

Janapada

The **Janapadas** (pronounced [dʒənəpəɖə]) were the realms, republics (GanaPada) and kingdoms (SaamaRajya) of the Vedic period on the Indian subcontinent. The Vedic period reaches from the late Bronze Age into the Iron Age: from about 1500 BCE to the 6th century BCE. With the rise of sixteen Mahajanapadas ("great janapadas"), most of the states were annexed by more powerful neighbours, although some remained independent.

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Janapada



Late Vedic era map showing the boundaries of Āryāvarta with Janapadas in northern India. Beginning of Iron Age kingdoms in India—Kuru, Panchala, Kosala, Videha.



This detailed map shows the locations of kingdoms and "republics" mentioned in the Indian epics or Bharata Khanda.

Etymology

The Sanskrit term *janapada* is a tatpurusha compound term, composed of two words: *janas* and *pada*. *Jana* means "people" or "subject" (cf. Latin cognate *genus*, English cognate *kin*). The word *pada* means "foot" (cf. Latin cognate *pedis*);^{[1][2]} from its earliest attestation, the word has had a double meaning of "realm, territory" and "subject population". Linguist George Dunkel compares the Greek *andrapodon* "slave", to PIE **pédom* "fetters" (i.e. "what is attached to the feet"). Sanskrit *padám*, usually taken to mean "footprint, trail", diverges in accent from the PIE reconstruction. For the sense of "population of the land", *padasya janas*, the inverted *padajana* would be expected. A primary meaning of "place of the people"*janasya padam*, would not explain why the compound is of masculine gender. An original dvandva "land and people" is conceivable, but a dual inflection would be expected.^[3]

Evolution

Literary evidence suggests that the janapadas flourished between 1500 BCE and 500 BCE. The earliest mention of the term "janapada" occurs in the Aitareya (8.14.4) and Shatapatha (13.4.2.17) Brahmana texts.^[5]

In the Vedic samhitas, the term jana denotes a tribe, whose members believed in a shared ancestry.^[6] The janas were headed by a king. The samiti was a common assembly of the jana members, and had the power to elect or dethrone the king. The sabha was a smaller assembly of wise elders, who advised the king.^[7]

The janas were originally semi-nomadic pastoral communities, but gradually came to be associated with specific territories as they became less mobile. Various kulas (clans) developed within the jana, each with its own chief. Gradually, the necessities of defence and warfare prompted the janas to form military groupings headed by janapadins (Kshatriya warriors). This model ultimately evolved into the establishment of political units known as the janapadas.^[8]

While some of the janas evolved into their own janapadas, others appear to have mixed together to form a common Janapada. According to the political scientist Sudama Misra, the name of the Panchala janapada suggests that it was a fusion of five (pancha) janas.^[9] Some janas (such as Aja and Mutiba) mentioned in the earliest texts do not find a mention in the later texts. Misra theorizes that these smaller janas were conquered by and assimilated into the larger janas.^[9]

Janapadas were gradually dissolved around 500 BCE. Their disestablishment can be attributed to the rise of imperial powers (such as Magadha) within India, as well as foreign invasions (such as those by the Persians and the Greeks) in the north-western South Asia.^[10]

Nature

The Janapada were highest political unit in Ancient India during this period; these polities were usually monarchical (though some followed a form of republicanism) and succession was hereditary. The head of a kingdom was called a (rajan) or king. A chief (purohita) or priest and a (senani) or commander of the army who would assist the king. There were also two other political bodies: the (sabha), thought to be a council of elders and the (samiti), a general assembly of the entire people.^[11]

The boundaries of the kingdoms

Often rivers formed the boundaries of two neighboring kingdoms, as was the case between the northern and southern Panchala and between the western (Pandava's Kingdom) and eastern (Kaurava's Kingdom) Kuru. Sometimes, large forests, which were larger than the kingdoms themselves, formed their boundaries as was the case of Naimisha Forest, the Naimisha Aranyam between Panchala and Kosala kingdoms. Mountain ranges like Himalaya, Vindhya Achala and Sahya Adri also formed their boundaries.

