# "Gajapati Empire: Medieval Inscription Surfaces in Guntur"

Study/source context: study of the inscription on a temple pillar in Guntur; The Hans India report, 15 March 2026 | Actual publication date: 20 October 2026

History-Culture: medieval dynasties and inscriptional evidence

## News Context:

Per The Hans India's report of 15 March 2026, a medieval inscription linked to the Gajapati rulers has come to light on a stone pillar of the mandapa of the historic Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple in Guntur's Ramachandrapura Agraharam. This carving on both sides of the pillar mentions Kumarguru Mahapatra, a steward-officer serving under the 15th-century Gajapati king Purushottama Deva.

The noted Odia epigraphy expert Bishnu Mohan Adhikari documented both inscription sites in his field study. Per him, Guntur's mandapa inscription was originally dedicated to Mallikarjuna of the original seat at Kondaveedu and was probably shifted later along with the temple structure. The report also records the temple priest's traditional belief that the idol and the pillar were brought from Kondaveedu fort; the Narasimha temple at Kondaveedu too has an Odia inscription of the Gajapati rulers, which mentions the donation of Panpasa village by Srichandana Mahapatra for the Amrita Manohi service.

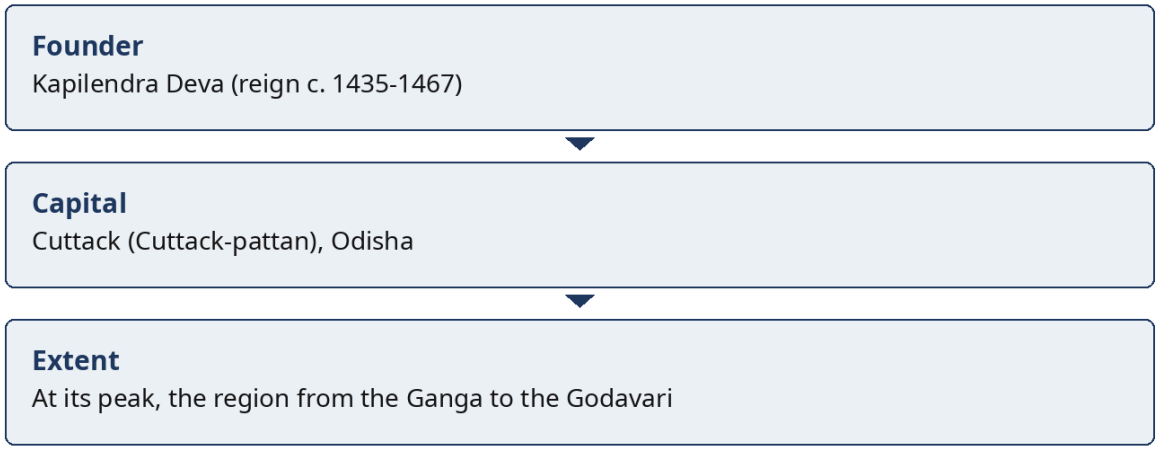
**Suryavamsi Gajapatis: Key Facts**
Founder: Kapilendra Deva (reign c. 1435-1467)

Capital: Cuttack (Kataka-pattana), Odisha

Extent: at its peak, the region from the Ganga to the Godavari

**The Suryavamsi Gajapatis, successors of the Eastern Ganga dynasty**

### Suryavanshi Gajapatis: Key Facts




**The Suryavanshi Gajapatis succeeded the Eastern Ganga dynasty**

Original concept diagram | Basis: the article's official/primary sources

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If the image's letters look small, tap the image to open it larger and zoom in.

Original concept diagram based on the article's primary sources.

## The Gajapati Empire: Rise and Expansion:

Per the study material of History of Odisha, after the weakness of Bhanu Deva IV, the last ruler of the Eastern Ganga dynasty, Kapilendra Deva took power and founded the Suryavamsi Gajapati dynasty; his reign is considered to be about 1435-1467. Because of a large elephant army, these rulers were called Gajapati - lords of elephants.

The empire's capital was Kataka-pattana (Cuttack), while Krittivasa Kataka (Bhubaneswar) remained the second seat city, where Kapilendra Deva's coronation took place. At its peak, Gajapati sovereignty stretched from the Ganga's bank to the Godavari.

## Decline and Cultural Contribution:

During the era of the third leading ruler Prataparudra Deva (c. 1497-1540), the saint Chaitanya came to Odisha; in this same period, under pressure from the powers of Vijayanagara, Bengal's Hussain Shahi and Golconda's Qutb Shahi, large parts of the empire were snatched away and imperial dominance weakened.

Inscriptional evidence shows the Hari-Hara tradition of the Gajapati period - the joint worship of both Shiva and Vishnu; the arrangement of donations and village grants to the temples of the Krishna basin is proof of this very culture. The Gajapati period is also known as a renaissance of Odia literature.

# Prelims: Practice Questions

### Question 1. Which place and which empire is the Guntur inscription related to?

(a) A pillar of the Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple; the Gajapatis

(b) Brihadeshwara temple; the Cholas

(c) Virupaksha temple; Vijayanagara

(d) Jagannath temple; the Pala dynasty

See answer and reason
**Answer: (a).** Hans India: the Lakshmi Narasimha temple of Ramachandrapura Agraharam; the era of Gajapati ruler Purushottama Deva.

### Question 2. Who were the founder of the Suryavamsi Gajapati dynasty and its capital?

(a) Purushottama Deva; Puri

(b) Kapilendra Deva; Cuttack

(c) Prataparudra Deva; Konark

(d) Bhanu Deva IV; Kalinganagar

See answer and reason
**Answer: (b).** History of Odisha: Kapilendra Deva (c. 1435-1467), founder; capital Kataka-pattana (Cuttack).

### Question 3. Consider the following statements:

**Statement 1:** The Gajapati dynasty was the successor of the Eastern Ganga dynasty.

**Statement 2:** Chaitanya came to Odisha in the era of Prataparudra Deva.

**Statement 3:** The Guntur inscription mentions Kumarguru Mahapatra.

(a) Only 1 and 2

(b) Only 2 and 3

(c) Only 1 and 3

(d) 1, 2 and 3

See answer and reason
**Answer: (d).** All three statements are consistent with the sources.

# Sources:

The Hans India: Gajapati inscription in Guntur, 15 March 2026

History of Odisha: The Suryavamsi Gajapatis