

1. Economic Factors:

- Heavy taxation and the cost of maintaining a vast empire strained the economy.
- The continuous wars and military campaigns, especially under Ashoka's predecessors, were financially burdensome.
- The empire's overreliance on revenue from agriculture led to economic stagnation.

2. Administrative Issues:

- The Mauryan Empire's large size made centralized administration challenging to maintain.
- Corruption and inefficiency crept into the bureaucracy, eroding the effectiveness of governance.
- The empire became unwieldy, with provincial governors gaining more autonomy.

3. Succession Problems:

- After the death of Ashoka, the Mauryan Empire faced a series of weak and ineffective rulers.
- Succession disputes and assassinations of emperors further weakened the empire's stability.
- The rulers who followed Ashoka lacked his moral and administrative qualities.

4. External Threats:

- External invasions, particularly by the Greek and Bactrian kings from the northwest, posed a significant challenge.
- The Seleucid Empire's attempts to regain control of the northwestern provinces of India added to the empire's woes.

5. Revolts and Dissent:

- Provinces and regions within the empire experienced local revolts and uprisings due to oppressive taxation and administrative issues.

- The Kalinga region, for example, rebelled against Ashoka's rule after the brutal Kalinga War.

6. Religious and Ideological Changes:

- After Ashoka's reign, the promotion of Buddhism as the state religion declined.
- The subsequent rulers did not maintain the same level of commitment to Buddhist principles and values.

7. Decline of Trade and Commerce:

- The decline in trade relations with other regions, such as the Mediterranean, contributed to economic stagnation.
- The Silk Road trade route bypassed much of Mauryan territory, affecting trade.

8. Fragmentation and Regional Kingdoms:

- As central authority weakened, the Mauryan Empire fragmented into smaller regional kingdoms.
- These regional rulers asserted their independence and established their dynasties.

9. Foreign Invasions and the End:

- The final blow to the Mauryan Empire came from the invasion of the Sunga dynasty, led by Pushyamitra Sunga, around 185 BCE.
- Pushyamitra Sunga usurped the throne and established the Sunga dynasty, officially marking the end of the Mauryan Empire.