

MCQ Question · mcqquestion.com

Anga (Mahajanapada)

Free · Share

Anga (Mahajanapada)

Practice MCQs

At a glance

Anga was an eastern state among the sixteen Mahajanapadas. Its capital Champa was a river port. The kingdom later passed to Magadha.

01 **Capital**Champa, near Bhagalpur in Bihar. The exact site is debated.
02 **River boundary**The river Champa. Anga lay east of it and Magadha west.
03 **Today**Bhagalpur and Munger districts of Bihar.
04 **Fall**Annexed by Magadha during Bimbisara's reign.

- Champa was among the six great cities that Ananda named to the Buddha.
- Malini is probably an old name of Champa, not a second capital.
- Jain tradition links Champa to Mahavira, Vasupujya, Dadhivahana and Chandana.
- Karna as king of Anga is an epic story, not proof.

MahajanapadaOne of the large states of early India.
AnnexTo add a land to your own kingdom for good.
FiefLand given by a king for the holder to enjoy its income.
KalyanakaOne of the five key events in a Tirthankara's life.

In the Mahabharata, Duryodhana crowns Karna king of Anga so that he can enter an archery contest. Anga was a real kingdom in early India. It was one of the sixteen great states called Mahajanapadas.

This lesson sorts firm facts from tradition. Anga's capital was Champa, a river port on the Ganga plain. Magadha took Anga under King Bimbisara.

Some details, such as the exact site of Champa and the date of the conquest, are debated. Where a fact is only tradition, the lesson says so.

Contents

1. Where Anga and Champa lay
2. Champa in Buddhist texts
3. How did Magadha take Anga?
4. The Jain and epic side
5. Exam practice
6. Think it through
7. Check your understanding
8. More lessons to read
9. Practice MCQs

Where exactly was Anga, and where was Champa?

A Mahajanapada was one of the large states of early India. Each held many farming settlements, called janapadas. Old Buddhist and Jain texts list sixteen of them. Anga was an eastern state of the group.

1. Which river divided Anga from Magadha?

The river Champa formed the boundary. Anga lay to its east. Magadha lay to its west. Today the river is called the Chandan.

A boundary river shows how close the two kingdoms were. Think of a river as a natural fence between two fields. Magadha later took over the land on the other bank, as the later items show.

Magadha	Anga
Lay to the west	Lay to the east
of the river	of the river
	Capital: Champa

The river Champa was the border between the two states.

True or False: Anga lay to the east of the river Champa, and Magadha lay to its west.
Source: UGC e-PG Pathshala, Mahajanapadas, item 1

Source: Dictionary of Pali Proper Names, Campa, item 1

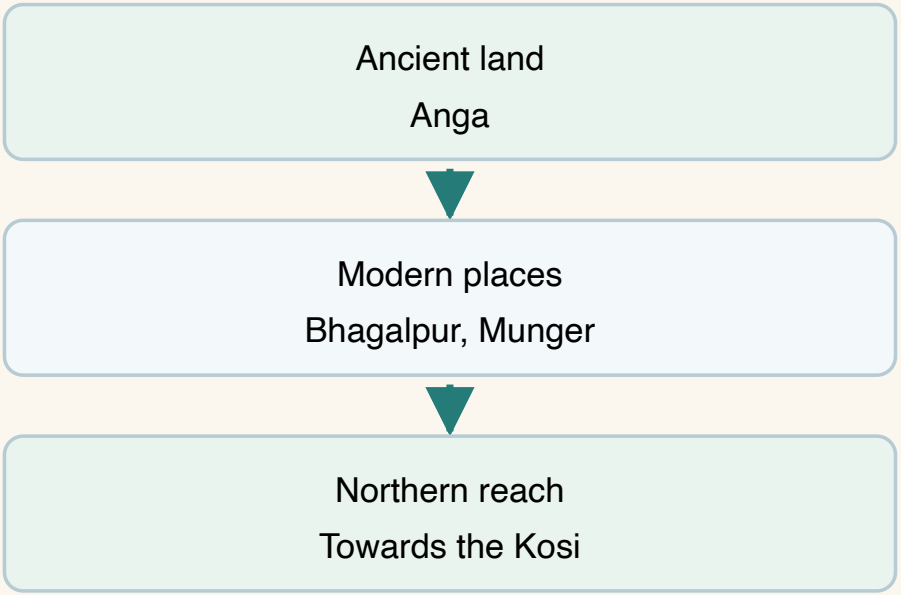
Source: Geography of Early Buddhism, Anga, item 1

2. Which modern places match ancient Anga?

Anga proper covered the modern **Bhagalpur** and **Munger** districts of Bihar. Munger was once spelled Monghyr. The kingdom stretched north towards the Kosi river.

You can use these two district names as a quick map. If a question says “Anga today”, think Bhagalpur and Munger.

The earliest mention of Anga is in the Atharvaveda. The Atharvaveda is one of the four Vedas, the oldest sacred texts of India. So the name Anga is very old.



Anga proper matches two Bihar districts today.

Source: UGC e-PG Pathshala, Mahajanapadas (items 1 and 2)

Source: Geography of Early Buddhism, Anga, item 2

3. Where was Champa, and why do sources differ?

Champa was Anga’s capital. It stood on the river Champa, near the point where that river meets the Ganga. The exact spot is **debated**.

