



Welcome

History of Bangladesh Ancient Period

The History of Bangladesh

- ▶ We are starting from beginning.
- ▶ We can know about the history of Bangladesh and our nation if we see the history of Bengal.
- ▶ The historic period of Bengal (Bangladesh and West Bengal) is usually classified into the Ancient, Medieval, and Modern periods.

Ancient Period

- ▶ No one can determine the exact time when people started living in this place. The historians think that 500 BC to 1300 AD is the ancient age of history, whereas some others think 500 BC to 600 AD should be treated as early historic period.
- ▶ Bangladesh is situated in southern part of Asia. Here, political condition changed from the beginning of the history. That's why the boundary also changed in the course of the time.

Gangaridai

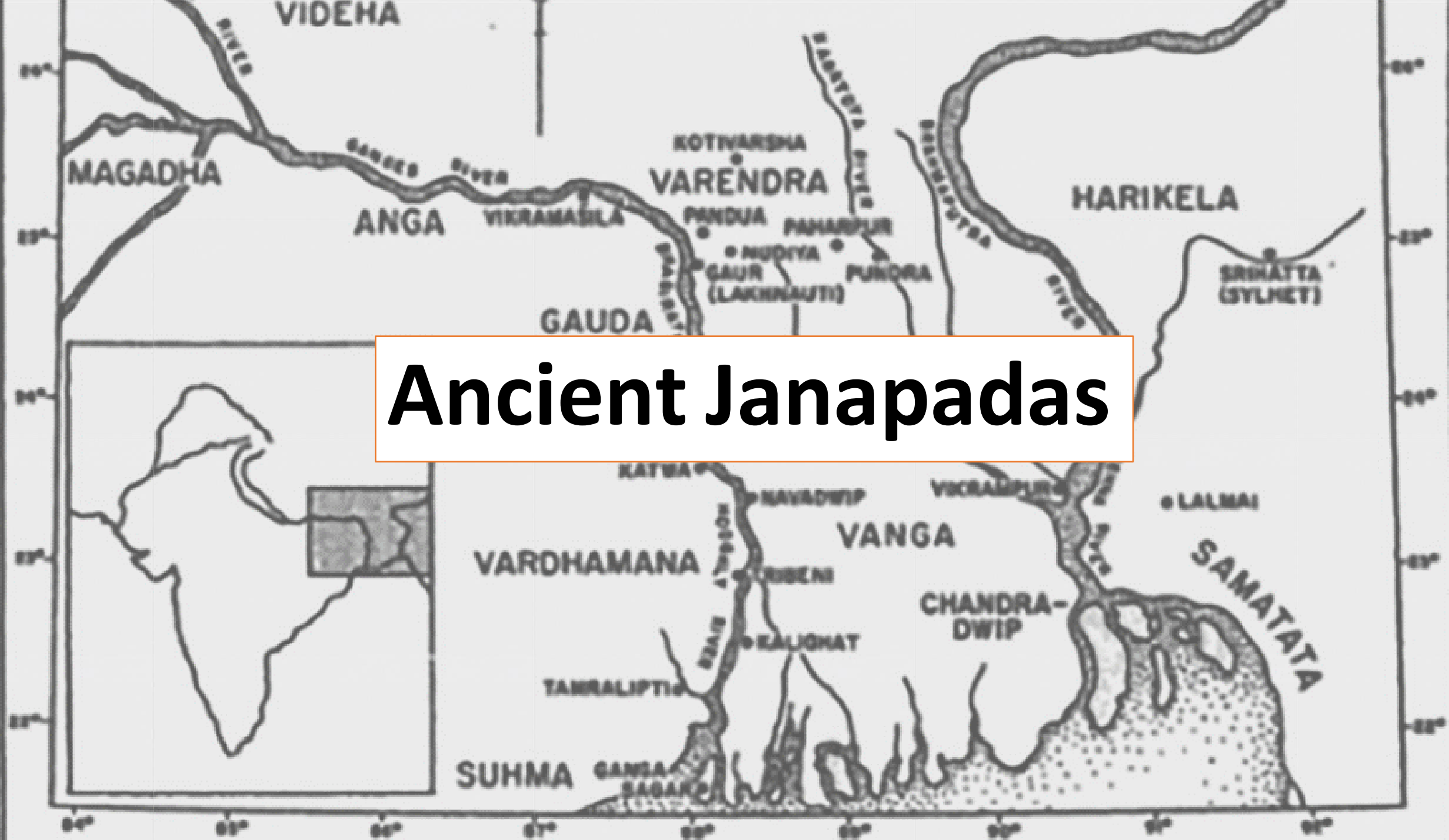
The word 'Gangaridai' was derived from the word Ganga which means Ganga people. It is a terminology used by the Ancient Greco-Roman writers. It represents a people or a geographical region of the ancient Indian continent.

