



30 Days Revision Module Day 7 - Ancient India (UPSC Prelims 2021)

1) Consider the following statements about Ashokan Inscription

1. Kandahar inscription is written in Greek and Aramaic languages.
2. Ashoka is addressed as “Devanampiya” in Aramaic language in Lampaka inscription in Afghanistan.
3. James Prinsep, an officer of the East India Company deciphered both Brahmi and Kharosthi scripts used in the Ashokan Inscription

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer : d

- Ashokan inscription is found in 2 places in Afghanistan – Kandahar and Lampaka.
- Kandahar inscription is bilingual – written in Greek and Aramaic.
- In Lampaka, written in Aramaic language, Ashoka is addressed as ‘Devanampiya’.
- James Prinsep, an officer in the mint of the East India Company, deciphered Brahmi and Kharosthi, two scripts used in the earliest inscriptions and coins.
- He found that most of these mentioned a king referred to as Piyadassi – meaning “pleasant to behold”

2) Consider the following statements about Indus Valley Civilisation

1. In Dholavira and Lothal, the entire settlement was fortified and sections within the town were also separated by walls.
2. In Lothal, houses were built of mud bricks, drains were made of burnt bricks.

Which of the statements given above is/are **not correct**?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : d

- While most Harappan settlements have a small high western part and a larger lower eastern section, there are variations.
- At sites such as Dholavira and Lothal (Gujarat), the entire settlement was fortified, and sections within the town were also separated by walls.
- The Citadel within Lothal was not walled off, but was built at a height
- Drainage systems were not unique to the larger cities, but were found in smaller settlements as well.
- At Lothal, while houses were built of mud bricks, drains were made of burnt bricks.

3) With reference to Buddhism, consider the following statements

1. Dhyana Mudra, also called Samadhi, in which both the hands of the Buddha are on his lap facing upwards.
2. The Abhaya Mudra signifies fearlessness and symbolises strength and energy security.
3. Bhumisparsha Mudra was exhibited by Buddha while preaching the first sermon.

Which of the statements given above is/ are correct?

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 3 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. None of the above

Answer : a

- The Dhyana mudra is the gesture of meditation and of the concentration of the Good Law. In this mudra, two hands are placed on the lap, right hand on left hand with fingers fully stretched and palms facing upwards. It is also called samadhi.
- The Abhaya mudra (mudra of no-fear) represents protection, peace, benevolence, and dispelling of fear.
- Dharmachakra Mudra was exhibited by Lord Buddha while preaching the first sermon.

4) Consider the following statements about Indus Valley Civilization

1. The Indus people were the earliest people to produce cotton.
2. The Indus people did not use metal money for trade relations.
3. The Indus people did not know about the Horses and Elephants.
4. The Indus valley people knew the use of wheel and carts.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a. 1,2 and 3 only
- b. 1,2 and 4 only
- c. 1,3 and 4 only
- d. 2,3 and 4 only

Answer : b

- Indus people were the earliest people to produce cotton. It was probably grown at Mehrgarh from about 7000 years ago.
- The Indus people did not use metal money for the trade relations. In fact, the exchanges were regulated by a precise system of weights.
- Elephants and rhinoceros were very well known in Harappa times.
- Terracotta toy models of bullock carts suggest that this was one important means of transporting goods and people across land routes.

5) Consider the following

(Stone Age Site)	(State)
1. Hathnora	- Maharashtra
2. Gudiyam	- Tamil Nadu
3. Kuchai	- Odisha

Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 2 only
- d. 1,2 and 3

Answer : b

- Hathnora of Madhya Pradesh belongs to upper Palaeolithic era.
- The Gudiya Caves, a prehistoric archaeological site in Thiruvallur district of Tamil Nadu.
- The excavated pre-historic site of Kuchai, Odisha is known for yielding Neolithic artifacts.

6) With reference to the administration of the Mauryan Empire, consider the following pairs

	(Term)		(Meaning)
1.	Yuktas	-	Rural administrators
2.	Rajjukas	-	Revenue officer
3.	Pradesikas	-	Heads of the districts

Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?

- a. 3 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 2 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer : a

- Yuktas - Subordinate revenue officer
- Rajjukas - Responsible for assessing land
- Pradesikas - Heads of the districts

7) Consider the following statements

1. The king was elected by assemblies in the Early Vedic Age
2. Pastoralism lost its significance during the Later Vedic Age
3. During the Later Vedic Age, there is no evidence of coins used as a medium of exchange.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 2 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer : c

- During Early Vedic Period, the election of the king happened by the tribal assembly called the samiti.
- During Later Vedic Period, the pastoral and semi-nomadic forms of living were relegated to the background and agriculture became the primary source of livelihood, and life became settled and sedentary.
- Besides 'nishka', which was introduced in early Vedic age, 'satamana' - gold coins and 'krishnala' - silver coins were also used as a media of exchange.

8) What is the term Upasampada signify in Buddhism?

- a. Religious merit accrued from donations of the Buddhist order
- b. Property attached to a Buddhist monastery
- c. Initial conversion to Buddhism
- d. Final stage of initiation of a Buddhist monk

Answer : c

- Upasampada, Buddhist rite of higher ordination, by which a novice becomes a monk, or bhikhu. Ordination is not necessarily permanent and, in some countries, may be repeated in a monk's lifetime. It is an initial conversion to Buddhism.

- A candidate for ordination must be at least 20 years old, have the permission of his parents, be exempt from military service, be free from debt and from contagious disease, and have received at least some elementary instruction in Buddhism.

