

APPSC GROUP-I MAINS — STUDY NOTES

## ASHOKA & DHAMMA

268–232 BCE | Kalinga War • Dhamma Policy • Edicts • Missionaries • Legacy

Paper II — History, Culture & Geography | Day 9 (08 Apr 2026)

### SECTION 1: SUMMARISED NOTES

#### 1.1 Ashoka — Before the Transformation

Ashoka (Devanampiya Piyadasi — ‘Beloved of the Gods, He Who Looks on with Affection’) ruled from c. 268–232 BCE. He was Bindusara’s son and grandson of Chandragupta Maurya. Before becoming emperor, Ashoka served as governor of Ujjain (Avantipatha province) and possibly Taxila. Buddhist texts (Ashokavadana, Divyavadana) describe a violent war of succession where Ashoka killed 99 of his brothers to seize the throne — though this is likely exaggerated. He is called ‘Chandashoka’ (Ashoka the Fierce) in Buddhist tradition for his pre-Dhamma cruelty.

For the first ~8 years of his reign, Ashoka followed the expansionist policy of his predecessors. The Mauryan Empire under him was the largest in Indian history — stretching from Afghanistan to Bengal, from Kashmir to Karnataka, covering almost the entire subcontinent except the deep south (Chola, Pandya, Chera, Satyaputra — mentioned in Rock Edict II as friendly neighbours, not subjects).

#### 1.2 The Kalinga War (261 BCE) — The Turning Point

In his 8th regnal year, Ashoka conquered Kalinga (modern Odisha). Rock Edict XIII is the ONLY ancient royal inscription in the world where a king publicly expresses remorse for war. The edict records: 100,000 killed, 150,000 deported, and many more died of disease and famine. Ashoka declares: ‘This is a matter of profound sorrow and regret to His Sacred Majesty.’

The impact was transformative. Ashoka replaced Bherighosha (the sound of war drums) with Dhammaghosha (the sound of Dhamma). He did not merely adopt Buddhism — he fundamentally reconceived the purpose of kingship from conquest to welfare. No other ancient ruler — not Alexander, not Augustus, not Qin Shi Huang — publicly renounced war after victory. H.G. Wells called Ashoka ‘the greatest of kings’ and Jawaharlal Nehru described Kalinga as ‘one of the decisive battles of the world.’

#### 1.3 Dhamma — Ashoka’s Ethical Code

##### 1.3.1 What was Dhamma?

Dhamma was NOT Buddhism — it was a universal ethical code drawn from multiple Indian traditions (Buddhist, Jain, Brahmanical, and Ajivika). Ashoka explicitly promoted religious tolerance: ‘All sects deserve reverence for one reason or another’ (Rock Edict XII). The term ‘Dhamma’ comes from the Pali word for ‘Dharma’ (righteous conduct). Ashoka’s Dhamma was a state policy for social harmony and ethical governance, not a religious conversion programme.

##### 1.3.2 Key Principles of Dhamma

- **Ahimsa (Non-violence):** Towards all living beings. Ashoka banned animal sacrifice in many areas, established veterinary hospitals, and promoted vegetarianism (without mandating it).
- **Daya (Compassion):** For all subjects regardless of religion, caste, or status. 'Every human is my child' (Rock Edict V).
- **Satya (Truthfulness):** Personal and governmental honesty.
- **Religious Tolerance:** Ashoka supported all religions: Buddhist Sangha, Brahmins, Ajivikas, Jains. Rock Edict XII: 'Whoever praises his own sect or blames other sects, injures his own sect most severely.' This is perhaps the world's earliest articulation of religious pluralism.
- **Respect for Elders & Parents:** Obedience to parents, respect for teachers, generosity to elders — social harmony through family values.
- **Welfare:** State responsibility for public welfare: hospitals (for humans and animals), rest houses for travellers, wells and trees along roads, botanical gardens.
- **Moderation:** Avoiding extravagance and unnecessary ceremony. Self-restraint in personal conduct.
- **Generosity:** Dana (charitable giving) to Brahmins, Sramanas, the poor, and the elderly.