Location: Located to the east of the Ganges river in Bengal region which was 30 states wide

Capital: Ganges or Patliputra was the capital of Gangaridae or Gangaridai.

- At present two rivers have been observed which are related to the term Gangaridai-
 1. Bhagirothi (West Bengal)
 2. Padma (West-Southern part of Bangladesh)
- **Didorus** states that Gangaridai had never been conquered by the foreign countries because of its strong elephant force. He further states that **Alexander the Great** advanced up to after subjugating other Indians, but decided to retreat when he heard that the Gangaridai had 4,000 elephants.

Ancient Janapadas



Ancient Janapadas (settlement) in the lands of Bengal

The land of modern Bengal was divided into many settlements.

A few became famous such as Pundra/Pundraverdhana, Varendra, Banga, Gaur, Radh, Samatata, Horikel; as time went on, Banga and Gaur became dominant.



Gaur

Roughly the areas of present Rajshahi and Chapai-Nawabganj districts of Bangladesh and Malda and Murshidabad districts of West Bengal of India were the Gaur Janapada.

In the seventh century Sasanka was the king of Gaur. Karnasuborna, in the present district of Murshidabad, was the capital at that time. Sometimes before the Muslim conquest, Lakhnauti of Maldah district was also known as Gaur. This region was known as Gaur during the Muslim period too.



Banga



The regions bordered by the Jamuna on the north, the Padma on the south, and the Meghna on the east was the ancient Banga Janapada (present Khulna and Barisal regions. Present Mymensingh regions were also sometimes included in the Banga Janapada).

There was another janapada (human settlement) in Bakla/Bakerganj, i.e. present Barishal, known as Chndradip (Chandra Island).

Pundra

The Pundra was situated on the northern banks of the Ganges-Padma. On the south, it was bordered by the Jamuna. It was indeed the lower part (southern part) of the present northern districts of Bangladesh.

The Pundra Janapada was the oldest janapada. It is said that before the coming of the Muslims, the oldest Pundra Janapada was replaced by the Varendra Janapada.



Ancient Janapada: Varendra

- Varendra is an historical region in the northern part of Bangladesh and the southwestern part of West Bengal, India. It was an important center of Hindu and Buddhist cultures and civilizations and has a rich history and heritage.
- It is supposed that it constituted a part of Pundra. A large portion of Bogra district and Rajshahi district was included in the Varendra.
- The region was ruled by various kingdoms and dynasties, including the Vanga Kingdom and the Pala Empire.
- The archaeological sites of Mahasthangarh, Mainamati, and Paharpur are located in Varendra and are considered some of the most important archaeological sites in South Asia. The region is also known for its rich culture and traditions, including music, dance, and art.



Ancient Janapada: Samatata

- Samatata was an ancient kingdom located in present-day Bangladesh. It was a significant centre of Hindu and Buddhist cultures and civilizations and was one of the four major kingdoms in Bengal during the early medieval period.
- The kingdom of Samatata was ruled by a line of independent kings who maintained control over a large area of present-day Bangladesh and parts of Assam and West Bengal, India. Samatata was an important centre of trade and commerce, and its capital, Samatata (modern Comilla), was a major centre of Buddhism and a hub of maritime trade.
- The kingdom of Samatata was eventually absorbed into the larger Pala Empire, which dominated Bengal from the 8th to the 12th centuries.