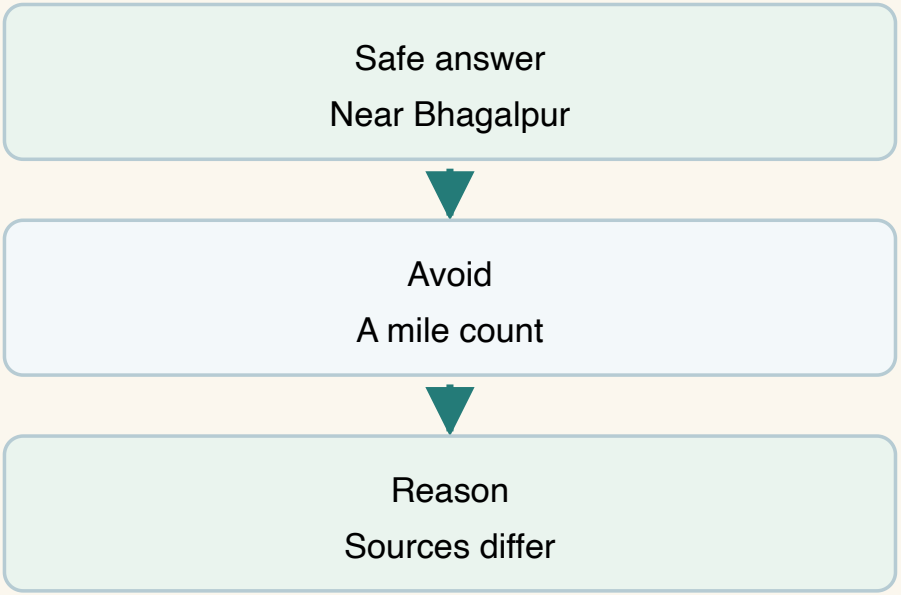
One reading puts the city on the right bank of the Ganga. An older identification puts it east of Bhagalpur. A third view says the villages of Champanagara and Champapura near Bhagalpur most probably mark the site.

Sources do not agree on the distance. So give a safe answer in the exam: Champa was **near Bhagalpur**. Do not add a number of miles.

Do not say the city lay exactly at the meeting of the two rivers. The sources say only “near”.



The Ganga at Bhagalpur, Bihar, in the area of ancient Anga. Photo: 555prembhai420, via Wikimedia Commons. File page. Licence: CC BY-SA 4.0.



Say near Bhagalpur and stop there.

True or False: All sources agree on how many miles Champa lay from Bhagalpur.
Source: UGC e-PG Pathshala, Mahajanapadas, item 3

Source: Dictionary of Pali Proper Names, Campa, item 3

Source: Lord Mahavira and His Times, page 218, item 3

4. Is Anga in the old lists of sixteen states?

Yes. Two religions kept lists of the sixteen states. Each list comes from a different text.

The Buddhist list is in the Anguttara Nikaya, a collection of the Buddha's talks. It names Anga first, then Magadha, Kasi and Kosala. The Jain list is in the Bhagavati Sutra. It begins with Anga, Banga and Magadha.

The two lists differ in many names. Six names appear in both lists: Anga, Magadha, Vatsa, Vajji, Kasi and Kosala. Anga is one of the safe names, because both traditions kept it.

Buddhist list	Jain list
Anguttara Nikaya	Bhagavati Sutra
Anga first, then	Begins with Anga,
Magadha, Kasi,	Banga, Magadha
Kosala	

Six names are common to both lists.

Source: UGC e-PG Pathshala, Mahajanapadas, item 4

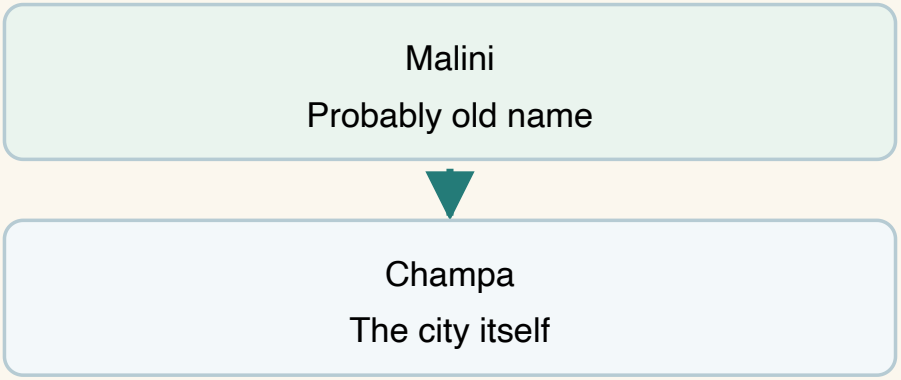
Source: Geography of Early Buddhism, Sixteen Mahajanapadas, item 4

5. What was Malini?

Malini is **probably** an old name of Champa. It is not a second capital. The Mahabharata, the Puranas and the Harivamsa use this name. The Puranas are old story-books about gods, kings and families.

The word “probably” matters. The old sources themselves only say that Champa was “probably” Malini. So do not write it as a sure fact in an answer.

Think of a city with an old name and a new name, like Bombay and Mumbai. It is one place, not two.



Malini is not a second capital.

True or False: Malini was a second capital of Anga, separate from Champa.
Source: Geography of Early Buddhism, Campa and Malini, item 5

Source: Dictionary of Pali Proper Names, Campa, item 5

Why was Champa famous in Buddhist texts?

6. Which six cities did Ananda name?

Ananda was a close follower of the Buddha. When the Buddha was dying, Ananda asked him not to die at the small town of Kusinara. He named six great cities instead. Each lay in a different state.

City	State
Champa	Anga
Rajagaha	Magadha
Savatthi	Northern Kosala
Saketa	Southern Kosala
Kosambi	Vamsa
Varanasi	Kasi

The Buddha refused. He said Kusinara had once been Kusavati, the capital of King Mahasudassana. So even a small town can have a great past.

Note the wording. This is **Ananda's list** of great cities, given as a plea. It is not a ranking made by the Buddha.