### 1.3.3 Dhamma vs Buddhism

While Ashoka was personally a Buddhist (he visited Bodh Gaya, Lumbini, and joined the Sangha as an upasaka), his state policy of Dhamma was consciously non-sectarian. Key differences: Buddhism teaches the Four Noble Truths and Nirvana — Ashoka's edicts never mention these. Buddhism requires monasticism for liberation — Ashoka addressed all citizens, not just monks. Buddhism rejects caste — Ashoka accepted existing social structures while promoting ethical conduct within them. Ashoka used Buddhist ethical vocabulary (Ahimsa, Daya, Dana) but applied them as universal civic values, not religious doctrines.

## 1.4 Ashokan Edicts — The Primary Source

### 1.4.1 Types of Edicts

Type	Number	Locations (Key)	Content
<b>Major Rock Edicts</b>	14	Erragudi (AP), Girnar (Gujarat), Dhauli (Odisha), Shahbazgarhi, Mansehra (Pakistan)	Dhamma principles, Kalinga War remorse (XIII), religious tolerance (XII), welfare measures, administration, missionaries
<b>Minor Rock Edicts</b>	~15	Maski (Karnataka — first to mention 'Ashoka' by name), Gujara, Bhabru, Suvamagiri	Personal religious journey, conversion to Buddhism, encouragement for Dhamma practice
<b>Pillar Edicts</b>	7	Delhi-Topra, Delhi-Meerut, Lauriya-Araraj, Lauriya-Nandangarh, Rampurva, Allahabad (Kaushambi), Sarnath	Dhamma administration, Dhamma-Mahamatras, animal protection, religious tolerance, welfare institutions
<b>Separate Rock Edicts</b>	2	Dhauili (Odisha), Jaugada (Odisha)	Special instructions to Kalinga administrators — treat newly conquered people with compassion

Type	Number	Locations (Key)	Content
Cave Inscriptions	3	Barabar Caves (Bihar)	Dedicated caves to Ajivika monks — shows tolerance towards non-Buddhist sects

### 1.4.2 Languages & Scripts

Edicts were written in: Brahmi script (most edicts — deciphered by James Prinsep, 1837), Kharoshthi script (NW frontier edicts — Shahbazgarhi, Mansehra), Greek (Kandahar, Afghanistan), and Aramaic (Kandahar, Laghman). Languages: Prakrit (majority), Greek, and Aramaic. The use of local scripts and languages shows Ashoka's desire to communicate directly with all subjects. The Maski Minor Rock Edict is significant because it is the FIRST inscription to use the name 'Ashoka' (other edicts use 'Devanampiya Piyadasi').

### 1.4.3 Key Edicts to Remember

- **Rock Edict XIII:** Kalinga War description. '100,000 killed, 150,000 deported.' Ashoka's remorse. Renunciation of war. Missionary mentions. THE most important edict.
- **Rock Edict XII:** Religious tolerance. 'All sects deserve reverence.' 'Whoever praises his sect, blames others, injures his own.' Most quoted for secularism.
- **Rock Edict V:** 'Every human is my child.' Appointment of Dhamma-Mahamatras for welfare of all people.
- **Rock Edict II:** Medical treatment for humans and animals. Mentions friendly southern kingdoms: Chola, Pandya, Chera, Satyaputra, Keralaputra.
- **Pillar Edict VII:** Summary of Dhamma policy and welfare institutions created during Ashoka's reign.
- **Bhabru (Minor Rock):** Ashoka's personal devotion to Buddhism. Calls himself a 'Buddhist upasaka.' Recommends specific Buddhist texts.

