



# VISIONIAS

[www.visionias.in](http://www.visionias.in)

Test Booklet Series

TEST BOOKLET

C

GENERAL STUDIES (P) 2026 – Test – 6321

Time Allowed: Two Hours

Maximum Marks: 200

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE EXAMINATION, YOU SHOULD CHECK THAT THIS BOOKLET DOES **NOT** HAVE ANY UNPRINTED OR TURN OR MISSING PAGES OR ITEMS, ETC. IF SO, GET IT REPLACED BY A COMPLETE TEST BOOKLET.
2. ENCODE CLEARLY THE TEST BOOKLET SERIES **A, B, C** OR **D** AS THE CASE MAY BE IN THE APPROPRIATE PLACE IN THE ANSWER SHEET.
3. You have to enter your Roll Number on the Test Booklet in the Box provided alongside. **Do NOT** write anything else on the Test Booklet.
4. This Test Booklet contains **100** items (Questions). Each item is printed in **English**. Each item comprises four responses (answers). You will select the response which you want to mark on the Answer Sheet. In case you feel that there is more than one correct response with you consider the best. In any case, choose **ONLY ONE** response for each item.
5. You have to mark all your responses **ONLY** on the separate Answer Sheet provided. See direction in the answers sheet.
6. All items carry equal marks. Attempt all items. Your total marks will depend only on the number of **correct responses** marked by you in the answer sheet. For **every incorrect** response **1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the allotted marks** will be deducted.
7. Before you proceed to mark in the Answer sheet the response to various items in the Test booklet, you have to fill in some particulars in the answer sheets as per instruction sent to you with your Admission Certificate.
8. After you have completed filling in all responses on the answer sheet and the examination has concluded, you should hand over to Invigilator only the answer sheet. You are permitted to take away with you the Test Booklet.
9. Sheet for rough work are appended in the Test Booklet at the end.

**DO NOT OPEN THIS BOOKLET UNTIL YOU ARE ASKED TO DO SO**

1. Which one of the following statements is correct?
- (a) Lomas Rishi Cave is part of the Ajanta complex.
- (b) Udayagiri Caves are located near Vidisha in Madhya Pradesh.
- (c) Barabar Caves are located near Bhubaneswar.
- (d) Elephanta Caves are situated on the banks of Ganga River.

2. The "Kashi Declaration", recently in news, is related to:
- (a) Promotion of India's cultural heritage through G20 cultural track
- (b) Setting a roadmap for the nationwide De-Addiction Movement
- (c) Framing policies for sustainable urban development in Varanasi
- (d) Strengthening international Buddhist tourism circuits

3. Consider the following pairs:

Authors	Literary work
1. Asvaghosa	: Buddhacharita
2. Vasumitra	: Milindapanho
3. Bilhana	: Devichandragupta

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

4. Consider the following statements about the Suharwardi silsila:
1. Saint Hamid-ud-Din Nagori belonged to the Suhrawardi order.
2. Suharwardi saints believed in leading a life of poverty.
3. They did not accept the State service.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 3
- (d) 1 and 3 only

5. Consider the following pairs:

<i>Vedic terms</i>	<i>Meaning in Vedic society</i>
--------------------	---------------------------------

1. Purcharishnu : A moving fort or war chariot used in battle
2. Goshu : Refers to search for cows or conflicts over cows
3. Langala : Refers to the plough used in agriculture

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

6. Consider the following architectural structures:

1. Shivneri fort
2. Khanderi fort
3. Rajgad Fort
4. Kumbhalgarh fort

How many of the above are part of the Maratha Military Landscapes of India, a UNESCO World Heritage Site?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All four

7. With reference to the social structure prevalent in the Sangam age, consider the following statements:

1. The practice of Sati was prohibited in the Sangam society.
2. Agricultural operations such as ploughing were mainly confined to the members of the lowest class.
3. The rich nobles were invested with the title of *enadi* to demarcate the society.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 3 only
- (c) 2 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

8. Which among the following works was/were composed by *Amir Khusrau*?

1. Tuti Nama
2. Miftah-ul Futuh
3. Nuh Siphir

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 only
- (d) 3 only

9. With reference to the religious history of India, consider the following statements:

1. Jainism is based on the philosophy of Anekantavada.
2. Both Buddhism and Jainism reject the authority of the Vedas.
3. Madhyamaka and Yogacara are sub-schools of Jainism.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

10. With reference to the differences between the Vedic age and the Mahajanpada period, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. In Vedic times, exchange was conducted through barter, whereas coins made of metal were used in the Mahajanpada period.
2. In the Mahajanpada period, voluntary payment was made by the peasants to the king, whereas there is no evidence of this type of collection in Vedic age.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

11. Which among the following Delhi sultan had established a separate government department for the welfare of slaves (*Diwan-i-Bandagan*) and trained them in handicrafts and employed them in the royal workshops?

- (a) Muhammad bin Tughlaq
- (b) Firuz Shah Tughlaq
- (c) Alauddin Khalji
- (d) Iltutmish

- 12.** Consider the following statements regarding the ASTRA Missile:
1. Astra is an indigenous Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air Missile (BVRAAM) developed by DRDO.
  2. It is designed to engage and destroy highly manoeuvring supersonic aircraft.
  3. The missile has all-weather day and night capability.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) Only one
  - (b) Only two
  - (c) All three
  - (d) None
- 13.** The details of Ashoka's war with Kalinga are given in the
- (a) Rock Edict X
  - (b) Rock Edict XIII
  - (c) Arthashastra
  - (d) Sarnath Pillar
- 14.** With reference to India's culture and tradition, what is Thang-Ta?
- (a) It is an ancient martial art of Manipur.
  - (b) It is a ritualistic dance performed in the Buddhist temples of Ladakh.
  - (c) It is a traditional handloom weaving technique of Nagaland.
  - (d) It is a music style prevalent in Sikkim.
- 15.** Which among the following was responsible for the intelligence and household affairs, under Shivaji's Ashtapradhan system?
- (a) Majumdar
  - (b) Dabir
  - (c) Panditrao
  - (d) Waqenavis

- 16.** Consider the following pairs:
- | <i>Author</i>  | <i>Work</i>             |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Bilhana     | : Kumarapalacharita     |
| 2. Hemachandra | : Vikramankadevacharita |
| 3. Kalhana     | : Rajatarangini         |
- How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?
- (a) Only one pair
  - (b) Only two pairs
  - (c) All three pairs
  - (d) None of the pairs
- 17.** Consider the following statements regarding Alexander's invasion of India (327–325 BCE):
1. Alexander entered India through the Karakoram Range, crossing into the Punjab directly.
  2. After the Battle of Hydaspes, Alexander founded the city of Nicaea to commemorate his victory.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) 1 only
  - (b) 2 only
  - (c) Both 1 and 2
  - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 18.** Uparikara and Udranga, as mentioned in the Gupta inscriptions, are related to which of the following?
- (a) Judicial penalties
  - (b) Agricultural taxes
  - (c) Trade levies
  - (d) Designations of administrative officers

19. In order to encourage trade and commerce, which among the following reforms taken up by the Sher Shah Suri:

1. Collection of taxes allowed only at point of entry and point of sale.
2. Standardization of metal content of gold and silver coins.
3. Large network of sarais on the highways.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 3 only
- (b) 1, 2 and 3
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1 and 3 only

20. Which of the following statements best describes the term 'Gas Flaring', recently seen in the news?

- (a) The process of compressing natural gas for transportation in pipelines.
- (b) The controlled burning of natural gas released during oil extraction.
- (c) The release of unburned methane directly into the atmosphere.
- (d) The conversion of natural gas into hydrogen through steam reforming.

21. Consider the following statements with respect to Amara-Nayakas system of Vijayanagar empire:

1. Amara-nayakas were military commanders.
2. Kings could transfer amara-nayakas from one place to another.
3. Amara-nayakas had powers to collect taxes.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

22. Arrange the following Mahajanapadas in the correct geographical order from north to south:

1. Kamboja
2. Gandhara
3. Magadha
4. Asmaka

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1-2-3-4
- (b) 2-1-3-4
- (c) 2-1-4-3
- (d) 1-2-4-3

23. In the Gupta administration, the empire was divided into provinces, each under a governor, and further into districts under local heads. Which of the following terms correctly refer to the provincial governors and the district heads, respectively?

- (a) Uparikas and Vishayapatis
- (b) Bhogikas and Vishayapatis
- (c) Amatyas and Uparikas
- (d) Vishayapatis and Sannidhats

24. Consider the following events in the history of India :

1. Establishment of Mughal empire by Babur
2. Raziya ascended to the throne of the Delhi Sultanate
3. Rudramadevi became ruler of the Kakatiya dynasty
4. Bahmani kingdom founded by Alauddin Hasan Bahman Shah

What is the correct chronological order of the above events, starting from the earliest time?

- (a) 1-4-3-1
- (b) 3-2-1-4
- (c) 3-2-4-1
- (d) 2-3-4-1

25. Which of the following heads the Capacity Building Commission (CBC), launched as a part of Mission Karmayogi?
- (a) Ministry of Home Affairs
  - (b) Prime minister
  - (c) Secretary
  - (d) Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions
26. Which of the following statements best describes the term Operation Mahadev, recently seen in the news?
- (a) An Indian Army counter-insurgency operation was launched in Jammu & Kashmir to dismantle terror networks.
  - (b) A joint Indo–Nepal military exercise is conducted annually to strengthen mountain warfare capabilities.
  - (c) A Ministry of Power initiative to enhance hydroelectric capacity in Himalayan states by 2030.
  - (d) An Archaeological Survey of India project to digitally document and preserve ancient Shaivite temples across central India.
27. Consider the following statements about Vajrayana Buddhism:
1. It emphasized the possibility of achieving liberation in a single lifetime through specialised mystical practices.
  2. Vajrayana first emerged in China as a distinct sect of Buddhism before spreading elsewhere.
  3. It developed as a later branch of Mahayana Buddhism.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only
  - (b) 2 and 3 only
  - (c) 1 and 3 only
  - (d) 1, 2 and 3

28. With reference to the Gupta period, consider the following statements:
1. The scholars known as Navratnas lived during the reign of Samudragupta.
  2. The Gupta adopted both the Nagara and Dravidian styles of temple architecture.
  3. The famous Chinese pilgrim, Fahien, visited India during the reign of Chandragupta II.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only
  - (b) 2 and 3 only
  - (c) 1 and 3 only
  - (d) 1, 2 and 3
29. With reference to Vijayanagar empire, which one of the following statements is **not** correct?
- (a) Harihara and Bukka laid the foundation of the Vijayanagar empire in 1336 A.D.
  - (b) Vijayanagar empire was founded on the northern bank of Tungabhadra river.
  - (c) Vijayanagar rulers made Pampapati their patron deity and family god.
  - (d) Vijayanagara empire was contemporary to the Gajapati dynasty of Orissa.
30. Consider the following statements about the Ramanujacharya:
1. Ramanujacharya propounded the Vishistadvaita philosophy.
  2. He rejected the idea that the world is just an illusion.
- Which of the following statements is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
  - (b) 2 only
  - (c) Both 1 and 2
  - (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**31.** Consider the following Indian folk painting traditions:

1. Madhubani
2. Pattachitra
3. Warli

Which of the above are predominantly found in eastern India?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

**32.** Which of the following Indus Valley Civilization sites is *not* a port city?

- (a) Chanhudaro
- (b) Sutkagendor
- (c) Kuntasi
- (d) Balakot

**33.** In the context of Medieval India, arrange the following battles in the chronological order:

1. Battle of Haldighati
2. Battle of Samugarh
3. Battle of Chausa
4. Battle of Khanwa

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 3-4-2-1
- (b) 4-3-1-2
- (c) 4-3-2-1
- (d) 3-4-1-2

**34.** Consider the following statements regarding the Ethanol Blending Programme in India:

1. Ethanol blending refers to mixing ethanol with petrol or diesel to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.
2. India has achieved its target of 20% ethanol blending in petrol.
3. Ethanol can be produced from multiple feedstocks, including sugarcane, damaged food grains, maize, and surplus rice.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 2 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

**35.** In the context of ancient Indian religious traditions, "Sasana Devi/ Shasana Devi" refers to:

- (a) A protective goddess associated with Tirthankaras in Jainism.
- (b) A goddess of wisdom worshipped in Vajrayana Buddhism.
- (c) A goddess representing divine energy in Shaktism.
- (d) A deity associated with the worship of Lord Shiva in Kalamukha Saivism.

**36.** Consider the following statement:

"He was a foreign traveller who visited the court of Deva Raya II of the Vijayanagara empire. He gave a vivid account of the Vijayanagar city and mentioned the seven lines of forts of the Vijayanagar empire".

The above statement reflects which one of the following foreign travellers?

- (a) Fernao Nuniz
- (b) Domingos Paes
- (c) Abdur Razzaq
- (d) Ibn Bututa



37. Consider the following statements regarding the Grandala bird:
1. It is a native of the high-altitude region of the Himalayas and Tibetan Plateau.
  2. It is a vocal bird, known for its melodious singing.
  3. It is listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List.
- How many of the statements given above are correct
- (a) Only one  
(b) Only two  
(c) All three  
(d) None
38. With reference to Bhakti movement in South India, consider the following statements about Alvars:
1. There were 12 Alvars.
  2. Alvars saints were great supporters of Buddhist ideas.
  3. Akkamahadevi was the only female saint among the Alvars.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) Only one  
(b) Only two  
(c) All three  
(d) None
39. Famous literary works Amukthamalyadha and Jambavati Kalyanam composed by which of the following?
- (a) Malik Muhammad Jaisi  
(b) Harisena  
(c) Tenali Ramakrishna  
(d) Krishnadevaraya

40. Consider the following pairs:
- | <i>Ancient port cities</i> | <i>Modern-day locations</i> |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Shaliyur                | : Tamilnadu                 |
| 2. Muziris                 | : Kerala                    |
| 3. Ghantasala              | : Andhra Pradesh            |
| 4. Tamralipti              | : West Bengal               |
- How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?
- (a) Only one  
(b) Only two  
(c) Only three  
(d) All four
41. Piprahwa relics were recently repatriated to India after a planned sale in Hong Kong was halted. These artefacts belong to which of the following religions?
- (a) Hinduism  
(b) Islam  
(c) Buddhism  
(d) Jainism
42. Consider the following statements regarding the Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS) in India:
1. The scheme has been notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 by the Ministry of Power.
  2. The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) has been designated as the administrator of the scheme.
- 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



43. Consider the following pairs:

<i>Exercise</i>	<i>Partner Country</i>
-----------------	------------------------

- |                     |             |
|---------------------|-------------|
| 1. Talisman Sabre   | : USA       |
| 2. Jaa Mata         | : Nepal     |
| 3. Bold Kurukshetra | : Sri Lanka |

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

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

44. With reference to the Bhakti movement in medieval India, consider the following statements:

- 1. Vallabhacharya propounded the Pushtimarg sect based on the worship of Lord Shiva.
- 2. Dadu Dayal propagated the Nirguna Saint tradition in present-day Gujarat and Rajasthan.
- 3. Surdas was a sixteenth-century saint who composed songs centered around Krishna.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

45. Consider the following statements with respect to Virashaiva or the Lingayat movement:

- 1. They did not practise funerary rites such as cremation.
- 2. They did not believe in visiting the pilgrimages places.
- 3. They supported the ideas of Jainism.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 3
- (d) 3 only

46. Consider the following statements regarding the Ahar Culture:

- 1. It is primarily located along the Banas and its tributaries in south-eastern Rajasthan.
- 2. Black-and-red ware pottery with white painted designs is a distinctive feature of this culture.
- 3. Newasa and Tripuri are important sites of this culture.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

47. Consider the following statements:
1. Gandakasela and Ganjam on the east coast were important seaports of this dynasty.
  2. Gathasaptasati (also called Sattasai) is an excellent piece of Prakrit literature belonging to this period.
  3. The rulers of this dynasty patronized both Buddhism and Brahmanism.

The above given statements are associated with which of the following dynasty?

- (a) Satavahanas
- (b) Ikshvakus
- (c) Kadambas
- (d) Vakatakas

48. Consider the following statements regarding the Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana:

1. The scheme aims to address all the low crop productivity districts in India.
2. The scheme is implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.

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

49. The dynasty was a feudatory of the Western Chalukyas. It is famous for the Thousand Pillared Temple. The Kohinoor diamond in India was found during this dynastic era. The dynasty is still used as an example of using best practices of water conservation tanks. The empire also witnessed an Islamic attack. Which of the following dynasties is being referred to in the above passage?

- (a) Kakatiya
- (b) Rashtrakutas
- (c) Hoysalas
- (d) Pallavas

50. How many of the following countries are member nations of AUKUS?

1. Australia
2. United Kingdom
3. Ukraine
4. Austria
5. USA
6. Uzbekistan

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) Only three
- (b) Only four
- (c) Only five
- (d) All six

51. This Sanskrit prose romance, composed during the Gupta period, narrates the love story of Prince Kandarpaketu and a princess. It is considered one of the earliest specimens of ornate prose (gadya-kavya), marked by elaborate descriptions and literary flourishes. The work is attributed to Subandhu, a Gupta courtier, and sets the trend for later Sanskrit prose romances.

Which of the following works fits the above description?

