

Hindu Puranams

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1. The 18 Mahapuranas and the Upapuranas
2. Deities, sages and lineages in the Puranas
3. Sacred places: Jyotirlingas, Shakti Peethas and AP kshetras

1 The 18 Mahapuranas and the Upapuranas

The Puranas are the "fifth Veda" of story and worship: 18 great Puranas (Mahapuranas) and 18 minor ones (Upapuranas), arranged by Vyasa and recited by the Suta to Shaunaka and the sages at Naimisharanya; EO Paper II asks each Purana's place in the list, narrator, listener, limb of Vishnu, guna, size and best-known story.

Core facts

- **Purana** means "old (story)". Two old derivations: *purabhavam* (what happened long ago) and **Yaska's** *pura navam* (old, yet new in every age). The eighteen together are the **Ashtadasa Puranas**.
- **Veda Vyasa** is **Krishna Dvaipayana**, son of **Parashara** and **Satyavati**. He is called Vyasa because he **divided the Veda** into four; tradition says he arranged the 18 Mahapuranas.
- **Fifth Veda** (*panchama veda*): the **Chandogya Upanishad** (7.1.2) calls Itihasa-Purana the fifth Veda, because the Puranas **carry the Vedic message to ordinary people as stories**.
- One truth, three ways of telling it: the Vedas are **Prabhu-sammita** (a master's command: "speak the truth"), the Puranas **Mitra-sammita** (a friend's gentle counsel), the Kavyas **Kanta-sammita** (a beloved's charm).
- **Purana-vidya** is one of the **14 vidyas** (*chaturdasa vidyas*).
- Vyasa taught the Puranas to the **Suta Romaharshana** (Lomaharshana). His son **Ugrashravas** (Sauti) recited them to **Shaunaka** and the sages at **Naimisharanya** during their long **Satra-yaga**. Most Puranas are written as this question and answer.
- **Pancha lakshana** (five marks): **sarga** (primary creation), **pratisarga** (re-creation after dissolution), **vamsha** (lines of gods and sages), **manvantara** (the period of one Manu), **vamshanucharita** (deeds of the Solar and Lunar kings). The **Bhagavata** gives **ten** marks (*dasa lakshana*).
- **Guna grouping** (Padma Purana), six in each:
 - **Sattvika** (Vishnu): Vishnu, Narada, Bhagavata, Garuda, Padma, Varaha.
 - **Rajasa** (Brahma): Brahma, Brahmanda, Brahma Vaivarta, Markandeya, Bhavishya, Vamana.
 - **Tamasa** (Shiva): Shiva, Linga, Skanda, Agni, Matsya, Kurma.
- **Purana-purusha**: the Padma Purana pictures the 18 Puranas as the limbs of Mahavishnu (last column below).

The 18 Mahapuranas in order

No.	Purana	Told by → to	Limb of Vishnu
1	Brahma	Brahma → Marichi	head
2	Padma	Pulastya → Bhishma (Srishti Khanda)	heart
3	Vishnu	Parashara → Maitreya	right arm

No.	Purana	Told by → to	Limb of Vishnu
4	Shiva (some lists: Vayu)	Suta → the sages (Vayu Purana: Vayu)	left arm
5	Bhagavata	Shuka → Parikshit	thighs
6	Narada (Naradiya)	Sanaka → Narada; Vasishtha → Mandhata	navel
7	Markandeya	Markandeya, then the Dharma birds → Jaimini	right foot
8	Agni	Agni → Vasishtha	left foot
9	Bhavishya	Sumantu → King Shatanika	right knee
10	Brahma Vaivarta	Savarni Manu → Narada	left knee
11	Linga	Shiva, present in the fire-linga (Agni-linga)	right ankle
12	Varaha	Varaha → Bhudevi	left ankle
13	Skanda	Shiva → Skanda (Kumaraswami) → the sages	hair
14	Vamana	Pulastya → Narada	skin
15	Kurma	Kurma (Vishnu) → the sages, Indra present; also King Indradyumna	back
16	Matsya	Matsya (Vishnu) → Vaivasvata Manu	fat (<i>medas</i>)
17	Garuda	Vishnu → Garuda (Garutman)	marrow (<i>majja</i>)
18	Brahmanda	Vayu → Vyasa	bones

- Places to remember: **Padma** comes right after Brahma, **Bhagavata** is **5th**, **Skanda** is **13th**, **Brahmanda** is last. Some lists put the **Vayu** in place of the **Shiva** Purana; Vayu is not a 19th Purana.
- **Longest: Skanda**, about **81,000** verses; **Padma** is second (about 55,000).
- **Bhagavata**: a **Mahapurana**, Vaishnava, **12 Skandhas**, about 18,000 verses.
- **Upapuranas**: also **18**, but lists differ. The Kurma Purana list: Sanatkumara, Narasimha, Skanda, Shivadharma, Durvasa, Naradiya, Kapila, Vamana, Aushanasa, Brahmanda, Varuna, Kalika, Maheshvara, **Samba**, Saura, Parashara, Maricha, Bhargava.

Explained

Divisions and size (verse counts as listed in the Bhagavata; chapter counts of the usual printed text, which differ between editions)

Purana	Divisions	Chapters	Verses
Brahma	Purva and Uttara bhaga	246	10,000

Purana	Divisions	Chapters	Verses
Padma	5 khandas: Srishti, Bhumi, Svarga, Patala, Uttara	641	55,000
Vishnu	6 amshas	126	23,000
Shiva	7 samhitas	464	24,000
Vayu	4 padas	—	24,000
Bhagavata	12 skandhas	335	18,000
Narada	Purva (125) and Uttara (82)	207	25,000
Markandeya	—	134	9,000
Agni	—	383	15,400
Bhavishya	parvas (see Common traps)	—	14,500
Brahma Vaivarta	4 khandas: Brahma, Prakriti, Ganesha, Krishna Janma	about 276	18,000
Linga	Purva (108) and Uttara (55)	163	11,000
Varaha	Purva and Uttara	218	24,000 (about 11,000 survive)
Skanda	7 khandas (older plan: 6 samhitas)	—	81,000
Vamana	Purva; Uttara = Brihad-Vamana (4 samhitas)	95	10,000
Kurma	Purva and Uttara; of 4 samhitas only the Brahmi survives	99	17,000
Matsya	—	289	14,000
Garuda	Purva (229) and Uttara (35)	264	19,000
Brahmanda	4 padas: Prakriya, Anushanga, Upodghata, Upasamhara	161	12,000

What each Purana is remembered for

- **Brahma:** the first Purana. **Purushottama kshetra** (Puri Jagannatha) and King **Indradyumna**; the **Konark** Sun shrine; **Gautami** (the Godavari); sage **Kandu** and the apsaras **Pramlocha**; Sagara, Bhagiratha and the descent of the Ganga; **Varaha** offering shraddha to the **Pitris** (2026 key).
- **Padma:** named after the **lotus from Vishnu's navel** in which Brahma appeared. "All is Hari"; the **Kartika** month, **Ekadashi**, **Tulasi** and the amla tree (*dhatri*); the mother is all tirthas, the father all gods.
- **Vishnu:** Vishnu as the ground of creation, preservation and dissolution. **Dhruva**, **Prithu** (the Earth is called Prithvi after him), **Jadabharata** (detachment), Prahlada; Shiva and Keshava are one.
- **Shiva:** Sati and Daksha's sacrifice, Parvati's penance, the burning of Kama, Markandeya saved from Yama, Nilakantha, Ardhanarishvara, Lingodbhava, the **12 Jyotirlingas**, Shiva as a **Kirata** testing Arjuna.
- **Vayu:** **Gaya** and the rites for the Pitris; Pashupata yoga.