## 1.5 Dhamma in Practice — Institutions & Missionaries

- **Dhamma-Mahamatras:** Special officers appointed to spread Dhamma across the empire and among all communities. Tasked with welfare of: Brahmins, Sramanas, aged, orphans, prisoners, and all people. First recorded welfare bureaucracy.
- **Welfare Measures:** Hospitals (for humans and animals), rest houses, wells, trees along roads, botanical gardens. Banned animal sacrifice in the capital. Introduced 'observance days' (Uposatha) for ethical reflection.
- **Missionaries Abroad:** Rock Edict XIII mentions missions to 5 Hellenistic kingdoms: Antiyoka (Antiochus II Theos, Syria), Tulamaya (Ptolemy II Philadelphus, Egypt), Antekina (Antigonus Gonatas, Macedonia), Maka (Magas, Cyrene), Alikasundara (Alexander II, Epirus). Mahinda and Sanghamitta (Ashoka's son and daughter) to Sri Lanka — established Theravada Buddhism there (still dominant). Missionaries also sent to Kashmir, Central Asia, and Myanmar.
- **3rd Buddhist Council:** Held at Pataliputra under Moggaliputta Tissa (250 BCE). Compiled Abhidhamma Pitaka (completing the Tripitaka). Purified the Sangha. Organized missionary activity. Established Theravada as the orthodox school.

## 1.6 Ashoka's Administration

Ashoka maintained the Mauryan administrative machinery (Day 8 topic) but introduced significant reforms:

- **Danda Samata:** Uniformity in punishment — same offence, same punishment regardless of social status. Revolutionary for a caste-stratified society.
- **Vyavahara Samata:** Uniformity in legal procedure — standardised judicial processes across the empire.
- **Rajukas' Expanded Authority:** District officers (Rajukas) given independent judicial authority to punish and reward. Decentralised judicial power for faster justice.
- **Quinquennial Tours:** Officials conducted tours every 5 years to propagate Dhamma and inspect administration (in addition to regular Pradeshikas' tours).
- **Abolition of Royal Hunt:** Ashoka banned the royal hunting expedition (vihar-yatra) and replaced it with Dhamma-yatra (tours of Dhamma propagation and inspection).

### 1.7 Decline of the Empire After Ashoka

Ashoka died c. 232 BCE. The empire fragmented rapidly due to: weak successors (Dasaratha, Samprati, Salisuka, Devavarman, Shatadhanvan, Brihadratha), financial strain from Dhamma projects and welfare spending, Brahmanical reaction against Dhamma-Mahamatras who may have undermined Brahmin authority, provincial governors becoming autonomous, and the fundamental challenge of governing a vast, diverse empire without Ashoka's personal moral authority. Pushyamitra Shunga (Brahmin general) assassinated the last Maurya king Brihadratha during a military parade in 185 BCE, founding the Shunga dynasty — which represented a Brahmanical restoration.

### 1.8 Ashoka's Legacy

- **National Symbols:** Sarnath Lion Capital = National Emblem of India. Dharma Chakra = Indian flag. 'Satyameva Jayate' (Mundaka Upanishad, inscribed on Ashoka's pillar) = National Motto. India's national identity is literally Ashokan.
- **Buddhism's Global Spread:** Without Ashoka's missionary activity, Buddhism might have remained an Indian sect. His missionaries established it in Sri Lanka, Central Asia, and (via later transmission) East and Southeast Asia. Today Buddhism has ~520 million followers worldwide.
- **Constitutional Values:** Ashoka's Dhamma's principles — non-violence, tolerance, welfare, equality before law — resonate in the Preamble (secular, socialist), FRs (Art. 14 equality, Art. 25 religious freedom), DPSPs (Art. 38 welfare, Art. 51 international peace), and FD Art. 51A(e) (harmony).
- **International Influence:** Ashoka's edicts are among the earliest examples of: public communication by a ruler, welfare state policy, religious tolerance as state doctrine, and international diplomacy through cultural exchange rather than military conquest.

