



## Coins in Ancient and Mediaeval India

# COINS IN ANCIENT AND MEDIAEVAL INDIA

The first recorded use of coins was believed to be in China and Greece (~700 BC) and in India in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC.

### Punch Marked Coins (600-200 BC)

- ↳ Earliest coins; die-struck only on one side
- ↳ Irregular, standard weight, made of silver with markings
- ↳ Issued by Mahajanapadas - called Puranas, Karshapanas or Pana
- ↳ **Mauryan Period coins** - Rupyarupa (silver), Suvarnarupa (gold), Tamrarupa (copper), Sisarupa (lead)

### Indo-Greek Coins (180 BC - 10 AD)

- ↳ Made of silver, copper, nickel and lead
- ↳ Carried information about the issuing monarch
- ↳ **Coin inscription** - Greek and Pali

### Satavahana Coins (232 BC-227 AD)

- ↳ Made of lead (mostly), silver (rarely) and Potin (copper-silver alloy)
- ↳ No artistic merit/beauty
- ↳ Contained Ujjain symbol - a cross with four circles at the end of the two crossing lines
- ↳ **Coin inscription** - Prakrit

### Gupta Coins (319-550 AD)

- ↳ Made of gold (mainly), silver and copper
- ↳ Silver coins issued after Chandragupta II
- ↳ Carried information about performing *Ashvamedha*, images of Indian Gods/Goddesses
- ↳ **Coin inscription** - Sanskrit

### Other Ancient Coins

- ↳ **Chalukya Coins:** Temple/lion/legends/boar on one side, blank on the other
- ↳ **Rajput Coins:** Made of gold, copper, billon (silver-copper alloy) and rarely silver
- ↳ **Pandya Coins:** Square shaped with inscriptions in Sanskrit (gold) and Tamil (copper)
- ↳ **Chola Coins:** Depicted king and goddess with Sanskrit inscription

### Turkish and Delhi Sultanate Coins

- ↳ No image of monarch due to prohibition of idolatry in Islam
- ↳ Gold, silver, copper and billon coins
- ↳ **Silver Tanka and Copper Jital** - introduced by Iltutmish
- ↳ **Bronze, copper coins, token paper currency** - Muhammad bin Tughlaq
- ↳ **Rupee and dam** - Sher Shah Suri

### Mughal Coins

- ↳ Gold coins called *Mohur*; Silver rupee most popular (adopted from *dam*)
- ↳ **Akbar's coins:** both round and square; gold coins called *Ilahi* (to propagate *Din-i-Ilahi*); **Sahansah** - largest gold coin



Drishti IAS

[Read more...](#)

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/coins-in-ancient-and-mediaeval-india>