Source: Mahaparinibbana Sutta, Kusinara section, item 6

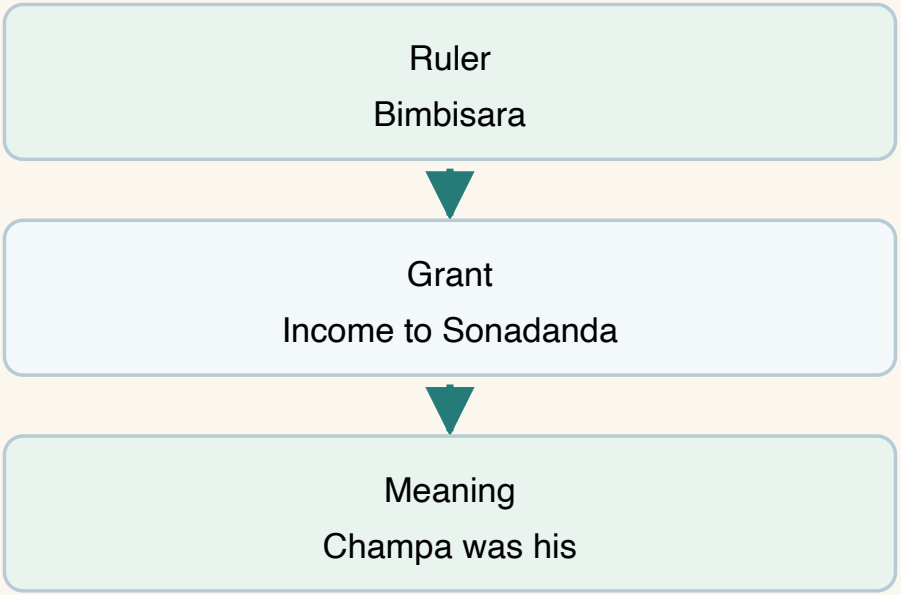
Source: Dictionary of Pali Proper Names, Campa, item 6

7. What is the Sonadanda link?

Bimbisara gave the income of Champa to a Brahmin named Sonadanda. A Brahmin is a member of the priestly class. Such a grant is called a **fief**, which means land given by a king so that the holder can enjoy its income.

The Sonadanda Sutta was taught at Champa. A sutta is a Buddhist discourse. The Buddha also stayed beside the Gaggara tank there. Queen Gaggara had dug that tank. A tank here means a large pond.

This shows that Champa belonged to Bimbisara in the Buddha's lifetime. A king can only give away the income of a city that he rules.



A king can grant only what he rules.

Source: Dictionary of Pali Proper Names, Campa, item 7

Source: Geography of Early Buddhism, Campa, item 7

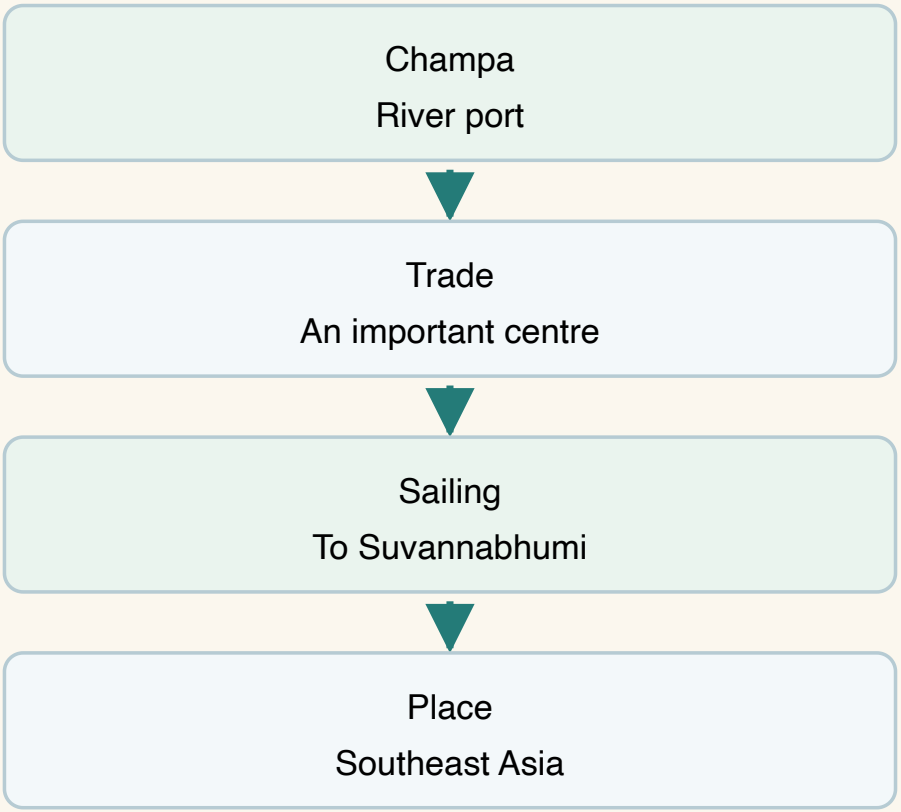
8. How far did Champa's trade reach?

A river port is a city on a river bank where boats load and unload goods. Champa was one. A Jataka story says merchants sailed from Champa to Suvannabhumi. A Jataka is a tale about one of the Buddha’s earlier lives.

Champa is also described as “an important centre of trade”. Pali is the language of the early Buddhist texts.

Sources place Suvannabhumi in Southeast Asia, but its exact place is uncertain. One text says Lower Burma.

Jain accounts also call Champa one of ten important capitals and a big trade centre. They add that traders sailed to Suvarnabhumi from there. The sources do not name a sea port on the way, so do not add one.



Merchants sailed from Champa.