## SECTION 2: KEY DIMENSIONS TO COVER

*Examiner angles.*

1. **Kalinga War:** 261 BCE, 8th regnal year. Rock Edict XIII (100K killed, 150K deported). Bherighosha → Dhammaghosha. ONLY ancient king to publicly repent war. THE defining event.
2. **Dhamma vs Buddhism:** Dhamma = universal ethical code, NOT Buddhism. No mention of Four Noble Truths or Nirvana in edicts. Tolerated all religions. Buddhism was Ashoka's personal faith; Dhamma was state policy.
3. **Key Edicts:** XIII (Kalinga remorse), XII (tolerance), V ('every human is my child'), II (medical + friendly southern kingdoms), Bhabru (personal Buddhism), Pillar VII (Dhamma summary). Know content.
4. **Scripts & Languages:** Brahmi (Prinsep 1837), Kharoshthi (NW), Greek + Aramaic (Kandahar). Prakrit language. Maski = first edict naming 'Ashoka.'
5. **Missionaries:** 5 Greek kingdoms (Antiyoka, Tulamaya, Antekina, Maka, Alikasundara). Mahinda + Sanghamitta to Sri Lanka. 3rd Buddhist Council (Pataliputra, Moggaliputta Tissa).
6. **Administrative Reforms:** Danda Samata (uniform punishment), Vyavahara Samata (uniform procedure), Rajukas' authority, quinquennial tours, Dhamma-yatra replacing vihar-yatra.
7. **Decline:** Weak successors, financial strain, Brahmanical reaction, provincial autonomy. Pushyamitra Shunga assassination (185 BCE).
8. **Legacy:** National Emblem, Flag Chakra, Satyameva Jayate. Buddhism's global spread. Constitutional values parallel. AP: Erragudi edicts, Suvarnagiri province.

## SECTION 3: PRELIMS MUST-REMEMBER FACTS

*Crisp factual points.*

1. Ashoka: 268–232 BCE. Devanampiya Piyadasi ('Beloved of Gods, Who Looks with Affection'). Bindusara's son. Chandragupta's grandson.
2. Kalinga War: 261 BCE. 8th regnal year. Rock Edict XIII: 100,000 killed; 150,000 deported. Ashoka's remorse. Bherighosha → Dhammaghosha.
3. Dhamma ≠ Buddhism. Universal ethics: Ahimsa, Daya, Satya, religious tolerance, respect for elders, welfare. State policy for all subjects, all religions.
4. Rock Edict XII: Religious tolerance. 'Whoever praises his sect, blames others, injures his own most severely.' World's earliest articulation of pluralism.
5. Rock Edict V: 'Every human is my child.' Appointed Dhamma-Mahamatras.
6. Rock Edict II: Medical care for humans + animals. Mentions Chola, Pandya, Chera, Satyaputra, Keralaputra as friendly neighbours.
7. Bhabru Minor Rock Edict: Ashoka calls himself 'Buddhist upasaka.' Recommends specific Buddhist texts. Personal faith declaration.
8. Maski Minor Rock Edict: FIRST edict to name 'Ashoka' (others use Devanampiya Piyadasi).
9. Scripts: Brahmi (most edicts; Prinsep 1837), Kharoshthi (NW frontier), Greek + Aramaic (Kandahar). Language: Prakrit (majority).
10. 5 Greek kingdoms: Antiyoka (Antiochus II, Syria), Tulamaya (Ptolemy II, Egypt), Antekina (Antigonus, Macedonia), Maka (Magas, Cyrene), Alikasundara (Alexander II, Epirus). Rock Edict XIII.
11. Mahinda + Sanghamitta: Ashoka's son + daughter. Sent to Sri Lanka. Established Theravada Buddhism. Sanghamitta carried Bodhi Tree branch.
12. 3rd Buddhist Council: 250 BCE, Pataliputra. Moggaliputta Tissa presided. Compiled Abhidhamma Pitaka. Tripitaka completed. Missionaries organised.
13. Dhamma-Mahamatras: Special welfare officers. Appointed to spread Dhamma among all communities. First recorded welfare bureaucracy.
14. Danda Samata: Uniform punishment. Vyavahara Samata: Uniform legal procedure. Rajukas given independent judicial authority.
15. Vihar-yatra (royal hunt) → Dhamma-yatra (Dhamma tours + inspection). Quinquennial tours every 5 years.
16. Barabar Caves: Bihar. Ashoka dedicated to Ajivika monks. Shows tolerance: even non-Buddhist sects supported.
17. Decline after Ashoka: Weak successors. Financial strain. Brahmanical reaction. Pushyamitra Shunga killed Brihadratha (185 BCE). Shunga dynasty.
18. National Emblem: Sarnath Lion Capital (4 lions, abacus with Dharma Chakra). Dharma Chakra = Indian Flag. Satyameva Jayate = National Motto.
19. AP: Erragudi (Kurnool) = all 14 Major Rock Edicts + 2 Separate Edicts. Suvarnagiri = Dakshinapatha capital. Amaravati stupa = Ashokan foundation.
20. H.G. Wells: 'Ashoka = greatest of kings.' Nehru: Kalinga = 'one of the decisive battles of the world.'

