resolved to take drastic action.

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- He encouraged his protege **Chandragupta Maurya** to assemble a massive and fearsome army and threaten Nanda's rule.
- Whatever **Chandragupta's military power**, there was many intrigues, counter-intrigues, scheming and counter-plotting that **Kautilya** resorted to in order to weaken Dhanananda by weaning away his major allies, adherents, and supporters.
- **Vishakhadatta's** Sanskrit play **Mudrarakshasa**, composed between the 4th and 8th centuries CE (probably the 5th century CE), provides vivid descriptions of the same.
- **At Pataliputra, Chandragupta** ascended to the throne and became the first Maurya ruler.
- With Dhanananda's popularity ratings at an all-time low, the new king (and ultimately emperor) was warmly welcomed.
- **Magadha's** kingdom has vanished into history.