

UPSC Civil Services Examination

UPSC Notes [GS-I]

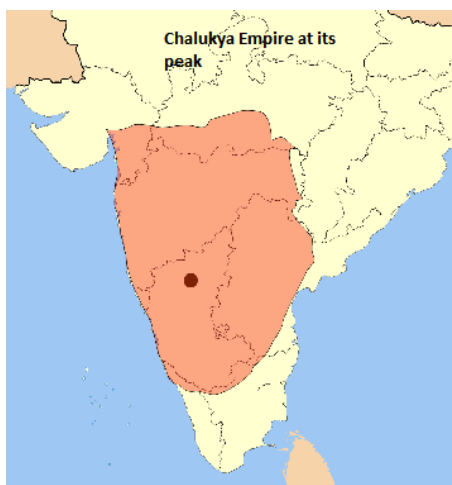
Topic: Chalukya Dynasty - (6th Century to 12th Century) [Ancient Indian History Notes For UPSC]

The Chalukyas ruled parts of Southern and Central India between the 6th century and the 12th century.

The Three Chalukyas

- There were three distinct but related Chalukya dynasties.
- **Badami Chalukyas:** The earliest Chalukyas with their capital at Badami (Vatapi) in Karnataka. They ruled from mid-6th century. They declined after the death of their greatest king, Pulakesin II in 642 AD.
- **Eastern Chalukyas:** Emerged after the death of Pulakesin II in Eastern Deccan with capital at Vengi. They ruled till the 11th century.
- **Western Chalukyas:** Descendants of the Badami Chalukyas, they emerged in the late 10th century and ruled from Kalyani (modern-day Basavakanlyan).

Extent of the Chalukya dynasty



- The Chalukya dynasty reached its peak during the reign of Pulakesin II.
- His grandfather Pulakesin I had created an empire around Vatapi.
- Pulakesin II subjugated the Kadambas, the Gangas of Mysore, the Mauravas of North Konkan, the Latas of Gujarat, the Malavas and the Gurjars.
- He also succeeded in getting submission from the Chola, Chera and Pandya kings.

- He had also defeated King Harsha of Kannauj and the Pallava king Mahendravarman.

Chalukya Rulers

Jayasimha was the first ruler of the Chalukyas.

Pulakesin I (Reign: 543 AD – 566 AD)

- Founded the empire with his capital at Vatapi.
- Performed Ashwamedha.

Kirtivarman I (Reign: 566 AD – 597 AD)

- Son of Pulakesin I.
- Conquered Konkan and northern Kerala.

Mangalesha (Reign: 597 AD – 609 AD)

- Brother of Kirtivarman I.
- Conquered the Kadambas and the Gangas.
- Was killed by his nephew and son of Kirtivarman, Pulakesin II.

Pulakesin II (609 AD – 642 AD)

- The greatest of the Chalukya kings.
- Extended the Chalukya rule to most parts of the Deccan.
- His birth name was Eraya. Information about him is obtained from the Aihole inscription dated 634. This poetic inscription was written by his court poet Ravikirti in Sanskrit language using the Kannada script.
- Xuanzang visited his kingdom. He has praised Pulakesin II as a good and authoritative king.
- Though a Hindu, he was tolerant of Buddhism and Jainism.
- He conquered almost entire south-central India.
- He is famous for stopping Northern king Harsha in his tracks while he was trying to conquer southern parts of the country.
- He had defeated the Pallava king Mahendravarman I but was defeated and killed by Mahendravarman's son and successor Narasimhavarman I in a series of battles he had with the Pallavas.
- For the next 13 years, Badami remained under Pallava control.
- Pulakesin II received a Persian mission as depicted in an Ajanta cave painting. He maintained diplomatic relations with the King of Persia Khusru II.
- His death saw a lapse in Chalukya power.

Vikramaditya I (655 AD – 680 AD)

- Son of Pulakesin II who plundered Kanchi, the capital of the Pallavas.

Kirtivarman II (746 AD – 753 AD)

- Great-great-grandson of Vikramaditya I.
- Last of the Chalukya rulers. Was defeated by the Rashtrakuta king, Dantidurga.[/su_box]

Administration and Society

- The Chalukyas had great maritime power.
- They also had a well-organised army.
- Though the Chalukya kings were Hindus, they were tolerant of Buddhism and Jainism.
- Saw great developments in Kannada and Telugu literature.
- Sanskrit along with the local languages thrived. An inscription dated 7th century mentions Sanskrit as the language of the elite whereas Kannada was the language of the masses.[/su_box]

Art and Architecture

- They built cave temples depicting both religious and secular themes.
- The temples had beautiful mural paintings also.
- The temples under the Chalukyas are a good example of the Vesara style of architecture. This is also called the Deccan style or Karnataka Dravida or Chalukyan style. It is a combination of Dravida and Nagara styles.
- Aihole temples: Ladh Khan temple (Surya Temple), Durga temple, Huchimalligudi temple, Jain temple at Meguti by Ravikirti. There are 70 temples in Aihole.
- Badami temples
- Pattadakal: is a UNESCO World Heritage site. There are ten temples here – 4 in Nagar style and 6 in Dravida style. Virupaksha temple and Sangameshwara Temple are in Dravida style. Papanatha temple is in Nagara style.