

**IMPORTANT GUPTA RULERS**

Sri Gupta was the founder of the Gupta Dynasty. He ruled over parts of Bengal and at that time Gupta was a small kingdom. His son Ghatotkacha Gupta also finds a very small mention just like his father. But Chandragupta I, his son and grandson of Sri Gupta, was the first powerful Gupta emperor.

(a) **Chandragupta I** (ad 320-335) founded the empire around a 320 in Magadha and ruled till AD 330. He was called 'the King of Kings. He married Kumara Devi, the Lichhavi princess, and as there was no heir to the Lichhaviya throne, he merged it to his empire, which further strengthened his position. He died in AD 335 leaving his son Samudragupta a vast empire extending from Patali-putra to Prayag.

(b) **Samudragupta** (AD 335—375), the successor of Chandragupta I was known as **the Indian Napoleon** as he never suffered defeat in the battlefield. His four main campaigns are mentioned in a pillar inscription. It was actually an Ashoka pillar and later Samudragupta added his inscription to it. **Harisena**, the commander-in-chief, of Samudragupta's army was the author of this edict.

The account of his campaigns is as follows:

**Northern campaign** He defeated Aryavarttha (nine kings of the Ganga valley—King Achutha, King Chandravurman, King Nagasena. King Balavarman. King Ruilradeva. King Nandin,

King Nagadatta, King Mathila and King Ganapathinaga).

**Central campaign** He defeated the forest kingdoms of Jabalpur, Rewa and Nagpur. He also defeated many kingdoms of the upper Vindhya region.

**Conquest of tribal kingdoms** He captured the Sunderban Kingdom, the Kamarupa and Haw-aka Kingdoms (near Assam main), the Kingdom of Nepal, the Karturpura Kingdom, the Yaudheyas Kingdom (in I Satluj valley), the Madrnka Kingdom (on the banks of the Ravi and Cncnab nvers. in Punjab) and the Arjunayan Kingdom (Rajasthan). He defeated the neighbouring kingdoms of Kabul (King Devaputra), Ceylon (King Meghavarma).

**Southern conquest** He Conquered - King Mahindra of Bilajpur, King Matharaja of Kowrala (both in Madhya Pradesh); King Dhananjaya of Kustalapura (Karnataka); King of Mahakanthara. King Swamydatta of Kattura (both in Orissa region); King Mahendra of Pistapura, King Damana of Yarandapalli, King Hastivarman of Vengi (all in Andhra); King Vishnugopa of Kanchi, King Neelaraj of Avamukta (both in Tamil Nadu region); King Kuvera in Devarashtra (Devagiri region in Maharashtra) and King Ugrasena of Palakka (Palghat region of Kerala).

Samudragupta was not only a matchless conquerer but also an able administrator. He was also a very good poet and at many places he is referred to as Kaviraa. He had two sons, Ramagupta and Chandragupta II. As per the records, Ramagupta was made king after the death of

Samudragupta, but he was a coward and afraid of the Saka king. He was too afraid of fighting with the Sakas when they challenged him to surrender Queen Dhruvadevi to the Saka king. It was his younger brother who saved the queen by killing the Saka king. Later, Chandragupta II married the queen and also ascended the throne.

(c) **Chandragupta II or Vikramaditya** (ad 375-413) was the son of Samudragupta and is also referred to as the Vikrama of Ujjain. He removed foreign rule completely from India. He ruled close to 40 years. He is remembered as the best Gupta ruler as he completed many of the campaigns that were left incomplete by his predecessor. Many historians term him as the hero of the Indian history. Pataliputra and Ujjain became the prominent cities in the world map during his reign. He made Ujjain the biggest commercial city in India as he gained control of the trade routes in the Arabian Sea. India started gaining heavily from Egyptian and European contacts. He gathered wealth that made India a prosperous country for many future centuries. Books mentioned that he once filled the Kailashnath temple at Kanchi with gold. He issued many gold and silver coins, which describe the political greatness and abundance of wealth of his empire. Nine great gems adorned his court.

S l. No	Name of the Person	Contribution in the Field of	Works that Made them Famous
1.	Kshapan	Astrolog	Jyothisyashastra

	aka	y	a
2.	Dhanvuntri	Medicine	Ayurveda (Book of Medicine)
3.	Kalidasa	Drama and Poetry	Shakuntala, Meghaduta etc.
4.	Amarasimha	Lexicography	Amarakosha (Glossary)
5.	Varahmihira	Astrology	Brihadsamhita
6.	Vararuchi	Grammar	Vyakarana (Sanskrit)
7.	Sanku	Architecture	Shilpashastra
8.	Vetalabhata	Magic	Mantrashastra
9.	Harisen	Poet	

**Fa-hien** (AD 399-411), a Chinese traveller, has written about India during the reign of Chandragupta II. He came from China to study the original Buddhist texts and was greatly influenced by the superior architecture and political greatness Chandragupta II provided to India.

### Rise of Chandragupta II

**Chandragupta II ruled until AD 413. He married the daughter of the king of Deccan, Rudrasena, and gained a valuable ally. Only marginally less warlike than his father, he expanded his realm westwards, defeating the Saka Satraps of Malwa, Gujarat, and Saurashtra. In a campaign lasting until AD 409 but with his main opponent Rudrasimha III defeated by AD 395, and crushing the Bengal (Vanga) chieftoms. This extended his control**

from coast to coast, established a second (trading) capital at Ujjain and was the high point of the empire. Despite the creation of the empire through war, the realm is remembered for the great growth in Hindu art, literature, culture, and science, especially during the reign of Chandragupta II.

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