Ancient Janapada: Harikela

- Harikela was a historical kingdom in ancient Bengal, which covered parts of present-day Bangladesh and the Indian state of Tripura. The kingdom was established in the 8th century and was one of the four major kingdoms in Bengal during the early medieval period, along with Samatata, Vanga, and the Gauda Kingdom.
- Harikela was known for its wealth and prosperity, and its rulers were patrons of the arts, including music, dance, and literature. The kingdom was also known for its rich cultural heritage and religious traditions, including Hinduism and Buddhism. Harikela was eventually absorbed into the larger Pala Empire, which dominated Bengal from the 8th to the 12th centuries.



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Gupta Dynasty

Shashanka (First Bengal King)

Matsyanam (Chaotic Period)

Pala Dynasty (400-years rule)

Sena Dynasty (Hindu Regime)



Gupta Empire

- ▶ Gupta Empire was established in India in 320 A.D. Then some independent kingdoms came into being in Bengal.
- ▶ Some sections of the North Bengal came under the possession of Gupta Empire just during the reign of Gupta Emperor Chandragupta.
- ▶ Whole Bengal was conquered during the reign of Samudragupta. Since the reign of Samudragupta up to the middle of the sixth century North Bengal was used to be considered as a 'Province' or 'Bhukti' of Gupta Empire.
- ▶ Like the Mauryas, Pundranagar of Magadha was the capital of the Gupta kings of the province.

The independent Kingdom of Banga

- ❑ An independent kingdom emerged in the Banga Janapada with the advantage of the weaknesses of the Gupta's Empire. It was known from 'Copper inscription' on copper that three kings named Gochandra, Dharmaditya and Samachardeva ruled independent Bengal. All of them assumed the title 'Moharajadhiraj'.
- ❑ Their regime was between 525 A.D. - 600 A.D. It cannot be said when and how the independent and powerful Bongo kingdom collapsed. It is a notion that Kirtivarman was the last king of independent Banga. The rise of some feudal kings is also held responsible for the fall of independent Bengal.

Shashanka

- ▶ **Shashanka was the first important king of ancient Bengal, who occupied a prominent place in Bengal history. It was generally believed that Shashanka ruled approximately between 600 AD and 625 AD, and two dated inscriptions, issued in his 8th and 10th ruling years from Midnapore, and another undated inscription from Kharagpur have been discovered.**
- ▶ **King Shashanka also issued gold and silver coins. Between the decline of Guptas and the rise of Shashanka, a few independent rulers flourished in Bengal in the intervening period and their existence is known from a few inscriptions and gold coins.**
- ▶ **In the inscriptions and literary accounts also, Shashanka is described as the ruler of Gaura. Gaura is the territory between the river Padma and Bardhaman region, however in course of time it embraced much wider area.**



- ▶ **Extending political influence:** The ruler Shashanka first established himself in Gaura, the north-western region of Bengal, and made Kornosubora in Murshidabad his capital. Then he gradually extended his rule in Bihar. The contribution of Shashanka in the history of Bengal was that he defended the independence of the Gaura empire against a very powerful northern Indian powers.
- ▶ For a king of Bengal, it was a great show of strength to have ventured into northern Indian politics. So, **he can be seen as the first important king of Bengal**, who for the first time brought her into competition with other states for control of northern India.

- ▶ **Art & Architecture of Shashanka Dynasty:** The archaeological site of Kolkata found a number of structures include the base of several square and circular stupas, remains of square rooms (probably classrooms or rooms where the students put up), remnants of two walls (possibly the boundary of the capital). He build/excavated a massive dighi (lake) measuring over 140 acres. That is nearly equal to the total area of 80 football fields. He developed metropolitan city ideas.
- ▶ Shashanka, is credited with creating the Bengali calendar. The term Bangabda (Bangla year) is found too in two Shiva temples many centuries older than Akbar era, suggesting that a Bengali calendar existed long before Akbar's time.