- (a) Setubandha
- (b) Kadambari
- (c) Vasavadatta
- (d) Avantisundari Katha

**52.** Consider the following statements regarding the Kushanas:

1. The Kushanas originally belonged to Western China and were also known as the Yueh-chis.
2. Gondophernes was the first prominent ruler of the Kushana dynasty.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

**53.** With reference to the history of philosophical thought in India, consider the following statements regarding the Vaisheshika school:

1. The founder of the Vaishesika system of Indian philosophy is Kanada.
2. The Vaishesika system considers liberation (moksha) as the supreme goal of human life.
3. The followers of this school also accept the existence of God.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

**54.** Gunadya and Sharvavarma, renowned poets and scholars, were associated with which dynasty?

- (a) Maurya Dynasty
- (b) Gupta Dynasty
- (c) Satavahana Dynasty
- (d) Shunga Dynasty

**55.** Consider the following statements regarding the development of sculpture art during the Gupta period:

1. The Mathura school of Gupta art is noted for delicately carved drapery folds, while at Sarnath, the drapery became nearly invisible, marked only by faint lines.
2. The human figure became the central pivot of Gupta sculpture, with emphasis on smooth, supple forms and transparent drapery.
3. The famous Sheshashayi Vishnu panel from the Deogarh temple represents the cosmic balance between dissolution and creation.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1 and 3 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

**56.** It denies the existence of soul and God, rejects dharma and moksha among the four puruṣārthas, and considers material enjoyment as the ultimate goal of life.

The above-mentioned features are associated with which one of the following ancient Indian philosophical systems?

- (a) Samkhya
- (b) Charvaka
- (c) Nyaya
- (d) Vedanta

57. Consider the following pairs:

<i>Craft/Heritage</i>	<i>State</i>
1. Puthukkuli shawl	: Tamil Nadu
2. Baluchari saree	: West Bengal
3. Sujni embroidery	: Bihar

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

58. Consider the following pairs:

<i>Title</i>	<i>Belongs to the Ruler</i>
1. Adivaraha	: King Bhoja
2. Friend of the Poor	: Ali Adil Shah
3. Malik-ut-Tujjar	: Mahmud Gawan.

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

- (a) Only one pair
- (b) Only two pairs
- (c) All three pairs
- (d) None of the pairs

59. Consider the following pairs:

<i>Prehistoric sites</i>	<i>Present-day locations</i>
--------------------------	------------------------------

1. Liddar Valley	: Kashmir
2. Belan Valley	: Uttar Pradesh
3. Soan Valley	: Maharashtra

Which of the above pairs are correctly matched?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

60. With reference to the Gupta administration, the terms Bhukti and Vishya denote

- (a) titles of military commanders in the Gupta army
- (b) categories of land revenue assessment
- (c) units of provincial and district administration
- (d) types of religious endowments granted to temples

61. In context of medieval Indian history, the term “kudirai chettis” referred to

- (a) Horse merchants
- (b) Gold coins
- (c) Persian calligraphists
- (d) Weapons

62. Consider the following statements regarding the FIDE Women’s World Cup:

- 1. The FIDE Women’s World Cup is organized by the International Chess Federation.
- 2. Divya Deshmukh becomes the first Indian woman to win the Women’s World Cup Championship.
- 3. India hosted the latest edition of the FIDE Women’s World Cup in 2025 at Chennai.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1 and 2 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

63. Which among the following dynasties of Delhi Sultanate was in power when Timur invaded India?

- (a) Khalji dynasty
- (b) Lodi dynasty
- (c) Saiyid dynasty
- (d) Tughlaq dynasty

64. Consider the following statements with respect to the social divisions of the Rigvedic times:

1. Kinship was the basis of social structure.
2. Women could not attend assemblies and offer sacrifices.
3. Slaves were given as gifts to the priests.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 3
- (d) 1 and 3 only

65. With reference to *ziyarat* in Sufism, consider the following statements:

1. It refers to the practice of pilgrimage to the dargah of the Sufi saint on his death anniversary.
2. The practice started during the times of Mughal rule in India.
3. The practice has direct relevance to the evolution of Qawwali.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1 and 3 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

66. Which of the following Indian manuscripts are the latest additions to UNESCO's Memory of the World Register as of August 2025?

- (a) Bhagavad Gita and Natyashastra
- (b) Arthashastra and Manusmriti
- (c) Rigveda and Samaveda
- (d) Ramayana and Mahabharata

67. With reference to the cultural history of India, consider the following statements:

1. Jodha Bai's Palace was constructed by Akbar at the Red Fort.
2. The pietra dura method of decoration became more popular during the reign of Shah Jahan.
3. Red sandstone was used in making the Jama Masjid in Delhi.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

68. Which of the following reports given below are published by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)?

1. Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme
2. Global Education Monitoring Report
3. World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

69. Which of the following best describes the term 'Ratnins' in the Vedic context?
- (a) The tribal assemblies such as Sabha and Samiti that advised the king
  - (b) The key dignitaries and associates of the king in rituals and governance
  - (c) The hereditary revenue officials responsible for land assessment
  - (d) The guild leaders who regulated trade and crafts in Vedic society

70. The Vedangas are six auxiliary disciplines of the Vedas. In this context, consider the following:

1. Shiksha (Phonetics)
2. Kalpa (Rituals)
3. Vyakarana (Grammar)
4. Nirukta (Etymology)
5. Itihasa (Epics)
6. Dharma Shastra (Law codes)

How many of the above are part of the Vedangas?

- (a) Only two
- (b) Only four
- (c) Only five
- (d) All six

71. With reference to the cultural history of medieval India, consider the following statements:

1. The Indian classical work Ragadarpan was translated into Persian during the reign of Alauddin Khilji.
2. Amir Khusrau introduced several new ragas, such as ghora and sanam.

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

72. Which of the following emperors was called "Amitragatha" by the Greeks, meaning "slayer of enemies," and is said to have conquered the Deccan up to Mysore?

- (a) Chandragupta Maurya
- (b) Bindusara
- (c) Ashoka
- (d) Samudragupta

73. Assertion (A): Digital Colonialism refers to the domination of digital infrastructure, data, and platforms of developing countries by a few global technology corporations.

Reason (R): It includes the centralised capture and management of data from individuals, with or without their explicit consent, threatening individual autonomy.

Which of the options given below is/are correct?

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation for A.
- (b) Both A and R are true but R is not the correct explanation for A.
- (c) A is true, while R is false.
- (d) A is false, while R is true.

74. Consider the following languages notified as Classical Languages by the Government of India:

1. Sanskrit
2. Tamil
3. Prakrit
4. Marathi

How many of the above were given Classical Language status before 2010?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All four

**75.** Consider the following statements regarding the International Organisation for Mediation (IOM):

1. India is among the founding members of the International Organisation for Mediation.
2. Its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.
3. Membership of the IOM is open only to states that are members of the United Nations.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

**76.** The play Vikramorvashiyam belongs to which of the following authors?

- (a) Bhasa
- (b) Vishakhadatta
- (c) Bharavi
- (d) Kalidasa

**77.** This ancient centre of learning was renowned for its Ghatika, which attracted students from across India and abroad. Mayurasarman, the founder of the Kadamba dynasty, studied the Vedas here. The Buddhist writer Dinganaga also came to study at this place, and Dharmapala, who later became the Head of Nalanda University, belonged to this place.

The above given description refers to which of the following famous ancient learning centre?

- (a) Takshashila
- (b) Ujjain
- (c) Vallabhi
- (d) Kanchi

**78.** How many of the following are the Pillars of Digital India?

1. Broadband Highways
2. Universal Access to Phones
3. Early Harvest Programmes
4. Information for All
5. E-Governance

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) Only two
- (b) Only three
- (c) Only four
- (d) All five

**79.** With reference to the art and archaeological history of India, which one among the following was made earliest?

- (a) Kailasa Temple at Ellora
- (b) Great Stupa at Sanchi
- (c) Sun Temple at Konark
- (d) Dilwara Temples at Mount Abu

**80.** The report "Global Peace Index", recently released, is published by:

- (a) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- (b) Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP)
- (c) Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
- (d) World Economic Forum



81. With reference to the history and cultural traditions of India, consider the following pairs:

<i>Folk / Living Tradition</i>	<i>State</i>
1. Tamasha	: Maharashtra
2. Raslila	: Karnataka
3. Bhavai	: Gujarat

Which of the pairs given above are correctly matched?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

82. Consider the following statements with respect to Local Self Government during the Chola period:

- 1. Uttaramerur inscription gives details of the functioning of the village assembly.
- 2. The affairs of the village were managed by an executive committee.
- 3. A person above 18 years of age could become a member of Gram Sabha.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

83. To counter the threat of Mongol invasions on Delhi, which among the following administrative steps were taken by the Alauddin Khalji?

- 1. Levied additional taxes on peasants even during the famine to meet the expense of maintaining a large army.
- 2. Constructed a new garrison town named Siri for his soldiers.
- 3. Chose to pay his soldiers salaries in cash rather than iqtas.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 2 and 3 only
- (b) 1 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

84. Recently, the WHO declared India free of Trachoma. In this context, the Trachoma disease is related to:

- (a) Heart
- (b) Eye
- (c) Legs
- (d) Brain

85. The "3 by 35" Initiative, sometimes seen in the news, refers to:

- (a) A global health campaign by WHO to raise prices of three unhealthy products, tobacco, alcohol, and sugary drinks—by the year 2035.
- (b) An Indian renewable energy target to achieve 35% of electricity generation from three major clean sources—solar, wind, and hydro—by 2035.
- (c) A Ministry of Education program to ensure that children achieve minimum proficiency in three foundational skills—reading, writing, and numeracy—by age 5.
- (d) A climate initiative by UNDP to cut greenhouse gas emissions in three critical sectors—transport, power, and agriculture—by 35% before 2035.

- 86.** Consider the following statements regarding the Bharat Forecast System (BFS):
1. It is a global numerical weather prediction system which has the highest resolution in the world.
  2. It has been developed by the India Meteorological Department along with Indian Space Research Organisation.
- 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

- 87.** With respect to Krishnadeva Raya, consider the following statements:
1. Krishnadeva Raya constructed the Hiriya canal for irrigation purposes.
  2. He was also known as Abhinava Bhoja.
  3. Krishnadeva Raya led the Battle of Talikota.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) 1 and 3 only  
(b) 1, 2 and 3  
(c) 2 only  
(d) 1 and 2 only

- 88.** Consider the following pairs:
- | <i>Deccan Sultanates</i> | <i>Dynasty</i> |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| 1. Ahmadnagar            | : Nizam Shahi  |
| 2. Bijapur               | : Adil Shahi   |
| 3. Golkonda              | : Qutb Shahi   |
| 4. Berar                 | : Farooqi      |
- How many pairs given above are correctly matched?
- (a) Only one pair  
(b) Only two pairs  
(c) Only three pairs  
(d) All four pairs

- 89.** Which of the following statements are *not* correct regarding the Khajuraho Group of Monuments?
1. The temples of Khajuraho were constructed by the Chandela rulers during the 10th to 12th centuries CE.
  2. Chausath Yogini Temple is the largest Hindu temple in the Khajuraho Group of Monuments.
  3. The temples were originally constructed in the Dravidian style of architecture.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below.
- (a) 1 and 2 only  
(b) 2 and 3 only  
(c) 3 only  
(d) 1, 2 and 3
- 90.** A community of people called Killekyata is well-known for their
- (a) martial dance traditions in Central India  
(b) shadow puppet theatre in South India  
(c) wood carving traditions in North-East India  
(d) devotional singing traditions in South India
- 91.** In the context of Sangam literature, the term "Antharar" refers to which of the following roles?
- (a) Merchants  
(b) Envoys  
(c) Spies  
(d) Priests

**92.** Recently, Union Minister said that Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project will be Operational by 2027. In this regard, which of the following countries are part of the project?

1. India
2. Myanmar
3. Bangladesh
4. Nepal

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

**93.** Which of the following correctly describes the Girmitiya community?

- (a) They were freedom fighters from India who signed agreements to fight alongside the British Army in World War I.
- (b) They were Indian traders who migrated voluntarily to Southeast Asia during the 19th century.
- (c) Indian agricultural settlers who voluntarily migrated to East Africa to cultivate cash crops as part of British colonial expansion policies.
- (d) They were Indian indentured labourers taken to British colonies under contracts, mostly to work on plantations.

**94.** Consider the following Mahajanapadas:

1. Vajji
2. Avanti
3. Malla
4. Licchavi

Which of the above were considered monarchical states?

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

**95.** Consider the following statements regarding the Gharial in India:

1. Gharial is a freshwater crocodilian species native to the Indian subcontinent.
2. It is listed as vulnerable on the IUCN Red List.

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

**96.** The Pithora and Phad are the

- (a) painting traditions of India
- (b) famous pilgrimage routes of Buddhism
- (c) forms of classical music in South India
- (d) branches of early Indian mathematics

**97.** Consider the following statements regarding Agrarian reforms taken up by Alauddin Khilji:

1. Under his rule, land taxes were collected directly from the cultivators.
2. Kharaj was the land tax collected from the peasants.
3. He set up Diwan-i-Amir-i-Kohi as a separate department to extend and improve cultivation in the Ganga doab region.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

98. Which of the following is/are correct with reference to Malik Ambar?
1. He belonged to the family of nobles in the Bahmani sultanate.
  2. He supported the Mughal ruler Akbar in his struggle against the Marathas.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below.
- (a) 1 only  
(b) 2 only  
(c) Both 1 and 2  
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
99. Which of the following was/were the characteristic features of Neolithic age?
1. Predominantly hunting and gathering communities with absence of farming.
  2. Grinding and polishing of stone tools.
  3. Use of pottery.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below.
- (a) 1, 2 and 3  
(b) 1 and 3 only  
(c) 2 and 3 only  
(d) 2 only
100. Which among the following Chola rulers established a Chola administrative province in the northern part of Anuradhapura Kingdom of Sri Lanka and also conquered Maldives towards the end of his reign?
- (a) Vijayalaya Chola  
(b) Aditya I  
(c) Parantaka I  
(d) Rajaraja

**Copyright © by Vision IAS**

*All rights are reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission of Vision IAS.*



---

## ANSWERS & EXPLANATIONS

### GENERAL STUDIES (P) TEST – 6321 (2026)

---

#### Q 1.B

- **Lomas Rishi Cave is part of the Barabar Caves in Bihar**, famous for their granite rock-cut architecture and the characteristic arched doorway. Ajanta Caves are Buddhist rock-cut caves in Maharashtra. **Hence, option (a) is not correct.**
- **Udayagiri Caves are rock-cut caves near Vidisha, Madhya Pradesh.** They belong to the Gupta period (4th–5th century CE) and are famous for sculptures of Hindu deities, including Vishnu in Varaha form. **Hence, option (b) is correct.**
- **The Barabar Hill Caves are the oldest surviving rock-cut caves in India, dating from the Maurya Empire**, some with Ashokan inscriptions, located in the Makhdumpur region of Jehanabad district, Bihar, India, 24 km north of Gaya. **Hence, option (c) is not correct.**
- **Elephanta Caves are on Elephanta Island near Mumbai, in the Mumbai Harbour (Maharashtra), not on the Ganga River.** They are famous for Shaivite sculptures, especially Trimurti Shiva. **Hence, option (d) is not correct.**

#### Q 2.B

- **Context: The three-day Youth Spiritual Summit on the topic of Drug-free Youth for Developed India concluded with the Kashi Declaration.**
  - The Kashi Declaration lays out a five-year roadmap for a nationwide de-addiction campaign. It acknowledges substance abuse as a public health and societal issue, not just a criminal offense. The declaration commits to developing coordinated policies involving various ministries and youth organizations.
  - A Joint National Committee will be formed to monitor progress, along with annual reports and a national platform to link individuals with support services.
  - The initiative stresses the integration of spiritual, educational, and cultural tools to address drug abuse at the community level. Youth engagement in value-based programs, community service, and digital outreach will be scaled up across regions. Varanasi (Kashi), where the declaration was adopted, is one of the oldest living cities and a spiritual hub in India.
- **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer**

#### Q 3.B

- Asvaghosa (1st–2nd century CE) was a Buddhist philosopher-poet who wrote Buddhacharita, a Sanskrit mahākāvya narrating the life of the Buddha. **Hence, pair 1 is correctly matched.**
- Milindapañho (Questions of King Milinda) is attributed to Nāgasena, not Vasumitra. Vasumitra (2nd century CE, Kushana period) presided over the Fourth Buddhist Council and is credited with Samayabhedoparacanacakra, a work on Buddhist sects. **Hence, pair 2 is not correctly matched.**
- Bilhana, a Kashmiri poet (11th century CE), authored the drama Devichandraguptam. The play narrates an episode from the early Gupta period involving Ramagupta, Chandragupta II, and Queen Dhruvadevi. **Hence, pair 3 is correctly matched.**

#### Q 4.A

- **The Suhrawardi order, initially founded in Baghdad, gradually expanded its influence across multiple regions of the Islamic world, most notably in Persia (Iran) and the Indian subcontinent.**

- The Suhrawardi order is an orthodox Sunni Sufi order, founded in 12th-century Baghdad by Abu al-Najib al-Suhrawardi, a Persian Sufi who died in 1168 CE. The Suhrawardi order entered India at about the same time as the Chishtis. The most well-known saints of the order were Shaikh Shihabuddin Suhrawardi and Hamid-ud-Din Nagori. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- Unlike the Chishtis, the Suhrawardi saints did not believe in leading a life of poverty. They accepted the service of the state, and some of them held important posts in the ecclesiastical department. The Chishtis, on the other hand, preferred to keep aloof from state politics and shunned the company of rulers and nobles. However, the order helped the rulers in their own way by creating a climate of opinion in which people belonging to different sects and religions could live in peace and harmony. Hence, statements 2 and 3 are not correct.