The cities and villages

Some kingdoms possessed a main city that served as its capital. For example, the capital of Pandava's Kingdom was Indraprastha and the Kaurava's Kingdom was Hastinapura. Ahichatra was the capital of Northern Panchala whereas Kampilya was the capital of Southern Panchala. Kosala Kingdom had its capital at Ayodhya. Apart from the main city or capital, where the palace of the ruling king was situated, there were small towns and villages spread throughout the kingdom, from which tax was collected by officers appointed by the king. What the king offered in return was protection from attack by other kings and robber tribes, as well as from invading foreign nomadic tribes. The king also enforced law and order in his kingdom by punishing the guilty.^{[12][13]}



Modern replica of utensils and falcon shaped altar used for Agnicayana, an elaborate shrouta ritual originating from the Kuru Kingdom,^[4] around 1000 BCE.



Ahichchhatra (or Ahi-Kshetra) was the ancient capital of Northern Panchala. The remains of this city have been discovered in Bareilly.

Administration

The Janapadas had Kshatriya rulers.^[15] Based on literary references, historians have theorized that the Janapadas were administered by the following assemblies in addition to the king:

Sabha (Council)

An assembly more akin to a council of qualified members or elders (mostly men) who advised the king and performed judicial functions. In the *ganas* or republican Janapadas called Gana-Rajya with no kings, the council of elders also handled administration.^[16]



A Kuru coin, earliest example of coinage in India^[14]

Paura Sabha (Executive Council)

Paura was the assembly of the capital city (*pura*), and handled municipal administration.^[17]

Samiti (General Assembly)

A samiti generally consisted of all adults of the republic or the city-state. A samiti was congregated when a matter of importance had to be communicated to the entire city-state. A samiti was also held at the time of festivals to plan, raise revenue and conduct the celebrations.

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The Janapada assembly represented the rest of the Janapada, possibly the villages, which were administered by a *Gramini*.^[17]

Some historians have also theorized that there was a common assembly called the "Paura-Janapada", but others such as Ram Sharan Sharma disagree with this theory. The existence of Paura and Janapada itself is a controversial matter.^[18]

Indian nationalist historians such as K. P. Jayaswal have argued that the existence of such assemblies is evidence of prevalence of democracy in ancient India.^[19] V. B. Misra notes that the contemporary society was divided into the four *varnas* (besides the outcastes), and the Kshatriya ruling class had all the political rights.^[20] Not all the citizens in a janapada had political rights.^[16] Based on *Gautama's Dharmasutra*, Jayaswal theorized that the low-caste *shudras* could be members of the Paura assembly.^[18] According to A. S. Altekar, this theory is based on a misunderstanding of the text: the term "Paura" in the relevant portion of the *Dharmasutra* refers to a resident of the city, not a member of the city assembly.^[21] Jayaswal also argued that the members of the supposed Paura-Janapada assembly acted as counselors to the king, and made other important decisions such as imposing taxes in times of emergency. Once again, Altekar argued that these conclusions are based on misinterpretations of the literary evidence. For example, Jayaswal has wrongly translated the word "amantra" in a *Ramayana* verse as "to offer advice"; it actually means "to bid farewell" in proper context.^[21]

Interactions between kingdoms

There was no border security for a kingdom and border disputes were very rare. One king might conduct a military campaign (often designated as *Digvijaya* meaning *victory over all the directions*) and defeat another king in a battle, lasting for a day.^[22] The defeated king would acknowledge the supremacy of the victorious king. The defeated king might sometimes be asked to give a tribute to the victorious king. Such tribute would be collected only once, not on a periodic basis. The defeated king, in most cases, would be free to rule his own kingdom, without maintaining any contact with the victorious king. There was no annexation

Janapada weaponry



of one kingdom by another. Often a military general conducted these campaigns on behalf of his king. A military campaign and tribute collection was often associated with a great sacrifice (like Rajasuya or Ashvamedha) conducted in the kingdom of the campaigning king. The defeated king also was invited to attend these sacrifice ceremonies, as a friend and ally^[23]

Ancient Indian Antennae sword; Ancient Indian Ax Blade, 1500–Metalwork, 1500–500 BCE.	1000 BCE.
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New kingdoms

New kingdoms were formed when a major clan produced more than one King in a generation. The Kuru clan of Kings was very successful in governing throughout North India with their numerous kingdoms, which were formed after each successive generation. Similarly, the Yadava clan of kings formed numerous kingdoms in Central India.^[24]

Cultural differences

Parts of western India were dominated by tribes who had a slightly different culture, considered non-Vedic by the mainstream Vedic culture prevailing in the Kuru and Panchala kingdoms. Similarly, there were some tribes in the eastern regions of India considered to be in this category.^[25] Tribes with non-Vedic culture — especially those of barbaric nature — were collectively termed as Mleccha. Very little was mentioned in the ancient Indian literature about the kingdoms to the North, beyond the Himalayas. China was mentioned as a kingdom known as Cina, often grouped with Mleccha kingdoms.