- ▶ This period is called the Golden Age of India and was marked by extensive inventions and discoveries in science, technology, engineering, art, literature, logic, mathematics, astronomy, religion, and philosophy.
- ▶ Chandra Gupta I, Samudra Gupta, and Chandra Gupta II were the most notable rulers of the Gupta dynasty.
- ▶ In the vast Gupta Empire Bengal was an important province. The period of the imperial Guptas is generally considered to be the 'golden age' of Indian history.
- ▶ During this period, under a strong benevolent central authority, peace, wealth and prosperity were manifest for a considerable time and Bengal enjoyed the benefit of being a part of the All-Indian empire.

- Bengal had a participation in the All-Indian trade. Gold and silver coins brought into currency in entire Bengal.
- Introduction of many gold coins proves economic prosperity of Bengal. Betel nut, silk, cotton, coconut, salt, and sugar etc were probably exported from Bengal.
- At that time Bengal had trading link with Southeast Asia and China. The discovery of many imitation Gupta coins from different places of Bengal prove that Bengal enjoyed the benefit of money economy.
- The land administration of the Guptas was also well controlled. In Gupta period, the accurate measurement system of land was active.
- This period also saw artistic excellence & is also remarkable for religious toleration.

Matsayanyam

- ▶ Period between the death of Shashangka and rise of Palas in mid 8th century.
- ▶ Matsayanyam, a Sankrit term, refers to a situation when big fish swallows a small fish.
- ▶ Chaos prevailed in Bengal as no ruler could retain power for more than a year.