#### Q 5.B

- **The Vedic Age:**
  - The Vedic Age (c. 1500–600 BCE) marks the period when the Indo-Aryans composed the Vedas, the earliest literary sources of Indian history. It is generally divided into the Early Vedic Period (Rigvedic, c. 1500–1000 BCE) and the Later Vedic Period (c. 1000–600 BCE).
  - The early phase, centered in the Punjab and north-west, reflects a semi-nomadic, pastoral society with cattle as the main wealth and simple tribal political structures led by chiefs (rajan). In the later period, settlements expanded eastward into the Ganga-Yamuna plains, agriculture intensified, iron was used, and political authority became more centralized with larger kingdoms emerging. Social stratification hardened into the varna system, rituals became elaborate, and philosophical inquiry began, paving the way for the Upanishadic tradition. The Vedic Age thus laid the cultural, social, and religious foundations of Indian civilization.
- **Vedic Terms and associated Meaning:**
  - "Purcharishnu" refers to a destructive machine, a type of mobile fort, used by the Aryans during the Vedic Age to aid in their expansion and in warfare. It was one of the technological advancements, alongside horse-drawn chariots, bronze and iron weapons, and armor, that contributed to their military success. Hence, pair 1 is correctly matched.
  - **Goshu : Derived from go (cow). Since cows were the primary unit of wealth, goshu implies wealth, possessions.** Whereas, Gaviṣṭi means battle/conflict, especially cattle raid or search for cows, in the Rigvedic context. Hence, pair 2 is not correctly matched.
  - **Langala :** The plough, symbol of settled agriculture, marks the transition from pastoralism to agriculture in the later Vedic period. Hence, pair 3 is correctly matched.

#### Q 6.C

- **Context: Maratha Military Landscapes of India inscribed in UNESCO's World Heritage list.**
- **Maratha Military Landscapes of India**
  - Spanning from the 17th to 19th centuries CE, Maratha Military Landscapes of India is an extraordinary network of twelve forts that demonstrates the strategic military vision and architectural ingenuity of the Maratha Empire.
  - Spread across the states of Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, the selected sites, include **Salher, Shivneri, Lohgad, Khanderi, Raigad, Rajgad, Pratapgad, Suvarnadurg, Panhala, Vijaydurg, and Sindhudurg in Maharashtra, along with Gingee Fort in Tamil Nadu.** Hence, options 1,2 and 3 are correct.
  - **Kumbhalgarh, also known as the Great Wall of India, is a fortress located on the western range of the Aravalli Hills in Kumbhalgarh, Rajsamand district, Rajasthan, India.** Located approximately 48 km from Rajsamand and 84 km from Udaipur, the fort was constructed in the 15th century by Rana Kumbha. Hence option 4 is not correct.

#### Q 7.C

- The Sangam age refers to that period in the early history of south India when large numbers of poems in Tamil were composed by a number of authors. . The term Sangam refers to an assembly or "meeting together" of Tamil poets. Traditionally, three Sangams or assemblies are believed to have been convened one after the other. All the three Sangams took place at different places under the patronage of the Pandya kings of Madurai.



- Women in the Sangam period appear to have been educated. This is testified by many poems contributed by women poets to the Sangam literature. Women are also described as engaged in various economic activities such as paddy plantation, cattle rearing, basket-making, spinning, etc. However, **the cruel practice of Sati was also prevalent in Tamil society, and it was known as tippayadal. But it was not obligatory as there are references to widows present in society.** However, their position was miserable as they were prohibited to decorate themselves or participate in any form of amusement. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- The class of warriors was an important element in society during the Sangam age. **Captains of the army were invested with the title of *enadi* at a formal ceremony.** Civil and military officers were held under both the Cholas and the Pandyas **by *vellalas* or rich peasants.** The ruling class was called *arasar* and its members had marriage relations with the *vellalas*. **Hence statement 3 is not correct**
- The rich did not plough land themselves but employed labourers for this purpose. **Agricultural operations were generally carried on by the members of the lowest class known as *kadaisiyar*.** Hence statement 2 is correct
- We notice sharp social inequalities in the Sangam age. The rich lived in houses of brick and mortar and the poor in huts and humbler structures. In the cities, the rich lived in the upper storey of their house.

#### Q 8.B

- **Amir Khusrau** was the Indian born son of a Turkish immigrant. He began his career as a **courtier and poet during the reign of Sultan Balban.** He became a **disciple of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya**, the famous Sufi saint of the Chisti order.
- He was the **court-poet during the reigns of Jalaluddin Khalji and Alauddin Khalji.** Later, Sultan **Ghiyasuddin Tughluq** also patronised him. He lived through the reigns of six Sultans of Delhi and was connected with their courts.
- Amir Khusrau was a prolific and versatile writer and is said to have composed half a million verses and ninety-nine works on different themes. His poetry consisted of a great variety of forms - lyric, ode, epic, and elegy.
- His poetry was essentially Indian in sentiment though he followed Persian models in technique. Thus **he created a new style of Persian which came to be known as *sabaq-i Hindi* or the Indian style.**
- Some of the works composed by Amir Khusrau have been lost. **Five literary masterpieces** composed by him are *Mutla-ul Anwar*, *Shirin Khusrau*, *Laila Majnun*, *Ayina-i Sikandari* and *Hasht Bihisht*. **He dedicated all of them to Alauddin Khalji.**
- His five ***diwans* (collection of compositions called *ghazals*)** include *Tuhfat-us Sighar*, *Wast-ul Hayat*, *Ghurrat-ul Kamal*, *Baqiya Naqiya* and *Nihayat-ul Kamal*. These compositions show the great lyrical talent of his poetry.
- Amir Khusrau also wrote **historical *masnavis* (narrative poems)** which have great literary and historical value. He was not a historian in the actual sense of the term but since he enjoyed the patronage of successive Sultans of Delhi and since he selected historical themes for his *masnavis*, the historical content of his writings is of great interest to the students of the history of his times.
  - In ***Qiran-us Sa'dain***, Amir Khusrau describes the quarrel and reconciliation between Sultan Kaiqubad and his father Bughra Khan.
  - ***Miftah-ul Futuh*** deals with the military successes of Sultan Jalauddin Khalji.
  - ***Ashiq*** is the story of romantic love between Khizr Khan, the eldest son of sultan Alauddin Khalji and Deval Rani, daughter of Rai Karan, the Raja of Gujarat.
  - In ***Nuh Siphir*** (The Nine Skies) he gives a **poetical description of Sultan Qutbuddin Mubarak Khalji's reign. This work also contains references to contemporary social and religious conditions.**
  - The ***Tughluq Nama*** describes **Ghiyasuddin Tughluq's rise to power.**
  - Another historical work written by Amir Khusrau is *Khazain-ul Futuh* in which he gives an account of Alauddin Khalji's conquests in the South.
  - However, it is to be noted that Amir Khusrau, being a court-poet, looked at events largely through official eyes.
- **Note:** The first scholar to translate Sanskrit stories into Persian was Zia Nakhshabid. His *Tuti Nama* is based on a Sanskrit work.



### Q 9.A

- **Jainism is built on the concept of Anekantavada**, which means "non-absolutism" and states that reality is complex, multifaceted, and can only be fully understood from multiple viewpoints, rather than a single absolute truth. This doctrine encourages tolerance, open-mindedness, and a deeper understanding by acknowledging that every perspective offers a partial truth about a complex reality, fostering harmony and co-existence rather than conflict. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Buddhism and Jainism are Sramana traditions and are distinct from Vedic orthodox Hinduism. They do not accept the Vedas as supreme authority and instead focus on personal experience, ethical conduct, and liberation. This rejection of Vedic authority is a hallmark of these non-orthodox Indian traditions. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- **Madhyamaka (Middle Way) and Yogacara (Consciousness-Only) are Mahayana Buddhist schools, not Jain sub-schools.** Madhyamaka is a major Mahayana Buddhist philosophical tradition founded by the Indian philosopher Nagarjuna, which emphasizes the "middle path" (madhyamaka) and the doctrine of sunyata (emptiness). Yogacara focuses on mind and consciousness as the basis of reality. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

### Q 10.A

- Trade was facilitated by the use of money. The coin or metal money bearing the stamp of an authority was invented in the seventh century BC in Lydia in Asia Minor. How it was first introduced in India is not clear. The terms **nishka** and **satamana** in the Vedic texts are taken to be names of coins, but they seem to have been **prestige objects made of metal**.
- It appears that **in Vedic times, exchange was conducted through barter**, and the mutual gift system served as a mode of exchange in pre-Buddhist times. Sometimes cattle served the purpose of currency. **Coins made of metal appear first in the age of Gautama Buddha.** The earliest were made largely of silver, though a few copper coins also existed. They are called **punch-marked** because pieces of silver and copper were punched with certain marks, such as a hill, tree, fish, bull, elephant, and crescent. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The large, long-service army had to be fed by the state exchequer. The Nandas possessed enormous wealth which must have enabled them to maintain the army with a well-established fiscal system. Warriors and priests, that is, the **kshatriyas and the brahmanas, were exempted from payment of taxes**, and the burden fell on the peasants who were mainly **vaishyas or grihapatis**. **Bali, a voluntary payment made by the tribesmen to their chiefs in Vedic times, became a compulsory payment to be made by the peasants in the age of the Buddha**, and officers called **balisadhakas** were appointed to collect it. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- It appears that **one-sixth of the produce** was collected as tax by the king from the peasant. Taxes were assessed and collected by the royal agents with the help of village headmen.

### Q 11.B

- Firuz Tughlaq adopted a policy of trying to appease the nobles, the army and the theologians, and of asserting his authority over only such areas which could be easily administrated from the centre. Firuz abolished the practice of torturing nobles.
- In same way, to manage his massive number of slaves, Firoz Shah Tughlaq (reigned 1351–1388) created a dedicated department called the **Diwan-i-Bandagan**. **Firoz Shah placed many of his slaves in karkhanas (royal workshops or factories), where they were trained to become skilled artisans.** **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**
- Firuz also took a number of humanitarian measures. He banned inhuman punishments such as cutting of hands, feet, nose, etc., for theft and other offences. He set up hospitals for free treatment of the poor, and ordered the kotwals to make lists of unemployed persons.

### Q 12.C

- **Context: DRDO & Indian Air Force (IAF) successfully conducted the flight-test of 'Astra' equipped with indigenous Radio Frequency (RF) Seeker from Su-30 Mk-I platform.**
  - The ASTRA is an Indian family of Beyond-Visual-Range Air-to-Air Missiles (BVRAAMs) developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). It features an indigenous Radio Frequency (RF) Seeker for high-accuracy targeting and is designed for all-weather, beyond-visual-range engagements with a range of up to 100 km. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
  - Astra has a high agility active radar seeker and smokeless propulsion, specifically meant to engage highly manoeuvring supersonic aerial targets at long ranges. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

- The missile has all weather day and night capability. The missile is being developed in multiple variants to meet specific requirements. The ASTRA Mk-I Weapon System integrated with SU-30 Mk-I aircraft is being inducted into the Indian Air Force (IAF). **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

#### Q 13.B

- Rock Edict XIII is the only edict that explicitly narrates the Kalinga War (c. 261 BCE).
- It records the human cost, ~100,000 killed, 150,000 deported, and many more perished, and Ashoka's deep remorse, leading to his policy of Dhamma-vijaya (moral conquest) over military conquest.
- It is found at several sites (e.g., Kalsi, Girnar, Shahbazgarhi, Mansehra).
- Note: In Kalinga itself (Dhauili, Jaugada), RE XI–XIII are absent and replaced by Separate Rock Edicts I & II, which give post-conquest administrative instructions, not the war narrative. **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**
- **Rock Edict X** reflects Ashoka's view that glory/fame are of little value compared to spreading Dhamma; no war details.
- **Sarnath Pillar** is famous for the Lion Capital (India's National Emblem) and the Schism Edict concerning Sangha discipline; it doesn't describe the Kalinga War.
- **Arthashastra** is a treatise by Kautilya (Chanakya) on polity, economy, warfare; it is pre-Mauryan/early Mauryan in milieu and does not mention Ashoka's Kalinga War.

#### Q 14.A

- **Manipur is considered the birthplace of the martial arts tradition known as Thang-Ta**, which showcases the essence of Manipuri aesthetics. Thang-Ta is inspired by the unarmed combative arts such as Sarit Sarat and Mukhna. Both Sarit Sarat and Mukhna are forms of martial arts in which several techniques are deployed by an expert to overcome the assailants without the use of any weapons.
- The term **Thang-Ta is a combination of two words: Thang (means sword) and Ta (means spear)**. Also, the term Huyen Lallong is analogous to Thang-Ta in old Meitei language. The origin and development of Thang-Ta is chronicled in several mythical lores pertaining to the land of Manipur.
- **In Thang-Ta, the use of swords and spears is customary.** Some of the salient **approaches and techniques employed in Thang-Ta are known as Thangbi, Khutlon, and Khonglon.**
- **Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 15.D

- Ashta Pradhan, administrative and advisory council set up by Shivaji in 1674. It was an eight-member council of ministers that assisted Shivaji in state administration. Each member had a specific portfolio and was responsible for both civil and military (except judicial and religious heads).

Ashta Pradhan Council – Roles & Responsibilities		
Title (Traditional/Alternate Name)	Designation	Duties & Responsibilities
 <b>Peshwa (Mukhya Pradhan)</b>	Prime Minister	Head of the council; managed civil affairs and acted as king's deputy.
 <b>Amatya (Mazumdar)</b>	Finance Minister	Oversaw state revenue, budget, audits, and treasury.
 <b>Mantri (Waqia-Navis)</b>	Interior/Home Minister	Maintained court records, supervised internal intelligence and daily reports.
 <b>Sumant (Dabir)</b>	Foreign Minister	Handled diplomacy, alliances, and foreign negotiations.
 <b>Sachiv (Surnavis/Shurunavis)</b>	Chief Secretary	Managed official correspondence, documentation, and seals.
 <b>Senapati (Sar-i-Naubat)</b>	Commander-in-Chief	Supreme head of the military; oversaw strategy, training, and defense.
 <b>Nyayadhish</b>	Chief Justice	Administered civil and criminal justice; supervised legal procedures.
 <b>Panditrao</b>	Religious & Charity Head	Oversaw religious activities, rituals, charitable grants, and ethics.

- **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 16.A

- The Sanskrit literature of the early medieval period includes philosophical commentaries and religious texts, bhanas (monologue plays), stotras (hymn compositions), story literature, and anthologies of poetry. The growth of regional polities was accompanied by the composition of royal biographies by court poets.
- **Vikramadevacharita was written by Bilhana, a prominent 11th-century Kashmiri poet and court poet to the Western Chalukya king Vikramaditya VI. Hence, pair 1 is not correctly matched.**
- **Hemachandra's Kumarapalacharita (in Sanskrit and Prakrit) tells the story of Kumarapala, king of Anahilawada, while illustrating the rules of grammar. Hence, pair 2 is not correctly matched.**
- **Kalhana's Rajatarangini is a historical chronicle of the rulers of Kashmir from the earliest times up to the 12th century CE. It is a historical poem and a chronicle detailing the history of the Kashmir region from its mythical origins to Kalhana's own time. Hence, pair 3 is correctly matched.**

#### Q 17.B

- **Alexander's invasion of the Indian subcontinent:**
  - It marks a significant chapter in ancient history, occurring around 327 to 326 BCE. After establishing a vast empire through conquests in Asia Minor, Egypt, and Persia, Alexander sought to extend his reach into India, motivated by tales of its riches and legends of his mythological predecessors.
  - His campaign began with the establishment of bases in present-day Afghanistan, where many communities surrendered peacefully, while others faced brutal suppression.
  - The invasion culminated in the notable Battle of the Hydaspes against King Porus, where despite being outnumbered, Alexander's tactical advantages led to a decisive victory.
  - **He entered India by crossing the Hindukush Mountains via the Khyber Pass, entering through the Swat Valley. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
  - The Nanda king Dhana Nanda ruled Magadha during Alexander's campaign.
  - After the Battle of Hydaspes (326 BCE), Alexander founded Nicaea ("Victory") and Bucephala (after his horse Bucephalus). **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

#### Q 18.B

- **Uparikara and Udranga:**
  - In Gupta inscriptions, Uparikara and Udranga **are terms related to agricultural taxes.** They were specific types of taxes imposed on agricultural land, particularly in the context of revenue collection during the Gupta period.
  - **Uparikara** refers to an additional tax or levy related to agricultural produce.
  - **Udranga** refers to a type of tax or tribute that was also linked to agricultural yields or land.
  - **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 19.B

- **Sher Shah paid great attention to the fostering of trade and commerce.**
  - **In his entire empire, customs duty for goods were paid only at two places:** goods produced in Bengal or imported from outside paid customs duty at the border of Bengal and Bihar at Sikrigali, and goods coming from West and Central Asia paid customs duty at the Indus. **No one was allowed to levy customs at roads, ferries or towns anywhere else. Duty was paid a second time at the time of sale of goods. Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
  - For the convenience of travellers, Sher Shah built a sarai at a distance of every two kos (about eight km) on these roads. **Sher Shah built 1700 sarais in all.** His roads and sarais have been called 'the arteries of the empire'. **They helped in quickening trade and commerce in the country.** Many of the sarais developed into market-towns (qasbas) to which peasants flocked to sell their produce. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
  - **He struck fine coins of gold, silver and copper of uniform standard in place of the earlier debased coins of mixed metal. His attempt to fix standard weights and measures all over the empire were also helpful for trade and commerce. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

#### Q 20.B

- **Context: Gas flaring in 2024 released 389 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent, as global flare volumes highest since 2007**
- **Gas flaring**
  - It is the burning of the natural gas associated with oil extraction. The practice has persisted from the beginning of oil production over 160 years ago. Associated gas is wastefully flared for a variety of reasons from market and economic constraints, to a lack of infrastructure to capture the gas, or the absence of effective and enforced regulations and a lack of priority by field operators.