9) Consider the following statements

1. Khila - A Barren land
2. Dhanya - Waste land
3. Shalabhoga - A land donated to Jaina institutions
4. Pallichchandam - Land for the maintenance of a school

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 3 and 4 only
- c. 1, 2, 3 and 4
- d. None of the above

Answer : a

- In Vedic age land was classified as Urvara (cultivable land), Khila (barren land), Dhanva (waste land) and Aranya (forest).
- Shalabhoga - Land for the maintenance of a school
- Pallichchandam - A land donated to Jaina institutions

10) Consider the following statements

1. They were the first native Indian rulers to issue their coins with the portraits of the rulers.
2. They adopted their mother's name to be their surname.
3. They patronised Prakrit more than Sanskrit.
4. They supported both Buddhism and Brahminism.

Which of the following kingdoms had possessed the above features?

- a. Vakataka Kingdoms
- b. Satavahana Dynasty
- c. Pallava Kingdom
- d. Rashtrakutas dynasty

Answer : b

- The Satavahanas are identified with the Andhras of the Puranas
- The Satavahanas claimed Brahmana descent and followed Brahmanical Vedic tradition.
- Satavahanas and Shakas were involved in prolonged conflict.
- All the given statements describe satavahanas.

11) With reference to Sangam Literature, consider the following statements

1. Sangam literature dealt both with personal lives such as love and relationships as well as ethics, heroism, values and social customs.
2. Both men and women poets composed Sangam literature.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : c

- The poems belonging to the Sangam literature were composed by Tamil poets, both men and women, from various professions and classes of society.
- These poems were later collected into various anthologies, edited, and with colophons added by anthologists and annotators around 1000 AD.
- Sangam Poems falls into two categories: the 'inner field' (Agam), and the 'outer field' (Puram) as described even in the first available Tamil grammar, the Tolkappiyam.
- The 'inner field' topics refer to personal or human aspects, such as love and sexual relationships, and are dealt with in a metaphorical and abstract manner.
- The 'outer field' topics discuss all other aspects of human experience such as heroism, valour, ethics, benevolence, philanthropy, social life, and customs.

12) Which one of the following refers to the Unpaid labour in Ancient India?

- a. Bali
- b. Sulka
- c. Udranga
- d. Vishti

Answer : d

- 'Visti' in Sanskrit means mandatory or forced labour. This was one among the four kinds of taxes imposed on agriculturists or cultivators by the State.
- The other three were tax on raw produce, special levy on produce during war or famine and occasional contributions to the king's household by his subjects.

13) Consider the following pairs:

Post-Mauryan Centre for special manufacture		Craft / Articles	
1.	Mathura	-	Cloth
2.	Uraiyur	-	Dyeing
3.	Taxila	-	Glass
4.	Yelleshwaran	-	Terracotta

Which of the above pair is/are correctly matched?

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 2 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer : d

All the given pairs are correctly matched.

14) Arrange the following Indian era in chronological order.

1. Guptan Era
2. Vikrama Era
3. Saka Era

Select the correct answers using the code given below.

- a. 1 - 2 - 3
- b. 2 - 1 - 3
- c. 2 - 3 - 1
- d. 3 - 2 - 1

Answer : c

- Guptan Era - 320 AD
- Vikrama Era - 58/56 BC
- Saka Era - 76/78 AD

15) The Doctrine "Panchamahavratas" is associated with

- Buddhism
- Jainism
- Saivism
- Vaishnavism

Answer : b

It represents 5 cardinal principles of Jainism such as Ahimsa, Brahmacharya, Satya, Achaurya or Asteya, Aparigraha

16) Which of the following statements is **not correct**?

- Use of burnt bricks and rise of towns in north eastern part of India were witnessed during Mauryan period
- Kushana kings issued numerous gold coins with higher degree of metallic purity than Guptan gold coins
- Satavahanas started the practice of granting tax free villages to Brahmanas and Buddhist monks
- Harsha followed the same centralised administrative methods of Ashoka

Answer : d

- Harsha followed decentralised system of administration.

17) Consider the following statements about the Gupta Kings.

- Nalanda University was built during the period of Skanda Gupta.
- The Mehru Iron Pillar inscriptions are associated with Samudra Gupta.
- The Chinese traveler Hiuen Tsang visited India.

Which of the statements given above is/are **not correct**?

- 1 and 2 only
- 1 and 3 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 1, 2 and 3

Answer : d

- Nalanda University was built during the period of Kumaragupta.
- The Mehru Iron Pillar inscription was related to Chandra Gupta II.
- Huein-Tsang visited during Harsha period.

18) The terms "Sudesi, Ainurruvar and Nanadesi" denotes

- Traders
- Trade Guilds
- Foreign imported products
- Village officials

Answer : a

- During Pallava's period, Traders were referred as Sudesi, Ainurruvar and Nanadesi (foreign merchants).

- They formed guilds and Aihole is their main guild.
- Manigramam – Merchant's organisation

19) With reference to Indian Culture and tradition, what is "Basadi"?

- Fine Muslin cloth produced in Eastern India.
- A glass making technique introduced in India by Turks
- Jaina Monastic establishment
- A dance form in Assam

Answer : c

- During Ancient period, Jaina's monastic establishments called "Basadi" existed as a source of learning

20) Consider the following pairs

Philosophy	Explanation
1. Samkhya	- Divine Agency is not essential to the creation of the world
2. Vaisheshika	- Art of reasoning and interpretation and justification for various Vedic rituals
3. Mimamsa	- Material objects are made up of atoms

Which of the following pairs are correctly matched?

- 1 only
- 2 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 1, 2 and 3

Answer : a

- Vaisheshika - Material objects are made up of atoms
- Mimamsa - Art of reasoning and interpretation and justification for various Vedic rituals