- **Bhagavata:** Vyasa wrote it on **Narada's** advice; the **10th Skandha** is Krishna's life; Kapila, son of Kardama and Devahuti, teaches Samkhya.
- **Narada:** called the **Mantra Shastra Sangraha** (mantras, kavachas, astrology). King **Rukmangada's** Ekadashi vow tested by **Mohini**; the **Sapta Mokshapuris** (Maya = **Haridwar**); Gaya for pinda-dana.
- **Markandeya:** opens with **Jaimini's** doubts on the Mahabharata (why avatars; Draupadi's five husbands; Balarama's pilgrimage; the death of the Upapandavas), answered by Markandeya and then by four learned **Dharma birds**, whose eggs sage **Shamika** had saved. Queen **Madalasa** and her son **Alarka**; Harishchandra; the **Devi Mahatmya** (Durga Saptashati: 13 chapters, 700 verses), read at Navaratri.
- **Agni:** the **encyclopaedia** among the Puranas: temple building, Vastu, images, grammar, prosody, poetics, Ayurveda, gem testing, polity. Ramayana summary in **chapters 5 to 11**; its Mahabharata summary says **10 warriors** survived the war.
- **Bhavishya:** "of the future". **Sun worship**; Krishna's son **Samba** cured of leprosy; **Garuda** brought Sun-priests from **Shakadvipa**; Rathasaptami; 16 samskaras, 8 forms of marriage; **annadana** (the giver of food equals the giver of life); Kalki.
- **Brahma Vaivarta:** **Krishna as Parabrahma** and a high place for **Radha**; *vaivarta* means **transformation** (the world unfolding from Brahman); Tulasi and Shankhachuda; Ganesha's birth; Shashti Devi.
- **Linga:** Lingodbhava; **Pashu-Pasha-Pashupati** (the bound soul, its bonds, the Lord who frees it); **28 avatars** of Shiva; Tripurantaka; **Kashi as Avimukta kshetra**.
- **Varaha:** twelve monthly **Dvadashi** vows linked with **twelve forms of Vishnu**; annadana; Nachiketa's visit to Yama; temple service by cleaning, singing and dance.
- **Skanda:** khandas Maheshvara, Vaishnava, Brahma, Kashi, **Avanti** (Ujjayini; the **Reva Khanda** on the Narmada is usually placed here), Nagara, Prabhasa. Mahatmyas of tirthas; restoring old temples (*jirnoddharana*) praised as great merit.
- **Vamana:** **ingratitude has no expiation**; a disciple ranks above a son; Kurukshetra's tirthas; 25 stotras.
- **Kurma:** Vishnu as a tortoise bears **Mount Mandara** at the churning; Shiva and Keshava are one; the **Ishvara Gita**; Ashtanga yoga; King **Durjaya's** fall over Urvashi.
- **Matsya:** the fish-Vishnu saves **Vaivasvata Manu** (King **Satyavrata**), the seeds and the seven sages in the flood and recovers the stolen **Vedas**; names **18 teachers of Vastu**, from **Bhrigu** to **Brihaspati**; temple building and iconography; Savitri and Satyavan.
- **Garuda:** **Vishnu answers Garuda's** questions on death and the after-life; the goal of human birth is **moksha**. Its **Preta Kalpa** (Yamaloka, the river **Vaitarani**, the hells, shraddha) is read in homes after a death; it also covers gems and Ayurveda.
- **Brahmanda:** the cosmos, the seven dvipas and time; the Saptarshis' birth in the Upodghata pada; **Lalita** and **Kamakshi** in the **Upasamhara pada**; **1 Mahayuga = 43,20,000 human years**; the **Adhyatma Ramayana** is attributed to it.

Ten lakshanas of the Bhagavata: sarga, visarga, sthana, poshana, uti, manvantara, ishanukatha, nirodha, mukti, ashraya.

A memory verse. A traditional verse counts the eighteen by first syllable: two "ma" (Matsya, Markandeya), two "bha" (Bhagavata, Bhavishya), three "bra" (Brahma, Brahmanda, Brahma Vaivarta), four "va" (Vishnu, Vayu or Shiva, Varaha, Vamana), then A (Agni), Na (Narada), Pa (Padma), Linga, Ga (Garuda), Ku (Kurma), Ska (Skanda).

Upapuranas asked: the **Samba** Purana is named after Krishna's son, cured of leprosy by worshipping Surya. Shaktas count the **Devi Bhagavata** as the "real" Bhagavata; most lists put it among the Upapuranas.

AP angle

- **Tirumala:** the **Venkatachala Mahatmya** is placed in the **Vaishnava Khanda of the Skanda Purana**; it tells how Srinivasa came to the seven hills and married Padmavati.
- **Annavaram:** the **Satyanarayana Vrata Katha**, performed daily at Annavaram, is traditionally said to come from the **Reva Khanda** (Skanda Purana).
- **Srisailem:** its legend is told in the **Srisaile Khanda**, attributed to the Skanda Purana.
- **Godavari:** the **Brahma Purana** has a long section (Gautami Mahatmya) on the tirthas of the Godavari.
- **Telugu: Bammara Potana** (15th century) wrote the **Andhra Maha Bhagavatamu**, the best-loved Telugu Purana.

Common traps

✗ "Bhagavata is an Upapurana." ✓ The **Bhagavata Purana is a Mahapurana** (the Devi Bhagavata is the one most lists call an Upapurana).

✗ "Padma Purana is the longest." ✓ **Skanda** is the longest (~81,000 verses); Padma is second.

✗ "The Skanda Purana has 18 or 6 khandas." ✓ **7 khandas** in the printed edition (6 samhitas is an older plan).

✗ "Ten lakshanas are in the Vishnu (or Agni) Purana." ✓ Ten lakshanas: **Bhagavata**. Five lakshanas: the general definition.

✗ "Suta told the Puranas at Kurukshetra or Prayag." ✓ At **Naimisharanya**, to **Shaunaka** and the sages.

✗ "Durga Saptashati is in the Devi or Skanda Purana." ✓ It is in the **Markandeya Purana**.

✗ "Vyasa got his name for writing the Mahabharata." ✓ For **dividing the Vedas**.

✗ "Matsya avatar saved Parikshit or Daksha." ✓ It saved **Manu** and recovered the **Vedas**.

✗ "The Atharvaveda calls the Puranas the fifth Veda." ✓ The text is the **Chandogya Upanishad** (7.1.2); some guide books add the Atharvaveda.

✗ "The Matsya Purana is Vishnu's brain." ✓ The Padma Purana list says **fat** (*medas*); some Telugu books render it as brain.

✗ "The Bhavishya Purana has five parvas." ✓ The printed text has **four** (Brahma, Madhyama, Pratisarga, Uttara); five (Brahma, Vaishnava, Shaiva, Saura, Pratisarga) is the Narada Purana's description. Either way, future kings are in the **Pratisarga parva**.

✗ "The Brahma Vaivarta has 133 chapters." ✓ About **276** in all; 133 is the Krishna Janma Khanda alone.