- Flaring and venting are a waste of a valuable natural resource that should either be used for productive purposes, such as generating power, or conserved. For instance, the amount of gas currently flared each year – about 151 billion cubic meters (bcm) – could, if supplied to power generation facilities, power the whole of sub-Saharan Africa.
- The proportion of global flaring attributed to the top nine flaring nations — Russia, Iran, Iraq, the United States, Venezuela, Algeria, Libya, Mexico, and Nigeria — rose from 65 per cent in 2012 to 76 per cent in 2024. The most significant increases in flaring volumes in 2024 were observed in Iran, Nigeria, the United States, Iraq and Russia, listed in order of the volume increase. Collectively, these five countries were responsible for an additional 4.6 bcm of gas flaring.
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer**

#### Q 21.C

- The amara-nayaka system was a major political innovation of the Vijayanagara Empire. **The Amara-Nayaka system of the Vijayanagara Empire was a legally recognized institution**, functioning as a system of land tenure based on military and administrative service.
- **In the large centrally controlled area, the king granted amaram or territory with a fixed revenue to military chiefs.** These chiefs, who were called palaiyagar (palegar) or nayaks, had to maintain a fixed number of foot, soldiers, horses and elephants for the service of the state. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- They collected taxes and other dues from peasants, craftspersons and traders in the area. The amara-nayakas sent tribute to the king annually and personally appeared in the royal court with gifts to express their loyalty.
- **Kings occasionally asserted their control over them by transferring them from one place to another. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- **Amara-nayakas had taxation powers and could collect taxes and other dues from people. Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- During 17th century, many of the nayakas resorted to separatism and established independent kingdoms. This became one of the reasons for accelerating the collapse of Vijaynagar empire. It can be compared with the 'iqta system' of the Delhi Sultanate as both were the systems of giving land revenue grants. However, whereas the 'Iqta system' was not hereditary, on the other hand 'nayakaship' was in the initial stages personal, it became hereditary in the course of time.

#### Q 22.A

- **The Mahajanapadas:**
  - The Mahajanapadas were sixteen powerful states or regions that existed in ancient India around the 6th century BCE. These states are important in the context of Indian history as they laid the foundation for the later rise of empires like the Maurya and Gupta Empires.
- The correct north-to-south order is:
  - 1. Kamboja - Located in the far north-west (modern-day Afghanistan and Pakistan).
  - 2. Gandhara - Located just south of Kamboja (present-day Afghanistan and north-western Pakistan).
  - 3. Magadha - Located in the eastern part of India (modern-day Bihar).
  - 4. Asmaka - Located in the southern part of India (likely in Andhra Pradesh or Maharashtra).
- **Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.**





Q 23.A

- **The Guptas Administration:**
  - The Guptas developed a well-structured system of provincial and local administration. The empire was divided into large territorial units called **bhuktis**, each governed by an **Uparika**.
  - These bhuktis were further divided into **vishayas (districts)** under the authority of a **Vishayapati**. In eastern India, the vishayas were subdivided into vithis, which in turn consisted of villages. **Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.**
  - At the grassroots level, the village headman—known as the gramadhyaksha or Ganapati—emerged as an important figure during Gupta rule. He managed local affairs and settled disputes, making the village the smallest administrative unit.
  - In towns and cities, professional guilds played a significant role in governance. These corporate bodies were influential in civic matters, and their leaders were known as Nagarseths.
  - Samaharta & Sannidhata → Revenue officers in the Mauryan administration, not Gupta.

Q 24.D

- **Raziya ((1236–39) ascended to the throne of the Delhi Sultanate in 1236. She was chosen as successor by her father, Sultan Iltutmish. During his last year, Iltutmish was worried over the problem of succession. He considered none of his surviving sons to be worthy of the throne. After anxious consideration, he finally decided to nominate his daughter, Raziya, to the throne.**
- **Rudramadevi** was the fourth independent ruler of the Kakatiya dynasty of Warangal. **From 1262 onwards, Kakatiya inscriptions speak of Rudramadevi as king. This queen's long reign ended with her death in 1289.** Rudramadevi was able to repulse the Pandyas of southern Tamil Nadu, Eastern Gangas of Orissa, and Seunas of Devagiri.

- **Bahmani kingdom: (1347-1526 A.D.): It was founded by Alauddin Hasan Bahman Shah (in 1347), also known as Hasan Gangu, revolting against the Delhi Sultanate of Muhammad bin Tughlaq. In 1347 A.D, he established the independent Bahmani kingdom.** His kingdom stretched from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal, included the whole of Deccan up to the river Krishna with its capital at Gulbarga.
- **Babur, a Central Asian prince of Timurid descent, established the Mughal Empire in India in 1526 by defeating Ibrahim Lodi at the First Battle of Panipat.**
- **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 25.C

- **Context: Recently, NSCSTI 2.0 framework was launched by the Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.**
- The Capacity Building Commission (CBC) is an independent body with full executive power, established on April 1, 2021, through the Gazette of India as part of the Mission Karmayogi initiative to transform the training paradigm for Indian civil servants and drive standardisation and harmonisation in public sector capacity building.
- Purpose: To build credibility and shape a uniform approach to capacity building on a collaborative and co-sharing basis.
- **Composition: It is a three-member Commission, supported by an internal Secretariat headed by a Secretary. Hence option (c) is the correct answer.**
- Members have been appointed from diverse backgrounds such as private sector, academia, public sector, and civil society.
- **CBC is as an independent body with full executive power.**
- Key Functions:
  - Preparing an Annual State of Civil Services Report
  - Exercising functional supervision over Training Institutions and creating shared learning resources
  - Facilitating the creation of Annual Capacity Building Plans for ministries and departments
  - Evolving a harmonious, de-siloed approach to capacity building initiatives
  - Recommending policy interventions in areas of personnel/HR to DOPT

#### Q 26.A

- **Context: Union Home Minister congratulates the Army and all the security forces who increased India's honour through Operation Sindoor and Operation Mahadev**
- Operation Mahadev, carried out by the Indian Army and Jammu & Kashmir Police, eliminated the alleged mastermind behind the Pahalgam attack, along with two other terrorists affiliated with Lashkar-e-Taiba, in an encounter in the forests near Dachigam National Park, Jammu and Kashmir.
- Its objective to eliminate foreign terrorists who have infiltrated into the Kashmir valley with support from Pakistan-based groups like LeT.
- **Hence option (a) is the correct answer**

#### Q 27.C

- **Schools of Buddhism:**
  - There are three main schools of Buddhism: Mahayana, Theravada and Vajrayana.
    - > **Mahayana Buddhism** is common in China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, Taiwan and Tibet. It emphasizes the role models of bodhisattvas (beings that have achieved enlightenment but return to teach humans).
    - > **Theravada Buddhism** is common in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand. It emphasizes a monastic lifestyle and meditation as the way to enlightenment.
    - > **Vajrayana** is the major school of Buddhism in the region of Tibet as well as in Nepal and Mongolia. It offers followers a faster path to enlightenment than Mahayana or Theravada, because a person can achieve enlightenment in one lifetime through specific rituals.
- **Philosophy of Liberation:**
  - **Hinayana focused** on the personal path to liberation through the Arhat ideal. It stressed discipline, morality, and meditation, usually seeing enlightenment as a gradual **process requiring multiple lifetimes**.
  - **Mahayana, the "Great Vehicle,"** shifted emphasis toward universal salvation, centering on the Bodhisattva ideal of postponing personal nirvana to help others. Its practices included meditation, compassion, wisdom, and devotion to Bodhisattvas, with liberation often viewed as a long process, though sometimes aided by grace.

- **Vajrayana**
  - > Vajrayana, the “Diamond Vehicle,” emerged later as an **esoteric branch of Mahayana**, teaching that enlightenment could be achieved in a single lifetime through tantric rituals, initiation by gurus, and practices that harness desires instead of renouncing them. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
  - > **Vajrayana did not emerge in China.** It developed in India (around 7th century CE) as a tantric form of Mahayana, and spread later to Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, and Mongolia. China mainly received Mahayana traditions, not Vajrayana directly. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
  - > Vajrayana is seen as a later branch of Mahayana Buddhism, adding tantric/esoteric practices. **Hence, statement 3 is also correct.**
- Theravāda, the “Doctrine of the Elders,” is the oldest surviving school, grounded in the Pali Canon. It emphasizes the Arhat path, strict adherence to discipline, and the gradual cultivation of virtue, concentration, and wisdom, with enlightenment considered difficult and requiring many rebirths.

#### Q 28.B

- **The court of Chandragupta II was adorned by the celebrated Navratnas.** Names commonly attached to Vikramaditya’s court include Kalidasa, Amarasimha, Dhanvantari, Varāhamihira, Shanku, Vetlabhatta, Ghatakarpara, Kshapanaka, etc. Kalidasa remains the foremost among them. His masterpiece was the Sanskrit drama Shakuntala. It is considered one among the ‘hundred best books of the world’. He wrote two other plays - the Malavikagnimitra and Vikramorvasiya. His two well-known epics are Raghuvamsa and Kumarasambhava. Ritusamhara and Meghaduta are his two lyrics. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- In the history of Indian art and architecture, the Gupta period occupies an important place. **Both the Nagara and Dravidian styles of art evolved during this period.** But most of the architecture of this period had been lost due to foreign invasions like that of Huns. Yet, the remaining temples, sculptures and cave paintings provide an idea about the grandeur of the Gupta art. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- **The famous Chinese pilgrim, Fahien visited India during the reign of Chandragupta II.** Out of his nine years stay in India, he spent six years in the Gupta empire. He came to India by the land route through Khotan, Kashgar, Gandhara and Punjab. He visited Peshawar, Mathura, Kanauj, Sravasti, Kapilavastu, Kusinagara, Pataliputra, Kasi and Bodh Gaya among other places. He returned by the sea route, visiting on the way Ceylon and Java. The main purpose of his visit was to see the land of the Buddha and to collect Buddhist manuscripts from India. He stayed in Pataliputra for three years studying Sanskrit and copying Buddhist texts. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

#### Q 29.B

- **The Vijayanagara empire which was founded by two brothers Harihara Raya-I and Bukka Raya-I in 1336 between river Krishna and Tungabhadra** and the kingdom of Vijayanagar was named after their Guru Vidyaranya.
- **They made Pampapati or Virupaksha their patron deity and family god.**
- On the northern bank of the river **Tungabhadra** was the fort of Anegundi and **Vijayanagar was on the southern bank.** **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**
- **Gajapati literally means lord of elephants.** This was the name of a ruling lineage that was **very powerful in Orissa in the fifteenth century.** The Gajapati rule marks a brilliant phase in Orissa history. The rulers were great builders and warriors. **From 1450, Orissa’s Gajapati rulers made raids into south India up to Madurai which weakened the Vijayanagara and shrunk the authority of Rayas to Karnataka.** Even, Krishna Deva Raya (1509-1529) fought against the continuous incursions by the Gajapati rulers of Odisha. Krishna Deva Raya, the greatest among Vijayanagar rulers and one of the most distinguished kings of India. In his reign, Vijayanagar Empire was at its zenith of glory and prosperity.

#### Q 30.C

- **Born in 1017 CE, is revered worldwide as a Vedic philosopher, social reformer and one of the most important exponents of Sri Vaishnava tradition.**
- **Ramanuja advocated the Vishistadvaita school of Vedāntic thought.** It is a qualified version of monism and hence is called qualified monism. Ramanuja differs from Sankara only a little in the sense that he considers the jiva or the individual soul as the entity different from the body and is infinite in number and cannot be one with the Supreme as long as it is confined in a body. **Vishistadvaita posits that the ultimate reality is one. Hence, statement 1 is correct**



- Sri Ramanujacharya wrote **9 scriptures, the Navrathanas. They are:** Vedartha-Sangraha, Sri Bhashya, Gita-Bhashya, Vedanta-Dipa, Vedanta-Sara, Saranagati-Gadya, Sriranga-Gadya, Sri Vaikuntha-Gadya and Nitya-Grantha. **His 9 scholarly works are the beacon lights for Veda & Vedanta literature.**
- **He also rejected the idea that the world is just an illusion. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

**Q 31.A**

- **Madhubani**
  - Region: Primarily in Bihar and parts of Nepal.
  - Features: Uses natural dyes, geometric patterns, and depicts mythological themes, daily life, and nature.
  - Art form: Wall and floor painting originally; later also on paper and cloth.



- **Pattachitra**
  - Region: Odisha and West Bengal.
  - Features: Painted on cloth (Patta) or dried palm leaves, with intricate borders and mythological themes, especially stories of Lord Jagannath.



- **Warli**
  - Region: Maharashtra (tribal areas like Thane and Palghar).
  - Features: White tribal motifs on mud base walls, depicting social life, animals, and nature



- Madhubani and Pattachitra are from eastern India, whereas Warli is from western India.
- Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.

#### Q 32.A

- **Indus Valley Cities:**
  - **Chanhudaro** (Sindh, Pakistan) is an Inland site, about 130 km south of Mohenjodaro. Famous for bead-making, bangles, weights, and seals. **Hence, it is not a port city. Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.**
  - **Sutkagendor** (Makran Coast, Baluchistan) is a port settlement linking Harappans to sea trade with Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf.
  - **Kuntasi** is a small Harappan port-cum-industrial site near the Gulf of Kutch. Shows how Harappans utilized Gujarat's coast as a gateway for trade with western Asia.
  - **Balakot** (Makran Coast, Pakistan) is a coastal Harappan site with a shell industry. Evidence of conch-shell (*Turbinella pyrum*) use, which was later important for ornaments in South Asia.

#### Q 33.B

- **The Battle of Haldighati** was fought between **Raja Man Singh of the Mughal army** and **Rana Pratap of Mewar** in **1576**.
- The battle of Haldighati was **significant** for the **valour displayed by the Rajputs and the small tribe Bhils**.
- Rana Pratap set an example of courage and bravery in the Haldighati battle.
- It was a turning point for the Mughals as well. It was a fierce battle and both sides showed strong repulsions.
- The **result** of the battle was **indecisive**. But, even today, the battle is considered as a true symbol of courage, sacrifice, and loyalty of the Rajputs to save their motherland.
- **The Battle of Samugarh** was fought between **Aurangzeb** and **Murad Baksh** and **Dara Shikoh** in **1658**.
- It was a **decisive** battle in the **struggle for the throne** during the **Mughal war of succession** (1658–1659). **Aurangzeb defeated Dara Shikoh**.
- **The Battle of Chausa** was fought between **Sher Shah** and **Humayun** in **1539**. Humayun lost this battle.
- The two forces camped opposite each other, but none of the two warranted an attack for two months. In these two months, the Mughal forces suffered the scarcity of food and supply, leading death of cattle and horses. In the desperate situation, Humayun opened the negotiations and arrangements for a treaty were made.
- As per this treaty, Sher Shah was to retain Bengal and parts of Bihar. In return, he would give recognition to the emperor and accept his suzerainty.
- **The Battle of Khanwa** was fought between **Babur** and **Rana Sangh of Mewar** in **1527**. Babur came out victorious.



- The foundation laid at the battle of Panipat for the establishment of the Mughal empire in India was strengthened and based on firm bases.
- The defeat of the Rajput's, at Khanwa, ended the superiority of the Rajput's which they had established successfully in the last ten years and which was an eyesore to the Muslims.
- Hence the correct answer is 4-3-1-2 i.e. option (b).

#### Q 34.B

- **Context: Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas announced India's achievement of 20% Ethanol blending target in petrol.**
- In India, Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme refers specifically to mixing ethanol with petrol (not diesel). The purpose is to reduce fossil fuel dependence, enhance energy security, cut import bills, and lower carbon emissions. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- India had an original target of 20% blending by 2030, advanced to 2025–26. The target was achieved as envisaged in the Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme. Ethanol blending in petrol increased from 1.5% in 2014 to 20% in 2025 (Nearly 13-fold increase). **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- Types of Ethanol:
  - 1 st Generation Ethanol: It is made from food crops such as cereals (rice, wheat, barley, corn and sorghum), sugarcane, sugar beet etc.
  - 2 nd Generation Ethanol: It is made from ligno-cellulosic or woody biomass, or agricultural residues/waste such as wheat straw, corn stover, wood etc.
  - 3 rd Generation Ethanol: It includes those derived from aquatic biomass such as algae.
  - 4 th Generation Ethanol: It is derived from engineered plants and microorganisms. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

#### Q 35.A

- In Jainism, "Sasana Devi" refers to the protective goddess or yakshini associated with specific Tirthankaras. These goddesses are believed to safeguard and support the Tirthankaras, who are revered spiritual teachers in Jain tradition. The Sasana Devis are typically depicted in Jain temples as attendants or spiritual protectors of the Tirthankaras. **Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.**
- Their association reflects the incorporation of popular goddess cults into Jain tradition.
  - **Padmavati Devi:** She is the Sasana Devi of the 23rd Tirthankara, Parshvanath.
  - **Ambika Devi:** She is the Sasana Devi of the 22nd Tirthankara, Neminath.
  - **Chakreshwari Devi:** She is the Sasana Devi of the 1st Tirthankara, Adinath (Rishabhanatha), not Mahavir.

