



Birth Anniversary of Emperor Ashoka

Why in News?

On the **birth anniversary** [Emperor Ashoka](#), the **Bihar Governor and Chief Minister** paid floral tributes at his statue at **the Ashoka Convention Center**.

Key Points

▪ About Ashoka:

- Every year **the Ashtami of Chaitra month** is celebrated as Ashok Jayanti. This time it was celebrated on 5th April 2025.
- Ashoka was the son of **Maurya emperor** [Bindusara](#) . He displayed extraordinary talent in **administrative work** .
- Impressed by his ability and knowledge, Bindusara appointed him **the governor of Ujjain (Avanti)** .
- Ashoka fought only one major war , [the Kalinga War](#) , which is mentioned in his **13th major rock edict** .
 - He fought this war in **the eighth year of his reign (261 BC)** . Ashoka was deeply saddened by **the destruction and bloodshed in this war, due to which his personality** changed **from a warrior to a saint** .
 - **As a result, he** abandoned **the policy of Digvijaya** and adopted **the policy of Dhammavijaya** .

▪ Ashoka's Dhamma:

- After conversion to [Buddhism](#), he remained a **simple worshipper for about two and a half years** . **After that, he** joined **the Buddhist Sangha** and became a **Bhikshu Gatika** (those who live in a monastery for a limited time are called Bhikshu Gatika).
- Ashoka never fully adopted the life of a **Buddhist monk** , but rather he always remained a **worshipper** .
- **Definition of Dhamma:**
 - Ashoka has presented the definition of [Dhamma](#) in his **second** and **seventh pillar inscriptions** .
 - **According to him, Dhamma includes the following principles:**
 - No human being **will be killed** .
 - There will be no **destruction of property** .
 - Service and respect for **parents** and **elders** .
 - Respect for **elders** and **teachers** .
 - Good treatment of **slaves and servants** .
 - **Spend less** and live a **simple life** .
- **In the** [13th major rock edict](#), Ashoka has described **Dhammavijaya** as the greatest victory. He was the first ruler in **world history** who adopted **the Dhamma based imperialist policy** through [non-violence](#).
- **For the propagation of Dhamma**, Ashoka created a new administrative category which was called '**Dhammamahamatra**' .
- **In the fifth major inscription**, Ashoka has mentioned that these officers were appointed in **the 13th year of the reign (256 BC)**.
- **Apart from this, other officers like Yukta , Rajukka , and Pradeshik** were also given the responsibility of propagating **the principles of Dhamma** .

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