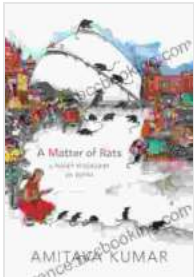


# Short Biography of Patna: A City of Enduring Legacy



## A Matter of Rats: A Short Biography of Patna

by Amitava Kumar

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

Language : English  
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Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
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Nestled on the banks of the mighty Ganges River, Patna is a city that has stood the test of time, bearing witness to the rise and fall of empires, the shaping of cultural traditions, and the unfolding of momentous events. Its rich history is woven into the fabric of the Indian subcontinent, making it a treasure trove for history buffs, culture enthusiasts, and heritage seekers alike.

### Ancient Origins and the Birthplace of Patliputra

The story of Patna begins in the mists of antiquity, around 600 BCE. It was during this period that the city emerged as the capital of the powerful Magadha empire, founded by the legendary king Bimbisara. The city, then known as Patliputra, quickly grew into a thriving metropolis, becoming a center of trade, learning, and culture.

Patna's strategic location on the Ganges River made it a vital hub for commerce. Traders from far-flung lands, including Greece, Rome, and China, flocked to Patliputra to exchange goods and ideas. The city also became a renowned center of learning, with scholars and philosophers from across the subcontinent congregating to pursue their studies.

## **The Golden Age Under the Mauryan Empire**

Patna's golden age dawned under the rule of the Mauryan Empire, established by the great emperor Chandragupta Maurya in the 4th century BCE. Chandragupta's grandson, Ashoka, is particularly revered in Indian history for his embrace of Buddhism and his dedication to spreading the message of non-violence. Under Ashoka's patronage, Patliputra became a gleaming city, adorned with magnificent palaces, temples, and public baths.

Ashoka's reign also marked a period of cultural and intellectual brilliance. He established the Nalanda University, which would later become one of the most renowned centers of Buddhist learning in the world. Patliputra became a melting pot of ideas and cultures, with influences from Greece, Persia, and beyond shaping its art, architecture, and literature.

## **Medieval and Colonial Eras**

After the decline of the Mauryan Empire, Patna continued to play a significant role in Indian history. It was ruled by a succession of dynasties, including the Guptas, the Palas, and the Delhi Sultanate. Each dynasty left its own unique mark on the city, contributing to its rich architectural heritage.

In the 16th century, Patna came under the control of the Mughal Empire. The Mughals further embellished the city, constructing impressive

mosques, tombs, and gardens. Patna Sahib, one of the holiest Sikh shrines, was also built during this period.

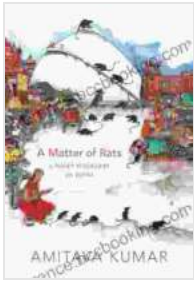
In the 18th century, Patna became a major trading center under the British East India Company. The city's strategic location on the Ganges River made it a vital hub for the company's commercial activities. Patna also became a center of the Indian independence movement, with prominent figures such as Mahatma Gandhi and Jayaprakash Narayan playing a key role in the struggle for freedom.

### **Modern-Day Patna**

After India's independence in 1947, Patna became the capital of the state of Bihar. Today, it is a bustling metropolis with a population of over two million people. The city has a thriving economy, being a major center for agriculture, manufacturing, and education.

Patna is also renowned for its cultural heritage. The Patna Museum houses a vast collection of artifacts and exhibits showcasing the city's rich history. The city is also home to numerous historical sites, including the ruins of Patliputra, the Patna Sahib gurdwara, and the Golghar, a massive granary built by the British.

The history of Patna is a captivating tapestry woven over centuries. From its ancient origins as Patliputra to its modern-day significance, the city has witnessed the rise and fall of empires, the shaping of cultural traditions, and the unfolding of momentous events. Its rich architectural heritage, cultural landmarks, and historical sites make it a must-visit destination for anyone seeking to delve into the fascinating past of the Indian subcontinent.



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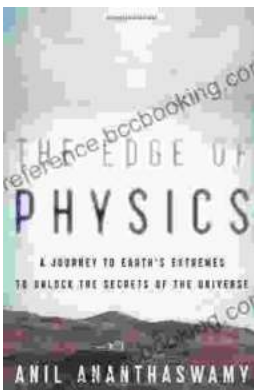
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