#### Q 36.C

- **The Persian traveller Abdur Razzaq ((1443-1444 A. D.), who had travelled widely in and outside India, visited Vijayanagara in the reign of Deva Raya II. Deva Raya II (1425-1446) considered the greatest ruler of the Sangam dynasty.** Abdur Razzaq considers Vijayanagara to be one of the most splendid cities anywhere in the world which he had seen or heard of.
- **Abdur Razzaq was greatly impressed by the fortifications, and mentioned seven lines of forts.** Most significant about this fortification is that it enclosed agricultural tracts. Abdur Razzaq noted that "between the first, second and the third walls there are cultivated fields, gardens and houses". The outermost wall linked the hills surrounding the city. The massive masonry construction was slightly tapered. No mortar or cementing agent was employed anywhere in the construction. **Hence, option (c) is the correct answer.**
- **Ibn Bututa (1333-1347 A.D.) — Moroccan traveller,** who visited India during the reign of Muhammad bin-Tughlaq. And came to Vijayanagar during the reign of Harihar I.
- **Domingos Paes (1520-1522 A.D) — Portuguese traveller,** who visited the court of Krishnadeva Raya.
- **Fernao Nuniz (1534-1537 A.D) — Portuguese merchant,** who wrote the history of the empire from its earliest days to the closing years of Acchyutdeva Raya's reign.

#### Q 37.A

- The Grandala is native to the Himalayan belt, with confirmed sightings in countries like India (notably Sikkim, Uttarakhand, and Arunachal Pradesh), Nepal, Bhutan, and western China. Its presence in multiple ecosystems across this arc makes the Grandala a transboundary gem of the mountains. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**

- The Grandala primarily feeds on insects and small invertebrates, catching them in mid-air or picking them off the ground with precision. It often forages in flocks during summer, displaying aerial acrobatics similar to flycatchers, making the Grandala not just beautiful, but also a skilled hunter.
- The Grandala is not a vocal bird, which adds to its mystique. While it may occasionally let out a soft, fluty call, the Grandala typically remains quiet, blending into the stillness of the mountains and enchanting those lucky enough to observe its graceful movements. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
- The Grandala (Grandala coelicolor) is currently listed as Least Concern (LC). This high-altitude Himalayan thrush is found in alpine and subalpine zones, and despite its vibrant plumage and flocking behavior, its large range, stable population trend, and unspecified but likely large population size prevent it from meeting the criteria for Vulnerable or more threatened categories. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

#### Q 38.A

- The seventh to ninth centuries saw the emergence of new religious movements, led by the Nayanars (saints devoted to Shiva) and Alvars (saints devoted to Vishnu) who came from all castes including those considered “untouchable” like the Pulaiyar and the Panars. **They were sharply critical of the Buddhists and Jainas and preached ardent love of Shiva or Vishnu as the path to salvation. Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
- **There were 12 Alvars, who came from equally divergent backgrounds, the best known being Periyalvar, his daughter Andal (only female saint among the Alvars), Tondaradippodi Alvar and Nammalvar. Their songs were compiled in the Divya Prabandham. Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- **Akkamahadevi, belonged to Virashaiva movement initiated by Basavanna. Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

#### Q 39.D

- The Vijayanagara empire which was founded by two brothers Harihara Raya-I and Bukka Raya-I in 1336 between river Krishna and Tungabhadra, reached its golden age under the reign of the powerful king, Sri Krishnadevaraya. During this period, trade across the globe expanded and fields like music, dance, literature, painting, sculpture and architecture saw a new high.
- Sri Krishnadevaraya was a great litterateur-king, who composed the epic **Telugu poem, Ámukta Malyada, which describes the anguish of estrangement experienced by Andal, the incarnate of Goddess Lakshmi.**
- **Jambavati Kalyanam is a Sanskrit play authored by Krishnadevaraya.**
- Áshtadiggajas’ or eight literary titans in the court of Krishnadevaraya - Alasani Peddanna, Nandi Thimmanna, Madayyagari Mallanna, Dhurjati, Ayyalaraju Ramambhadrudu, Pingali Suranna, Ramarajabhushanudu and Tenali Ramakrishna, together took Telugu literature and poetry to extraordinary heights of refinement and excellence. **Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 40.D

- India’s ancient port cities:
  - India’s ancient port cities played a crucial role in maritime trade networks, linking the subcontinent with the Roman world, Southeast Asia, and beyond. Sources like the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, Sangam literature, and Buddhist texts mention several ports that facilitated commerce and cultural exchange. Identifying their modern locations helps us trace the geography of ancient Indian trade.
- Port Cities and their location:
  - Shaliyur:
    - > Shaliyur (sometimes identified with ancient Kaveripattinam region ports) was located on the Tamil Nadu coast and played a role in Chola and Pandya maritime trade. **Hence, pair 1 is correctly matched.**
  - Muziris
    - > Muziris (near modern-day Kodungallur, Kerala) was one of the most famous ports of ancient India, especially known for Indo-Roman trade. Roman coins and amphorae have been found in large numbers here. **Hence, pair 2 is correctly matched.**
  - Ghantasala
    - > Ghantasala (near Krishna district, Andhra Pradesh) was an important Buddhist centre and port town. Archaeological finds, including stupas, testify to its prominence in Satavahana maritime trade. **Hence, pair 3 is correctly matched.**

- Tamralipti
  - > Tamralipti (modern-day Tamluk in West Bengal) was the principal port of eastern India in ancient times, mentioned in Buddhist and Jain texts, as well as accounts of Chinese pilgrims like Faxian. It facilitated trade with Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia. **Hence, pair 4 is also correctly matched**

#### Q 41.C

- **Context: The Ministry of Culture, Government of India, proudly announces the historic return of the sacred Piprahwa relics of Lord Buddha to their rightful home in India.**
- The Piprahwa relics, discovered in 1898 by British civil engineer William Claxton Peppé in Piprahwa, Uttar Pradesh, are believed to be associated with the mortal remains of Lord Buddha. Enshrined by His followers around the 3rd century BCE, these relics have long held immense spiritual value for the global Buddhist community and represent one of the most important archaeological discoveries in India's history.
- Originally slated for auction in Hong Kong in May 2025, the sacred artefacts were successfully secured by the Ministry of Culture through decisive intervention, reflecting the Government's unwavering commitment to preserving India's cultural and spiritual heritage.
- **Hence, option (c) is the correct answer.**



#### Q 42.A

- **Context: MoEFCC Issued Draft Emission Targets Rules for Industries Under Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS).**
- India's Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS) is a national framework developed under the Energy Conservation Act, 2001, to achieve India's climate goals by reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions through a carbon pricing mechanism. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- Key Features of the Scheme
- Dual Mechanism:
- The CCTS is built on two pillars:
  - Compliance Mechanism: Targets energy-intensive industries with binding emission reduction obligations.
  - Voluntary Offset Mechanism: Encourages other entities (not covered under compliance) to undertake greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction projects and earn tradable carbon credits.
- Institutional Framework:
  - Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE): Administers the scheme and develops technical standards. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
  - Grid Controller of India: Manages the Indian Carbon Market (ICM) registry, where credits are recorded and tracked.
  - Trading Platform: Carbon Credit Certificates will be traded via electronic platforms such as power exchanges.
- Project Eligibility & Scope:
- Carbon Projects must begin on or after January 1, 2025.

- Eligible sectors (in the first phase) include:
  - Energy
  - Industry
  - Agriculture
  - Waste Management
  - Forestry
  - Transport
- The scheme currently covers carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and perfluorocarbons (PFCs), with scope to include additional GHGs in the future.

#### Q 43.A

- **Context: 'Jaa Mata', a Joint Exercise, was held from July 7–12, 2025, off the Chennai coast, marking deeper India–Japan Coast Guard cooperation.**
- Talisman Sabre is a large-scale, biennial multinational military exercise led by Australia and the United States, with the 2025 iteration marking its 11th iteration and the first time India has participated. The 2025 exercise involved over 35,000 personnel from 19 nations, focusing on complex combat simulations and interoperability among partner forces in the Indo-Pacific region. **Hence, Pair 1 is correctly matched.**
- 'Jaa Mata', a Joint Exercise, was held from July 7–12, 2025, off the Chennai coast, marking deeper India–Japan Coast Guard cooperation. Japan's JCGS Itsukushima participated under its Global Ocean Voyage Training program. Its aim is to enhance the operational capabilities of both forces. It also focuses on refining combat skills and strengthening interoperability. The exercise promotes effective joint maritime operations and regional cooperation. **Hence, Pair 2 is not correctly matched.**
- The 14th edition of the India-Singapore Joint Military Exercise commenced in July in Jodhpur. The objective of the exercise is to enhance interoperability and joint training capabilities of both armies under a United Nations mandate, thereby strengthening bilateral defence cooperation. **Hence, Pair 3 is not correctly matched.**

#### Q 44.C

- **Sri Vallabhacharya (c. 1479 – 1531 CE)** was a **devotional philosopher** who founded the **Pushtimarg sect in India**, following the **philosophy of Shuddha Advaita (Pure Non-dualism)**. Shuddhadvaita is the purely non-dual philosophy propounded by him. It was a Hindu Vaishnava tradition that focused on the worship of Krishna. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- **Dadu Dayal (c. 1544-1603 CE)** was a significant representative of the **Nirguna Saint tradition in North India (Gujarat & Rajasthan)**. Nirgun is a form of aniconic worship of the formless as opposed to the saguna tradition, which is the worship of religious icons and deities with form. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
  - **Dadu means brother, and Dayal means the compassionate one;** later, his followers came to be known as the **Dadupanthis**, who set up **ashrams known as Thambas**.
- **Surdas (c. 1483-1563 CE)** was a disciple of the Vallabhacharya. He was a blind poet whose songs were centered around Krishna. **His Sursagar recounts the exploits of Krishna during his childhood and youth with gentle affection and delightfulness. Hence statement 3 is correct.**

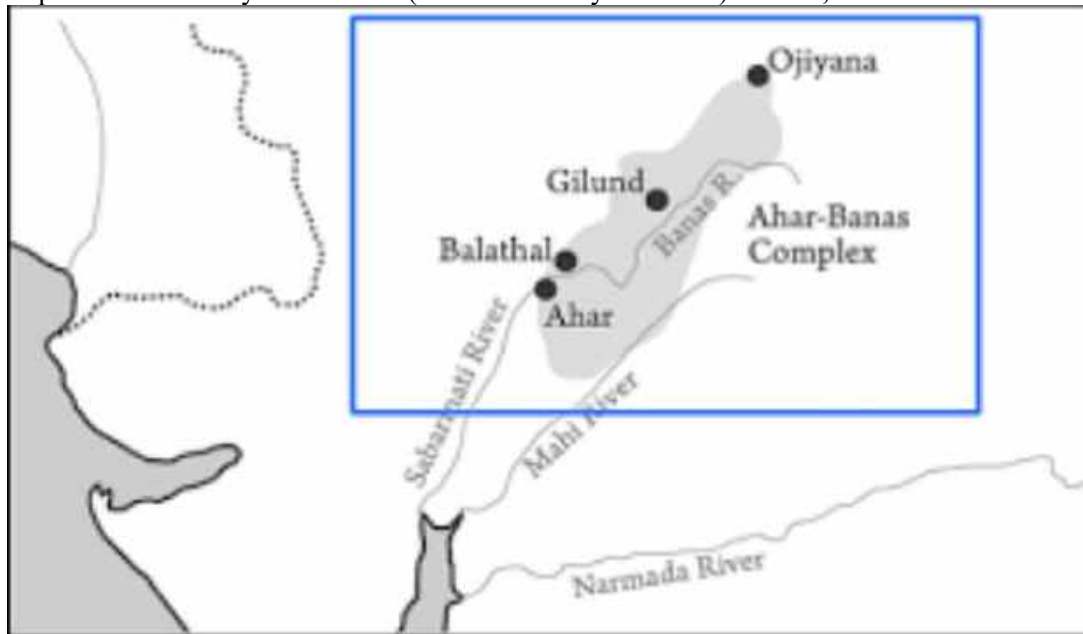
#### Q 45.A

- **The twelfth century witnessed the emergence of a new movement in Karnataka, led by a Brahmana named Basavanna (1106-68)** who was a minister in the court of a Kalachuri ruler. His followers were known as Virashaivas (heroes of Shiva) or Lingayats (wearers of the linga).
- **They established their faith after bitter disputes with the Jains. Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**
- They worship Shiva in his manifestation as a linga, and men usually wear a small linga in a silver case on a loop strung over the left shoulder. Lingayats believe that on death the devotee will be united with Shiva and will not return to this world. **Therefore they do not practise funerary rites such as cremation, prescribed in the Dharmashastras. Instead, they ceremonially bury their dead. Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The Lingayats are worshippers of Siva. **They strongly opposed the caste system, and rejected fasts, feasts, pilgrimages and sacrifices.** In the social sphere, they opposed child marriage and allowed remarriage of widows. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

#### Q 46.A

- **Ahar–Banas culture:**

- Ahar–Banas culture flourished mainly in southeastern Rajasthan along the Banas River and its tributaries, with sites like Ahar (near Udaipur) and Gilund. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Typical Ahar pottery is a Black-and-Red ware (BRW) with linear and dotted designs painted on it in white pigment and has limited range of shapes, which include bowls, bowls-on-stands, elongated vases and globular vases. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- Newasa belongs to the Jorwe Culture (Chalcolithic, Maharashtra), not Ahar–Banas. Tripuri is an important site in Kayatha Culture (Western Madhya Pradesh). **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**



#### Q 47.A

- **The Satavahanas:**

- The Satavahanas were one of the most prominent post-Mauryan dynasties in the Deccan, ruling roughly between the 1st century BCE and 3rd century CE. They played a vital role in uniting the Deccan region and acting as a cultural bridge between North and South India. The dynasty is remembered for its active participation in maritime trade, its contributions to Prakrit literature, and its balanced patronage of both Buddhism and Brahmanism.

- **Features:**

- Seaports – Gandakasela and Kottalinga (Ganjam region) on the east coast were key Satavahana ports, enabling Indo-Roman and Southeast Asian trade.
- Literature – The Gāthāsaptasatī (also called Sattasai), a celebrated collection of Prakrit lyrical verses, is attributed to King Hāla, a Satavahana ruler (1st century CE).
- Religion – The Satavahanas followed Brahmanism but were also great patrons of Buddhism (e.g., donations to Buddhist caves and stupas at Amaravati, Nasik, Karle).

- **Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 48.B

- **Context:** In pursuance of the Union Budget 2025–26 announcement, PMDDKY was approved for a period of six years.
- The Pradhan Mantri Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY) is a groundbreaking government initiative launched to revolutionize Indian agriculture by making it more productive, sustainable, and financially rewarding for farmers.
- Announced on February 1, 2025, during the Union Budget 2025-26 by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and approved by the Union Cabinet on July 16, 2025, **PMDDKY targets 100 underperforming districts** where farming faces challenges like low crop yields, water scarcity, and limited access to resources. With an annual budget of ₹24,000 crore for six years (2025-26 to 2030-31), totaling ₹1.44 lakh crore, the scheme aims to support 1.7 crore farmers, particularly small and marginal farmers owning less than 2 hectares of land, who constitute 86% of India's farming population (Economic Survey 2024-25).