✗ "The Naradiya Upapurana is the same text as Mahapurana No. 6." ✓ The **Narada (Naradiya) Mahapurana** is No. 6; the Upapurana in the lists is a separate, shorter work.

Quick revision

- 18 Mahapuranas + 18 Upapuranas; Vyasa arranged them; Purana-vidya is one of 14 vidyas.
- Vedas command, Puranas counsel like a friend (Mitra-sammita), Kavyas charm (Kanta-sammita).
- Five marks: sarga, pratisarga, vamsha, manvantara, vamshanucharita; ten marks: Bhagavata.
- Suta Romaharshana → Ugrashravas → Shaunaka at Naimisharanya (Satra-yaga).
- Order: Brahma, Padma, Vishnu, Shiva/Vayu, Bhagavata (5th) ... Skanda (13th) ... Brahmanda (18th).
- Limbs: Brahma head, Padma heart, Vishnu right arm, Bhagavata thighs, Narada navel, Kurma back, Vamana skin.
- Narrators: Parashara–Maitreya, Shuka–Parikshit, Agni–Vasishtha, Savarni–Narada, Vayu–Vyasa, Pulastya–Narada.
- Sattvika: Vishnu, Narada, Bhagavata, Garuda, Padma, Varaha; Tamasa includes Kurma, Matsya, Agni.
- Durga Saptashati: Markandeya; Pashu–Pasha–Pashupati: Linga; Vaitarani: Garuda; Lalita: Brahmanda.
- Skanda: longest, 7 khandas; Venkatachala Mahatmya in its Vaishnava Khanda.

2 Deities, sages and lineages in the Puranas

The Puranas arrange the gods in families: the Trimurti and their consorts, Brahma's mind-born Prajapatis, Kashyapa's wives whose sons became gods, demons, serpents and birds, and the Sun and Moon dynasties of kings.

Core facts

Trimurti

God	Role	Consort	Vahana / abode
Brahma	creator	Saraswati	swan (hamsa) / Satyaloka
Vishnu	preserver	Lakshmi (Sri)	Garuda / Vaikuntha
Shiva	destroyer	Parvati (earlier Sati)	Nandi (Nandiswara) / Kailasa

Vahanas (vehicles)

Deity	Vahana	Deity	Vahana
Ganesha	mouse (mushika)	Indra	Airavata (elephant)
Kartikeya (Subrahmanya)	peacock	Agni	ram
Durga	lion	Yama	buffalo
Lakshmi	owl (also elephant)	Varuna	makara
Saraswati	swan (also peacock)	Vayu	deer (antelope)
Surya	chariot of 7 horses, Aruna driver	Kubera	man (nara)
Shani	crow	Ganga	makara
Kama	parrot	Bhairava	dog

Prajapatis and sages

- Brahma's **mind-born sons** (*manasa putras*) include **Marichi, Atri, Angiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Vasishtha**, with **Bhrigu, Daksha** and **Narada**. The four **Kumaras** (Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatana, Sanatkumara) are also mind-born.
- The **Kurma Purana** names **nine sons of Brahma: Marichi, Bhrigu, Angiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Daksha, Atri, Vasishtha**. **Kashyapa** is not one of them; he is Marichi's son.
- Vyasa's line** (Linga Purana): **Vasishtha** → **Shakti** → **Parashara** → **Vyasa**. So Vasishtha is Vyasa's great-grandfather. When Parashara set out in anger to destroy all rakshasas (they had killed his father Shakti), **Vasishtha** calmed him; Parashara then won Shiva's grace by worshipping a **clay linga**.
- From Brahma came the first couple, **Svayambhuva Manu and Shatarupa** (the 2023 key's answer to "the mind-born sons of Brahma were"; strictly, Shatarupa came from Brahma's body).

- **Daksha** Prajapati held a sacrifice (the **Brihaspati-sava**; the 2023 paper spells it *Brihaspatistava*) and did not invite **Shiva** and **Sati**; Sati gave up her body there; **Virabhadra** destroyed the sacrifice.
- **Kashyapa** (son of Marichi) married many daughters of Daksha. His sons by them:

Wife	Children	Famous names
Aditi	Adityas (devas)	Indra, Surya (Vivasvan), Vamana
Diti	Daityas	Hiranyaksha, Hiranyakashipu
Danu	Danavas	Vritra (in some versions), Viprachitti
Kadru	Nagas (serpents)	Shesha, Vasuki, Takshaka
Vinata	birds	Aruna, Garuda

- **Kadru** is the **mother of snakes**; **Diti** is the mother of **Hiranyaksha**.
- **Brihaspati**: son of Angiras, **Deva Guru** (teacher of the gods), planet Jupiter (*Guru*).
- **Shukracharya**: son of (or descended from) **Bhrigu**, **teacher of the demons** (asuras), planet Venus, knows the **Mritasanjivani** (reviving) vidya.
- **Narada**: mind-born son of Brahma, carries the veena **Mahati**, wanders the three worlds. In the Bhagavata Mahatmya he meets the grieving **Bhakti Devi** and tells her to sing Keshava's praise (*Kesavakirtanam*, as the 2026 paper spells it); the key's answer is Narada.
- **Vishwakarma**: architect of the gods. **Maya**: architect of the asuras.

Explained

The Kadru-Vinata story (Mahabharata Adi Parva; Puranas)

- The two sisters bet on the colour of the tail of **Uchchaisravas**, the white horse from the churning.
- Kadru made her serpent sons hang on the tail so it looked black; **Vinata** lost and became her slave.
- Vinata broke her first egg too early: **Aruna** came out half-formed, cursed her, and became **Surya's charioteer**.
- **Garuda** fetched the **amrita** from the gods to free his mother. Vishnu made him his **vahana**, and Indra won the nectar back. Hence the enmity of eagles and serpents.

Diti's line and the three births of Jaya-Vijaya

- **Jaya and Vijaya**, Vishnu's door-keepers, stopped the **Sanaka Kumaras** at Vaikuntha and were cursed to be born three times as Vishnu's enemies.

Birth	Enemies	Killed by
1 (Satya yuga)	Hiranyaksha, Hiranyakashipu	Varaha, Narasimha
2 (Treta yuga)	Ravana, Kumbhakarna	Rama
3 (Dvapara yuga)	Shishupala, Dantavakra	Krishna

- Line: **Hiranyakashipu** → **Prahlada** → **Virochana** → **Bali** → **Bana**. Bali's wife: **Vindhyavali** (spelt *Vindhyawali* in the 2026 paper). **Vamana** asked **Bali Chakravarti** for three steps of land; Shukracharya warned Bali against giving it.
- Diti later wanted a son to kill Indra; Indra cut the unborn child into pieces, who became the **49 Maruts**.

Brihaspati and Shukra

	Brihaspati	Shukracharya
Father / line	Angiras	Bhrigu (Bhargava)
Pupils	devas	asuras (daityas, danavas)
Planet	Jupiter (Guru)	Venus (Shukra)
Other names	Vachaspati, Guru	Ushanas, Kavya, Bhargava

- Kacha**, Brihaspati's son, became Shukra's pupil to learn the Sanjivani vidya. Shukra's daughter **Devayani** loved him and cursed him when he left. Devayani later married King **Yayati**, with **Sharmishtha** (daughter of the asura king Vrishaparva) as her maid.
- Tara**, Brihaspati's wife, was taken by **Chandra**; their son was **Budha** (Mercury).

