

16 July 2025

# UPSC

Answer Questions in NOT MORE THAN the Word Limit specified for each in the Parenthesis.  
(Specimen Answer Booklet - For Practice Purpose Only)

उम्मीदवारों को  
इस प्रश्नाएँ में  
नहीं लिखना  
चाहिए  
Candidates  
must not  
write on this  
margin

(Please do not  
write anything  
except the  
question number  
in this space)  
कृपया इस स्थान  
में प्रश्न संख्या के  
आंतरिक कुछ  
न लिखें।

Q. Discuss the main contribution of Gupta & Chola period to Indian heritage and culture. (20, 22, 15).

The Gupta Period (4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> Cent. CE) is hailed as "Golden Age of India" for its immense contributions in Indian heritage & culture, whereas, Chola dynasty (9-13 century CE) known as "Zenith" for bringing Dravidian culture to heights.

Main Contribution of Gupta Empire

Indian Heritage

① Sanskrit Literature flourished  
Kavya and drama achieved Excellence

↳ Kalidasa's Abhijñāna  
- Kuntalam

↳ Bhavabhuti



Fig. Gupta Empire & Art

2 Emergence of Shikhar-style temple & Rock-cut Shrine [e.g.] Panchayatana Style.  
↳ Dashavatara Temple, Deogarh.  
↳ Ajanta Caves (Gupta Painting)

3 Murals and Frescoes are common in Life like Jataka Tales (Life of Buddha)  
[e.g.] Ajanta Frescoes & Bodhisattva Padmapani.

## Gupta Period on Culture

① Development of Decimal system, Concept of zero, astronomy & Medicine.

Eg Aryabhata's Aryabhatiya

Eg Sushruta's Samhita, Garahana (Astronomy)

② Rise in Bhakti element, tolerance among Jainism, Buddhism & Hinduism.

Eg Gupta King were Vaishnavites but patronized Nalanda [Buddhist Center].

Eg 6 philosophies of hinduism Compiled.

③ Decentralized administration of land, grants to Brahmins. [Agraha System]

Eg Allahabad pillar, Samudragupta

④ Gupta coin reflect artistic Excellence & Royal iconography in gold coins.

Eg Chandra Gupta I - Kumardeni type.

Eg Dhanurdhori - archer type.

## The Main Contribution of Chola Period. (9-13<sup>th</sup> CE).

## Indian Heritage

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- ① Dravidian style at its zenith, massive temple with Vimanas & gopurams;

Eg. Brihadishwara Temple, Tanjore [UNESCO]  
Gangai Konda Cholapuram

- ② Mastery in Panchaloha bronze Casting.

Eg. Nataraja [Shiva or Cosmic dance].

- ③ Trade link with SE Asian countries soft power.

Eg. Naval Expedition "Sriwijaya", Angkor Wat zone temple.

## Chola Period on Culture

- ① Flourishing of Tamil Bhakti devotional literature

Eg. Thevaram, Periyapuranam.

- ② Well-organized bureaucracy, self-government.

Eg. Uttarasamer ur. Inscription.

The Cholas period known as "2nd golden age" of Tamil culture which elevated the global power while Gupta period reached India's Classical peak, their contribution laid the foundation of long lasting global Indian culture heritage.

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Q. Rock-cut architecture represents one of the most important ... early art History. (2020, 10).

Rock-cut architecture, structures carved directly into natural Rock represent oldest and enduring legacies, from Barabar Caves [3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE] to Ajanta, Ellora, and Elephanta, which offer direct, durable evidence of India's artistic, religious & socio-pol evolution.

Significance in Art & History

① Buddhist Caves show evolution from Hinayana (Stupa Worship) to Mahayana (Image Worship)

Eg Ajanta (2<sup>nd</sup> BCE-6<sup>th</sup> CE)

Vihara, Chitiyas depicting Bodhisattva & Tatha Katuri.

② Patronage to later Religion like Hinduism & Jainism.

Eg Ellora Caves Coexistence of all 3 Religion, showing Tolerance. Udayagiri caves.

③ Transition from wood to stone, intricate Planning, pillars.

