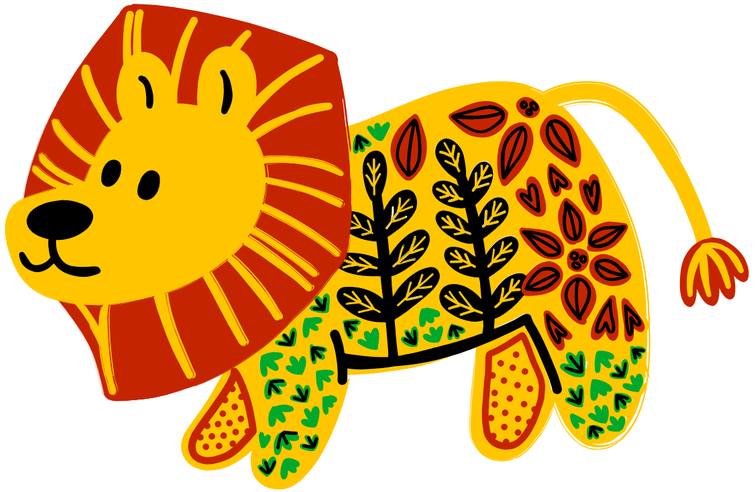
From Prehistory to Ancient Period



Topic

1. **Ganga Valley → Janapadas → Aryanization → Maurya → Gupta → Sasanka → Pala → Sena**

Mumtahina Rahman Tushi

242, BS CSE
Instructor, Ostitto
CSR, Eventa
QACC, 10 Minute School

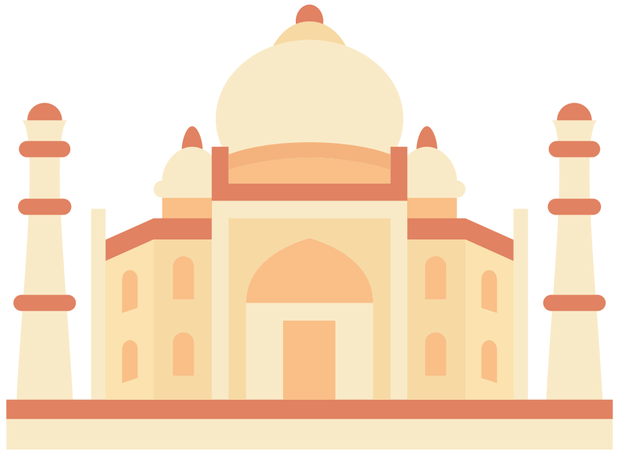
CD, ACS Future School
MI, 10 Minute School
SMM, SquidX

Introduction

From Prehistory to Ancient Bengal & India

Learning Objectives:

- Understand early settlements in Ganga region
- Explain Aryanization & Janapadas
- Analyze major dynasties (Maurya, Gupta, Sasanka, Pala, Sena)
- Evaluate political, economic & cultural development



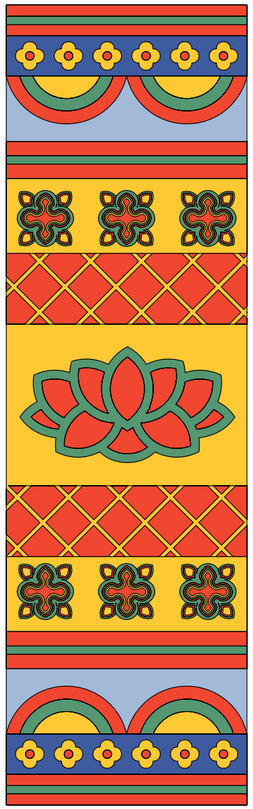
Prehistoric Background of Ganga Region

Ganga Redai (Ganga Valley Civilization Context)

- Early agricultural settlements
- Use of iron tools
- Development of river-based civilization
- Fertile alluvial soil → farming growth
- Rise of trade routes

Importance:

- Basis of later kingdoms
- Cultural blending of indigenous & Aryan groups



Janapadas & Mahajanapadas (600 BCE)

Janapada:

- Meaning: “Foothold of a tribe”
- Small territorial kingdoms

Mahajanapadas (16 major states)

Examples:

- Magadha
- Kosala
- Vatsa
- Avanti

Political Features:

