

Post-Gupta Period & Lineage of Ancient India (Exam-Focused Notes)

■■ Lineage of Ancient India (Chronological Order)

Period	Time (Approx.)	Key Features / Dynasties
Indus Valley / Harappan Civilization	2500 BCE – 1500 BCE	Urban civilization; cities like Harappa & Mohenjo-Daro; town planning.
Vedic Age	1500 BCE – 600 BCE	Arrival of Aryans; Rig-Vedic & Later Vedic period; tribal polity evolution.
Mahajanapadas & Age of Buddha	600 BCE – 322 BCE	16 Mahajanapadas; rise of Magadha; teachings of Buddha & Mahavira.
Mauryan Empire	322 BCE – 185 BCE	Founded by Chandragupta Maurya; peak under Ashoka; first empire of India.
Post-Mauryan Period	185 BCE – 300 CE	Shungas, Kanvas, Satavahanas, Indo-Greeks, Kushanas; regional kingdoms.
Gupta Empire (Classical Age)	320 CE – 550 CE	Founded by Chandragupta I; Golden Age in arts, science, literature, and technology.
Post-Gupta Period (Early Medieval)	550 CE – 1200 CE	Political fragmentation; rise of regional kingdoms; feudal structure.
Delhi Sultanate begins	1206 CE	Start of the Medieval period.

■■ Post-Gupta Period (c. 550 CE – 1200 CE)

Fall of the Gupta Empire: Huna invasions, weak successors, economic decline, decentralization, and rise of regional powers.

■ Major Kingdoms After Guptas

Region	Kingdom / Dynasty	Important Rulers	Notes
North India	Pushyabhutis of Thanesar	Harshavardhana (606–647 CE)	Unified north India for a short time; capital – Kannauj.
Bengal	Pala Empire	Gopala, Dharmapala, Devapala	Promoted Buddhism; founded Nalanda & Vikramashila universities.
Deccan	Chalukyas	Pulakesin II	Capital – Badami; resisted Harsha; later succeeded by Rashtrakutas.
Deccan & Central India	Rashtrakutas	Dantidurga, Govinda III, Amoghavarsha	Unified Deccan; built Kailasa temple (Ellora).
South India	Pallavas	Mahendravarman I, Narasimhavarman II	Capital – Mahabalipuram; rock-cut temples (Mahabalipuram).
South India	Cholas	Vijayalaya, Rajaraja I, Rajendra I	Great maritime empire; Brihadeeswarar temple; trade with Sri Lanka.
South India	Pandyas, Cheras	-	Important Tamil kingdoms in far south.
North-West	Gurjara-Pratiharas	Bhoja I	Defended India from Arab invasions.
North & East	Rajput Kingdoms	-	Feudal polity; many small warrior states.

■ Political, Social & Economic Life (Post-Gupta)

Political: Feudalism rose, wars for supremacy (Tripartite Struggle), decentralization of power.

Social: Caste rigidified, Bhakti & Shaivism rise, decline of women's status.

Economic: Agrarian base, land grants to Brahmins, south Indian maritime trade revival.

Cultural: Temple architecture, Sanskrit & regional literature, universities like Nalanda & Vikramashila flourished.

■ Summary for Quick Revision

Aspect	Key Point
Gupta Fall	Huna invasion, weak rulers, decentralization
Major Successor	Harshavardhana (Pushyabhuti Dynasty)
Regional Powers	Palas (Bengal), Pratiharas (North), Rashtrakutas (Deccan), Cholas (South)
Nature of Period	Fragmented polity; rise of feudalism
Economy	Agrarian; land grants; south trade revival
Society	Caste rigidity; decline of women's status
Religion	Bhakti, Shaivism, Vaishnavism, Tantrism, Buddhism revival (Palas)
Culture	Temple architecture & regional literature flourished