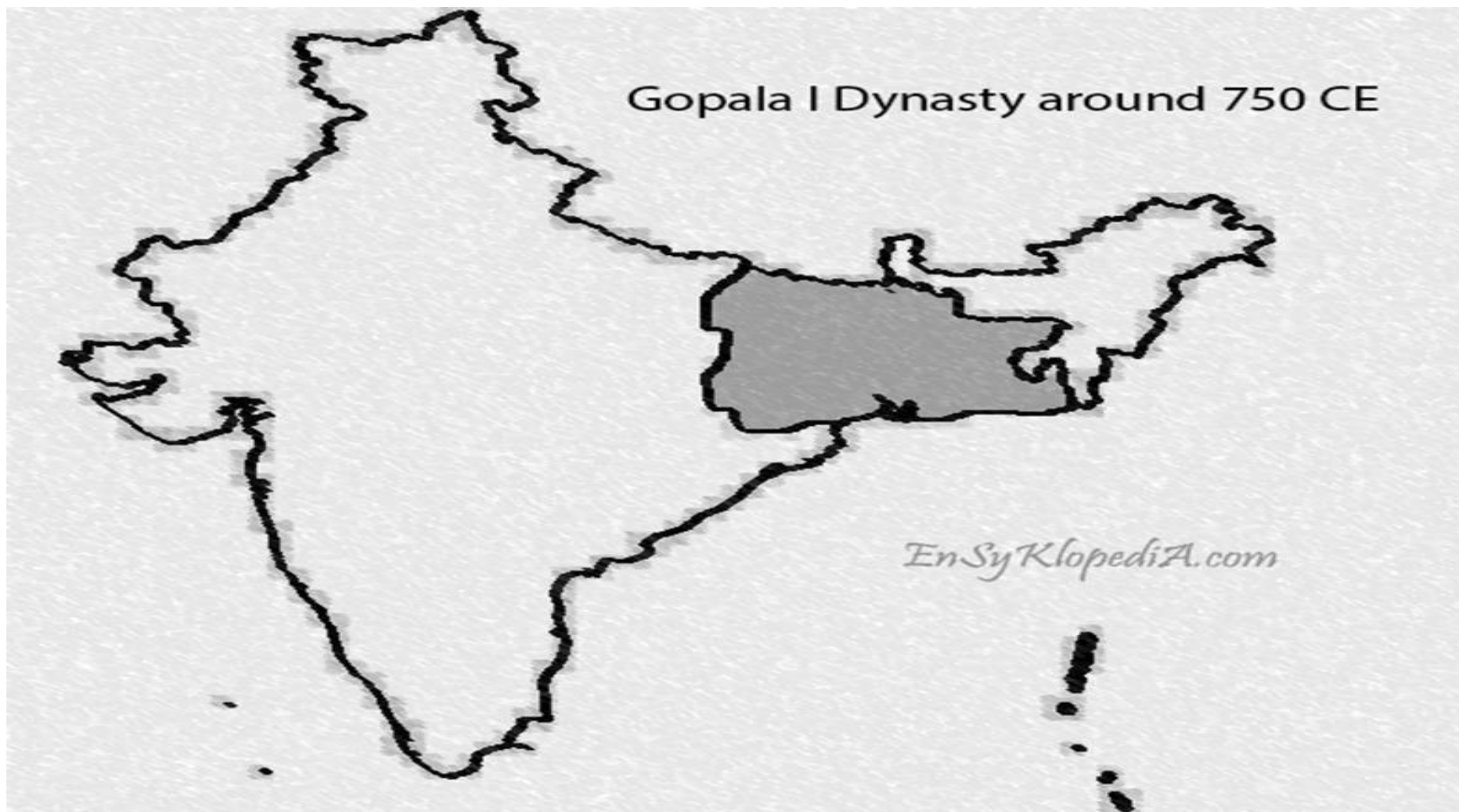


Rise of Palas

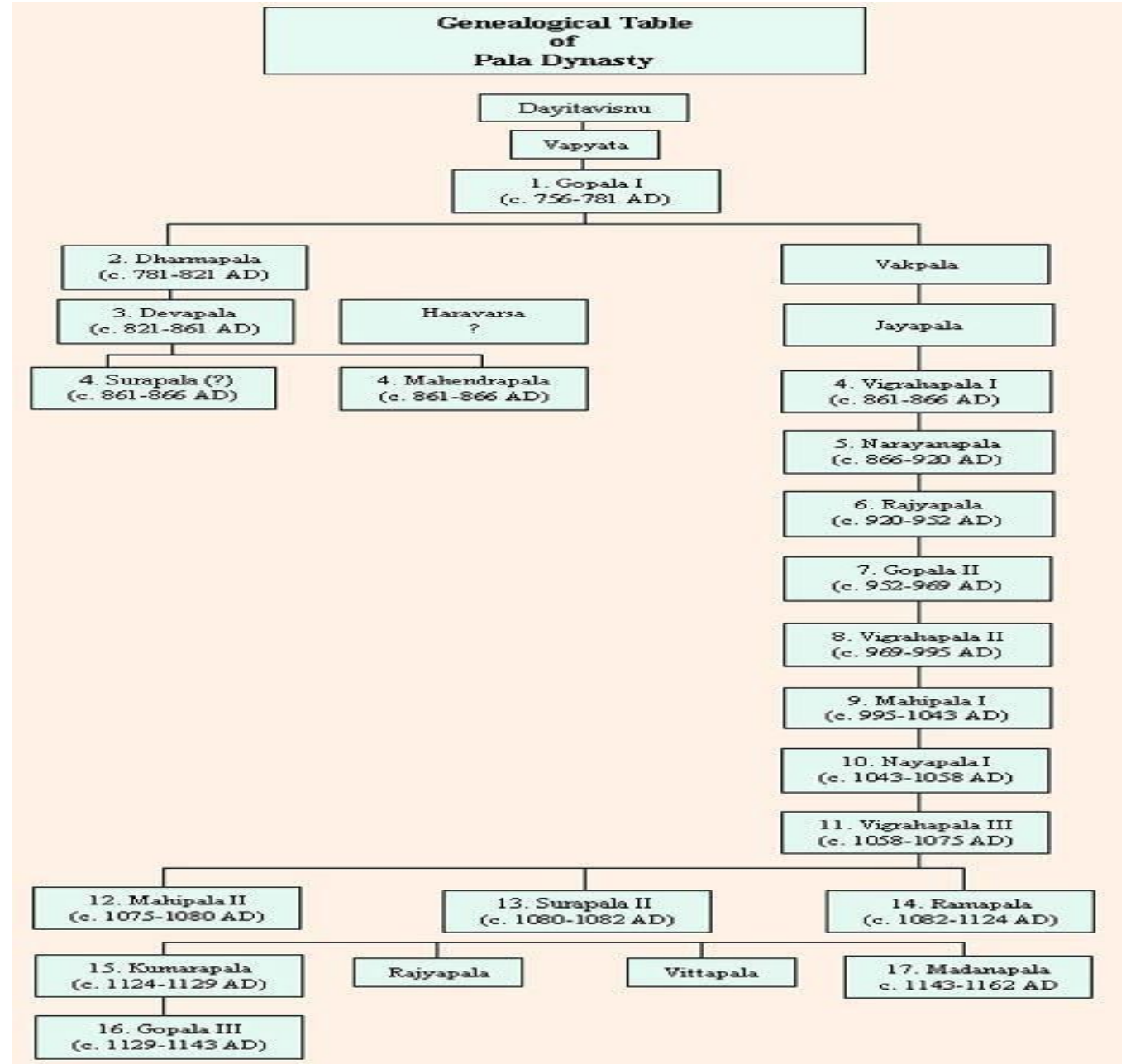


- Pala kings put an end to the disorder.
- ‘Pala’ means protector.
- Ruled for 400 years! (Mid 8th-late 11th Century)
- Followers of Buddhism

Gopala I Dynasty around 750 CE



- Eighteen generations of kings
- There were rise and stagnation in the rule





Important Features

- Administration System
- Religious Harmony
- Spread of Buddhism
- Flourishing of Arts and Culture

Administration



They improved
upon the
administrative
structure
developed by
Gupta Empire.

They could
govern for so
long because
they had a
strong
administration
system.

Administration

- Well-designed structure spanning from the center to the rural areas prevailed during this period.
- Long list of state officials have been found on sources from Pala period

Spread of Buddhism

- This region became the hub of Buddhist teaching.
- Many came from different corners of the world.
- Buddhism spread to areas like Myanmar, Indonesia, etc.
- Viharas or monasteries became center of excellence.
- Nalanda university was revived.

Religious Harmony

- Though most natives were Hindus, amicable relation persisted between the Palas and their subjects.
- Brahmin were posted in important position.
- Lands were granted for temples.

SENA DYNASTY

The Sena Empire was a Hindu dynasty that ruled from Bengal through the 11th and early 13th centuries. The empire at its peak covered much of the north-eastern region of the Indian subcontinent. The rulers of the Sena Dynasty traced their origin to the south Indian region of Karnataka of the Deccan. According to some, they were

-Brahmakhatryia

-Khatrya

- **The founder of Sena Dynasty:**