## SECTION 4: MAINS MUST-WRITE POINTS

*Each can form a paragraph.*

1. **Kalinga — History's Most Consequential Conversion:** The Kalinga War is not merely a battle in Indian history — it is a civilisational moment. When Ashoka surveyed the devastation (100,000 killed, 150,000 deported) and declared 'this is a matter of profound sorrow and regret,' he became the ONLY conquering ruler in ancient history to publicly repent. This was not weakness — Ashoka was at the peak of military power, ruling the largest empire India had ever seen. His choice to replace conquest with compassion transformed not just Indian governance but the trajectory of an entire world religion. Without Kalinga's trauma, there would have been no Dhamma, no missionaries to Sri Lanka, and possibly no global Buddhism.
2. **Dhamma — Ancient India's Secularism:** Ashoka's Dhamma was NOT Buddhism imposed on a diverse empire — it was a consciously ecumenical ethical code. He supported Brahmins, Sramanas, Ajivikas, and Jains alongside the Buddhist Sangha. Rock Edict XII's principle that criticising other religions harms one's own sect anticipates modern secularism by 2,200 years. India's constitutional 'secularism' (defined as 'equal respect for all religions' rather than separation of church and state) is closer to Ashokan Dhamma than to French laïcité. The Preamble's 'secular' (42nd Amendment) and Art. 25's religious freedom are philosophical descendants of Rock Edict XII.
3. **Dhamma-Mahamatras — History's First Welfare Bureaucracy:** Ashoka's Dhamma-Mahamatras were special officers appointed to promote Dhamma and oversee welfare of all communities: Brahmins, Sramanas, the aged, orphans, prisoners, and the poor. This was arguably the world's first dedicated welfare bureaucracy — state officers whose primary function was not revenue collection or military administration but social welfare. The concept anticipates modern welfare institutions: social workers, ombudsmen, and human rights commissioners. India's NHRC, State Human Rights Commissions, and welfare officers trace a conceptual lineage to Ashoka's innovation.
4. **The Edict Revolution — When a King Spoke to His People:** Ashokan edicts are revolutionary not just in content but in form. For the first time in recorded history, a ruler used inscriptions to communicate directly with all subjects — in their own languages (Prakrit, Greek, Aramaic) and scripts (Brahmi, Kharoshthi). This was the ancient equivalent of a public address system. The edicts were placed at major roads, trade routes, and provincial capitals to maximise reach. No Roman emperor, no Chinese sovereign, no Persian king used public inscriptions for ethical communication at this scale. Ashoka's edicts anticipate the concept of government transparency and public accountability.
5. **Ashoka's International Diplomacy — Soft Power Before the Term Existed:** Sending Buddhist missionaries to 5 Greek kingdoms (Syria, Egypt, Macedonia, Cyrene, Epirus) and to Sri Lanka, Central Asia, and Myanmar was the ancient world's most ambitious cultural diplomacy programme. Ashoka used religion and ethics — not armies — to project influence beyond his borders. This is the earliest documented example of what modern IR theory calls 'soft power' (Joseph Nye's concept). India's modern Buddhist diplomacy (with Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Japan) and the International Solar Alliance invoke the same principle: influence through shared values, not military coercion.
6. **AP's Ashokan Heritage:** Erragudi (Kurnool district) contains all 14 Major Rock Edicts and 2 Separate Edicts — one of the most complete collections anywhere. Suvarnagiri served as