- Monarchy & republic systems
- Standing armies
- Tax collection system

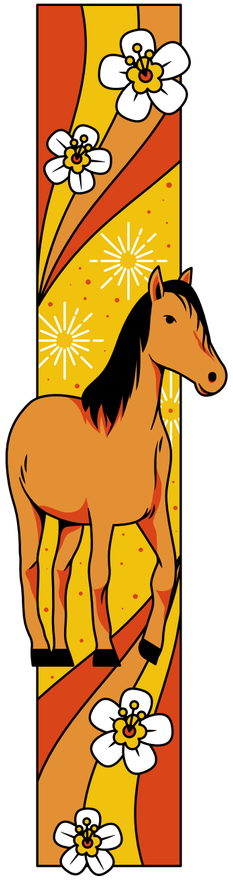
Aryanization

Meaning:
Spread of Indo-Aryan culture into eastern India (including Bengal)
Features:

- Introduction of Sanskrit language
- Varna system (social hierarchy)
- Vedic religion & rituals
- Iron technology expansion

Impact:

- Cultural assimilation
- Agricultural expansion
- Rise of new kingdoms



The Mauryan Empire (321–185 BCE)

Ashoka
Chandragupta Maurya
Key Points:

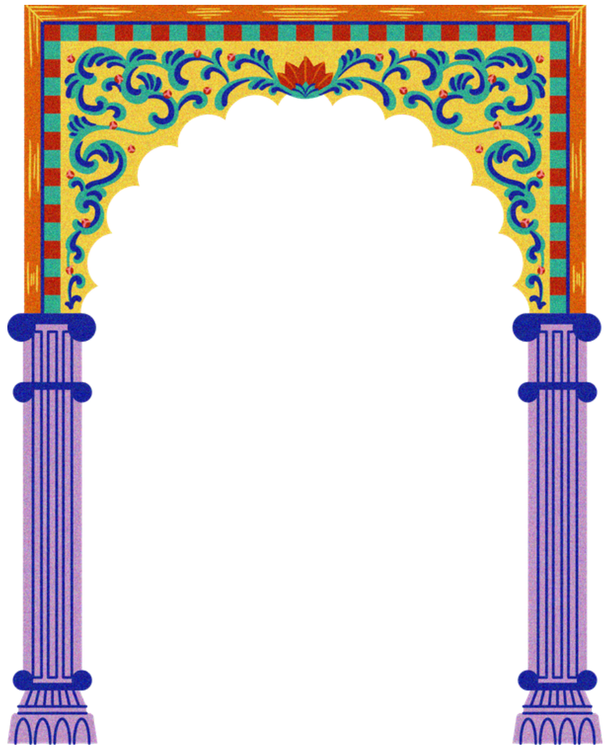
- Founded by Chandragupta Maurya
- Capital: Pataliputra
- Strong centralized administration
- Large army & spy system

Ashoka:

- Kalinga War → conversion to Buddhism
- Spread of Buddhism
- Rock & pillar edicts

Contribution:

- First pan-Indian empire
- Administrative model



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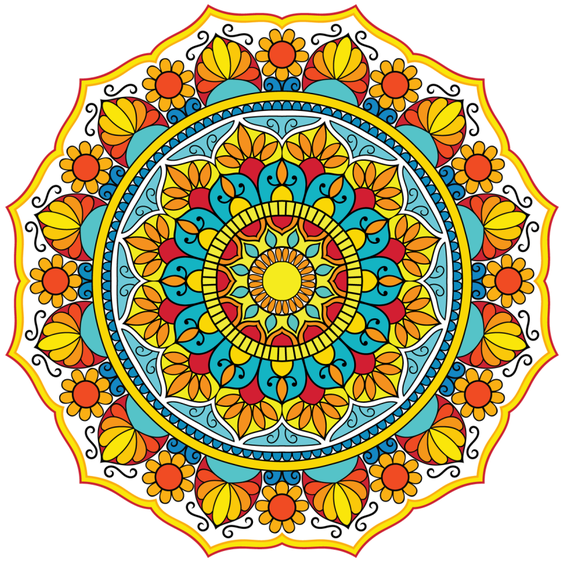

