

EDITORIAL

Kalinga Mahajanapada in Purana and Mahabharata

By **Brajabandhu Mahanta** • December 8, 2017 • 3 min read

Origin of Kalinga Mahajanapada

The name Kalinga did not appear in the Vedic literature but the great Puranic tradition of India

Kalinga Mahajanapada During Mahabharata

associated the origin of Kalinga Mahajanapada with the Vedic sage Dirghatamas. Dirghatama was the blind son of Utathya and Mamta. According to Puranas- Dirghatama was lived in the hermitage of his cousin Saradvanta. But he was driven out from there by his younger brother Autathyas because of his indulgence in gross immorality. He was made to drift down the river Ganga by a raft.

In the lower stream he was rescued by Vali. Vali was the king of Anava Janapada. Vali ruled his Janapada with his beloved wife Sudeshna. Queen Sudehna had a beautiful nurse (Dashi). Dirghatama married the dashi of Sudeshna.

The king Vali had no heir so he request Dirghatama to give him a successor from his queen Sudehna. On request, Dirghatama begot on Sudehna five sons- Anga, Vanga, Kalinga, Pundra and Sumbha. Each of these princes founded the kingdoms after him. In this way the Mahajanapada of Kalinga was founded by the third prince Kalinga. This story was confirmed by the Adi Parva of Mahabharata.

Kalinga Mahajanapada in Adi Parva of Mahabharata

In Mahabharata names of several early kings of Kalinga Mahajanapada have been mentioned. Few of them are Kshema and Ugratirtha. Ugratirtha may be identified with Uggata of Dantapura described in the Buddhist text Mahavastu.

The Adi parva refers to matrimonial relations of the royal houses of Kalinga with different Aryan royal families of Aryavarta (Northern India), long before the time of Kurukshetra war such as:

1. The renowned king Akrodhana, the son of Ayutanayi and Kama, married the Kalinga Princess Karambha and their fourth descendant was king Matinara. Matinara married Saraswati, the river goddess.
2. The son of Matinara and Saraswati was Tamsu who again married a princess of Kalinga and begot her a son named Ilina. The son of Ilina was the famous Paurava king Dusyanta, the father of Bharata.

Paurava King Bharata was the first emperor of India, after whom the land south Hindukosh was named Bharatavarsha.

Kalinga Mahajanapada in Santi Parva of Mahabharata

Duryodhana, the Kaurava Prince married the daughter of Kalinga king Chitragada. The daughter of Chitragada was Bhanumati. At the Swayamvara of Bhanumati all prominent kings of Bharatavarsha were attended viz. Sisupala, Jarasandha, Bhishmaka, Kapotarma, Nila, Asoka, Satadhanva and Bhoja along with Kuru prince Duryodhana. When Bhanumati was declined to marry Duryodhan, he forcibly caught hold of her and escaped with her to his capital Hastinapura.

Later during the Kurukshetra war Kalinga king Srutayu was fought on the side of Kaurava. He was probably the successor of Chitragada and brother of Bhanumati. Srutayu also attended the Swayambar of Draupadi at Dakshina Panchala. He also attended the Rajasuya sacrifice of Yudhishthira at Indraprastha.

During the Kurukshetra war, in the third day of Bhishma's generalship he was killed in the battle with his two heroic sons Bhanumana and Ketumana by the second Pandava Bhimasena. The Kalinga army sustained a heavy loss in Kurukshetra and the royal house was completely annihilated in the battle.

This is what information we have in Mahabharata about the Kalinga Mahajanapada.

References

1. *Mahabharata of Krishna Dwaipayana Vyasa, translated to English by Kisari Mohan Ganguli*
2. *History of Orissa by Sahu, Sahu and Mishra*

Category: Editorial

Tag: Editorials

Source: <https://historyofodisha.in/kalinga-mahajanapada-in-purana-and-mahabharata/>

© History of Odisha · Generated on October 14, 2026