Vedic King performs the Rajasuya Sacrifice.

List of Janapadas

Vedic literature

The Vedas mention five sub-divisions of ancient India.^[26]

- *Udichya* (Northern region)
- *Prachya* (Eastern region)
- *Dakshina* (Southern region)
- *Pratichya* (Western region)
- *Madhya-desha* (Central region)

The Vedic literature mentions the following *janas* or *janapadas*:^[27]

Jana or Janapada	<u>IAST name</u>	Region	<u>Mentioned in Rigveda</u>	<u>Mentioned in Atharvaveda</u>
Aja	Aja	Central	✓	
Alina	Alina	Western	✓	
Ambashtha	Ambaśṭha	Central		
<u>Andhra</u>	Āndhra	Southern		
<u>Anga</u>	Aṅga	Eastern		✓
Anu	Anu	Western	✓	
<u>Balhika</u>	Balhika	Northern		✓
Bhalana	Bhalana	Western	✓	
Bharadvaja	Bharadvāja	Central	✓	
<u>Bharata</u>	Bharata	Central	✓	
Bheda	Bheda	Central	✓	
Bodha	Bodha	Central		
<u>Chedi</u>	Cedi	Central	✓	
<u>Druhyu</u>	Druhyu	Western	✓	
<u>Gandhari</u>	Gandhāri	Western	✓	✓
<u>Kamboja</u>	Kamboja	Northern		
Keshin	Keśin	Central		
<u>Kikata</u>	Kīkaṭa	Eastern	✓	✓
<u>Kirata</u>	Kirāta	Eastern		
<u>Kosala</u>	Kosala	Eastern		
Krivi	Krivi	Central	✓	
<u>Kunti</u>	Kunti	Central		
<u>Kuru</u>	Kuru	Central	✓	✓
<u>Magadha</u>	Magadha	Eastern		✓
Mahavrisha	Mahāvṛṣa	Northern		✓
<u>Matsya</u>	Matsya	Central	✓	
Mujavana	Mūjavana	Northern	✓	✓
Mutiba	Mūtiba	Southern		
<u>Nishada</u>	Niṣāda	Central		
<u>Paktha</u>	Paktha	Western	✓	
<u>Panchala</u>	Pāñcala	Central		
Parshu	Parśu	Western	✓	
<u>Paravata</u>	Pārāvata	Central	✓	
Prithu	Pṛthu	Western	✓	
<u>Pulinda</u>	Pulinda	Southern		
<u>Pundra</u>	Puṇḍra	Eastern		
<u>Puru</u>	Pūru	Western	✓	
Rushama	Ruśama	Central	✓	
<u>Shalva</u>	Śālva	Central		

Satvanta	Satvanta	Southern		
Shabara	Śabara	Southern		
Shigru	Śigru	Central	✓	
Shiva	Śiva	Western	✓	
Shvikna	Śvikna	Central		
Srinjaya	Sṛñjaya	Central	✓	✓
<u>Tritsu</u>	Tṛtsu	Central	✓	
<u>Turvasha</u>	Turvaśa	Western	✓	
Ushinara	Uśīnara	Central	✓	
Uttara Kuru	Uttara Kuru	Northern		
Uttara Madra	Uttara Madra	Northern		
Vaikarna	Vaikarṇa	Northern	✓	
<u>Vanga</u>	Vaṅga	Eastern		
<u>Kashi</u>	Kāśi	Eastern		
Varashikha	Varaśikha	Central	✓	
Vasha	Vaśa	Central		
<u>Vidarbha</u>	Vidarbha	Southern		
<u>Videha</u>	Videha	Eastern		
Vishanin	Viśaṇin	Western	✓	
Vrichivanta	Vṛcivanta	Western	✓	
<u>Yadu</u>	Yadu	Western	✓	
<u>Yakshu</u>	Yakṣu	Central	✓	

Puranic literature

The Puranas mention seven sub-divisions of ancient India.^[28]

- *Udichya* (Northern region)
- *Prachya* (Eastern region)
- *Dakshinapatha* (Southern region)
- *Aparanta* (Western region)
- *Madhya-desha* (Central region)
- *Parvata-shrayin* (Himalayan region)
- *Vindhya-prashtha* (Vindhyan region)

According to research by political scientist Sudama Misra, the Puranic texts mention the following *jñanapadas*:^[29]