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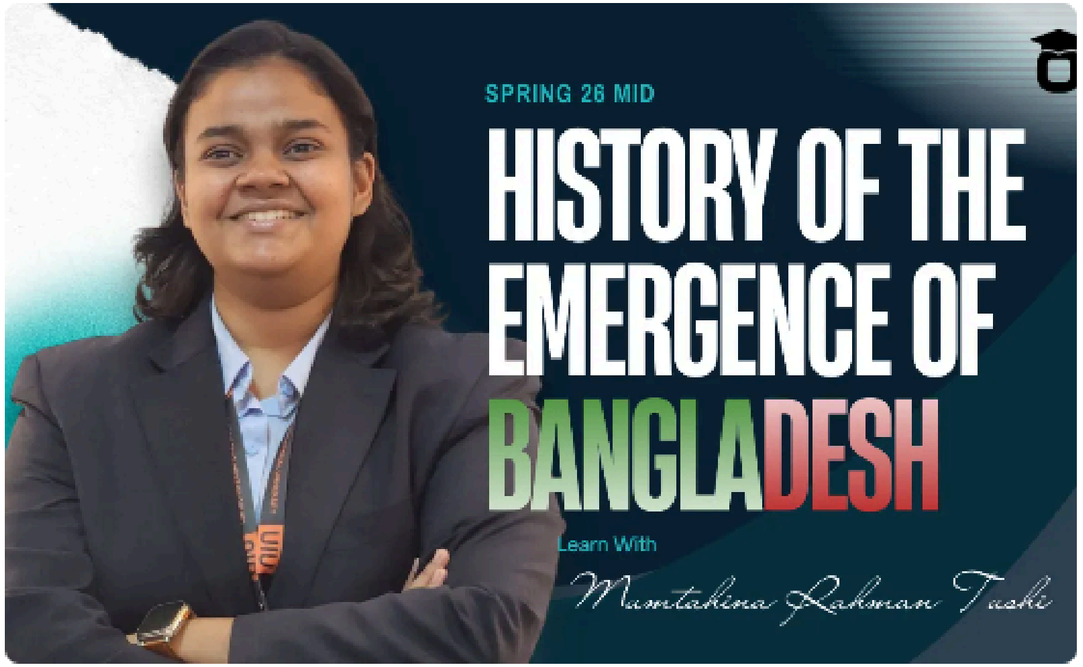


Updated: **Feb 25, 2026**

History of the Emergence of Bangladesh (MID)

Course Title: History of the Emergence of Bangladesh
Code: BDS 1201
Prerequisites: N/A
Course type: Core

The Gupta Empire (320–550 CE)

Chandragupta I
Samudragupta
Chandragupta II
Golden Age of India
Achievements:

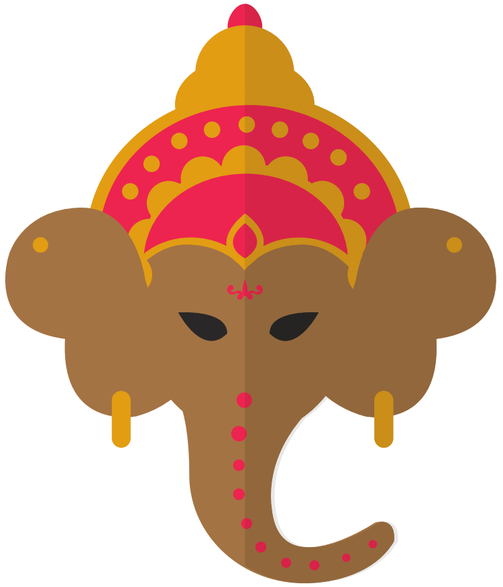
- Political stability
- Expansion of trade
- Sanskrit literature

Science & Culture:

- Aryabhata (mathematics & astronomy)
- Kalidasa (literature)
- Decimal system

Administration:

- Decentralized governance
- Land grants system



Sasanka (7th Century)

Shashanka
First Independent King of Bengal

Capital:

- Karnasuvarna

Contributions:

- Political unification of Bengal
- Expansion against Harsha
- Development of regional identity

The Pala Dynasty (750–1161 CE)

Gopala
Dharmapala
Devapala
Features:

- Buddhist rulers
- Elected monarchy (Gopala chosen by people)
- Strong naval & military power

Education:

- Nalanda & Vikramashila universities
- International Buddhist connections

Art:

- Pala sculptures & bronze art

The Sena Dynasty (1070–1230 CE)

Vijaya Sena
Ballala Sena
Lakshmana Sena
Characteristics:

- Orthodox Hindu revival
- Strict caste system
- Land-based feudal structure

Contribution:

- Sanskrit scholarship
- Temple construction

Decline:

- Turkish invasion (Bakhtiyar Khalji)

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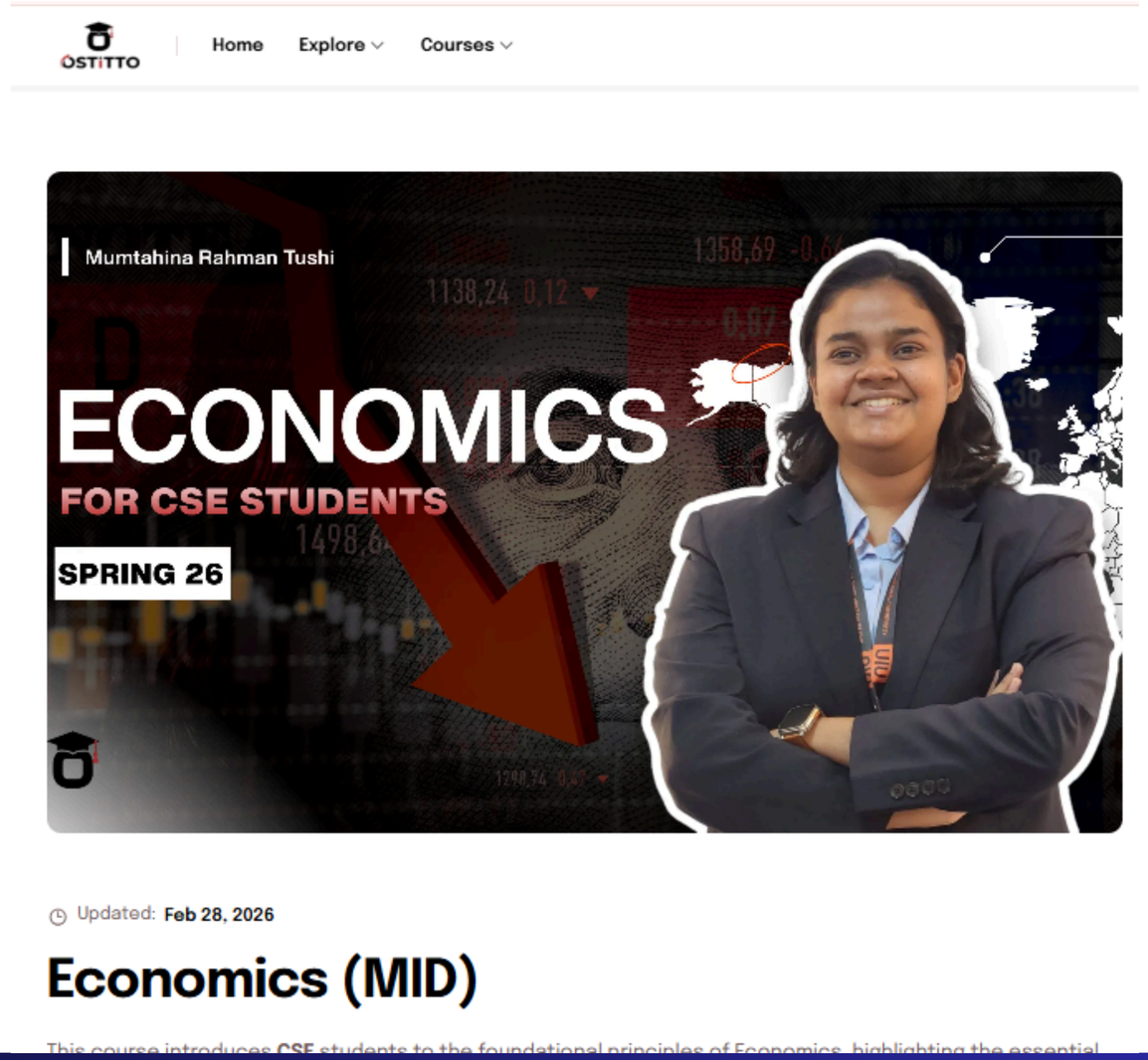
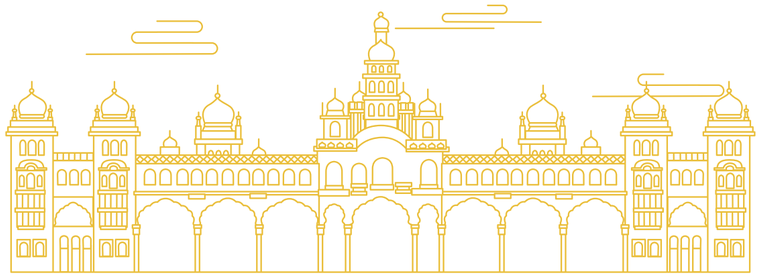