True or False: Champa was an important trade city, and merchants sailed from it towards Suvannabhumi.
Source: Geography of Early Buddhism, Suvannabhumi, item 8

Source: Dictionary of Pali Proper Names, Campa, item 8

Source: Lord Mahavira and His Times, page 218, item 8

How did Magadha take Anga?

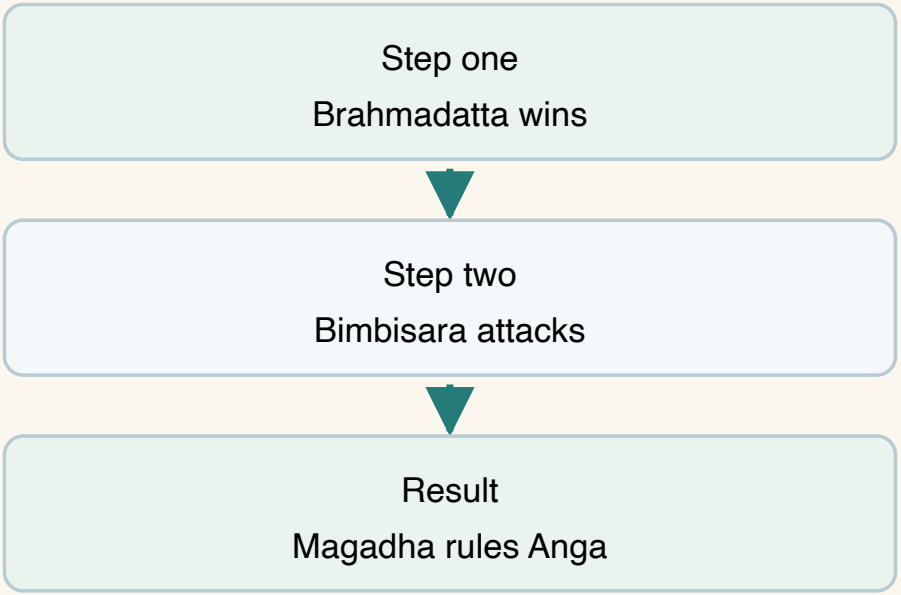
To annex a land is to add it to your own kingdom for good. Magadha did this to Anga. The story shows how Magadha grew from one state among sixteen into the strongest.

9. What do the sources say about Bimbisara's conquest?

Bimbisara used arms and diplomacy to expand Magadha. His first conquest was Anga. The exact year is not firmly known, so do not give one in an answer. Say only that it happened **during Bimbisara’s reign**.

Jain accounts add a reason. Brahmadatta, king of Anga, had defeated Bimbisara’s father. Bimbisara then **probably** attacked Anga to avenge that defeat.

The word “probably” shows that the motive is a guess drawn from the story. It is not a stated fact. Keep the name straight: Brahmadatta is the Anga king in this story.



The revenge motive is only probable.

True or False: It is certain that Bimbisara attacked Anga only to take revenge.
Source: Geography of Early Buddhism, Anga, item 9

Source: Lord Mahavira and His Times, page 225, item 9

10. What did Magadha gain, and how did marriage help?

Anga was known for its prosperity. Magadha already had rich deposits of copper and iron ore. A deposit is a natural store of metal in the ground. The conquest of Anga improved the supply of both metals.

War was only one of Bimbisara's tools. He also made marriage ties with strong neighbours. His Kosalan wife brought Kasi as dowry. A dowry is a gift of property that comes with a bride.

So Magadha grew by war (Anga) and by marriage (Kosala and Kasi). You can use this pair in one answer on Magadha's rise.

War	Marriage
Won Anga	Kosalan wife
Copper, iron ore	Kasi as dowry

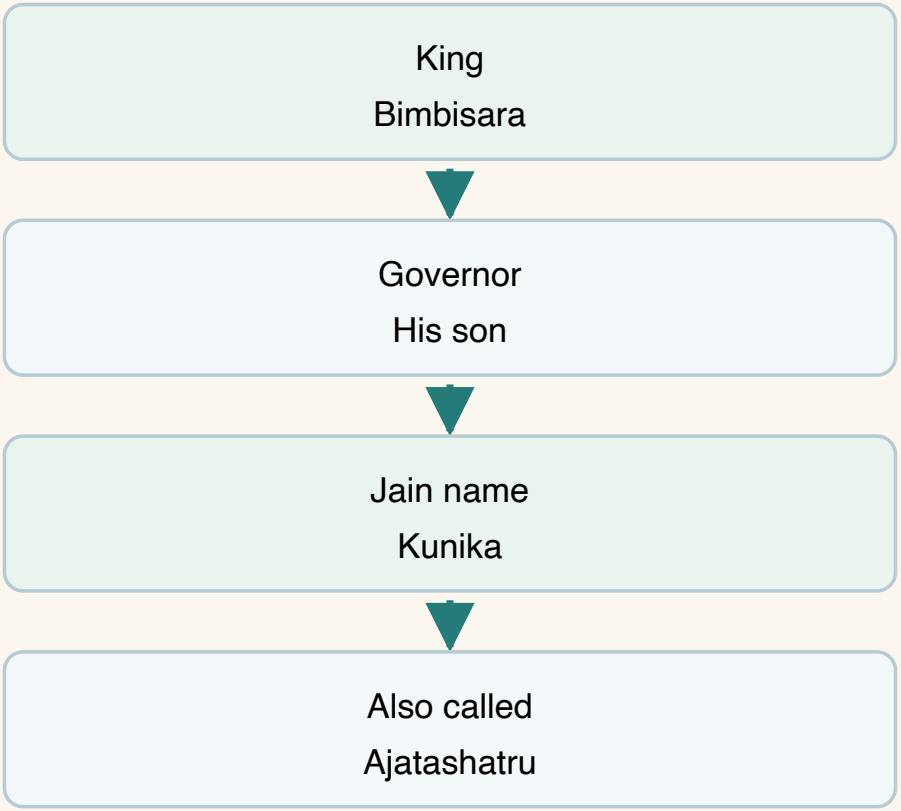
Magadha grew by war and by marriage.