Janapada	Region	Mentioned in the Puranas?					Alternative names and locations
		<u>Matsya</u> (Chapter 114)	<u>Vayu</u> (Chapter 45)	<u>Markandeya</u> (Chapter 57)	<u>Vamana</u> (Chapter 13)	<u>Brahmanda</u> (Chapter 16)	
<u>Ābhīra</u> (northern)	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<u>Ābhīra</u> (southern)	Southern		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Abhīṣaha (Abhishaha)	Northern		✓	✓	✓	✓	Apanga (<i>Vayu</i>), Aupadha (<i>Markandeya</i>), Alasa (<i>Vamana</i>)
Āhuka	Northern		✓	✓	✓	✓	Kuhaka (<i>Markandeya</i>), Kuhuka (<i>Vamana</i>)
Alimadra	Northern		✓	✓	✓		Anibhadra (<i>Markandeya</i>), Alibhadra (<i>Vamana</i>)
<u>Ānarta</u>	Western	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Āvantya <i>Markandeya</i> , <i>Vamana</i>
Andhaka	Central	✓					
<u>Āndhra</u>	Southern		✓	✓	✓	✓	Andha (<i>Markandeya</i>)
Andhravāka	Eastern		✓	✓		✓	Andhāraka (<i>Markandeya</i>)
<u>Aṅga</u>	Eastern	✓			✓	✓	Central and Eastern in <i>Vamana</i>
Aṅgāramāriṣa (Angara-Marisha)	Southern					✓	
Āntaranarmada	Western	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Uttaranarmada (<i>Markandeya</i>), Sunarmada (<i>Vamana</i>)
Antargiri	Eastern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Anūpa	Vindhyan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Arūpa (<i>Matsya</i>), Annaja (<i>Vayu</i>)
Aparānta	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Purandhra (<i>Matsya</i>), Aparīta (<i>Vayu</i>)
Arthapa	Central		✓	✓			Atharva (<i>Markandeya</i>)
Aśmaka (Ashmaka)	Southern		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Aśvakūṭa	Central			✓			
Āṭavi	Southern	✓	✓	✓		✓	Āraṇya (<i>Markandeya</i>), Āṭavya (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Ātreya	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Atri (<i>Matsya</i> , <i>Brahmanda</i>)
Auṇḍra	Vindhyan	✓					

<u>Avanti</u>	Vindhyan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Central and Vindhyan in <i>Matsya</i>
Bahirgiri	Eastern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<u>Vāhlikā</u>	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Bahula	Northern		✓	✓	✓		Pahlava (<i>Vayu</i>), Bahudha (<i>Vamana</i>)
<u>Barbara</u>	Northern		✓	✓	✓	✓	Central and Northern in <i>Vamana</i>
Bhadra	Eastern and Central					✓	
Bhadrakāra	Central	✓	✓			✓	
Bharadvāja	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Bhārgava	Eastern		✓	✓	✓	✓	
<u>Bharukaccha</u>	Western	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Bhanukaccha (<i>Vayu</i>), Bhīrukahcha (<i>Markandeya</i>), Dārukachchha (<i>Vamana</i>), Sahakaccha (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Bhogavardhana	Southern		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Bhoja	Vindhyan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Gopta (<i>Vamana</i>)
Bhūṣika (Bhushika)	Northern					✓	
Bodha	Central	✓	✓			✓	Bāhya (<i>Matsya</i>)
Brahmottara	Eastern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Suhmottara (<i>Matsya</i>), Samantara (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Carmakhaṇḍika (Charmakhandika)	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Attakhaṇḍika (<i>Matsya</i>), Sakheṭaka (<i>Vamana</i>)
<u>Kerala</u>	Southern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Kevala (<i>Markandeya</i>)
<u>Cīna</u> (China)	Northern		✓	✓	✓	✓	Pīna (<i>Vayu</i>), Veṇa (<i>Vamana</i>)
<u>Cola</u> (Chola)	Southern	✓	✓		✓	✓	Caulya (<i>Vayu</i>), Cauḍa (<i>Vamana</i>); Southern and Eastern in <i>Brahmanda</i>
Cūlika (Chulika)	Northern		✓	✓	✓	✓	Cūḍika (<i>Vamana</i>), Vindhyacūlika (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
<u>Daṇḍaka</u>	Southern	✓	✓	✓		✓	