Surya's family

- Surya (son of Kashyapa and Aditi) married **Sanjna** (Saranyu), daughter of Vishwakarma.
- Children of Sanjna: **Vaivasvata Manu**, **Yama**, **Yamuna**; later the **Ashvins**. Of **Chhaya** (Sanjna's shadow): **Shani**, Savarni Manu, Tapati.

Daksha's daughters (Bhagavata count): 10 to Dharma, **13 to Kashyapa**, **27 to Chandra** (the nakshatras), and others. Sati, Svaha (Agni's wife) and Svadha (wife of the Pitris) are also counted as Daksha's daughters in the Vishnu Purana.

The two royal lines

- Surya vamsha**: Vivasvan → Vaivasvata Manu → **Ikshvaku** (Ayodhya) → ... Harishchandra, Sagara, Bhagiratha, Raghu, Dasharatha → **Rama**.
- Chandra vamsha**: Atri → **Chandra (Soma)** → Budha (married Ila) → **Pururavas** (married Urvashi) → Ayu → **Nahusha** → **Yayati**. Yayati's sons: **Yadu** (Yadavas, Krishna's line) and **Puru** (Pauravas → Bharata → Kuru → Kauravas and Pandavas), with Turvasu, Druhyu and Anu.

Manus: 14 Manus rule in one kalpa. The first is **Svayambhuva**; the present (seventh) is **Vaivasvata**.

Weapons and treasures of Vishnu: Sudarshana (discus), Panchajanya (conch), Kaumodaki (mace), Sharnga (bow), Nandaka (sword), Kaustubha (jewel). **Shiva**: trishula, Pinaka (bow), damaru. **Indra**: vajra, made by Vishwakarma from the bones of sage **Dadhichi**.

Who's who in the Purana stories

Person	Story	Purana
Kandu	the apsaras Pramlocha , sent by Indra to break his penance, held him for years; he repented and served Jagannatha at Puri	Brahma

Person	Story	Purana
Chandra	married Daksha's 27 daughters (the nakshatras) but loved Rohini most; Daksha's curse, softened, explains the waxing and waning of the Moon	Brahma; told fully in the Mahabharata's Shalya Parva
Kartaviryaarjuna	Haihaya king of Mahishmati , strong by Dattatreya's grace; killed by Parashurama	Brahma, Markandeya
Indradyumna	sought the Jagannatha kshetra on Narada's advice	Brahma, Skanda
Dhruva	son of King Uttanapada ; unshaken devotion	Vishnu
Prithu	the ideal king; the Earth is called Prithvi after him	Vishnu
Jadabharata	a king reborn as a deer through attachment, then lived detached	Vishnu, Bhagavata
Markandeya	short-lived boy who clung to the linga; Shiva saved him from Yama	Shiva
Kama	burnt by the fire of Shiva's third eye ; revived as a favour to Rati	Shiva
Arjuna	tested by Shiva in the form of a Kirata (hunter)	Shiva
Rukmangada	king whose Ekadashi vow was tested by Mohini	Narada
Madalasa	queen of Ritudhvaja; taught her sons self-knowledge; only Alarka became king	Markandeya
Dharma birds	four learned birds who answered Jaimini; sage Shamika saved their eggs	Markandeya
Durga	born from the combined tejas of the devas; killed Mahishasura , Shumbha–Nishumbha, Chanda–Munda and Raktabija (each drop of his blood became a new asura)	Markandeya (Devi Mahatmya)
Durjaya	Lunar king infatuated with Urvashi ; repented and took refuge with sage Kanva	Kurma
Shvetamuni	Shiva devotee who prayed with Namaka–Chamaka ; Shiva saved him from Yama	Linga
King Shveta	taught the worth of annadana by Vasishtha	Varaha
Samba	Krishna's son, cured of leprosy by Sun worship; Garutman brought Sun-priests from Shakadvipa	Bhavishya
Narada	cursed by Brahma to be born as the Gandharva Upabarhana	Brahma Vaivarta
Astika	son of Manasa Devi ; stopped Janamejaya's snake sacrifice	Brahma Vaivarta
Kuja (Mars)	son of Bhudevi	Brahma Vaivarta
Yajnavalkya	received a boon from Saraswati	Brahma Vaivarta

Person	Story	Purana
Vedavati	daughter of Kushadhvaja ; insulted by Ravana on Gandhamadana , cursed him and was reborn as Sita (this Purana adds Draupadi)	Brahma Vaivarta
Nachiketa	son of Uddalaka ; went to Yamaloka by his father's curse	Varaha
Nishakara	proud scholar who suffered many births, then did penance at Badarikashrama	Vamana
Jamadagni	killed by Kartaviryarjuna and revived by the Sanjivani vidya	Brahmanda
Parashurama	took refuge with Agastya ; his mountain is Mahendra ; visited Gokarna	Brahmanda
Priyavrata	son of Svayambhuva Manu; his line ruled the seven dvipas	Brahmanda, Bhagavata
Kubera	ruled Lanka before Ravana took it, with the Pushpaka	Ramayana, Puranas

Other story facts asked

- **Shiva Purana: Parvati** is the daughter of **Himavan** and **Menadevi**; **Hanuman** is born of Shiva's amsha.
- **Linga Purana: 28 avatars** of Shiva; he is **Tripurantaka** because he destroyed **Tripurasura's** three cities.
- **Brahmanda Purana:** the birth of the **Saptarshis** is told in its **Upodghata pada**.
- **Skanda (Kartikeya):** born to destroy **Tarakasura**; nursed by the six **Krittikas** (hence Karttikeya, six-faced Shanmukha); commander of the gods' army; consorts **Devasena** and **Valli**.
- **Bhagiratha's** penance brought the **Ganga** down to earth; he was of Sagara's Solar line.
- **The churning: Durvasa's curse** made Indra lose his splendour, so the devas churned the ocean with the asuras. **Halahala** poison came first (Shiva drank it: Nilakantha); then Kamadhenu, Uchchaihshravas, Airavata, Parijata, Kaustubha, **Lakshmi** and others; **Dhanvantari** rose **last**, carrying the **amrita**.
- **War survivors (Agni Purana): 10** lived: Kritavarma, Kripa and Ashvatthama on the Kaurava side; the five Pandavas, Krishna and **Satyaki** on the Pandava side.
- **Four forms of Vishnu** (Markandeya Purana, the *vyuhas*): **Vasudeva**, **Sankarshana (Shesha)**, **Pradyumna**, **Aniruddha**.
- **Moral models:** Dhruva, determination; Prahlada, devotion; **Gajendra, surrender** (*sharanagati*); Ambarisha, steady dharma; Shibi, charity; Harishchandra, truth.