Source: UGC e-PG Pathshala, Mahajanapadas, item 10

11. Who ruled Champa for Magadha afterwards?

Bimbisara appointed his son as governor at Champa. A governor rules a province for the king.

Jain tradition names the son **Kunika**. Kunika is another name of Ajatashatru. So Ajatashatru first knew Champa as a young governor, before he became king.



A son ruled Champa for the king.

Source: Lord Mahavira and His Times, page 225, item 11

What is the Jain and epic side of the story?

Tradition means a story handed down over many years. Jain tradition and the Mahabharata add colour to Anga's history. They are valuable, but they are not the same as proof.

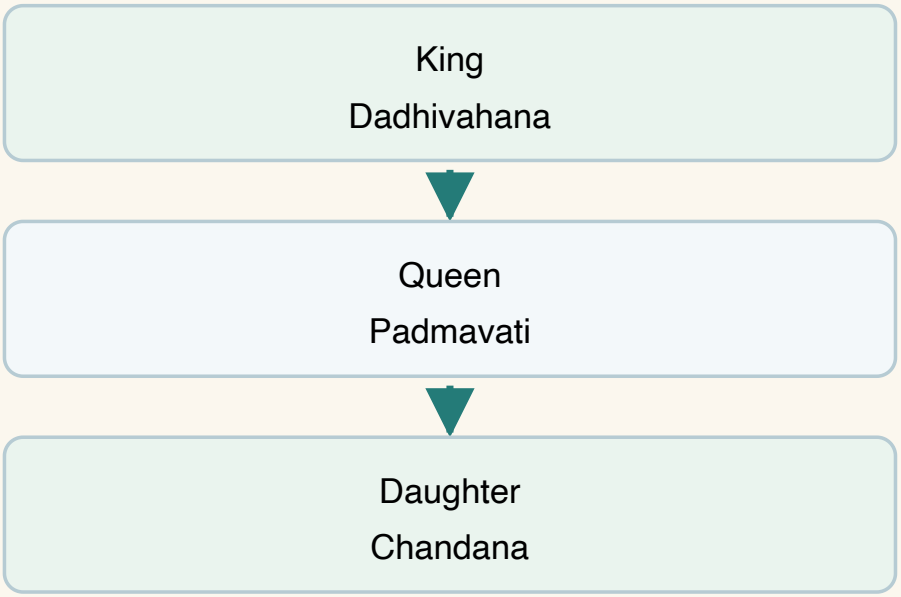
12. Who were Dadhivahana and Chandana?

Jain tradition makes **Dadhivahana** the king of Champa in Mahavira's time. He married Padmavati, second daughter of Cetaka of the Licchavis. Their daughter was **Chandana**, also called Chandanabala.

Chandana was the first woman to embrace Jainism. She did so soon after Mahavira gained omniscience. Omniscience means complete knowledge, which Jains hold Mahavira reached.

Chandana later headed the order of nuns in Mahavira's sangha. A sangha is the community of monks and nuns.

Be careful with one point. Dadhivahana is named in Jain tradition. The Buddhist texts used for this lesson do not name him. So write "Jain tradition names Dadhivahana", not "the historical king Dadhivahana".



This family is known from Jain tradition.

Source: Lord Mahavira, page 94, item 12

Source: Lord Mahavira and His Times, page 218, item 12

13. How many monsoons did Mahavira spend at Champa?

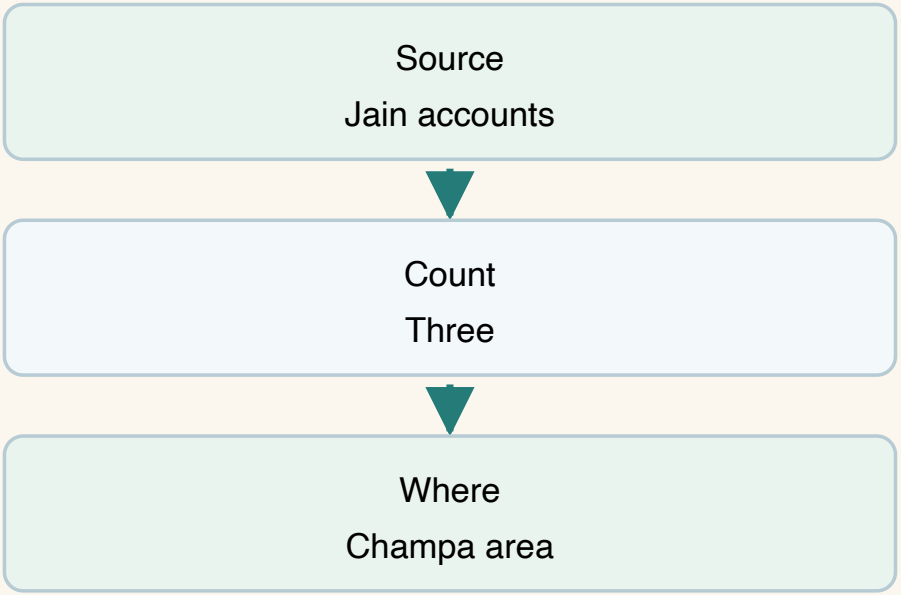
Jain accounts say Mahavira spent **three** rainy seasons at Champa. One account says three at Champa and Prishtichampa together. Prishtichampa was a place near Champa.

A rainy-season retreat is the four monsoon months when Jain monks stay in one place. Think of it as a school term spent in one town, not a trip.