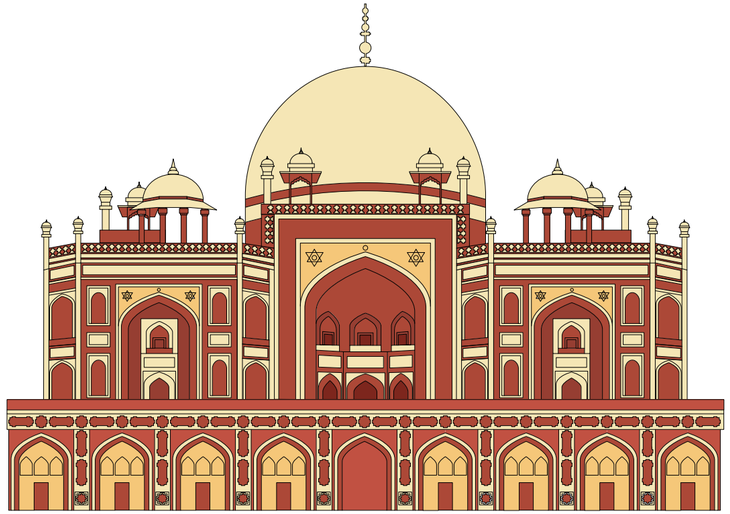
Comparative Analysis

Dynasty	Religion	Administration	Culture
Maurya	Buddhism	Centralized	Edicts
Gupta	Hinduism	Decentralized	Golden Age
Pala	Buddhism	Elected origin	Universities
Sena	Hinduism	Feudal	Caste rigidity

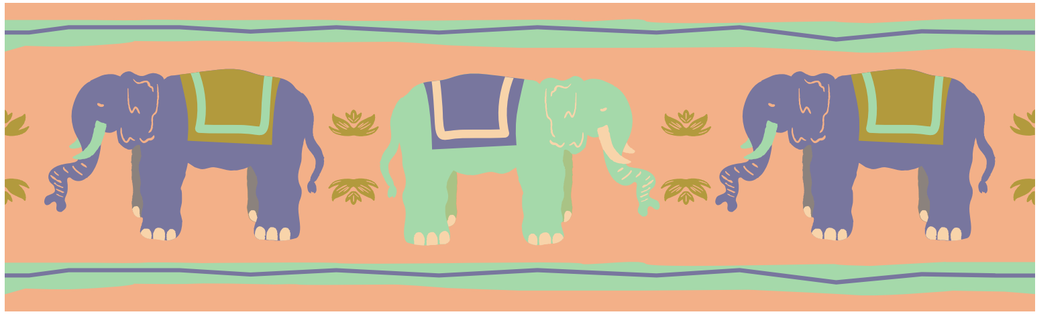


Conclusion

- Ganga Valley → Base of civilization
- Aryanization → Cultural transformation
- Maurya → Political unity
- Gupta → Cultural golden age
- Sasanka → Bengal identity
- Pala → Buddhist internationalism
- Sena → Hindu consolidation



5 Marks Questions

- Explain the importance of the Ganga Valley in early civilization.
- Discuss the political structure of Janapadas and Mahajanapadas.
- Describe the process and impact of Aryanization in Eastern India.
- Evaluate the administrative system of the Mauryan Empire.
- Why is the Gupta period called the Golden Age of India?
- Discuss the role of Sasanka in establishing Bengal’s identity.
- Explain the contributions of the Pala dynasty to education and Buddhism.
- Analyze the social reforms and policies of the Sena rulers.

Thank You!