



# MARTAND

## Sun Temple

## IN NEWS

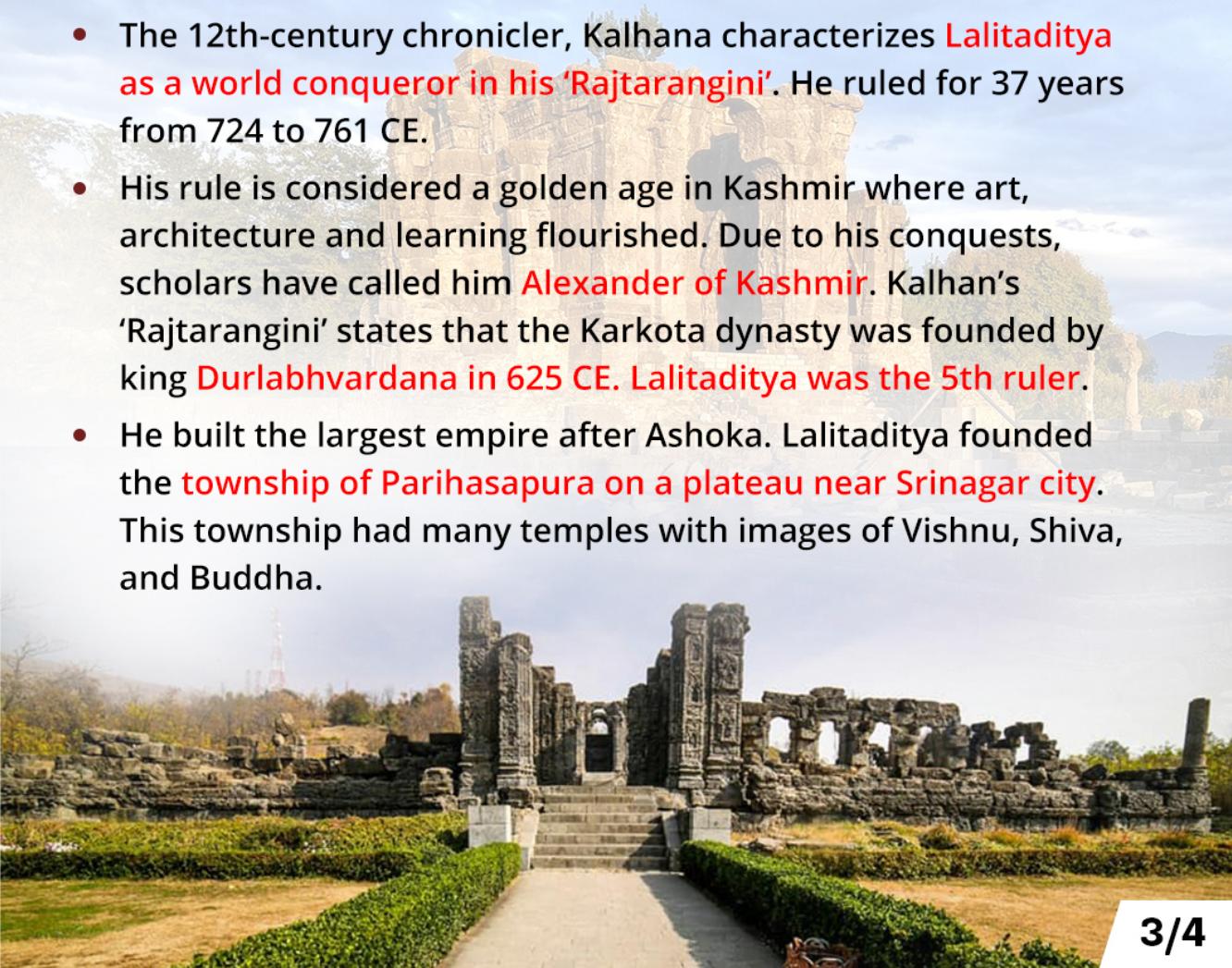
- The JK Lieutenant Governor participated in a religious ceremony held in the ruins of the **8th century Martand Sun temple**, a protected monument under the ASI (under the Ministry of Culture).

### MARTAND SUN TEMPLE

- The temple has been recognised as a “Site of National Importance”.
- It is a **Hindu temple** located near the city of **Anantnag** in the **Kashmir Valley of Jammu and Kashmir**.
- It dates back to the **eighth century AD** and was **dedicated to Surya**, the chief solar deity in Hinduism.
- It was **once a thriving place of worship**, commissioned by **Lalitaditya Muktapida**.
- It was **destroyed by Sikandar Shah Miri** in the 14th century.
- It was an **excellent specimen of Kashmiri architecture**, which had blended the **Gandharan, Gupta and Chinese** forms of architecture.

# WHO WAS LALITADITYA MUKTAPIDA?

- Lalitaditya was the most powerful ruler of the Karkota dynasty of Kashmir.
- The 12th-century chronicler, Kalhana characterizes Lalitaditya as a world conqueror in his 'Rajtarangini'. He ruled for 37 years from 724 to 761 CE.
- His rule is considered a golden age in Kashmir where art, architecture and learning flourished. Due to his conquests, scholars have called him Alexander of Kashmir. Kalhan's 'Rajtarangini' states that the Karkota dynasty was founded by king Durlabhvardana in 625 CE. Lalitaditya was the 5th ruler.
- He built the largest empire after Ashoka. Lalitaditya founded the township of Parihasapura on a plateau near Srinagar city. This township had many temples with images of Vishnu, Shiva, and Buddha.



## KARKOTA DYNASTY (C. 625 – 855 AD)

- Ruled over the **Kashmir valley** and some northern parts of the Indian subcontinent during the 7th and 8th centuries.
- **Durlabh Vardhana** was the founder of the **Karkota dynasty**.
- Their rule saw a period of political expansion, economic prosperity and the emergence of Kashmir as a center of culture and scholarship.
- The **Karkota rulers were Vaishnavas** and constructed several **Vishnu shrines** in their dominions.
- They also **patronised Buddhism** as some **stupas, chaityas and viharas** have been found in the ruins of their capital.