The count is traditional. Not every writer accepts the full list of Mahavira's twelve retreats. So keep the claim short: three, at Champa and nearby.



A Jain temple at Nathnagar, Bhagalpur. Photo: Harshyadavji, via Wikimedia Commons. File page. Licence: CC0.



Three retreats at Champa and nearby.

Source: Lord Mahavira, page 94, item 13

Source: Lord Mahavira and His Times, page 65, item 13

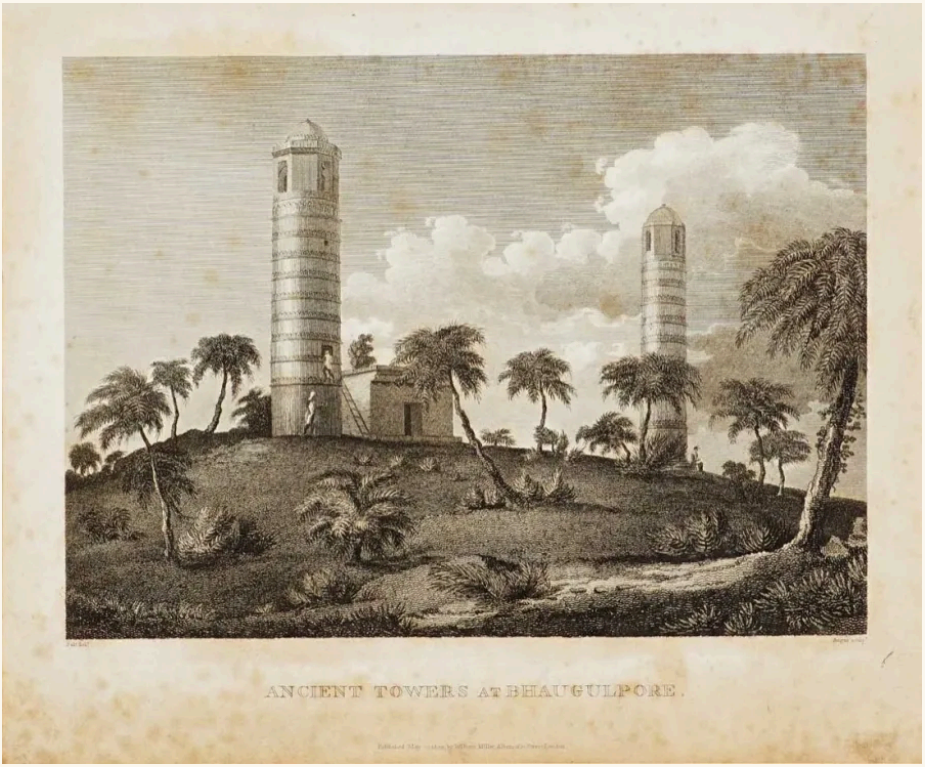
14. What is the Vasupujya claim?

A Tirthankara is one of the twenty-four great teachers of Jainism. Vasupujya was the 12th. Jain tradition says all five **kalyanakas** of Vasupujya happened at Champapuri.

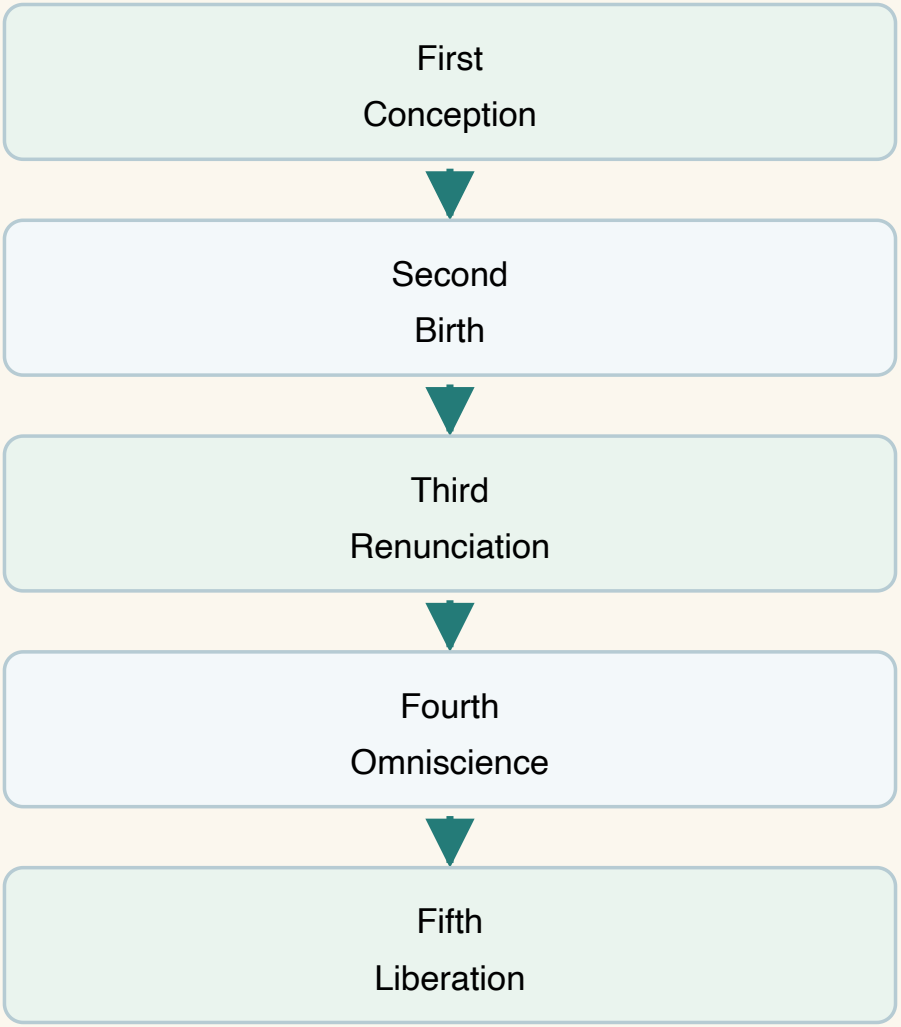
The five kalyanakas are the key events of a Tirthankara's life: conception, birth, renunciation, omniscience and liberation. Renunciation means giving up home and wealth.