Ashta Dikpalakas (guardians of the eight directions)

Direction	Guardian	Direction	Guardian
East	Indra	West	Varuna
South-east	Agni	North-west	Vayu
South	Yama	North	Kubera
South-west	Nirriti	North-east	Ishana

AP angle

- **Tirumala: Garudadri** is one of the seven hills (Seshadri, Neeladri, Garudadri, Anjanadri, Vrishabhadri, Narayanadri, Venkatadri). The **Garuda Seva** is the high point of the Brahmotsavam.
- **Tirumala legend figures:** sage **Bhrigu** kicked Vishnu's chest while testing the Trimurtis; **Brahma and Shiva** became a **cow and calf** to feed Srinivasa in the anthill; **Vakula Devi**, his foster mother, was **Yashoda** reborn; he borrowed from **Kubera** for his wedding with Padmavati.
- **Ahobilam** and **Simhachalam** are **Narasimha** kshetras, tied to Prahlada and Hiranyakashipu; Simhachalam's deity is Varaha-Lakshmi Narasimha.
- **Draksharamam** (Konaseema) is taken in local tradition as the site of **Daksha's sacrifice** (Daksha-aramam); it is one of the **Pancharama** kshetras.
- **Srisailem:** Mallikarjuna (jyotirlinga) and Bhramaramba (a Shakti Peetha, from the story of Sati's body).
- **Arasavalli** (Srikakulam) is an old **Surya** temple; **Mopidevi** is a **Subrahmanya** kshetra (worshipped as a serpent); **Kanipakam** is a self-manifest **Vinayaka**.

Common traps

✗ "Vinata is the mother of snakes." ✓ **Kadru** is mother of snakes; **Vinata** is mother of Garuda and Aruna.

✗ "Aditi is the mother of Hiranyaksha." ✓ **Diti** (Daityas); Aditi is mother of the Adityas.

✗ "Shukracharya is the guru of the gods." ✓ **Brihaspati** is Deva Guru; **Shukra** teaches the **asuras**.

✗ "Diti's husband was Marichi or Pulastya." ✓ **Kashyapa**, who is Marichi's son.

✗ "Aruna is Indra's charioteer." ✓ **Aruna** drives **Surya's** chariot (Matali drives Indra's).

✗ "Shani is Sanjna's son." ✓ Shani is the son of **Chhaya**; Yama and Yamuna are Sanjna's.

✗ "Kubera guards the south." ✓ Kubera: **north**; Yama: **south**.

✗ "Kashyapa is one of Brahma's nine sons." ✓ The Kurma list: Marichi, Bhrigu, Angiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Daksha, Atri, **Vasishtha**; Kashyapa is **Marichi's son**.

✗ "Krishna Dvaipayana is the 26th Vyasa." ✓ He is the **28th** (Vishnu Purana); some guide books print 26.

✗ "Madalasa's sons: Vikranta, Subahu, Shatamardana, Alarka." ✓ The third is **Shatrumardana**; the ruler was **Alarka**.

✗ "The Dharma birds were Pingaksha, Virata, Vrita, Sumukha." ✓ The Markandeya Purana names **Pingaksha, Vibodha, Suputra, Sumukha**.

✗ "Vishnu's four forms are Vasudeva, Shesha, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, with Hayagriva." ✓ **Vasudeva, Sankarshana (Shesha), Pradyumna, Aniruddha**; Hayagriva is not one.

✗ "Satyaki fought for the Kauravas." ✓ Satyaki was a **Pandava-side** survivor.

✗ "Bali was Hiranyakashipu's son." ✓ Bali is Prahlada's **grandson** (son of Virochana).

Quick revision

- Brahma-Saraswati-swan; Vishnu-Lakshmi-Garuda; Shiva-Parvati-Nandi.
- Ganesha mouse, Kartikeya peacock, Durga lion, Yama buffalo, Agni ram, Indra Airavata.
- Mind-born: Marichi, Atri, Angiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Vasishtha (+ Bhrigu, Daksha, Narada).
- Kashyapa: Aditi-devas, Diti-daityas, Danu-danavas, Kadru-snakes, Vinata-Garuda and Aruna.
- Vasishtha → Shakti → Parashara → Vyasa (the 28th Vyasa); Kurma's 9 sons of Brahma exclude Kashyapa.
- Brihaspati (Angiras): devas, Jupiter. Shukra (Bhrigu): asuras, Venus, Sanjivani.
- Kandu-Pramlocha; Chandra-Rohini; Kartaviryaarjuna-Mahishmati-Dattatreya; Nachiketa son of Uddalaka.
- Prahlada → Virochana → Bali → Bana; Vamana took three steps from Bali.
- Surya vamsha from Ikshvaku; Chandra vamsha: Budha → Pururavas → Nahusha → Yayati.
- Dikpalakas: Indra E, Agni SE, Yama S, Nirriti SW, Varuna W, Vayu NW, Kubera N, Ishana NE.

3 Sacred places: Jyotirlingas, Shakti Peethas and AP kshetras

The Puranas, above all the Skanda Purana, praise the tirthas of India: the twelve Jyotirlingas of Shiva, the Shakti Peethas where Sati's body fell, the seven moksha cities, and in Andhra the Pancharamas, Tirumala, Srisailam, Simhachalam and Ahobilam; EO Paper II asks which place, which deity, which Purana and which festival.

Core facts

- **Tirtha** = a crossing place (a ford) to liberation. The Puranas name three kinds: **sthavara** (fixed holy places), **jangama** (moving: holy persons) and **manasa** (of the mind: truth, patience, self-control).
- **Naimisharanya** (Naimisharanyam, on the Gomati, Uttar Pradesh): where **Suta** (Sutha Mahamuni, Ugrashravas) told the Puranas to **Shaunaka** and the sages during their long **Satra-yaga**. It is in Sitapur district.
- **Prabhasa Tirtha** (near Somnath, Saurashtra, Gujarat): where the Yadavas killed one another with clubs of **eraka grass** (the *Mausala* episode) and **Krishna left his body** (struck by the hunter **Jara**). The **Skanda Purana** has a whole **Prabhasa Khanda**.
- **Skanda Purana**: the **longest** Purana, about **81,000** shlokas. Its **Vaishnava Khanda** holds the **Venkatachala Mahatmyam**, the sthala purana of Tirumala.
- **Prayaga** (Prayagraj): **Tirtharaja**, the king of tirthas, praised in the Matsya and Kurma Puranas; the **Triveni Sangamam** of Ganga, Yamuna and the hidden Saraswati.
- **Sapta Mokshapuris** (seven cities that give moksha; listed in the Narada Purana): **Ayodhya, Mathura, Maya (Haridwar), Kashi, Kanchi, Avantika (Ujjain), Dwaraka**.
- **Kashi** (Varanasi): **Vishwanatha** (Vishveshvara) and the **Manikarnika** ghat; the Linga Purana calls it **Avimukta kshetra**; the Skanda Purana's **Kashi Khanda** ties Kashi, Vishveshvara, the Ganga and moksha ("death in Kashi frees").
- **Gaya** (Bihar): named after the asura **Gayasura**; the **Vishnupada** temple; the first place for **pinda-dana** to ancestors (Vayu, Narada, Matsya, Agni, Garuda Puranas).
- **Char Dham** (four abodes, linked with Adi Sankara): **Badrinath** (north), **Puri** (east), **Dwaraka** (west), **Rameswaram** (south).
- **Kumbha Mela** places (four): **Prayagraj, Haridwar, Ujjain, Nashik**.
- **Twelve Jyotirlingas** (listed in the **Shiva Purana**, Koti Rudra Samhita; they are that Purana's main place theme):

Jyotirlinga	Place	State
Somanatha	Prabhasa / Somnath	Gujarat
Mallikarjuna	Srisailam	Andhra Pradesh
Mahakaleshwara	Ujjain (on the Kshipra)	Madhya Pradesh