<u>Darada</u>	Northern		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Darva	Himalayan	✓	✓	✓		✓	Himalayan and Northern in <i>Vayu</i> and <i>Markandeya</i>
Daśeraka (Dasheraka)	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Karseruka (<i>Vayu</i>), Kuśeruka (<i>Markandeya</i>)
Daśamālika (Dashamalika)	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Daśanāmaka (<i>Matsya</i>), Daśamānika (<i>Vayu</i>), Dañśana (<i>Vamana</i>)
Daśarṇa (Dasharna)	Vindhyan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<u>Druhyu</u>	Northern	✓	✓			✓	Hrada (<i>Vayu</i>), Bhadra (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Durga	Western		✓	✓	✓	✓	Durgala (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Ganaka	Northern				✓		
<u>Gāndhāra</u>	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Godha	Central					✓	
Golāṅgūla	Southern			✓			
Gonarda	Eastern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Govinda (<i>Vayu</i>), Gomanta (<i>Markandeya</i>), Mananda (<i>Vamana</i>)
Haṃsamārga	Himalayan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sarvaga (Himalayan) in <i>Matsya</i> ; Haṃsamārga (Northern and Himalayan) in <i>Vayu</i> and <i>Markandeya</i> ; Karnamārga (Northern) and Haṃsamārga (Himalayan) in <i>Vamana</i> ; Haṃsamārga (Himalayan) Haṃsabhaṅga (Northern) in <i>Brahmanda</i>
<u>Hara-Hunaka</u>	Northern		✓	✓	✓	✓	Pūrṇa (<i>Vayu</i>), Ūrṇa (<i>Markandeya</i>), Cūrṇa (<i>Vamana</i>), Hūrṇa (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Hāramuṣika (Haramushika)	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓		Hāramūrtika (<i>Matsya</i>), Hārapūrika

							(Vayu), Sāmuṣāka (Vamana)
Huhuka	Himalayan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Samudgaka (Matsya), Sahūdaka (Vayu), Sakṛtraka (Markandeya), Sāhuhūka (Vamana), Sāhuhūka (Brahmaṇḍa)
Ijika	Northern					✓	
Īṣika (Ishika)	Southern	✓	✓	✓		✓	Vaisakya (Markandeya)
Jaguda	Northern	✓	✓	✓			Jāṅgala (Matsya), Juhuḍa (Vayu), Jāguḍa (Markandeya)
Jāṅgala	Central	✓	✓			✓	
Jñeyamarthaka	Eastern		✓	✓	✓	✓	Jñeyamallaka (Markandeya), Aṅgiyamaṣāka (Vamana), Gopapārthiva (Brahmaṇḍa)
<u>Kachchhika</u>	Western	✓	✓	✓		✓	Kāchchhika (Matsya), Kacchīya (Vayu), Kāśmīra (Markandeya), Kacchipa (Brahmaṇḍa)
Kālatoyaka	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<u>Kaliṅga</u> (central)	Central	✓		✓	✓	✓	Arkalinga (Markandeya)
<u>Kaliṅga</u> (southern)	Southern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Kalitaka	Western		✓	✓	✓	✓	Kālītaka (Vayu), Anīkaṭa (Markandeya), Tālīkaṭa (Vamana), Kuntala (Brahmaṇḍa)
Kalivana	Western		✓	✓	✓	✓	Kolavana (Vayu), Kālivala (Markandeya), Vāridhana (Vamana), Kalivana (Brahmaṇḍa)
<u>Kāmboja</u>	Northern		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Kantakara	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓		Kaṇṭakāra (Matsya), Raddhakaṭaka (Vayu),

							Bahubhadra (<i>Markandeya</i>), Kādhara (<i>Vamana</i>)
Kāraskara	Western	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Paraṣkara (<i>Vayu</i>), Kaṭhākṣara (<i>Markandeya</i>), Karandhara (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Kārūṣa (Karusha)	Vindhyan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Southern and Vindhyan (<i>Matsya</i>)
Kāśmīra (Kashmira)	Northern		✓	✓		✓	
Kauśika	Central				✓		
Kekeya	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Kaikeyya (<i>Matsya</i>), Kaikeya (<i>Markandeya</i>), Kaikeya (<i>Vamana</i>)
Khasa	Himalayan		✓	✓	✓	✓	Khaśa (<i>Vamana</i>), Śaka (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Kirāta	Himalayan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Kirāta (<i>Matsya</i> , Central and Himalayan)
Kisaṇṇa	Central		✓				
Kiṣkindhaka (Kishkindhaka)	Vindhyan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Kikarava (<i>Vamana</i>)
Koṇkaṇa	Southern					✓	
Kośala (Central)	Central	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Kośala (Vindhyan)	Vindhyan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Kukkuṭa	Northern				✓		
Kulūta	Northern				✓	✓	Ulūta (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Kulya	Southern and Central	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Only Central in <i>Markandeya</i> ; only Southern in <i>Vamana</i> and <i>Brahmanda</i>
Kumara	Southern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Kupatha (<i>Matsya</i>), Kumana (<i>Vayu</i>), Kusuma (<i>Markandeya</i>), Kumārāda (<i>Vamana</i>), Kṣapaṇa (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Kuninda	Northern	✓	✓	✓		✓	Pulinda (<i>Matsya</i>), Kaliṅga (<i>Markandeya</i>), Kalinda (<i>Brahmanda</i>)

