

Pusyavuti or Vardhana Dynasty (550-647)

- Was probably founded at **Thaneswar** (Kurukshetra district of Haryana) by **Pusyavuti**, a feudatory (military general) of the Guptas.
- **Prabhakar Vardhana**- 1st important ruler (fourth in serial number).
- Capital at **Thaneswar**
- **Rajya Vardhana was his eldest son and Rajyashri was daughter.**
- Prabhakar Vardhana was succeeded by **Rajya Vardhana**.
- But was killed by **Sasanka**.
- **His younger brother, Harsha (606-647)**
- Started the **Harsha era**.
- Sources: Si-Yu-Ki, Harsha Charita, his own writings and inscriptions.
- Assumed **title Siladitya** after defeating Shaivite king Sasanka of **Gaud (Bengal)**.
- Not only unified **Kannauj** (UP, “India's perfume capital”) with Thaneswar but also made it his **new capital**.
- This made him **most powerful king of the North**.
- **Defeated Sasanka in the east** and conquered Magadha and Sasanka’s empire.
- Southward march was stopped by **Pulakeshin II, Chalukyan King of Badami**, on the bank of Narmada River.
- **Only defeat in his life.**
- **Was Shaivite in the beginning but embraced Buddhism gradually.**
- **Religious tolerant**, as per Hiuen Tsang.
- **Patronised Nalanda university** by giving revenue from 100 villages.
- **Held two assemblies: in Kanauj and Prayag** (known as Mahamoksha Parishad) **in order to honour Hiuen Tsang and spread of Mahayana sect of Buddhism.**
- Prayag- **confluence of three rivers- beginning of Mahakubh Mela.**
- His empire divided into- Bhuktis (provinces), Visayas (districts), Tehsils, and grama or village.
- Ministerial administration was in the same line of the Guptas.
- Maintained **diplomatic relation with China**.
- **Three Chinese missions** visited his court.
- Tsang emperor, Tai Tsung sent **Hiuen Tsang** to his kingdom in 643 and again in 647 (**Si-Yu-Ki**).

- Wrote three Sanskrit Plays: **Ratnavali, Nagananda and Priyadarshika**
- **Banabhatta**, court poet wrote **Harsha Charita, Kadambari and Parvati Parinay**.
- Other scholars were **Matanga, Divakar, Jayasena** etc.
- His **administration became more feudal and decentralised**.
- **Grant of land in lieu of cash salary to the officers.**
- **Gave land grants to Brahmanas and other officers by charters.**
- **Trade and commerce, coins, towns declined.**
- **Position of women further declined.**
- **Widow remarriage not permitted.**
- **Dowry system as per Bana was quite common.**
- **Yasho Varmana, last king.**
- **Hiuen Tsang's (prince of pilgrims) account-**
- **Studied and taught at Nalanda varsity.**
- **Pataliputra and Vaishali were in decline**
- **Prayag and Kannauj became important.**
- **Referred to Sudras as agriculturists**
- **Talked about untouchables**
- **Revenue of Harsha divided into 4 parts: one part for the expenditure of the king, second for scholars, third for endowments of officials and public servants, fourth for religious purposes.**
- **Bali, Hiranya- tax paid in cash**
- **Bhaga- land tax paid in kind.**
- **King's share was 1/6 of the produce.**
- **Judicial administration- corporal punishment in vogue; but death penalty avoided.**
- **Life imprisonment for plotting against king.**
- **Most towns had outer walls, streets narrow.**
- **Free hospitals and rest houses in all the towns to provide medical treatment free of cost and outsiders could stay.**
- **Society:**
- **Sub-castes increased**
- **Though rigid, no social conflict among the various sections.**

- **Use of garlic, onion in food was uncommon.**
- **Position of peasants and women declined.**
- **Vishti (forced labour) prevalent.**