Jyotirlinga	Place	State
Omkareshwara	Mandhata island in the Narmada	Madhya Pradesh
Kedarnath	Himalaya (Mandakini)	Uttarakhand
Bhimashankara	Sahyadri, source of the Bhima	Maharashtra
Kashi Vishwanatha	Varanasi	Uttar Pradesh
Tryambakeshwara	Near Nashik, source of the Godavari	Maharashtra
Vaidyanatha	Deoghar (some lists: Parli)	Jharkhand
Nageshwara	Near Dwaraka (some lists: Aundha)	Gujarat
Rameshwara	Rameswaram	Tamil Nadu
Grishneshwara (Ghushmeshwara)	Near Ellora	Maharashtra

- **Shakti Peethas:** **Sati**, Daksha's daughter, gave up her body at **Daksha's yajna**; Shiva carried it in grief; **Vishnu's Sudarshana chakra** cut it, and each place where a part fell became a Peetha. The usual count is **51** (other texts give 52, 64 or 108). The **Ashtadasha Shakti Peetha stotra**, attributed to **Adi Sankara**, lists **18**.
- **Kamarupa (Kamakhya)**, Guwahati, Assam): the best-known Peetha of the Shakta tradition.
- **AP's three of the eighteen Peethas:** **Bhramaramba** (Srisailem), **Puruhutika** (Pithapuram), **Manikyamba** (Draksharama). **Jogulamba** (Alampur) is in Telangana.
- **Pancharamas** (five Shiva shrines, all in AP): **Amararama** (Amaravati), **Draksharama**, **Kumararama** (Samarlakota), **Ksheerarama** (Palakollu), **Somarama** (Bhimavaram).
- **Trilingas** (the Trilinga desha): **Srisailem**, **Kaleswaram**, **Draksharama**.
- **Tirumala:** **Sri Venkateswara** (Srinivasa) on **Venkatadri**, one of the **seven hills** (Seshachalam); worship follows the **Vaikhanasa Agama**; **Swami Pushkarini** is the temple tank in **Tirumala**; **TTD** was set up in **1932**.
- **Srisailem** (Nallamala hills, on the Krishna): **Mallikarjuna Swamy** (Jyotirlinga) with **Bhramaramba** (Shakti Peetha) in one temple complex.
- **Simhachalam** (Visakhapatnam): **Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha**; the deity stays under **sandal paste**; the true form is seen only at **Chandanotsavam** on **Akshaya Tritiya** (Vaisakha Shukla Tritiya).
- **Ahobilam** (Nallamala, Nandyal district): **Nava Narasimha** (nine Narasimha shrines), where Narasimha came out of the pillar and killed **Hiranyakashipu**.

Explained

Tirthas in the Puranas

- The **Skanda Purana** is a book of tirthas; its seven Khandas are **Maheshwara**, **Vaishnava**, **Brahma**, **Kashi**, **Avantya**, **Nagara**, **Prabhasa**. The **Padma** and **Matsya** Puranas and the Mahabharata's **Vana Parva** (Tirtha Yatra) also carry tirtha-mahatmyas.

- **Kurukshetra** is the *dharmakshetra*; **Pushkara** (Rajasthan) is the tirtha of **Brahma**; **Gaya** is the place for **shraddha** (offerings to ancestors, praised in the **Garuda Purana** and **Vayu Purana**).
- **Pushkaralu**: each of twelve rivers gets its Pushkaram when **Brihaspati (Jupiter)** enters a given rashi; **Godavari** when Jupiter is in **Simha**, **Krishna** when in **Kanya**.

Which Purana praises which place

Purana	Places it praises
Brahma	Purushottama kshetra (Puri Jagannatha), the Konark Sun shrine, Gautami (the Godavari)
Shiva	the twelve Jyotirlingas
Linga	Kashi as Avimukta
Skanda	Kashi Khanda (Kashi); Avanti Khanda (Ujjayini, Mahakala); Reva Khanda (the Narmada); Vaishnava Khanda (Venkatachala , Puri, Badari, Ayodhya); Brahma Khanda (Setu, Rameswaram)
Varaha	four tirthas: Chakra (wealth), Rupa (good of the ancestors), Yoga (end of attachment and hatred), Soma (learning and fame); Mathura, Gokarna
Vamana	Kurukshetra and its many tirthas
Kurma, Matsya	Kashi, Prayaga, the Narmada; Matsya also Gaya

Mountains, kingdoms and places in the Puranas

Name	Today	Remember
Meru	mythic	golden mountain at the centre of Jambudvipa
Bharatavarsha	India	one varsha of Jambudvipa, praised as karmabhumi (land of action)
Mandara	Mandar Hill, Bihar (tradition)	churning rod; Vasuki the rope; Kurma bore it
Vindhya	central India	Agastya told it to stay bent until he came back from the south (he never did)
Gandhamadana	Himalaya	Hanuman's herb mountain; Vedavati's penance
Rishyamuka	Hampi	Sugriva's refuge; Vali kept out by Matanga's curse
Mahendragiri	Eastern Ghats (Odisha-AP)	Parashurama's mountain
Malaya	southern Western Ghats	famous for sandalwood
Sahya	Western Ghats	a kula-parvata; source of the Godavari, Krishna and Kaveri
Pratishthanapura	near Prayagraj	early capital of Pururavas (Aila, Lunar line)
Hastinapura	near Meerut	capital of the Kurus

Name	Today	Remember
Indraprastha	Delhi	Pandava capital built on Khandavaprastha; the Maya Sabha
Mathura	Uttar Pradesh	capital of the Shurasena kingdom; Krishna's birthplace
Mahishmati	on the Narmada	Haihaya capital of Kartavirya
Vidarbha	eastern Maharashtra	Rukmini's home
Alakapuri	near Kailasa	Kubera's capital; Yakshas and Guhyakas
Kanchipuram	Tamil Nadu	Ekambareshvara, Kamakshi and Varadaraja Swamy
Gokarna	Karnataka coast	Ravana's Atmalinga , worshipped as Mahabaleshvara
Pushkara	Rajasthan	the kshetra of Brahma
Badarikashrama	Badrinath	penance of Nara and Narayana

Jyotirlingas: the stories asked

- **Somanatha: Chandra (Soma)**, cursed by **Daksha** to waste away, was freed by worshipping Shiva at Prabhasa; so the moon waxes and wanes.
- **Mallikarjuna**: when **Ganesha** won the race around the world by going round his parents, **Kartikeya** left for the **Krauncha** mountain in anger; **Shiva and Parvati** came to live near him as **Mallikarjuna and Bhramaramba**.
- **Rameshwara**: the linga worshipped by **Rama** before (or after) the war with Ravana.
- **Grishneshwara**: the last of the twelve, named for the devotee **Ghushma**.
- Maharashtra has the most Jyotirlingas in the common list (Bhimashankara, Tryambakeshwara, Grishneshwara); Vaidyanatha at Deoghar is in **Jharkhand**.
- **Not Jyotirlingas** (often given as options): Ekambareshvara (Kanchi), Arunachaleshwara, Srikalahasti; these are Pancha Bhuta sthalas.