the Dakshinapatha provincial capital, bringing the Deccan under direct Mauryan administration. The Amaravati stupa was originally an Ashokan foundation. These sites prove that AP was not peripheral to the Mauryan Empire but an integral administrative unit. Ashoka's administrative infrastructure in the Deccan — road networks, revenue systems, bureaucratic positions — created the foundations on which the Satavahanas later built their state.



## SECTION 5: VALUE ADDITION

4 topic-specific dimensions.

### Interlinkages

- **Buddhism (Day 5) → Ashoka:** Ashoka's conversion completed Buddhism's transformation from a regional teaching to a world religion. 3rd Council + missionaries = institutional globalisation of Buddhism.
- **Mauryan Admin (Day 8) → Ashoka's Reforms:** Ashoka inherited the Arthashastra state and reformed it: Danda/Vyavahara Samata (uniform justice), Dhamma-Mahamatras (welfare officers), and ethical governance principles.
- **Ashoka → Indian Constitution:** National Emblem, Flag Chakra, National Motto from Ashoka. Dhamma principles → Preamble (secular, justice, liberty), Art. 14 (equality), Art. 25 (religious freedom), Art. 51 (international peace), Art. 51A(e) (harmony).
- **Ashoka → Gandhi:** Ahimsa as state policy (Ashoka) → Ahimsa as political strategy (Gandhi's Satyagraha). Non-violence as governance (Dhamma) → non-violence as resistance. Direct philosophical lineage.
- **Kalinga → Odisha:** Separate Rock Edicts at Dhauli and Jaugada (special compassionate instructions for Kalinga) show post-war administrative sensitivity. The Kalinga edict sites are now peace memorials.

### Current Affairs

- **Nalanda Revival (2024):** New university campus at Rajgir. India-ASEAN collaboration. Revives the educational tradition that Ashoka's 3rd Council helped establish.
- **Buddhist Circuit Tourism:** India promoting Lumbini-Bodhi Gaya-Sarnath-Kushinagar-Rajgir-Nalanda circuit. Ashoka's sites (Sarnath pillar, Sanchi stupa) are key attractions. Kushinagar International Airport (2021).
- **India's Soft Power Diplomacy:** PM gifting Ashoka pillar replicas to world leaders. India's G20 presidency (2023) invoked Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (world is one family) — echoing Ashoka's 'every human is my child.'
- **Erragudi Conservation:** AP's rock edict sites need better conservation, visitor infrastructure, and UNESCO consideration. Currently managed by ASI but underdeveloped compared to sites in other states.

### International Comparison

- **Ashoka vs Augustus:** Contemporaries. Both ruled vast empires. Augustus used military power + propaganda (Res Gestae). Ashoka used Dhamma edicts + missionaries. Augustus celebrated conquest; Ashoka renounced it.
- **Ashoka vs Constantine:** Both rulers who adopted new religions. Constantine (312 CE) adopted Christianity and used it to consolidate power. Ashoka adopted Buddhism and used its ethics to transform governance. Constantine's conversion was political; Ashoka's was personal + moral.
- **Dhamma Edicts vs Hammurabi's Code:** Both are ruler's public inscriptions. But Hammurabi's Code (1750 BCE) prescribes punishments ('eye for an eye'). Ashoka's edicts

prescribe ethical conduct and compassion. One commands through fear; the other persuades through values.