<u>Kuntala</u>	Southern and Central	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Kuntala (<i>(Matsya, only Central)</i>), Kuṇḍala (<i>Vamana</i>)
Kupatha	Himalayan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Kṣupaṇa (<i>Vayu</i>), Kurava (<i>Markandeya</i>)
<u>Kuru</u>	Central	✓	✓		✓	✓	Kaurava (<i>Vamana</i>)
Kuśalya (<i>Kushalya</i>)	Central					✓	
Kuśūdra (<i>Kushudra</i>)	Central				✓		
Kuthaprāvaraṇa	Himalayan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Kuśaprāvaraṇa (<i>Vayu</i>), Kuntaprāvaraṇa (<i>Markandeya</i>), Apaprāvaraṇa (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Lalhitta	Northern				✓		
Lampāka	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Lamaka (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
<u>Madraka</u>	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Bhadraka (<i>Vayu and Vamana</i>), Maṇḍala (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Madguraka	Eastern	✓		✓	✓	✓	Mudgara (<i>Markandeya</i>), Mudagaraka (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Mādreya	Central					✓	
Magadha	Eastern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Central and Eastern in <i>Vayu</i> and <i>Brahmanda</i>
Maharāṣṭra (<i>Maharashtra</i>)	Southern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Navarāṣṭra (<i>Matsya</i>)
Māheya	Western	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Māhiṣika (<i>Mahishika</i>)	Southern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Māhiṣaka (<i>Vayu and Markandeya</i>)
Mālada	Eastern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Mālava (<i>Matsya</i>), Manada (<i>Markandeya</i>), Mansāda (<i>Vamana</i>)
Malaka	Central			✓			
Malavartika	Eastern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Mallavamaka (<i>Matsya</i>), Mālavartin (<i>Vayu</i>), Mānavartika (<i>Markandeya</i>), Baladantika (<i>Vamana</i>)

<u>Mālava</u>	Vindhyan	✓	✓		✓	✓	Ekalavya (<i>Vamana</i>), Malada (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
<u>Malla</u>	Eastern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Śālva (<i>Matsya</i>), Māla (<i>Vayu</i>), Māia (<i>Vamana</i>)
Maṇḍala	Himalayan	✓	✓	✓		✓	Mālava (<i>Vayu</i>), Mālava (<i>Markandeya</i>)
Māṇḍavya	Northern				✓		
Māṣa (Masha)	Vindhyan	✓					
Mātaṅga	Eastern	✓					
<u>Matsya</u>	Central	✓		✓	✓	✓	Yatstha (<i>Vamana</i>)
Maulika	Southern		✓	✓		✓	Maunika (<i>Vayu</i>)
Mekala	Vindhyan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Rokala (<i>Vayu</i>), Kevala (<i>Markandeya</i>)
<u>Arbuda</u>	Western	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Mūka	Central	✓					
<u>Mūṣika</u> (Mushika)	Southern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sūtika (<i>Matsya</i>), Mūṣikāda (<i>Vamana</i>), Mūṣika (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Nairṇika	Southern		✓	✓	✓		Naiṣika (<i>Markandeya</i>)
Nalakālīka	Southern		✓	✓	✓		Vanadāraka (<i>Markandeya</i>), Nalakāraka (<i>Vamana</i>)
<u>Nāsikya</u>	Western	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Vāsikya (<i>Matsya</i>), Nāsikānta (<i>Vamana</i>), Nāsika (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Nirāhāra	Himalayan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Nigarhara (<i>Vayu</i>), Nihāra (<i>Markandeya</i>)
<u>Naiṣadha</u> (Naishadha)	Vindhyan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Niṣāda (<i>Vayu</i>)
<u>Pahlava</u>	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Pallava (all except <i>Vayu</i>)
Pāṇavīya	Northern				✓		
<u>Pāñcala</u> (Panchala)	Central	✓	✓		✓	✓	
<u>Pāṇḍya</u> (Pandya)	Southern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Puṇḍra (<i>Markandeya</i>), Puṇḍra (<i>Vamana</i>)
<u>Pārada</u>	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Parita (<i>Vayu</i>), Pāravata