Shakti Peethas: the eighteen in Sankara's list

Goddess	Place	Region
Shankari	Trincomalee	Sri Lanka
Kamakshi	Kanchipuram	Tamil Nadu
Shrinkhala	Pradyumna	West Bengal
Chamundeshwari	Mysuru	Karnataka
Jogulamba	Alampur	Telangana
Bhramaramba	Srisailam	Andhra Pradesh
Mahalakshmi	Kolhapur	Maharashtra
Ekaveera	Mahur	Maharashtra
Mahakali	Ujjain	Madhya Pradesh

Goddess	Place	Region
Puruhutika	Pithapuram	Andhra Pradesh
Girija (Biraja)	Jajpur	Odisha
Manikyamba	Draksharama	Andhra Pradesh
Kamarupa (Kamakhya)	Guwahati	Assam
Madhaveshwari	Prayaga	Uttar Pradesh
Vaishnavi	Jwalamukhi	Himachal Pradesh
Mangala Gauri	Gaya	Bihar
Vishalakshi	Varanasi	Uttar Pradesh
Saraswati	Kashmir	Jammu and Kashmir

Pancharamas. Tradition: the asura **Tarakasura** wore a Shiva linga (the *Amritalinga*) at his throat and could not be killed; **Kumaraswamy** (Subrahmanya) broke it, and its five pieces fell at five places, each an *arama*.

Arama	Place	Shiva
Amararama	Amaravati (Palnadu)	Amareswara
Draksharama	Draksharama (Konaseema)	Bhimeswara
Kumararama	Samarlakota (Kakinada)	Kumara Bhimeswara
Ksheerarama	Palakollu (West Godavari)	Ksheera Ramalingeswara
Somarama	Bhimavaram (West Godavari)	Someswara

- **Draksharama** is also called **Dakshina Kashi**; tradition places **Daksha's yajna** here, and the goddess is **Manikyamba** (a Shakti Peetha).
- **Who installed each piece** (legend): Amararama, **Indra** (the *amaras*, gods); Kumararama, **Kumaraswamy**; Somarama, **Chandra (Soma)**, hence Someswara; Ksheerarama, **Rama** (a local story says Vishnu).
- **Somarama**: the linga is said to change colour with the moon's phases.
- **Tripurantakam** (Markapuram district, earlier Prakasam; Tripurantakeswara with Bala Tripurasundari) is the **eastern gate of Srisailem**, not a Pancharama.
- **Chalukya Bhima I** (Eastern Chalukya, 9th–10th century) built the Bhimeswara temples at Draksharama and Samarlakota (Kumararama Bhimeswara).

Tirumala (Tirupati)

- **Seven hills: Seshadri, Neeladri, Garudadri, Anjanadri, Vrishabhadri, Narayanadri, Venkatadri.** The Lord is on **Venkatadri** (Venkatachalam), south of Swami Pushkarini.
- **Seshachalam: Adisesha** and **Vayu** tested their strength; Adisesha coiled round Ananda Parvatam, Vayu blew; part of the hill came down near the **Swarnamukhi**, and Adisesha became the **Seshachala** range.

- **Sthala purana:** the **Venkatachala Mahatmyam** (Skanda Purana; also in the Varaha and Bhavishyottara Puranas). The legend in order:
 - Sages at a sacrifice sent **Bhrigu** to find the worthiest of the Trimurtis; at Vaikuntha he **kicked Vishnu's chest**, and Vishnu only asked if his foot was hurt.
 - **Lakshmi**, whose seat is Vishnu's chest, left in anger for **Karaveerapuram** (Kolhapur); Vishnu came to Venkatadri looking for her.
 - As **Srinivasa** he lived in an **anthill under a tamarind tree**; **Brahma and Shiva** became a **cow and calf** to feed him with milk; an angry cowherd's **axe** struck Srinivasa.
 - **Vakula Devi** looked after him: she was **Yashoda** reborn, granted the wish to see Krishna's wedding.
 - King **Akasa Raja** found **Padmavati** in a lotus while ploughing; Srinivasa met her while hunting; for the wedding he **borrowed from Kubera** (a belief, not the legal basis of the hundi).
 - When Lakshmi and Padmavati met, Srinivasa stood still in **stone** as Venkateswara.
- **Adi Varaha Kshetra:** the **Varaha Swamy** temple stands on the bank of **Swami Pushkarini**; by custom pilgrims see Varaha first.
- **Ananda Nilayam:** the gold-covered vimana over the sanctum.
- **Five idols (Panchabera) at Tirumala:**
 - **Dhruva bera:** **Mula Virat**, the main fixed idol
 - **Kautuka bera:** **Bhoga Srinivasa**
 - **Snapana bera:** **Ugra Srinivasa** (Snapana Murti)
 - **Utsava bera:** **Malayappa Swamy** with Sridevi and Bhudevi
 - **Bali bera:** **Koluvu Srinivasa**
- **Festivals:** the annual **Brahmotsavam** (nine days, begun by **Brahma** in the legend; **Dhvajarohanam** on day one, **Garuda Seva** on day five, **Chakrasnanam** in Swami Pushkarini on the last day); **Vaikuntha Ekadasi** (Vaikuntha Dwara darshan); **Ratha Saptami**.
- **Nearby:** **Padmavati** temple at **Tiruchanur** (Alamelu Mangapuram, about 5 km away; **Panchami Theertham** in the Karthika Brahmotsavam); **Govindaraja Swamy** temple in Tirupati (installed by **Ramanuja** in 1130 CE, by TTD history).
- **Devotees:** **Annamacharya** of **Tallapaka** (sankirtanas on Venkateswara), **Tarigonda Vengamamba**, **Hathiramji** (Bavaji).
- **TTD:** set up under the TTD Act of **1932** (Madras Act XIX of 1933); the **Hathiramji Mutt** mahants had managed the temple from **1843**, when the East India Company withdrew, until 1933. Today TTD is run under a separate chapter of the A.P. Endowments Act, 1987; its **Executive Officer** represents it in suits, and the **Government** sanctions its budget.

Srisailem

- Old name **Sriparvatam**; also called **Dakshina Kailasam**. In the Nallamala forest, Nandyal district, above **Patalaganga** (the Krishna).
- **Bhramaramba:** the goddess took the form of a bee (*bhramara*) to kill **Arunasura**.
- **Sakshi Ganapati** records the visit of each pilgrim; seeing **Shikhareswaram** (the peak) is said to free one from rebirth.

- Festivals: **Maha Shivaratri Brahmotsavam, Ugadi** (large Kannada and Maharashtrian crowds), **Kumbhotsavam** for Bhramaramba.
- The **Chenchu** forest people of the Nallamala treat Mallikarjuna as their **son-in-law** (**Chenchu Mallanna**). **Shivaji** built the northern gopuram (1677).

Simhachalam

- Hill shrine near Visakhapatnam of **Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha** (Varaha and Narasimha in one form).
- Legend: **Prahlada** built the first shrine after Narasimha saved him; King **Pururavas** found the buried idol and covered it with sandal paste.
- **Chandanotsavam** (Chandana Yatra): on **Akshaya Tritiya** the paste is removed for **nija rupa darshanam**, then new paste is laid on.
- The stone temple is in the **Kalinga** style, mainly of the **Eastern Ganga** period (13th century); **Krishnadevaraya** left an inscription after his eastern campaign (1516).