- The scheme operates under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, with oversight from a National Steering Committee, state-level nodal committees, and District Dhan Dhaanya Samitis led by District Collectors. These bodies ensure tailored implementation based on local needs, monitored through a digital dashboard tracking 117 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) like crop yields, loan disbursals, and storage usage. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- Inspired by NITI Aayog's Aspirational District Programme, the scheme focuses exclusively on agriculture and allied sectors. It focuses on 100 low-performing districts facing issues such as low yields, water scarcity, and limited resource access. **The scheme offers an integrated approach by combining 36 schemes of all the concerned agriculture ministries and will focus on district-level schemes. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

#### Q 49.A

- **Kakatiyas were earlier feudatories of Western Chalukyas.** All three contemporary dynasties of Deccan i.e. Hoysalas, Yadavas and Kakatiyas were feudatories of Western Chalukyas.
- **The independent dynasty was established when Rudradeva (Prataparudra I) became first independent ruler of Kakatiya dynasty in 1158 AD. Warangal was the capital of Kakatiyas.**
- **They faced Islamic invasion** from 1310 (by Alauddin Khilji) and ultimately came under control of Delhi Sultanate in 1323 (invasion by Sultan Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq).
- **Ganapatideva's reign was the longest amongst all the Kakatiya rulers,** starting from 1199 till 1262 CE during which he expanded his kingdom from the coastal Bay of Bengal in the east to Kanchipuram in the south.
- **Motupalli was the famous trading seaport of the Kakatiyas. Marco Polo the famous Venetian traveler visited Kakatiya kingdom** through this port and wrote about the prosperity and power in Andhras in his travelogue.
- **Kakatiya dynasty was famous for the construction of large tanks and used the sluice-weir device in it to boost crop production.**
- **The Koh-i-noor diamond was mined during Kakatiya rule from the Golconda mines**
- **Rammappa Temple:** It is the only temple in India known by the name of the sculptor who built it, rather than after the presiding deity. It was built on behalf of the king, Kakati Ganapathi Deva by his chief commander Rudra Samani.
- **The Thousand Pillared Temple at Hanamkonda** is dedicated to Lord Shiva, Vishnu, and Surya.
- The period is also famous for the patronage given to Sanskrit Literature.
- **Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 50.A

- **Context: Recently, Australia and United Kingdom (UK) signed a bilateral defence cooperation agreement also known as Geelong treaty, under AUKUS Pillar I for the next 50 years.**
- AUKUS is a new trilateral partnership featuring Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States. Though it aims to deepen diplomatic, security and defence cooperation between the three states, AUKUS will focus specifically on deepening integration in defence-related science, technology, industrial bases and supply chains, with particular emphasis on cyber capabilities, artificial intelligence, quantum technologies and new undersea capabilities.
- The first initiative of AUKUS will be to support Australia in acquiring nuclear-powered submarines and the necessary infrastructure to upkeep them, while keeping with partners' international obligations to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards regimes.
- **Hence option (a) is the correct answer**

#### Q 51.C

- **Vasavadatta:**
  - It is a **Gupta-era Sanskrit prose romance that narrates the love story of Prince Kandarpaketu and Princess Vasavadatta.**
  - Considered one of the earliest examples of gadya-kavya (ornate prose literature), it is written in an elaborate and highly decorative style, reflecting the literary sophistication of the Gupta period.
  - **Subandhu, a courtier of the Guptas, is credited as its author, and the work influenced later romances like Kadambari of Banabhatta. Hence, option (c) is the correct answer.**

- **Setubhanda:** a **Maharashtri Prakrit** poem also known as **Ravanavaho** which details the exploits of **Rama in Lanka against Ravana**.
  - The poem was based on Vaishnavite themes (as Rama was regarded to be an avatar of Vishnu) in contrast to Pravarasena's own avowed Shaivism.
  - **Pravarasena II (r. c. 420 – 455 CE)** was a ruler of the **Nandivardhana-Pravarapura branch of the Vakataka dynasty**. He was the son of Rudrasena II and Prabhavatigupta, the daughter of the Gupta emperor Chandragupta II. He succeeded his brother Damodarasena as Maharaja. Pravarasena's reign seems to have been mostly peaceful and prosperous, and is noted for an efflorescence of religious patronage.
- **Kadambari:** is a **romantic novel in Sanskrit**. It was **substantially composed by Bāṇabhaṭṭa in the first half of the 7th century CE**, who did not survive to see it through completion. The **novel was completed by Banabhatta's son Bhushanabhatta**, according to the plan laid out by his late father. It is conventionally divided into **Purvabhaga (earlier part)** written by Banabhatta, and **Uttarabhaga (latter part)** by Bhushanabhatta.
  - Its central thread is that of a **romantic attachment (and eventual union) between the hero Chandrapeda and the heroine Kadambari**.
  - **Bāṇabhaṭṭa was a 7th-century Sanskrit prose writer and poet**. He was the **Asthana Kavi** in the court of the **Emperor Harsha**, during his reign at Kanyakubja. **Apart from the Kadambari, Banabhatta is also the author of Harshacharita, a biography of his patron king Harshavardhana**.
  - The **other works** attributed to him are the **Caṇḍikāśataka** and a **drama, the Pārvaṭīpariṇaya**.
- **Avanti-sundari-katha-sara** is the **verse version of Avanti-sundari-katha, a prose text attributed to Daṇḍin**
  - **Daṇḍin's account of his life in Avantisundari-katha-sara** states that he was a great-grandson of Dāmodara, a court poet from Achalapura who served, among others, the Pallava king Siṃhaviṣṇu of Tamil Nadu and the Ganga king Durvīṇita of Karnataka.
  - **Daṇḍi or Daṇḍin (7th–8th century)** was an Indian Sanskrit grammarian and author of prose romances. He composed the **Daśakumāracarita**, the **Kāvyaadarśa ('Mirror of Poetry')**.

#### Q 52.A

- **The Kushanas:**
  - The Kushanas originally belonged to Western China and were also known as the Yueh-chis. Kushanas were a part of the Yueh-chi tribe, who migrated from western China. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
  - The first prominent ruler of the Kushan dynasty was Kujula Kadphises, who founded the dynasty. Gondophernes was a Parthian ruler, not Kushan. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
  - Kanishka, the most famous Kushan ruler, and he started the Shaka era in AD 78.

#### Q 53.D

- Kanada, also known as Uluka, is regarded as the founder of the Vaisesika school. His main text is Vaisesika Sutra. Later commentaries, such as Padārtha Dharma Sangraha by Prashastapada, further developed the system. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Vaisesika accepts that the ultimate aim of life is liberation, which can be achieved through knowledge of the categories (padārthas) such as dravya (substance), guna (quality), karma (action), samanya (generality), vishesha (particularity), samavaya (inherence), and abhava (non-existence). **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- Unlike Sankhya (which is nirishwara i.e. does not accept God), the Vaisesika school believes in God as the efficient cause of the universe. God is considered responsible for creation, maintenance, and dissolution of the world. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

#### Q 54.C

- **The Satavahana dynasty:**
  - The Satavahana dynasty (c. 1st century BCE – 3rd century CE) was one of the most prominent post-Mauryan powers in the Deccan. Known for their patronage of Prakrit literature, trade, and religion, they played a key role in shaping Deccan culture and connecting it with the rest of India.
- **Gunadhya and Sarvavarma**
  - **Gunadhya:**
    - > He was a **celebrated Prakrit poet of the Satavahana period**.

- > His most famous work is the Brihatkatha (Great Story), originally composed in the Paisachi dialect, though the original is lost. Later versions like Kathasaritsagara by Somadeva and Brihatkathamajari by Kshemendra are believed to be derived from it.
- > His works reflected folk traditions, legends, and narratives, showing the rich cultural milieu of the Satavahana period.
- **Sarvavarma (or Sharvavarma):**
  - > He was a distinguished **Sanskrit grammarian associated with the Satavahanas.**
  - > His notable contribution was the Katantra Vyakarana, a simplified system of Sanskrit grammar, designed to help learners who found Panini's Ashtadhyayi too complex.
  - > This shows the dynasty's interest in both scholarly refinement and practical learning.
- **Hence, option (c) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 55.D

- **The Gupta Age:**
  - The Mathura school of Gupta art is noted for delicately carved drapery folds, while at Sarnath, the drapery became nearly invisible, marked only by faint lines. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
  - The human figure became the central pivot of Gupta sculpture, with emphasis on smooth, supple forms and transparent drapery. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
  - Nudity as a rule was eliminated from Gupta sculpture
    - > It is the sensitivity of the plastic surface that the artist seeks to emphasise and for this; all superfluities, such as elaborate draperies, jewellery, etc., that tend to conceal the body, are reduced to the minimum. The wet or transparent clinging drapery hence became the fashion of this age. But the sensuous effect of these draperies, especially in the case of female figures, was restrained by a conscious moral sense, and nudity as a rule was eliminated from Gupta sculpture.
  - The famous Sheshashayi Vishnu panel from the Deogarh temple represents the cosmic balance between dissolution and creation. **Hence, statement 3 is also correct.**
    - > The large panel of Sheshashayi Vishnu from the Deogarh temple, representing the Supreme being slumbering wakefully on the serpent Ananta, the symbol of eternity, in the interval between the dissolution of the universe and its new creation, is a magnificent example. The four-armed Vishnu is reclining gracefully on the coils of the Adishesha, whose seven hoods form a canopy over his crowned head. His consort Lakshmi, is massaging his right leg and two attendant figures stand behind her.

#### Q 56.B

- Charvaka (also called Lokāyata or the Bṛhaspatiya school) is the classical Indian materialist school. It denies an immaterial soul (ātman) and rejects God or any supernatural agency.
- It rejects dharma and mokṣa as ultimate ends and holds material enjoyment (bhoga) and sensory pleasure as the proper aim of life.
- It reduces reality to the four elements (earth, water, fire, air) and accepts perception (pratyakṣa) as the sole reliable means of knowledge, rejecting scriptural testimony and, in many accounts, inference as certain proof for metaphysical claims. **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**
- Sāṃkhya: Sāṃkhya is dualistic: it posits Puruṣa (conscious soul) distinct from Prakṛti (matter/nature). It therefore accepts a soul and aims at liberation (mokṣa) through discrimination.
- Nyaya is a school of logic and epistemology that accepts multiple pramāṇas (perception, inference, testimony, etc.), does not deny the soul, and is generally not a hedonistic/materialist system.
- Vedānta (esp. Advaita) affirms Brahman/ātman and centers on mokṣa (liberation) as the highest goal, directly contradicting the features described.

#### Q 57.C

- **Puthukkuli (or Puthukkuli woolen shawls)** are handwoven woolen shawls traditionally made in Tamil Nadu. It has been granted the status of **Geographical Indication**. **Hence, pair 1 is correctly matched.**



- **Baluchari** is a famous silk saree (tassar silk) with woven mythological scenes in the Murshidabad region from West Bengal. In 2011, the Baluchari Sari was granted the status of **Geographical Indication** for West Bengal in India. Hence, pair 2 is correctly matched.



- **Sujni embroidery** is a traditional craft from Bihar, involving motifs stitched onto cotton or silk fabric, especially from the Bhagalpur region. It has been granted the status of **Geographical Indication**. Hence, pair 3 is correctly matched.





**Q 58.B**

- The successor of Ali Adil Shah, **Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1580–1627)**, ascended the throne at the age of nine. He was **very solicitous to the poor, and had the title of ‘abla baba’, or ‘Friend of the Poor’**. He was deeply interested in music, and composed a book called Kitab-i-Nauras in which songs were set to various musical modes or ragas. **Hence, pair 2 is not correctly matched.**
- **The Bahmani kingdom** reached its height of power and territorial limits during the **prime ministership of Mahmud Gawan**. He became a favorite of the Sultan Humayun Shah and **being granted the title of Malik-ut-Tujjar, meaning "Chief of the Merchants"**. Soon, he became prime minister or Peshwa. For almost 20 years, Mahmud Gawan dominated the affairs of the state. He extended the Bahmani kingdom by making further annexations in the east. **Hence, pair 3 is correctly matched.**
- **Bhoja** was a powerful ruler of the Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty in the 9th century. **Bhoja was a devotee of Vishnu, and adopted the title of ‘Adivaraha’ which has been found inscribed in some of his coins**. He is sometimes called Mihir Bhoja to distinguish him from Bhoja Paramara of Ujjain who ruled a little later. Bhoja probably died in about 885. **Hence, pair 1 is correctly matched.**

**Q 59.A**

- **The prehistoric period refers to the time before the advent of writing, reconstructed mainly through archaeological remains like tools, fossils, and habitation sites. In India, it spans from the Palaeolithic to the Neolithic stages, reflecting a gradual evolution of human culture.**
  - Palaeolithic Age (c. 2 million – 10,000 BCE): Humans were hunters and gatherers, using crude stone tools. The period is divided into Lower, Middle, and Upper phases, showing technological progress from core tools to blades. Sites are found across the subcontinent, from the Soan Valley to the Narmada basin.
  - Mesolithic Age (c. 10,000 – 8000 BCE): Marked by microlithic tools, domestication of animals, and beginnings of settled life. Rock art in places like Bhimbetka illustrates early symbolic and cultural expression.
  - Neolithic Age (c. 8000 – 2000 BCE): People adopted agriculture, pottery, and village settlements. Regional variations are visible — from wheat and barley cultivation in the north-west to rice domestication in the Ganga plains.
  - Chalcolithic Age (c. 3000 – 1000 BCE, overlaps with Neolithic in some regions): Introduction of copper along with stone tools, growth of agriculture, craft specialization, and village cultures (e.g., Ahar, Malwa, Jorwe).
- **Famous prehistoric sites:**
  - **Liddar Valley**
    - > **Paleolithic tools have been found in the Liddar Valley, Pahalgam, Kashmir. Hence, pair 1 is correctly matched.**
  - **Belan Valley**
    - > **The Belan Valley is actually in the Vindhyan region of Uttar Pradesh (near Allahabad/Prayagraj). It is famous for a continuous sequence from Palaeolithic to Neolithic. Hence, pair 2 is correctly matched.**
  - **Soan Valley – Maharashtra**
    - > **The Soan/ Sohan Valley is located in present-day Pakistan (in the Potwar Plateau, Punjab region), not in Maharashtra.**
    - > **Hence, pair 3 is not correctly matched.**

**Q 60.C**

- According to inscriptions, the Gupta kings assumed titles like Paramabhattacharya, Maharajadhiraja, Parameswara, Samrat, and Chakravartin. The king was assisted in his administration by a council consisting of a chief minister, a Senapati or commander-in-chief of the army and other important officials. A high official called Sandivigraha was mentioned in the Gupta inscriptions, most probably minister for foreign affairs.
- The king maintained a close contact with the provincial administration through a class of officials called Kumaramatyas and Ayuktas. **Provinces in the Gupta Empire were known as Bhuktis and provincial governors as Uparikas. They were mostly chosen from among the princes. Bhuktis were subdivided into Vishyas or districts.** They were governed by Vishyapatis. Nagara Sreshtis were the officers looking after the city administration. The villages in the district were under the control of Gramikas.
- **Hence, option (c) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 61.A

- **Kudirai Chettis were local merchants in the Vijayanagara Empire who were primarily involved in the horse trade, specifically importing horses from Arabia and Central Asia.** Effective cavalry was crucial for warfare during that period, making these horse merchants an important part of the empire's trading community and economy.
- From 1498 other actors appeared on the scene. These were the Portuguese, who arrived on the west coast of the subcontinent and attempted to establish trading and military stations. Their superior military technology, especially the use of muskets, enabled them to become important players in the tangled politics of the period. **Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 62.A

- **Context: Divya Deshmukh becomes third Women's World Cup Champion, defeats Humpy Koneru in tiebreak.**
  - FIDE (International Chess Federation) organizes the FIDE Women's World Cup as the global governing body for chess, overseeing its major tournaments. The Women's World Cup serves as a crucial part of the FIDE Women's World Championship cycle, determining qualifiers for the Candidates Tournament, which in turn helps select a challenger for the Women's World Championship title. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
  - Dr. Mandaviya personally felicitated Divya Deshmukh, who also became the 88th Grandmaster of the country and 4th Indian woman to become a Grandmaster, on becoming the first Indian woman to win the FIDE Women's World Cup, as well as the youngest ever to do so. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
  - The FIDE Women's World Cup 2025 was a massive tournament held from July 6 to July 28 in Batumi, Georgia. The tournament had 107 players from 46 countries, with 17 of the world's top 20 women chess players competing. It was the third edition of the Women's Chess World Cup. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

#### Q 63.D

- **Timur invaded the Delhi Sultanate in 1398 during the reign of Sultan Nasir-ud-din Mahmud Shah Tughluq.** The Tughlaq dynasty's weakness during this time, with most provincial governors having declared independence, presented an opportunity for Timur, a powerful Central Asian conqueror, to invade and plunder the wealthy city of Delhi, leaving it in ruins. On hearing the news of arrival of Timur, Sultan Nasir-ud-din Mahmud Shah Tughluq fled Delhi. **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**
- After the Timurid invasion, a new dynasty, called the **Saiyid dynasty**, arose in Delhi. Timur appointed the Khizr khan as his deputy to oversee Timurid interests in the Punjab marches. Khizr khan (1414-21) went on to seize Delhi and **establish the Sayyid dynasty (1414-51). The Sayyid dynasty established by Khizr khan had four sultans ruling up to 1451.**
- **The Lodis (1451-1526)** dominated the upper Ganga valley and the Punjab from the middle of the **fifteenth century**. As distinct from the earlier Delhi rulers who were Turks, the Lodis were Afghans.
- **The Khilji Dynasty (1290-1320)** was the second dynasty of the Delhi Sultanate, following the Slave Dynasty.

#### Q 64.D

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Kinship was the basis of social structure and a man was identified by the clan to which he belonged. People gave their primary loyalty to the tribe, which was called *jana*.
- **Statement 2 is not correct:** Women could attend assemblies and offer sacrifices along with their husbands. There are instances of five women who composed hymns although the later texts mention 20 such women.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Slaves were given as gifts to the priests. They were mainly women slaves employed for domestic purposes.