							(Vamana)
Paṭaccara (Patachchara)	Central	✓	✓			✓	Śatapatheśvara (Vayu)
Paurika	Southern		✓	✓	✓	✓	Paunika (Vayu), Paurika (Markandeya), Paurika (Vamana), Paurika (Brahmanda)
Pluṣṭa (Plushta)	Himalayan				✓		
Prāgjyotiṣa (Pragjyotisha)	Eastern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Prasthala	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Puṣkala (Markandeya)
Pravaṅga	Eastern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Plavaṅga (Matsya and Brahmanda)
Prāvijaya	Eastern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Prāviṣeya (Brahmanda)
Priyalaukika	Northern		✓	✓	✓	✓	Harṣavardhana (Markandeya), Aṅgalaukika (Vamana), Aṅgalaukika (Brahmanda)
Puleya	Western	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Kulīya (Matsya), Pulinda (Markandeya), Pulīya (Vamana), Pauleya (Brahmanda)
Pulinda	Southern	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Puṇḍra	Eastern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Muṇḍa (Vayu), Madra (Markandeya), Pṛsadhra (Vamana)
Rākṣasa (Rakshasa)	Southern				✓		
Rāmaṭha	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓		Māṭhara (Markandeya), Māṭharodha (Vamana)
Rūpasa	Western	✓	✓	✓		✓	Kūpasa (Vayu), Rūpapa (Markandeya), Rūpaka (Brahmanda)
Sainika	Northern	✓	✓	✓		✓	Pidika (Vayu), Śūlika (Markandeya), Jhillika (Brahmanda)
Śālva (Shalva)	Central	✓	✓			✓	
Saraja	Vindhyan			✓			

<u>Sārasvata</u>	Western	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Sārīka	Southern				✓		
<u>Surāṣṭra</u> (Surashtra)	Western	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Saurāṣṭra (Matsya)
Sauśālya (Saushalya)	Central					✓	
<u>Sauvīra</u>	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Setuka	Southern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Śailūṣa (Markandeya), Jānuka (Vamana)
Śabara (Shabara)	Southern	✓	✓	✓		✓	Bara (Vayu), Śarava (Brahmanda)
<u>Śaka</u> (Shaka)	Northern	✓	✓		✓	✓	Central in Vamana
Śaśikhādrīka (Shashikhadraka)	Himalayan				✓		
Śatadruja (Shatadruja)	Northern			✓	✓		Śatadrava (Vamana)
Ṣaṭpura	Vindhyan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Padgama (Matsya), Ṣaṭsura (Vayu), Paṭava (Markandeya), Bahela (Vamana)
Śulakara (Shulakara)	Northern			✓			
<u>Śūrpāraka</u>	Western		✓	✓	✓	✓	Sūrpāraka (Vayu), Sūryāraka (Markandeya), Sūryāraka (Brahmanda)
<u>Sindhu</u>	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Sirāla	Western	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Surāla (Vayu), Sumīna (Markandeya), Sinīla (Vamana), Kirāta (Brahmanda)
<u>Śudra</u> (Shudra)	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Suhya (Brahmanda)
Sujaraka	Eastern		✓				
Supārśva (Suparshva)	Northern				✓		
Śūrasena (Shurasena)	Central	✓	✓			✓	
Taittrika	Western	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Taittirika (Matsya), Turasita (Vayu), Kurumini (Markandeya),