Ahobilam

- Name from the gods' cry "*Aho balam*" (what strength!) on seeing Narasimha. **Garuda** did penance here, so the hill is **Garudachalam** (Garudadri).
- **Nava Narasimha: Jwala, Ahobila (Ugra), Malola, Kroda (Varaha), Karanja, Bhargava, Yogananda, Chatravata, Pavana.**
- **Upper Ahobilam** has the Nava Narasimha shrines; **Lower Ahobilam** has the **Prahladavarada** temple. **Ugra Stambham** is shown as the pillar from which Narasimha came out. The **Ahobila Mutt** (Srivaishnava) was founded in the 14th century by **Adi Van Satakopa Jeeyar**.

Other AP kshetras asked with these

Kshetra (district)	Deity	Remember
Srikurmam (Srikakulam)	Kurmanatha	the main temple of the Kurma avatar; Kalinga style
Arasavalli (Srikakulam)	Suryanarayana	old Sun temple; Rathasaptami (Magha Shuddha Saptami)
Srimukhalingam (Srikakulam)	Mukhalingeswara	on the Vamsadhara ; Eastern Ganga Shaiva centre; a face on the linga
Vizianagaram	Paidithalli Ammavaru	town's village goddess; legend of the Battle of Bobbili (1757); Sirimanu festival
Visakhapatnam (Burujiupeta)	Kanaka Mahalakshmi	worship on the Thursdays of Margasira
Annaram (Kakinada)	Veera Venkata Satyanarayana	Ratnagiri hill above the Pampa river; the Satyanarayana Vratam (Reva Khanda)
Pithapuram (Kakinada)	Kukkuteswara (<i>kukkuta</i> = rooster), Puruhutika	Shakti Peetha; Padagaya (Gayasura's feet); Sripada Srivallabha born here
Antarvedi (Konaseema)	Lakshmi Narasimha	where the Vasishta Godavari meets the sea; the idol faces west

Kshetra (district)	Deity	Remember
Dwaraka Tirumala (Eluru)	Venkateswara	Chinna Tirupati ; named after sage Dwaraka
Vijayawada, Indrakeeladri (NTR)	Kanaka Durga	Arjuna's penance for the Pashupatastra ; Dasara
Mangalagiri (Guntur)	Panakala Narasimha	jaggery panakam poured into the Lord's mouth
Kotappakonda (Palnadu)	Trikoteswara	three peaks; huge decorated prabhalu at Maha Shivaratri
Nellore	Talpagiri Ranganatha	on the Penna ; Adishesha as the Lord's couch (<i>talpa</i>)
Penchalakona (Nellore)	Penusila Lakshmi Narasimha	Lakshmi as Chenchu Lakshmi calmed the fierce Narasimha
Srikalahasti (Tirupati)	Kalahastiswara, Jnanaprasunambika	on the Swarnamukhi ; Vayu linga; spider, snake, elephant; Kannappa
Kanipakam (Chittoor)	Varasiddhi Vinayaka	self-born idol found by mute, deaf and blind brothers digging a well
Gudimallam (Tirupati)	Parasurameswara	very old linga with a standing Shiva carved on it (3rd–2nd century BCE)
Ontimitta (YSR Kadapa)	Kodandarama	Rama, Sita and Lakshmana on one stone
Pushpagiri (YSR Kadapa)	Chennakesava and Shiva shrines	on the Penna; Madhya Ahobilam to Vaishnavas, Madhya Kailasam to Shaivas
Lepakshi (Sri Sathya Sai)	Veerabhadra	built by Virupanna and Veeranna (Vijayanagara); hanging pillar; Jatayu legend
Mahanandi (Nandyal)	Mahanandeeswara	chief of the Navanandulu ; clear spring-fed tank
Yaganti (Nandyal)	Umamaheswara	Agastya's shrine; a Nandi believed to be growing
Mantralayam (Kurnool)	Raghavendra Swamy	Madhva saint's brindavanam on the Tungabhadra

- **Pancha Bhuta sthalas**: earth **Kanchipuram**, water **Jambukeswaram** (Tiruvanaikaval), fire **Tiruvannamalai**, air **Srikalahasti**, space **Chidambaram**.

AP angle

- AP has **one** Jyotirlinga (**Srisailem**), **three** of Sankara's 18 Shakti Peethas (Srisailem, Pithapuram, Draksharama), **all five** Pancharamas and **two** of the three Trilingas (Srisailem, Draksharama; Kaleswaram is in Telangana).
- **Narasimha kshetras** run along the state: **Ahobilam** (Nava Narasimha), **Simhachalam**, **Mangalagiri**, **Antarvedi**, **Vedadri**, **Dharmapuri** (Telangana) and **Yadagirigutta** (Telangana).

- **Brahmotsavams** in the big devasthanams are planned by their EOs: **Tirumala** under **TTD** (its own chapter of the Act), and **Srisailam, Kanaka Durga, Simhachalam, Annavaram** under the Endowments department.

Common traps

- ✗ "Krishna left his body at Dwaraka (or Kurukshetra)." ✓ At **Prabhasa Tirtha**.
- ✗ "Suta told the Puranas at Kurukshetra." ✓ At **Naimisharanya**.
- ✗ "The Padma Purana is the longest." ✓ The **Skanda Purana** (about 81,000 shlokas).
- ✗ "Swami Pushkarini is at Srirangam." ✓ At **Tirumala**.
- ✗ "Ahobilam is a Pancharama." ✓ Ahobilam is the **Nava Narasimha** kshetra; the Pancharamas are Shiva shrines.
- ✗ "Kumararama is at Kakinada town." ✓ At **Samarlakota**; Somarama is at **Bhimavaram**, Ksheerarama at **Palakollu**.
- ✗ "Tripurantakam is a Pancharama." ✓ It is the **eastern gate of Srisailam**; the five aramas are Amaravati, Draksharama, Samarlakota, Palakollu, Bhimavaram.
- ✗ "Antarvedi is Dakshina Kashi." ✓ **Draksharama** is the usual answer (some local accounts also use the name for Antarvedi).
- ✗ "Alampur Jogulamba is in AP." ✓ It is in **Telangana**; AP's Peethas are Srisailam, Pithapuram, Draksharama.
- ✗ "Simhachalam's deity is seen every day." ✓ The **nija rupa** is seen only at **Chandanotsavam** (Akshaya Tritiya).
- ✗ "Tirumala follows the Pancharatra Agama." ✓ **Vaikhanasa** (Ramanuja popularised Pancharatra elsewhere).
- ✗ "TTD was set up in 1947 or 1956." ✓ **1932**.

Quick revision

- Naimisharanya: Suta to Shaunaka; Prabhasa: Krishna's departure (Skanda Purana, Prabhasa Khanda).
- Skanda Purana: longest, ~81,000 shlokas; Venkatachala Mahatmyam in its Vaishnava Khanda.
- Moksha cities: Ayodhya, Mathura, Maya, Kashi, Kanchi, Avantika, Dvaraka.
- 12 Jyotirlingas (Shiva Purana); AP's one: Mallikarjuna, Srisailam.

- Shakti Peethas: Daksha yajna, Sudarshana; usually 51; Sankara's list 18.
- AP Peethas: Bhramaramba, Puruhutika (Pithapuram), Manikyamba (Draksharama).
- Pancharamas: Amaravati, Draksharama, Samarlakota, Palakollu, Bhimavaram.
- Tirumala: seven hills, Vaikhanasa, Swami Pushkarini, Varaha first, TTD 1932.
- Simhachalam: Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha, Chandanotsavam on Akshaya Tritiya.
- Ahobilam: Nava Narasimha, Ugra Stambham, Garudadri.