This claim comes from a Digambara Jain temple page. Digambara is one major Jain tradition. Other Jain traditions may place some of the events elsewhere. So say "according to Jain tradition".

Do not mix this up with Mahavira, the 24th Tirthankara. Mahavira stayed at Champa for monsoons. The five kalyanakas belong to Vasupujya.



The ancient Digambara Jain temple at Champapur, Anga's capital, in an 1809 engraving by William Angus after Henry Salt. Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.



Jain tradition places all five at Champapuri.

Source: Jain Heritage Centres, Champapuri, item 14

Source: Lord Mahavira, page 94, item 14

15. How do Buddhist and Jain texts differ on Bimbisara's death?

Bimbisara ruled Magadha, and his son Ajatashatru later ruled it too. The Buddhist and Jain traditions tell the end of Bimbisara’s life differently.

Buddhist texts say Ajatashatru killed his father. Jain tradition does not call him a parricide, which means one who kills a parent. It says he jailed his father, and Bimbisara took poison.

When sources disagree, a careful answer names both versions. It does not pick one as certain.

Buddhist texts	Jain texts
Ajatashatru killed his father	Bimbisara took poison

The two traditions tell it differently.

Source: Lord Mahavira and His Times, page 225, item 15

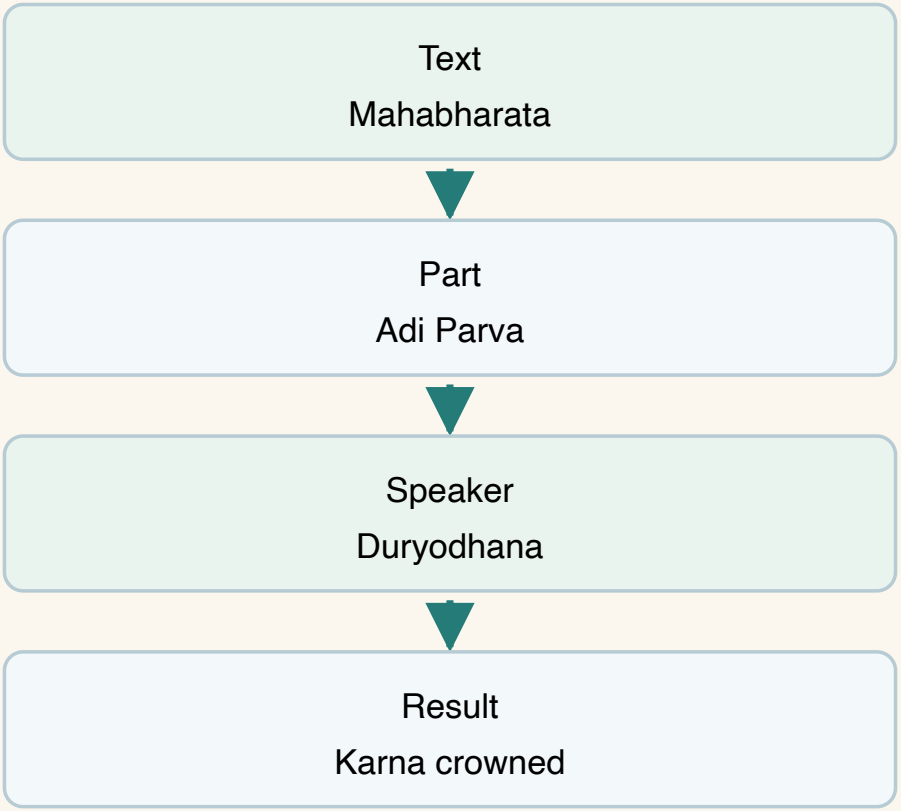
16. Where does the Karna story come from?

The scene is in the Mahabharata, Adi Parva, in the Sambhava Parva section. An epic is a long story-poem about heroes. A parva is a book or chapter of that epic.

Kripa asked Karna to name his family. He added that sons of kings never fight men of inglorious lineage. Phalguna, a name of Arjuna, might refuse to fight one who was not a king. So Duryodhana said, “I will install Karna as king of Anga.”

Brahmins who knew the mantras performed the coronation. A coronation is the ceremony that makes a king.

The story is literature. It is **not evidence** for the real history of Anga. Use it for the epic, not for the king-lists.



An epic story, not evidence.

True or False: The Karna coronation in the Mahabharata proves that Karna really ruled Anga.
Source: Mahabharata, Adi Parva, Section CXXXVIII, item 16

Exam practice

17. Which mistakes do exam questions set as traps?

Most traps come from mixing tradition with fact. Keep these corrections ready.

- Anga lay east of the river Champa. Magadha lay west of it.
- Champa was near Bhagalpur. Do not give a mile count.
- Malini was probably Champa's old name, not a second capital.
- Ananda named Champa among six great cities. The Buddha did not rank them.
- Bimbisara annexed Anga. The year is not firmly known.
- Brahmadatta is the Anga king in the revenge story. Dadhivahana is a Jain tradition name.
- The Karna coronation is epic literature, not proof that Karna ruled.

Source: UGC e-PG Pathshala, Mahajanapadas, item 17

Source: Geography of Early Buddhism, Anga, item 17

Source: Lord Mahavira and His Times, page 225, item 17

Can you think it through?