### Contemporary Relevance

- **Welfare State:** Ashoka's hospitals, rest houses, wells, and Dhamma-Mahamatras = ancient welfare state. Modern equivalents: PM-JAY (healthcare), MGNREGS (employment), PMAY (housing), SBM (sanitation). The philosophical lineage connects.
- **Secularism:** Rock Edict XII's 'equal respect for all sects' = India's constitutional secularism (S.R. Bommai: secularism = basic structure). Ashoka's model is more relevant to India than Western separation-of-church-and-state.
- **International Relations:** Ashoka's 'soft power' approach — cultural diplomacy through Buddhist missions — is India's contemporary strategy: Buddhist diplomacy with SE Asia, ISA (solar diplomacy), Vaccine Maitri (health diplomacy), and Yoga Day (cultural diplomacy).
- **Environmental Ethics:** Ashoka's Pillar Edicts on animal protection, banning hunting, planting trees, and creating botanical gardens anticipate modern environmental consciousness. Art. 48A (environment) and Art. 51A(g) (environmental duty) echo Ashokan values.



## SECTION 6: QUICK REVISION BOX

*Last-minute glance.*

▶ Ashoka: 268–232 BCE; Devanampiya Piyadasi	▶ Kalinga: 261 BCE; 100K killed; 150K deported; RE XIII
▶ Dhamma ≠ Buddhism; universal ethics; all religions	▶ RE XII: Tolerance ('praises own, blames others = injures own')
▶ RE V: 'Every human is my child'; Dhamma-Mahamatras	▶ RE II: Hospitals; friendly south kingdoms (Chola/Pandya/Chera)
▶ Bhabru: Personal Buddhism; 'upasaka'	▶ Maski: FIRST edict naming 'Ashoka' (not Devanampiya)
▶ Scripts: Brahmi (Prinsep 1837), Kharoshthi, Greek, Aramaic	▶ 5 Greek kingdoms: Antiyoka, Tulamaya, Antekina, Maka, Alikasundara
▶ Mahinda + Sanghamitta → Sri Lanka = Theravada established	▶ 3rd Council: 250 BCE; Pataliputra; Moggaliputta Tissa; Abhidhamma
▶ Danda Samata = uniform punishment; Vyavahara Samata = procedure	▶ Vihar-yatra (hunt) → Dhamma-yatra (ethical tours)
▶ Barabar Caves: Dedicated to AJIVIKA monks (not Buddhist)	▶ Chandashoka → Dhammashoka (Fierce → Righteous)
▶ National Emblem = Sarnath Lion Capital; Chakra = Flag	▶ Satyameva Jayate = National Motto; Ashoka connection
▶ AP: Erragudi (14 MRE + 2 SRE); Suvarnagiri; Amaravati	▶ Decline: Weak successors; Pushyamitra Shunga 185 BCE

## SECTION 7: RECOMMENDED SOURCES

*Refer to these.*

Source	What to Read	Why
NCERT Class XII — Themes in Indian History	Ch. 2: Kings, Farmers and Towns (Ashoka section)	<i>Edicts, Dhamma, administration, legacy</i>
R.S. Sharma — India's Ancient Past	Ch. 19–21: Ashoka, Dhamma, Mauryan decline	<i>Exam-oriented; edict content, missionary details</i>
Romila Thapar — Ashoka and the Decline of the Mauryas	Complete text	<i>The definitive scholarly study of Ashoka</i>
Upinder Singh — Ancient & Early Medieval India	Ch. 11–12: Ashoka's edicts and legacy	<i>Archaeological + epigraphic analysis</i>

Source	What to Read	Why
NCERT Class XI — An Introduction to Indian Art	Mauryan art: pillars, capitals, stupas	<i>Sarnath Lion Capital, Sanchi, Amaravati</i>
Bare Text of Ashokan Edicts	Rock Edicts XIII, XII, V, II; Pillar VII; Bhabru	<i>Reading actual edict text transforms Mains answers</i>

