

One Liner Shots (Mauryan Dynasty)



One Liner Shots MAURYAN DYNASTY

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Information About the Mauryan Dynasty

Chandragupta Maurya (324/321 - 297 BC)

- Chandragupta founded **the Mauryan Dynasty** under the mentorship of **Chanakya**.
- Chandragupta was mentioned in various texts such as Mudrarakshas, Arthashastra and Justin's Epitome.
- Greek accounts mention him as **Sandrokottos**.
- Chandragupta's origins are not clearly known. The Greek sources (which are the oldest) mention him to be of non-warrior lineage.
- The Hindu Purans mentioned that he was probably born to a Shudra woman.
- Most Buddhist sources describe Chandragupta as a Kshatriya.
- Chandragupta Maurya was called the **First Historical Emperor of India**.
- **Chanakya or Kautilya** provided the strategy, and in a series of battles, Chandragupta defeated Dhanananda and laid the foundations of the Maurya Empire in about 321 BC.

- In 305 BC, the Battle of Liberation took place between Chandragupta and Seleucus Nicator, in which Chandragupta acquired Baluchistan, eastern Afghanistan and a few regions in west Indus. He also married Seleucus Nicator's daughter, Helena.
- The Greek ambassador at Chandragupta's court was **Megasthenes** (sent by Selucas), who wrote **Indica**.
- Chandragupta brought almost the entire India except for Kalinga and a few places in the extreme South under one control.
- Chandragupta was a follower of **Jainism**.
- As per Jain tradition, he went to Shravana Belagola with Bhadrabahu and was said to have starved himself to death (Sallekhana).

Note: Chanakya

- Chanakya was the teacher of Chandragupta Maurya and later assisted Chandragupta as a Chief Minister.
- His other names were **Vishnugupta and Kautilya**.
- Chanakya authored '**Arthashastra**', which is said to be the first political text in India.
- He is also known as '**Indian Machiavelli**'.

Bindusara (324/321 - 297 BC)

- He was the son of Chandragupta.
- He was also called **Amitraghata**, which means 'Slayer of enemies'.
- Greek writers addressed him as **Amitrochates**.
- **Deimachus** was a Greek ambassador at Bindusara's court, as Strabo mentioned.
- He was a patron of the **Ajivika sect** and donated the Barabar cave to Ajivikas.
- The Mauryan Empire was expanded to Karnataka as well under his rule.
- Bindusara conquered the land between two seas.
- He also had diplomatic relations with Western rulers.

Ashoka (269 - 232 BC)

- He was the most popular Mauryan ruler and the **greatest king of all time**.
- Ashoka was appointed as a viceroy of Ujjain and Taxila during Bindusara's reign.
- The formal coronation of Ashoka took place in **269 BC**.

- He was the first king who maintained contact through his inscriptions.
- **Kalinga War** was held in **261 BC**. The **13th Major Rock Edict** of Ashoka depicts the war.
- Ashoka was converted to Buddhism in 260 BC by Upagupta.
- Being a great proponent of Buddhism, he sent his son Mahendra and daughter Sanghamitta to preach Buddhism in Sri Lanka.
- His title was **Dharmashoka, Devanampriya** and **Priyadarshi**.
- The 3rd Buddhist Council was organized during his rule at **Pataliputra**.
- Ashoka introduced **Dhamma** and appointed *Dharma Mahamitta* to propagate Dhamma in various social groups.

Mauryan Empire: Decline

Some important reasons are:

- ❖ Ashoka's patronage of Buddhism and the ban on animal slaughter policy affected Brahmins. It eventually led to the development of antipathy against Ashoka.
- ❖ There needed to be more than agrarian revenue to run a huge empire.
- ❖ Oppressive rules in some Mauryan provinces.
- ❖ Financial crisis to maintain a larger army as well as bureaucracy.
- ❖ Weak successors after Ashoka failed to maintain such a large centralized empire.
- ❖ The last Mauryan ruler, Brihadratha, was assassinated by his Chief Commander, Pushyamitra Sunga, followed by establishing Sunga Dynasty in Magadha.