Samanta Sena, who came to Bengal in his old age, making his settlement in the Rahr region on the bank of the river Ganges. As he did not establish a kingdom, the honor of being a king was given to his son **Hemanta Sena**. Thus Hemanta Sena (1070-1098) is regarded as the founder of Sena Empire,

His successor **Vijay Sena** (1098-1160 A.D.) helped laid the foundations of the dynasty. He brought East and South Bengal under his reign defeating the Varma king. Then he conquered North-West Bengal, Kamrupa, Kalinga and Mithila. His first capital was Vijayapura in Triveni of Hooghly district. The second capital was established in Vikrampura.

Vallala Sena (1160-1178 A.D.),

son of Vijay Sena, conquered Gaur from the Pala, became the ruler of the Bengal Delta, and made Nabadwip the capital as well. Vallala Sena married Ramadevi, a princess of the Western Chalukya Empire which indicates that the Sena rulers maintained close social contact with South India.

Lakhshmana Sena (1178-1206 A.D.)

succeeded Vallala Sena, ruled Bengal and expanded the Sena Empire to Assam, Odisha, Bihar, Proyaga, and probably to Varanasi. Coming to the end of his reign Lakhshmana Sena became quite weak. As a result, the feudal lords around him started to revolt. Well known rebel kings of that time were Dommanpala of Sundarban area (1196 A.D.), Pattikera of South-East Bengal and King Ranabankamalla Deva.

- In the beginning of the thirteenth century, the Muslim power from the North began to proceed onwards Bengal. The Muslim commander Ikhtiaruddin Muhammad Bakhtiar Khalji attacked Nadia, the second capital of Sena Dynasty. Being defeated Lakhshmana Sena fled to East Bengal. North and North-West Bengal went under the Muslim rule. With the defeat of Lakhshmana Sena the Sena rule in Bengal came to an end.

**Thank You for Your
Attention**