							Tubhamina (<i>Vamana</i>), Karīti (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Talagana	Northern	✓	✓		✓	✓	Talagāna (<i>Matsya</i>), Stanapa (<i>Vayu</i>), Tāvakarāma (<i>Vamana</i>), Tālaśāla (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Tāmasa	Himalayan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Chamara (<i>Matsya</i>), Tomara (<i>Vamana</i>), Tāmara (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Tāmas	Western				✓		
<u>Tāmralipataka</u>	Eastern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Taṅgaṇa	Himalayan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Apatha (<i>Matsya</i>), Gurguṇa (<i>Markandeya</i>)
Taṅgaṇa	Northern		✓	✓	✓	✓	Tuṅgana (<i>Markandeya</i>)
Tāpasa	Western	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Svāpada (<i>Markandeya</i>), Tāpaka (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Tilaṅga	Central		✓				
Tomara	Northern		✓	✓	✓	✓	Tāmasa (<i>Markandeya</i> and <i>Vamana</i>)
Tośala (Toshala)	Vindhyan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Traipura	Vindhyan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<u>Trigarta</u>	Himalayan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Tumbara	Vindhyan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Tumbura (<i>Vayu</i>), Tumbula (<i>Markandeya</i>), <i>Barbara</i> (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Tumura	Vindhyan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Tumbura (<i>Markandeya</i>), Turaga (<i>Vamana</i>), Tuhunḍa (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Tuṇḍikera	Vindhyan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Śauṇḍikera (<i>Matsya</i>), Tuṣṭikāra (<i>Markandeya</i>)
Tūrṇapāda	Northern				✓		
<u>Tuṣāra</u> (Tushara)	Northern		✓	✓	✓	✓	Tukhāra (<i>Markandeya</i>)
Udbhida	Southern		✓	✓	✓	✓	Ulida (<i>Vamana</i>),

							Kulinda (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Ur̥ṇa	Himalayan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Huṇa (Vayu)
<u>Utkala</u>	Vindhyan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Eastern and Central in <i>Brahmanda</i>
Uttamāṇa	Vindhyan		✓	✓	✓	✓	Uttama (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Vāhyatodara	Northern		✓	✓	✓	✓	Girigahvara (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Vanavāsika	Southern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Vājivasika (<i>Matsya</i>), Banavāsika (Vayu), Namavāsika (<i>Markandeya</i>), Mahāśaka (<i>Vamana</i>)
<u>Vaṅga</u>	Eastern	✓			✓	✓	Central and Eastern in <i>Vamana</i>
Vāṅgeya	Eastern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Mārgavageya (<i>Matsya</i>), Rāṅgeya (<i>Markandeya</i>), Vojñeya (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
<u>Kāśi</u> (Kashī)	Central	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Vāṭadhāna	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<u>Vatsa</u>	Central		✓				
Vātsiya	Western				✓		
<u>Vaidarbha</u>	Southern	✓	✓	✓		✓	
<u>Videha</u>	Eastern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<u>Vaidīśa</u> (Vaidisha)	Vindhyan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Vaidika (Vayu), Kholliśa (<i>Vamana</i>)
Vindhyamūlika	Southern	✓	✓	✓		✓	Vindhyapuṣika (<i>Matsya</i>), Vindhyaśaileya (<i>Markandeya</i>), Vindhyamaulīya (<i>Brahmanda</i>)
Vītihotra	Vindhyan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Vīrahotra (<i>Markandeya</i>), Vītahotra (<i>Vamana</i>)
Vṛka	Central		✓	✓	✓		
Yamaka	Eastern	✓					
<u>Yavana</u>	Northern	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Gavala (<i>Markandeya</i>)

Sanskrit epics

The *Bhishma Parva* of the *Mahabharata* mentions around 230 janapadas, while the *Ramayana* mentions only a few of these. Unlike the Puranas, the *Mahabharata* does not specify any geographical divisions of ancient India, but does support the classification of certain janapadas as southern or northern.^[30]

Buddhist canon

The Buddhist canonical texts primarily refer to the following 16 mahajanapadas ("great janapadas")^[31]

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. <u>Anga</u> | 9. <u>Kuru</u> |
| 2. <u>Assaka</u> | 10. <u>Machchha</u> |
| 3. <u>Avanti</u> | 11. <u>Magadha</u> |
| 4. <u>Chetiya</u> | 12. <u>Malla</u> |
| 5. <u>Gandhara</u> | 13. <u>Panchala</u> |
| 6. <u>Kamboja</u> | 14. <u>Surasena</u> |
| 7. <u>Kashi</u> | 15. <u>Vajji</u> |
| 8. <u>Kosala</u> | 16. <u>Vamsha</u> |

The Jain text *Bhagavati Sutra* also mentions 16 important janapadas, but their names differ from the ones mentioned in the Buddhist texts.^[31]

See also

- Bharata Khanda
- History of India
- Mahajanapadas
- Middle kingdoms of India
- Monarchy in ancient India

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