#### Q 65.B

- **When the sufi saint died, his tomb shrine-dargah became the center of his followers' devotion.** This encouraged **pilgrimage or ziyarat to his grave, especially on his death anniversary**, as a symbol of his soul's oneness with God. People thought that when saints died, they were united with God and hence closer to Him than when they were alive. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

- **The practice was prevalent even during the times of the Delhi sultanate.** The earliest textual references to Khwaja Muinuddin's dargah date to the fourteenth century. The Dargah was evidently popular because of the austerity and piety of its Shaikh, the greatness of its spiritual successors, and the patronage of royal visitors. **Muhammad bin Tughlaq was the first sultan to visit the shrine as per the available references. Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- **The use of music and dance, especially mystical chanting performed by specially trained musicians or qawwals to elicit divine ecstasy, is a significant aspect of ziyarat.** Sufis remember God by repeating the zikr (Divine Names) or by evoking his Presence through sama' (literally, "audition"), or the performance of mystical music, which eventually led to the development of the Qawwali style of music. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

#### Q 66.A

- Manuscripts of Bhagavad Gita and Natyashastra inscribed on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register
- With the inclusion of Gita and Natyashastra, India now has 14 entries in the Register.
- India's Rig Veda, Gilgit Manuscript, Manuscripts of Abhinavagupta (940-1015 CE), Maitreyayvarakarana, (a manuscript of the Pala period) etc. have also been included in the Register.
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris in 1948, is also among the new entries in the Register.
- **About the Inscriptions**
- **Bhagavad Gita**
  - Part of the Mahabharata, specifically within the Bhīṣmaparva (Chapters 23–40).
  - Structured as a dialogue between Lord Krishna and Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra.
  - It is considered to be composed in the 2nd or 1st century BCE.
  - Comprises of 700 verses across 18 chapters.
  - Relevance: Considered a guide to living a meaningful and purposeful life.
- **Natyashastra**
  - Preserved at the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute
  - Considered the essence of Nāṭyaveda — an oral tradition of performing arts comprising 36,000 verses, also known as the Gāndhārvaveda.
  - It deals with drama (nāṭya), performance (abhinaya), aesthetic emotion (rasa), feeling (bhāva), and music (saṅgīta).
  - Believed to have been codified around the 2nd century BCE by Bharatmuni in Sanskrit.
  - Laid the Foundation of Indian poetics, theatre, dance, and aesthetics.
- **Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 67.B

- Akbar constructed Jodha Bai's Palace at Fatehpur Sikri, not at the Red Fort. The Red Fort in Delhi was built much later by Shah Jahan.
- At Fatehpur Sikri, important constructions included Jodh Bai's Palace, Panch Mahal, Jama Masjid, and Buland Darwaza. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- The pietra dura technique (inlay of semi-precious stones in marble to create floral/geometric patterns) first appeared in the Itimad-ud-Daulah tomb (built by Nur Jahan). This art form reached its peak under Shah Jahan, especially in the Taj Mahal, Red Fort, and other monuments. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- The Jama Masjid at Delhi (1650–56 CE), commissioned by Shah Jahan, was built mainly with red sandstone and decorated with white marble.
- It represents the peak of Mughal mosque-building activity. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

#### Q 68.D

- **Context: The withdrawal was announced, citing the agency's support for woke and divisive causes and anti-Israel bias.**
- **UNESCO**
  - It is a specialized agency of the United Nations.
  - Purpose: To contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture.
  - Its Headquarters in Paris serves as the organisation's main building.
  - It has 194 Members and 12 Associate Members.
- **Key Reports and Initiatives:**
  - Global Education Monitoring Report



- World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development
- UNESCO World Heritage Sites
- Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme
- **Hence option (d) is the correct answer**

**Q 69.B**

- **Ratnins:**
  - The Later Vedic period, which followed the Rig Vedic era, is primarily understood through texts compiled during this time. This era corresponds with the Iron Age and is associated with the Painted Grey Ware (PGW) Culture.
  - The Later Vedic period saw the emergence of a structured administrative system, with royal officials called Ratnins (jewels), who were key members of the king's council and handled various administrative functions.
  - By 1000 BCE, Aryans began migrating from the Sapta Sindhu (Indus Valley) to the Gangetic plains (Ganga Doab region), settling in areas such as Delhi, Bihar, western Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan.
  - **Ratnins (literally, “jewel-bearers”) were royal functionaries who played crucial roles in Vedic polity. Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**
  - They were twelve important associates of the king, including the chief queen (Mahishi), charioteer (Suta), chamberlain (Kshattā), herald (Palagala), etc. Their role was both administrative and ritualistic, especially during royal sacrifices like the Rajasuya.

**Q 70.B**



- Vedangas, meaning “limbs of the Vedas,” are six auxiliary disciplines developed to aid the study and practice of the Vedas.
- They include **Shiksha (phonetics), Chhanda (meter), Vyakarana (grammar), Nirukta (etymology), Jyotisha (astronomy/astrology), and Kalpa (rituals).**
- Together, they ensured the preservation, correct recitation, interpretation, and application of Vedic knowledge, forming the intellectual foundation of Hindu thought and early Yogic traditions. **Hence, option (5) and (6) are incorrect.**
- Symbolically, each Vedanga is likened to a part of the body of Veda Purusha, reflecting how these disciplines collectively sustain and enrich the holistic understanding of Vedic wisdom.

**Q 71.B**

- The Sanskrit work Ragadarpana (a treatise on Indian classical music authored by Pt. Sodhala) was indeed translated into Persian as Nagma-e-Sarang during the reign of Firoz Shah Tughlaq, not Alauddin Khilji. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- Amir Khusrau, the celebrated poet, scholar, and musician of the Delhi Sultanate, is credited with innovations in Hindustani music. He is believed to have introduced several ragas such as ghora, sanam, and others, and played a key role in blending Persian and Indian musical traditions. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

### Q 72.B

- **Bindusara:**
  - Bindusara, who ruled from 298 to 273 B.C., was referred to by the Greeks as “Amitragatha,” meaning “slayer of enemies.” This title was a reflection of his military prowess and successful campaigns. **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**
  - He is believed to have expanded the Mauryan Empire to the Deccan region, reaching as far south as Mysore.
  - Tibetan monk Taranatha mentions that Bindusara conquered 16 states, which included the lands between the two seas (presumably the eastern and western coasts of India).
  - Furthermore, the Sangam Tamil literature supports the notion of a Mauryan invasion of the far south, thereby solidifying the claim that his empire stretched to Mysore.
  - Additionally, Bindusara was known to have corresponded with the Syrian king Antiochus I, requesting luxury goods, and supported the Ajivika sect. He also appointed his son, Ashoka, as the governor of Ujjain, showcasing his strategic approach to governance and succession.

### Q 73.C

- **Context: Former Indian Vice President raised concerns of digital colonialism stating dependence on foreign digital infrastructure and not invasion as the prime threat to sovereignty.**
- **About Digital Colonialism**
  - It is a theoretical framework that establishes the primacy in digital technologies by Big tech companies that extract, analyse and own user data for their own profit and market influence. Hence, statement A is correct.
  - It includes the decentralised capture and management of data from individuals, with or without their explicit consent, threatening state and individual autonomy. Hence, Reason R is not correct.
  - Key Pillars of Dominance characterising Digital Colonialism
    - Economic domination: Big corporations seize the resources of foreign countries by creating technological dependencies. o E.g., monopoly over search engines (Google); desktop operating systems (Microsoft Windows); social networking platforms (Facebook, Twitter); etc.
    - Imperial Control of Architecture: Proprietary software and non-free licensing regime restrict modification/access for other nations, locking them out of digital self-sufficiency. o E.g., App Store policies (Apple/Google) exercise unilateral decisions over what apps and features are allowed.
    - Global Surveillance Capitalism: Advanced data science and machine learning enable corporations to track user behaviour and make favourable business decisions based on global surveillance. o E.g., Facebook enabled mass data harvesting by third parties like Cambridge Analytica, influencing elections.
    - Tech hegemony: Few big tech firms steer the narrative around how technology should expand and define the economic ramifications of such an expansion. o E.g., Amazon (AWS), Microsoft (Azure), and Google Cloud control a vast majority of worldwide cloud service, giving them unparalleled power over global data storage, processing, and analytics.
    - Cultural Imperialism: Depicted in the homogeneity and superiority of technologies owned by few and underpinning values, language, and culture of others. o E.g., Content curation and algorithmic bias on social platforms prioritize content that aligns with dominant cultural values.
    - Discourse of ‘benevolence’: Framing digital technologies as evidently good, connectivity as progress and human rights. o E.g., Facebook’s “Free Basics” rollout in Africa positioned as philanthropy was criticized for potentially serving as a tool to expand market share and acquire user data.
- **Hence option (c) is the correct answer.**

### Q 74.B

- A classical language is a language that has an independent literary tradition and a substantial body of ancient written literature, often serving as a link to a rich cultural heritage. While the term "classical language" can refer to ancient languages like Latin and Ancient Greek, within the context of India, it refers to a specific status awarded by the government to languages meeting certain historical and literary criteria. As of August 2025, **India recognizes 11 languages as classical: Tamil, Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese, and Bengali.**
- Tamil: Declared Classical in 2004 (first language to get the status).
- Sanskrit: Declared Classical in 2005.
- Kannada & Telugu: Declared in 2008
- Malayalam: Declared in 2013.

- Odia: Declared in 2014.
- Recently (2024): Marathi, Prakrit, Pali, Bengali, Assamese were added.
- **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 75.D

- **Context: China formally established the IOMed as a global alternative to traditional institutions such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the Permanent Court of Arbitration.**
  - India was not among the 33 founding members that signed the Convention to establish the International Organisation for Mediation (IOMed) in May 2025. The initial founding members listed in the articles include China, Algeria, Belarus, Cambodia, Djibouti, Indonesia, Laos, Pakistan, Serbia, and Sudan, among others. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
  - The International Organisation for Mediation (IOMed) will be the world's first intergovernmental legal organization dedicated to resolving international disputes through mediation. Leveraging the unique advantages of mediation as a more flexible, cost-effective, convenient and well-implemented means, it offers a new option to all countries for party-owned and efficient resolution of international disputes.
  - The International Organisation for Mediation (IOMed) is headquartered in Wan Chai, Hong Kong. The headquarters is located in the historic former Wan Chai Police Station building. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
  - According to Article 7, The Organization shall be open and inclusive for membership of all States and regional integration organizations. States having signed or endorsed the Joint Statement on the Future Establishment of the International Organization for Mediation shall be entitled to be Founding Members if they have consented to be bound by this Convention within five years after the entry into force of this Convention. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

#### Q 76.D

- **Kālidāsa (4th–5th century CE)** was a **Classical Sanskrit** author who is often considered ancient India's greatest poet and playwright. He was **one of the 'navratnas' in the court of Chandragupta-II**. His plays and poetry are primarily based on Hindu Puranas and philosophy.
  - He composed the finest works such as:
    - > **Meghadutam- minor poem (the display of his love for Ujjain)** - (The Cloud Messenger), a khaṇḍakāvya (minor poem). It describes the story of a Yakṣa trying to send a message to his lover through a cloud.
    - > **Raghuvamsa - epic poem-** (highly eulogistic descriptions of Kalingan emperor Hemāṅgada) - epic poem
    - > **Kumarasambhava - epic poem** - (detailed description of the Himalayas) - epic poem
    - > **Abhijnashakuntalam (play)** - (Of the recognition of Śakuntalā) tells the story of King Duṣyanta who, while on a hunting trip, meets Śakuntalā, the adopted daughter of the sage Kanha and real daughter of Vishwamitra and Menaka and marries her.
    - > **Vikramorvasiyam (play)** -(Ūrvaśī Won by Valour) tells the story of King Pururavas and celestial nymph Ūrvaśī who fall in love. **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**
    - > **Mālavikāgnimitram (play)** (Pertaining to Mālavikā and Agnimitra) tells the story of King Agnimitra, who falls in love with the picture of an exiled servant girl named Mālavikā.
    - > **Vikramorvasiya tells the story of King Pururavas and the celestial nymph Urvashi, highlighting themes of love, separation, and reunion. Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.**
- **Bhāsa** was one of the earliest Indian playwrights in Sanskrit, predating Kālidāsa. Estimates of his floruit range from the 4th century BCE to the 4th century CE.
  - **Plays written by Bhasa:**
    - > **Plays based on Ramayana**
      - ✓ Pratimā-nāṭaka
      - ✓ Abhiṣeka-nāṭaka
    - > **Plays based on Mahābhārata**
      - ✓ Dūtavākya
      - ✓ Karṇabhāra
      - ✓ Dūtaghaṭotkaca
      - ✓ Ūrubhaṅga
      - ✓ Madhyama-vyāyoga
      - ✓ Pañcarātra

- > **Based on story of Br̥hatkathā**
  - ✓ Pratijñā-Yaugandharāyaṇa
  - ✓ Svapnavāsavadatta
  - ✓ Avimāraka
  - ✓ Cārudatta
- > **Bālarita: On childhood of Kṛṣṇa and slaying of Kāṣa**
- > **The Urubhanga (based on Duryodhana) and Karna-bhara (based on Karna) are the only known tragic Sanskrit plays in ancient India.**
- **Bharavi (Bhāravi) was a 6th century Indian poet known for his epic poem Kirātārjunīya (mahakavya in Classical Sanskrit).** It expands upon a minor episode in the Vana Parva ("Book of the Forest") of the Mahabharata: While the Pandavas are exiled in the forest, Draupadi and Bhima incite Yudhishthira to declare war with the Kauravas, while he does not relent. Finally, Arjuna, at the instruction of Indra, appeases Shiva with penance (tapasya) in the forest. Pleased by his austerities, Shiva decides to reward him.

#### Q 77.D

- **Kanchi Ghatika:**
  - The Pallavas were significant patrons of learning and culture in South India. They ruled from the 4th to 9th centuries CE, with their capital at Kanchi.
  - The Ghatika at Kanchi was a well-known center of learning, attracting students from all over India and beyond. Famous scholars such as Mayurasarman, the founder of the Kadamba dynasty, studied the Vedas here.
  - Dinganaga, a prominent Buddhist writer, also came to study at Kanchi. Dharmapala, who later became the Head of Nalanda University, hailed from Kanchi.
  - **Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 78.D

- **Context: India is celebrated 10th years of the Digital India Mission launched in 2015. Digital India Mission:**
  - The program, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015, was designed to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy.
  - Nodal Implementing Ministry: Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeiTY)
  - Purpose: To transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy
  - Nature: Umbrella programme that clubs together various e-governance initiatives across Ministries and Departments.
  - Leveraging private sector: Public Private Partnerships (PPP) are preferred wherever feasible to implement eGovernance projects.
- The Digital India Mission rests on nine pillars, designed to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. These are:
  - Broadband Highways – Expanding high-speed internet across rural and urban areas.
  - Universal Access to Mobile Connectivity – Ensuring mobile coverage in all regions.
  - Public Internet Access Programme – Establishing CSCs (Common Service Centres) and post offices as multi-service digital access points.
  - e-Governance – Reforming government through technology-enabled processes.
  - e-Kranti – Delivering electronic services across sectors like health, education, and agriculture.
  - Information for All – Open data, online information, and proactive citizen engagement.
  - Electronics Manufacturing – Promoting domestic electronics production to reduce imports.
  - IT for Jobs – Training youth for employment in IT and related fields.
  - Early Harvest Programmes – Quick-win initiatives like email for government staff, Wi-Fi in universities, and digital literacy
- **Hence option (d) is the correct answer**

#### Q 79.B

- **The Great Stupa at Sanchi was constructed by Emperor Ashoka during 3rd century BCE.**
- **Significance:** One of the oldest stone structures in India; a key Buddhist monument containing relics of Buddha.
- **Architecture:** Hemispherical dome (anda), harmika (square railing), and toranas (elaborately carved gateways). **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**

- **Kailasa Temple at Ellora**
  - Date: 8th century CE (Rashtrakuta period)
  - Significance: Monolithic rock-cut Hindu temple dedicated to Lord Shiva.
  - Architecture: Carved from a single rock, showcasing Dravidian style with elaborate sculptural panels.
- **Sun Temple at Konark**
  - Date: 13th century CE (Eastern Ganga dynasty)
  - Significance: Famous for chariot-shaped temple architecture dedicated to Surya, the Sun God.
- **Dilwara Temples at Mount Abu**
  - Date: 11th–13th century CE
  - Significance: Jain temples famous for intricate marble carvings, considered masterpieces of medieval Indian art.

#### Q 80.B

- **Context: 19th edition of the Global Peace Index (GPI) has been released by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP).**
- **Global Peace Index**
  - Produced by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) since 2007, the Global Peace Index (GPI) is the world's leading measure of global peacefulness. The report ranks 163 independent states and territories according to their level of peacefulness.
  - The report presents the most comprehensive data-driven analysis to date on trends in peace, its economic value, and how to develop peaceful societies.
  - The GPI covers 163 countries comprising 99.7 per cent of the world's population, using 23 qualitative and quantitative indicators from highly respected sources, and measures the state of peace across three domains: the level of Societal Safety and Security; the extent of Ongoing Domestic and International Conflict; and the degree of Militarisation.
- **Key Findings**
  - Average level of global peacefulness deteriorated.
  - South Asia, the second least peaceful region globally, experienced the largest regional decline in peacefulness.
- **Ranking:**
  - Iceland has been placed at first place.
  - India's rank is 115th.
  - Russia (163 Rank) is the least peaceful country.
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer**

#### Q 81.C

- Tamasha is a traditional folk theatre form of Maharashtra. The term 'Tamasha' is derived from Persian. **Hence, pair 1 is correctly matched.**
- Bhavai is a traditional theatre form of Gujarat and Rajasthan with its deep roots in Kutch and Kathiawar in Gujarat. Bhavai originated as a prayer to the Goddess Amba, during the Navaratra festival. **Hence, pair 3 is correctly matched.**
- Raslila is based exclusively on the legendary stories of Radha and Krishna, Raslila is a highly musical traditional theatre form of Uttar Pradesh. **Hence, pair 2 is not correctly matched.**

#### Q 82.B

- **Inscriptions from Uttaramerur in Chingleput district, Tamil Nadu, provide details of the way in which Gram Sabha/village assembly was organised.** The inscription gives details of the functioning of the local sabha, i.e. the village assembly. A sabha was an assembly exclusively of brahmins and had specialised committees tasked with different things. The Uttaramerur inscription details how members were selected, the required qualifications, their roles and responsibilities, and even the circumstances in which they could be removed.
- The Uttaramerur inscription lays down:
  - All those who wish to become members of the sabha should be owners of land from which land revenue is collected.
  - They should have their own homes.
  - **They should be between 35 and 70 years of age. Hence, statement 1 is correct and 3 is not correct.**
  - They should have knowledge of the Vedas.