Eg

Kailasa Temple, Ellora

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- ④ Grandhara, Gupta, Provision influence seen  
in depiction of god, dance, myths.  
Eg Ajanta Muralis Shows unique expression.
- ⑤ Epiographic Record helps to track king, donor  
& Religious sect.  
Eg Rudradarman's Junagadh Inscription in  
Girnar.
- ⑥ Donative Inscription provide the name  
of merchant, women and common people.  
Shows, democratization of religion.
- ⑦ Source of Soc-Economic history.  
Eg Nasik Caves inscription shows merchant  
guilds, Satavahana rules.
- ⑧ Provide tools to reconstruct Political  
History.  
Eg Kanheri Caves mention Satavahana  
Sai Kuntala.
- Preservation  
& Popularization  
of Rock-cut
- ① Digital Archiving & 3D mapping Eg ASI  
& Google art.
- ② Interact with Education & Technology.  
Eg AR/VR Headsets help  
to educate in NEP '2020.

Rock-cut architecture is not just a record  
of Chisel & hammer but a living museum of  
India's cultural, religious & political past  
making a key gene for Reconnect glorious  
Root.

Q. What were the major technology changes  
in Sultanate Period? — Influence of — study?  
(2023, 15)

"Technology opens the door to Transformation"

The Delhi Sultanate [1206 - 1526 CE] introduced significant significance for technological innovation, driven by Perso-Islamic influence, Central Asian Connection & Administrative needs which impact society.

### Major Technology Changes

- ① Introduction of Turkish Cavalry warfare.  
Use of arches on horseback  
chain-mail armor, Turkish Stirrup.



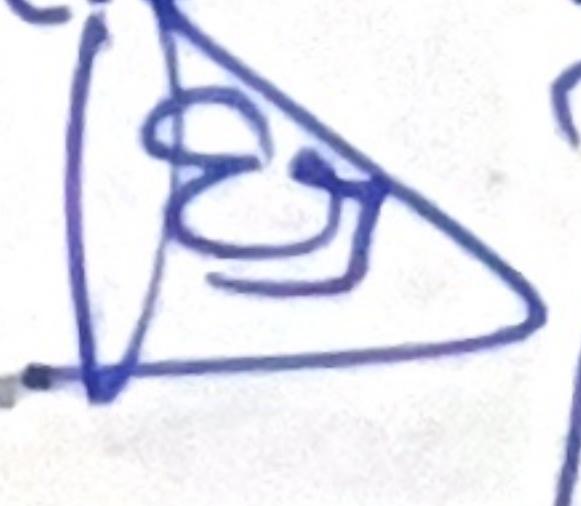
Alauddin Khilji's Cavalry Reform

- ② Development in advanced siege techniques like Trebuchets, ballistas, mining under fortifications.



Malik Kafur's Southern Campaign.

- ③ Rise in True Arch & Dome System Indo-Islamic like Voussois & Key Stone.



Alai Darwaza, Qutub Minar

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must not  
write on this  
margin

④ Enhanced water-lifting technique to  
intensify agriculture

Eg Persian Wheel [Asaghatta]. For  
Irrigation.

⑤ Wider use of iron ploughshares  
contribute to deep tillage.

⑥ Minting of Standardized Coins [Tanka, Jita]  
Alauddin introduced, Silver Tanka  
enable trade integration.

⑦ Improved techniques in metal work  
& weaponry.

Eg Damascus-steel Bihari  
like production in

Eg sword-making [Tipu Sultan]

Influence of Technology  
Change in Indian Society



Fig. Map of  
Sultanate.

Economic

① Boost to urbanization and Trade.

Cities like Delhi, Multan, Lakhnauti  
become center of military & craft based industry.

② Agricultural Surplus & Market Economy  
improved



High production in Punjab &  
Haryana region.

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## Cultural

- ③ Fusion of Indo-Islamic Style.

↳ Dome & arches influence temple  
arch. in Deccan & Gujarat.

## Art

- ④ Emergence of Kariyars & weavers  
as economic backbone

↳ Zari & rustin Production

- ⑤ State patronage to artisans

↳ Alauddin Khilji's Market Reform

- ⑥ Boosted Record Keeping, administration  
efficiency & Madrasa culture.

↳ Nasiruddin's libraries

## Military

- ⑦ Shifting from Feudal to Centralized  
Military Command.

↳ Delhi Sultans control Rajput Chief Army  
standing org.

The Delhi Sultanate Period marked as  
technological turning point, integrating Turko-  
Persian innovation with Indian ethos which  
transformed societal structure, and giving rise to  
Urbanization &