Now you try: why does the word 'probably' matter for Malini and for Bimbisara's revenge?

Both points are inferences, not stated facts. The sources say Malini was probably Champa's old name. They say Bimbisara probably attacked Anga to avenge a defeat. A careful answer keeps the word probably and does not turn a guess into a certain fact.

Why is Dadhivahana called a Jain tradition name and not a proven king?

Only Jain tradition names him as the king of Champa in Mahavira's time. The Buddhist texts used here do not name him. One tradition alone cannot prove a king existed. So the safe wording is 'Jain tradition names Dadhivahana'.

Explain it back: in what two ways did Bimbisara make Magadha bigger?

He used war and marriage. War won Anga, which improved the supply of copper and iron ore. Marriage to a Kosalan wife brought Kasi as dowry. An answer on Magadha's rise can use this pair.

Why should the Karna story stay apart from Anga's king-lists?

The Karna story is epic literature. It tells how Duryodhana made Karna king so that he could face Arjuna. A story-poem is not a record of real rulers. So use it for the Mahabharata, and use other sources for Anga's history.

Check your understanding

Your 6 quick checks Answered 0 of · Correct
This score resets when the page reloads. It is not saved to My Progress.

Continue to the practice MCQs

Practice MCQs

1. Jain tradition ties Champa (Anga's capital) to Mahavira's monsoon retreats. Champa is also the traditional site of all five kalyanakas (auspicious life-events) of which Tirthankara?

A. Mahavira, the 24th Tirthankara

B. Parshvanatha, the 23rd Tirthankara

C. Rishabhanatha, the 1st Tirthankara, traditionally linked to Ayodhya

D. Vasupujya, the 12th Tirthankara

See answer ↓

2. Which river formed the boundary between Anga and Magadha?

A. The river Champa

B. The Yamuna

C. The Narmada

D. The Kosi

See answer ↓

3. Which Magadha king brought Anga under Magadha's control?

A. Bimbisara

B. Chandragupta Maurya

C. Ashoka

D. Mahapadma Nanda

See answer ↓

4. In Ananda's list of six great cities, in which state did Champa lie?

A. Kasi

B. Vamsa

C. Anga

D. Magadha

See answer ↓

5. What is the best description of Malini in the Anga story?

A. A second capital of Anga

B. A port in Southeast Asia

C. Probably an old name of Champa

D. A river on Anga's border

See answer ↓

6. What valuable resources did Magadha gain from the conquest of Anga?

A. Mines of diamonds

B. Pearl fisheries

C. Large salt pans

D. A better supply of copper and iron ore

See answer ↓

7. In the Jain revenge story, which Anga king had defeated Bimbisara's father?

A. Dadhivahana

B. Karna

C. Brahmadatta

D. Mahasudassana

See answer ↓

8. The coronation of Karna as king of Anga is told in which text?

A. The Anguttara Nikaya

B. The Bhagavati Sutra

C. The Mahabharata, in the Adi Parva

D. The Sonadanda Sutta

See answer ↓

Answer Key

1. **D.** The answer is Vasupujya, the 12th Tirthankara. A Tirthankara is a great teacher of Jainism. Jain tradition places all five kalyanakas of Vasupujya at Champapuri. Mahavira, Parshvanatha and Rishabhanatha are said to have stayed there only for the monsoon. Memory hook: Champa and the twelfth, Vasupujya. ↑ Q1
2. **A.** The river Champa formed the boundary. Anga lay to its east. Magadha lay to its west. The Kosi is the river towards which Anga stretched in the north, so it is a common wrong pick. The Yamuna and the Narmada lie far from this border. Memory hook: Champa river, Anga east, Magadha west. ↑ Q2
3. **A.** Bimbisara brought Anga under Magadha's control. He used arms and diplomacy to expand Magadha, and Anga was his first conquest. The exact year is not firmly known. Mahapadma Nanda, Ashoka and Chandragupta Maurya ruled much later. Memory hook: Bimbisara first conquered Anga. ↑ Q3
4. **C.** Champa lay in Anga. Ananda named six great cities, and each lay in a different state. Rajagaha was in Magadha. Varanasi was in Kasi. Kosambi was in Vamsa. Memory hook: Champa for Anga, one city for one state. ↑ Q4
5. **C.** Malini is probably an old name of Champa. The Mahabharata, the Puranas and the Harivamsa use it. The word probably matters, because the sources do not say it is certain. It is not a second capital, since it names the same city. It is not the border river, which is the Champa. Memory hook: Malini is the old name, not a new city. ↑ Q5
6. **D.** The conquest improved Magadha's supply of copper and iron ore. Magadha already had rich deposits of both. Anga was also known for its economic prosperity. Diamond mines, salt pans and pearl fisheries are not named in this account. Memory hook: Anga added more copper and iron. ↑ Q6
7. **C.** The Anga king is Brahmadatta. Jain accounts say he had defeated Bimbisara's father. Bimbisara probably attacked Anga to avenge that defeat. Dadhivahana is a Jain tradition name for the king of Champa in Mahavira's time, and he is not named in this revenge story. Karna is an epic figure, and Mahasudassana was the king of Kusavati. Memory hook: Brahmadatta lost the war, B for Brahmadatta. ↑ Q7

8. **C.** The story is in the Mahabharata, in the Adi Parva. Duryodhana installs Karna as king of Anga. The aim is to let Karna face Arjuna in a contest. The Bhagavati Sutra is a Jain text that lists sixteen states. The Sonadanda Sutta and the Anguttara Nikaya are Buddhist texts. Memory hook: Karna is epic, not a king-list. ↑ Q8

Curated by Arsalan Zuberi · mcqquestion.com

Scan to read online

https://mcqquestion.com/articles/anga-mahajanapada/