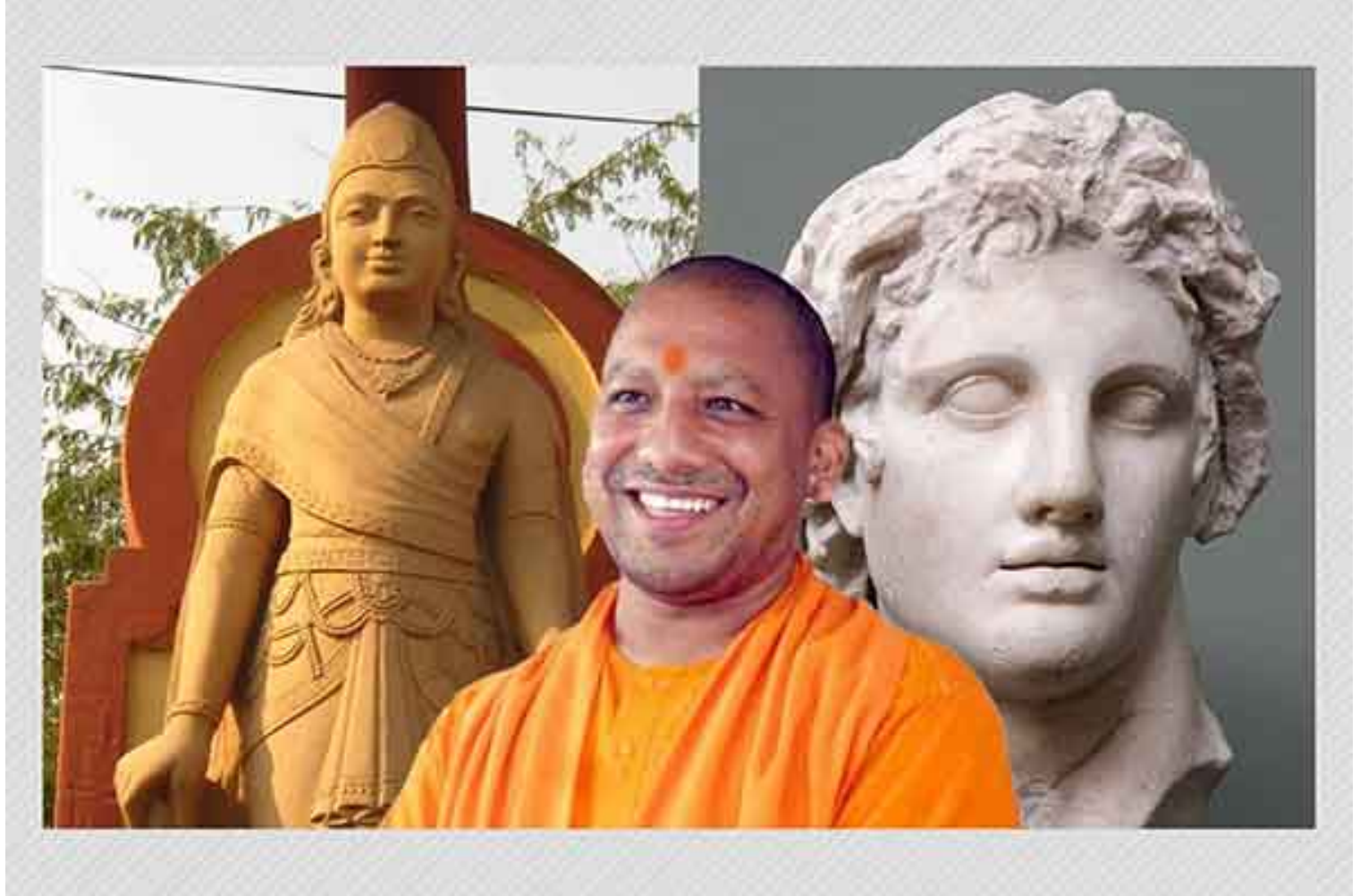


## Alexander and Chandragupta Maurya

By IAS Toppers | 2021-11-17 17:35:00



### Alexander and Chandragupta Maurya

As per Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Chandragupta Maurya, founder of Mauryan empire had defeated Alexander of Macedon yet it is the latter whom historians have chosen to call “great”.



[Ref: Indian Express]

## Who was Alexander?

- Alexander the Great, also known as Alexander III was born in 356 BCE, in Macedonia.
- He became the king of Macedonia (336–323 BCE) by defeating Persian empire.
- He carried Macedonian arms to India, and laid the foundations for the Hellenistic world of territorial kingdoms.

## Greatness' in Perspective:

- Alexander was referred to as “**great**” by early historians like other conquerors and prominent rulers.
- Famous examples are
  - Roman emperor Constantine
  - The Persians Cyrus and Darius
  - Herod, king of Judea
  - Catherine and Peter of Russia
  - Frederick of Prussia.
- In Indian history, ‘great’ has been used for the emperors **Ashoka**, Rajaraja and Rajendra Chola, and Akbar.

## Why Alexander is called ‘Great’?

- Alexander came to be called ‘great’ because of his **military conquests**.
- Before he turned 30 years of age, he had established the **largest empire in the world**.
  - It stretched across modern western and central Asia all the way from Greece to India’s northwestern frontier.
  - Consequently, **Genghis Khan** (1162-1227) stamped his authority over a bigger swathe of Asia and Europe,
  - Conquerors like Ashoka, Akbar, and Aurangzeb built their own large empires.
  - **The Chola emperors** Rajaraja I (985-1014) and Rajendra I (1014-1044) built formidable navies that conquered Maldives, Sri Lanka, and countries of Southeast Asia.

## About Chandragupta Maurya:

- Chandragupta Maurya was the founder of the Maurya Empire in ancient India.
- He built one of the largest empires on the Indian subcontinent.
- His political mentor and chief adviser was **Chanakya**, also known as Kautilya.
  - Chanakya wrote ‘**Arthashastra**’, the Indian treatise on political science, statecraft, military strategy, and economy.

## Contributions of Chandragupta Maurya:

- The Mauryan Empire was unified under him, expanding to most of South Asia.
- Pataliputra was the imperial capital of the empire.

- He laid the foundation of centralized administration and tax-collection.
- **Trade and agriculture** were reformed and regulated with Standardisation of weights and measures; and provisions were made for the army.

### Chandragupta and Alexander:

- As per historians, Chandragupta's rise to power stretched from 324 BC to 313 BC.
  - He ascended the throne in 321 BC.
- Chandragupta may have been in communication with **Alexander** during the latter's Indian campaign.
- Sandrocottus advised Alexander to advance beyond the River Beas and attack the Nanda empire.
  - Sandrocottus at the time of Seleucus Nicator, ruled over the powerful nation of the Gangaridae and Prasii on the banks of the Ganges.
- It is believed that Chandragupta Maurya was aware about the victory of Alexander, as he rose to power soon after Alexander's invasion.

### **Chandragupta's Ambition:**

- Once he had established his authority over the plains of the Ganga, he moved **north-west** to occupy the power vacuum left by the retreat of Alexander's army.
- In Seleucid-Mauryan War, he defeated the Greek **Seleucus Nicator**, the successor to Alexander, in 305 BC at the Indus River.
  - As a result of the **Seleucid-Mauryan War**, a peace treaty was signed in which Greeks offered a Macedonian princess for marriage to Chandragupta, and several territories of north-west region.
    - There was also cultural contact between the Mauryans and the Greeks.