- The affairs of the village were managed by an executive committee to which educated persons owning property were elected either by drawing lots or by rotation. These members had to retire every three years. There were other committees for helping in the assessment and collection of land revenue, for maintenance of law and order, justice, etc. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

## Inscriptions and texts

Who could be a member of a sabha? The Uttaramerur inscription lays down:

*All those who wish to become members of the sabha should be owners of land from which land revenue is collected.*

*They should have their own homes.*

*They should be between 35 and 70 years of age.*

*They should have knowledge of the Vedas.*

*They should be well-versed in administrative matters and honest.*

*If anyone has been a member of any committee in the last three years, he cannot become a member of another committee.*

*Anyone who has not submitted his accounts, and those of his relatives, cannot contest the elections.*

Q 83.A

- The Mongols under Genghis Khan invaded Transoxiana in north-east Iran in 1219. Mongol attacks on the Delhi Sultanate increased during the reign of Alauddin Khalji. This forced the ruler to mobilise a large standing army in Delhi. Delhi was attacked twice, in 1299/1300 and 1302-1303. As a defensive measure, Alauddin Khalji raised a large standing army and took following measures to prevent threat of Mongol invasions:
  - Alauddin constructed a new garrison town named Siri for his soldiers. Hence, statement 2 is correct.
  - The soldiers had to be fed. This was done through the produce collected as tax from lands between the Ganga and Yamuna. Tax was fixed at 50 per cent of the peasant's yield but not levied additional taxes during famine. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.
  - The soldiers had to be paid. Alauddin chose to pay his soldiers salaries in cash rather than iqtas. The soldiers would buy their supplies from merchants in Delhi and it was thus feared that merchants would raise their prices. Hence, statement 3 is correct.
- Alauddin's administrative measures were quite successful and chroniclers praised his reign for its cheap prices and efficient supplies of goods in the market. He successfully withstood the threat of Mongol invasions.

Q 84.B

- Context: In his monthly 'Mann Ki Baat' programme, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that India has been declared free of Trachoma — an eye disease.



- **Trachoma**
  - It is the leading infectious cause of blindness worldwide. It is caused by an obligate intracellular bacterium called Chlamydia trachomatis. The infection is transmitted by direct or indirect transfer of eye and nose discharges of infected people, particularly young children who harbour the principal reservoir of infection. These discharges can be spread by particular species of flies.
  - It is a public health problem in 32 countries and is responsible for the blindness or visual impairment of about 1.9 million people. Blindness from trachoma is difficult to reverse.
  - Based on April 2025 data, 103 million people live in trachoma endemic areas and are at risk of trachoma blindness.
  - Infection spreads through personal contact (via hands, clothes, bedding or hard surfaces) and by flies that have been in contact with discharge from the eyes or nose of an infected person. With repeated episodes of infection over many years, the eyelashes may be drawn in so that they rub on the surface of the eye. This causes pain and may permanently damage the cornea.
  - In 2024, 87 349 people received surgical treatment for advanced stage of the disease, and 44.4 million people were treated with antibiotics. Global antibiotic coverage in 2024 was 39%.
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer**

Q 85.A

- **Context: The World Health Organization (WHO) today has launched a major new initiative urging countries to raise real prices on tobacco, alcohol, and sugary drinks by at least 50% by 2035.**
  - **The World Health Organization (WHO) launched the "3 by 35" Initiative to urge countries to increase taxes on tobacco, alcohol, and sugary drinks by at least 50% by 2035.** The initiative aims to reduce the harmful consumption of these products, improve public health by combating non-communicable diseases, and generate significant revenue for health systems.
  - The consumption of tobacco, alcohol, and sugary drinks are fueling the NCD epidemic. NCDs, including heart disease, cancer, and diabetes, account for over 75% of all deaths worldwide. A recent report shows that a one-time 50% price increase on these products could prevent 50 million premature deaths over the next 50 years.
  - “Health taxes are one of the most efficient tools we have,” said Dr Jeremy Farrar, Assistant Director-General, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention and Control, WHO. “They cut the consumption of harmful products and create revenue governments can reinvest in health care, education, and social protection. It’s time to act.”
  - The Initiative has an ambitious but achievable goal of raising US\$1 trillion over the next 10 years. Between 2012 and 2022, nearly 140 countries raised tobacco taxes, which resulted in an increase of real prices by over 50% on average, showing that large-scale change is possible.
- **Hence option (a) is the correct answer**

Q 86.A

- **Context: Recently, Union Minister of Earth Sciences Dr. Jitendra Singh launched the Bharat Forecasting System, BFS, in New Delhi.**
- **Developed by the Pune-based Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, the Bharat Forecasting System will provide forecasts with a 6-kilometer resolution-the highest in the world-which will allow the meteorological department to predict small-scale weather features more accurately. Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
- The system has been experimental since 2022 and is finally ready for operation. The system will boost monsoon tracking, aviation, cyclone and disaster management, agriculture, waterways, defence, flood forecasting, and also support key ministries.
- The BFS, which will be operational up to the Panchayat level, is expected to help address extreme rainfall events, among other things. The new model allows a horizontal resolution of about 6 km, which is typically the size of a cluster or panchayat. It has been in experimental mode for over three years and has demonstrated notable improvements. **The Bharat FS is the only global numerical weather prediction system in the world that is deployed at such a high resolution, representing a major advancement in India’s forecasting capabilities. Hence, statement 1 is correct.**

### Q 87.C

- **Hiriya canal** drew water from a dam across the Tungabhadra and irrigated the cultivated valley that separated the "sacred centre" from the "urban core". This was apparently built by kings of the Sangama dynasty (**Sangama dynasty**, exercised control till 1485), **where as Krishnadeva Raya belonged to the Tuluva dynasty that came after Sangama dynasty. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- The greatest of the Vijayanagar rulers (Krishnadeva Raya) **was also known as 'Abhinava Bhoja', 'Andhra Pitamah', 'Andhra Bhoja' as he was great patron of literature and art. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- **In 1565 Rama Raya, the chief minister of Vijayanagara, led the army into battle at Rakshasi-Tangadi (also known as Talikota), where his forces were routed by the combined armies of Bijapur, Ahmadnagar and Golconda. The victorious armies sacked the city of Vijayanagara. Krishnadeva Raya died in 1529. Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

### Q 88.C

- By the year 1526, the Bahmani kingdom had disintegrated into five independent sultanates. They were Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, Berar, Golkonda and Bidar and were known as Deccan Sultanates by the region within which they emerged.
- From 1490 to 1633, the **Nizam Shahi dynasty** ruled the kingdom of Ahmadnagar in India's Deccan. The founder was Malik Ahmad, who in 1490 fixed his capital on a new site called Ahmadnagar after himself.
  - The kingdom lay in the northwestern Deccan, between the states of Gujarat and Bijapur. It secured the great fortress of Daulatabad in 1499 and added Berar in 1574. **Hence pair 1 is correctly matched.**
- **The Adil Shahi dynasty** (1489–1686) was the ruling family of the **kingdom of Bijapur**, one of the two principal successor states to the Muslim sultanate of Bahmani in the Deccan. It was named after its founder, Yusuf Adil Shah, one of the provincial governors under the Bahmani kingdom and a protege of Mahmud Gavan.
  - The dynasty strongly resisted the Mughal advance southward in the 17th century until it was extinguished by the Indian emperor Aurangzeb with the capture of Bijapur in 1686. **Hence pair 2 is correctly matched.**
- **The Qutb Shahi dynasty** (1518–1687), rulers of the kingdom of Golconda in the southeastern Deccan of India, was one of the five successor states of the Bahmani kingdom. The founder was Quli Qutb Shah, a Turkish governor of the Bahmani eastern region, which largely coincided with the preceding Hindu state of Warangal.
  - Qutb Shah declared his independence in 1518 and moved his capital to Golconda. Toward the end of the century, Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah built a new capital at Hyderabad, a few miles away. **Hence pair 3 is correctly matched.**
- **The Imad Shahi Sultanate of Berar** (1490-1572), in Maharashtra, was one of the five Deccan Sultanates. The Imad Shahi dynasty was established by Fathullah Imad Shah (1490–1504), with its capital at Ellichpur.
- **The Farooqi dynasty** was the ruling dynasty of the **Khandesh Sultanate** from its inception in 1382 until its annexation by the Mughal emperor Akbar in 1601. The founder of the dynasty, Malik Ahmad (also known as Malik Raja), participated in a rebellion against the Bahmani ruler Muhammad Shah I in his early years. **Hence pair 4 is not correctly matched.**
- **Barid Shahi: Barid Shahi dynasty, the rulers of the small state of Bidar (now in Karnataka state in southwestern India) from about 1487 until 1619**

### Q 89.B

- Khajuraho, known for its ornate temples, **was built by the Chandela rulers between 900 CE to 1130 CE.** The first mention of Khajuraho and its temples is in the accounts of Abu Rahyan al Biruni ( 1022 CE) and Ibn Batuta (1335 CE). The temples were said to have been spread across 20 square kilometres and there were around 85 temples in the 12th century. The ravages of time have reduced the number of temples in Khajuraho to just 20 today. The Chandela Empire ruled central India from the tenth to the fourteenth centuries. Chandelas were well known for their interest in art and architecture. Although followers of Shaivism, the Chandelas were also said to have been inclined towards Vaishnavism and Jainism as well. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Kandariya Mahadeva Temple is the largest of all the temples in Khajuraho, and it dates back to the 10th century CE. It is 109 feet high and 60 feet wide. The Chausath Yogini Temple is not the largest temple in Khajuraho. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
- **The Temples of Khajuraho are a magnificent example of the Nagara style of temples** as the temples consist of a sanctum, a narrow ante-chamber (antarala), a transept (mahamandapa), additional halls (ardha

mandapa), a mandapa or nave and an ambulatory passage (Pradakshina-path) which is lighted by large windows. The Dravidian style is characteristic of South India (like the temples in Tamil Nadu). **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

#### Q 90.B

- **Shadow Puppet Theatre Traditions of India**
- The communities which are distinctively associated with it are:
  1. Chamadyacha Bahulya Thakar, Maharashtra
  2. Tolu Bommalatta Killekyata or Are Kapu, Andhra Pradesh
  3. Togalu Gombeyatta Killekyata or Dayat, Karnataka
  4. Tolu Bommalattam Killekyata, Tamil Nadu
  5. Tolpava Kuthu Vellalachetti, Nair, Kerala
  6. Ravanachhaya Bhat, Orissa
- Who are the Killekyata?
- The Killekyata are a traditional community of leather-puppeteers associated with the shadow-puppet theatre of Karnataka. Their art form is known as Togalu Gombeyaata (literally “a play of leather dolls”), one of the oldest forms of shadow puppetry in South India.
- **Technique and materials**
- In this art, flat leather puppets (made from goat or deer hide) are cut, pierced, painted, and then animated behind a white cloth screen with the help of a lamp or modern lighting. The moving puppets cast coloured shadows on the screen, accompanied by music and narration.
- **Themes and performance**
- The stories are drawn mainly from the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Puranic tales. The plays also include stock comic characters such as Killekyata and his wife, who provide humour and social commentary.
- **Geography and related traditions**
- Killekyata are linked specifically to Karnataka’s shadow puppetry. Parallel traditions exist in other regions, Tholu Bommalata in Andhra Pradesh/Telangana and Ravanachhaya in Odisha, each practised by distinct communities.
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 91.D

- **Tamil Sangam literature:**
  - Tamil Sangam literature is a collection of ancient Tamil texts that provide insights into the culture, society, and administration of ancient Tamil Nadu. It includes works on poetry, ethics, politics, and society, created during the Sangam period (circa 300 BCE to 300 CE).
    - > **Priests - Anthanar:** The term Anthanar refers to the priests or scholars in Tamil Sangam literature. **Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.**
    - > **Envoys - Thuthar:** The term Thuthar refers to envoys or ambassadors who were sent on diplomatic missions.
    - > **Spies - Orrar:** The term Orrar refers to spies or informers in Tamil Sangam literature.

#### Q 92.C

- **Context: Union Minister said that KMTTP will be Operational by 2027.**
- The Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project (KMTTP) is a joint India-Myanmar initiative to link India's eastern ports to its North-Eastern states via Myanmar's Kaladan River and a road to the border.
- The Kaladan Multi Modal Transit project was conceived in 2008 jointly by India and Myanmar. It is aimed at connecting the port of Kolkata with the port of Sittwe in Rakhine or Arakan State which would then be connected to Mizoram by road and the Kaladan river which flows by Paletwa.
- The project is be entirely funded by India and the Inland Waterways Authority of India has been appointed as project development consultant.
- Components: Involves sea, river, and road transportation:
  - Sea Route: From Kolkata to Sittwe (539 km).
  - River Route: Sittwe to Paletwa via the Kaladan River (158 km).
  - Road Component: Paletwa to Indo-Myanmar border (110 km), and further into Mizoram.
- **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer**

### Q 93.D

- **Context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that India is actively working on creating a comprehensive database of the Girmitiya community.**
  - "Girmitiyas" were Indian indentured labourers who left India in the mid to late 19th century to work in British colonies, especially after the enforcement of the British Slavery Abolition Act of 1833, causing a labour shortage.
  - The term "Girmit" is a mispronunciation of "Agreement," referring to the contract under which they migrated.
  - They went to work on sugar plantations, tea gardens etc. in the colonies, and many eventually settled there.
  - Distribution: Mauritius, Fiji, West Indies, Mauritius, South Africa, Caribbean (mostly Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Suriname, and Jamaica).
  - Source Regions: Mostly from the eastern United Provinces and Bihar.
  - The economic challenges they faced back home, poverty, unemployment, unfavorable agricultural conditions, and prospect of greater pay and living conditions in the colonies were the main motivators for many Girmitiyas.
  - However, after reaching the colonies, the workers continued to live in poverty as they had no access to resources, living wages, or even food and potable water.
- **Significance of Girmitiyas for India**
  - Deep cultural ties: They became the majority group in countries like Mauritius, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and Suriname, driving significant cultural assimilation of Indian traditions into local cultures.
  - Festivals: Celebration of Diwali, Ramleela in Fiji, Hosay festival in Trinidad and Tobago.
  - Folk Songs: In Fiji and Surinam, North Indian folk songs Kaharva, Birha, Lorik, Faruahi etc. are popular.
  - Use of musical instruments like Dhanatal with dholak, harmonium, Dandatal (eastern Uttar Pradesh).
  - Language: Hindi, Bhojpuri, Awadhi are widely spoken in Mauritius, Fiji and Surinam.
- **Political:**
  - Soft Power Diplomacy: Support at multilateral forums like the UN, WTO etc.
  - Hold highest state and government positions in the Girmitiya countries. For eg. Prime Ministers of Mauritius (Navinchandra Ramgoolam), Trinidad and Tobago (Kamla Persad-Bissessar).
  - Economic: Source of philanthropy, information exchanges, investments in innovation, and support for development projects. For e.g. Mauritius (17% of total FDI FY 2024–25).
- **Hence, option (d) is the correct answer**

### Q 94.B

- **Oligarchies and Monarchies:**
  - In the beginning of the 6th century B.C., northern India consisted of a large number of independent kingdoms. Some of them had monarchical forms of government, while some others were republics.
  - While there was a concentration of monarchies on the Gangetic plain, the republics were scattered in the foothills of the Himalayas and in northwestern India. Some of the republics consisted of only one tribe like the Sakyas, Licchavis and Mallas.
  - In the republics, the power of decision in all matters of state vested with the Public Assembly which was composed of the tribal representatives or heads of families. All decisions were by a majority vote.
  - The Buddhist literature Anguttara Nikaya gives a list of sixteen great kingdoms called 'Sixteen Mahajanapadas'. In course of time, the small and weak kingdoms either submitted to the stronger rulers or gradually got eliminated. Finally in the mid 6th century B.C., only four kingdoms – Vatsa, Avanti, Kosala and Magadha survived.
- **Among the Mahajanapadas:**
  - **Monarchical States included:** Anga, **Avanti**, Chedi, Kashi, Kosala, Gandhara, Magadha, Matsya, Surasena, Vatsa. In these states, **power was vested in a king** who ruled over the janapada.
    - > Kingship was generally **hereditary**, though sometimes legitimacy was tied to ritual sacrifices (e.g., Rajasuya, Ashvamedha). The king was assisted by councils and ministers but held **central authority in administration, taxation, and war**.
  - **Republican/Non-Monarchical/ Oligarchies States included:** Vajji, Malla, Licchavi, Shakya, Kamboja, Kuru, Panchala, etc. Known as **Gana-sanghas or republics**, these states were ruled not by a single king but by an **assembly of chiefs or clans**. Decision-making was often collective, through deliberations in assemblies (Sabha). Leadership was sometimes **oligarchic**, with power resting in a



small group of aristocratic families (often Kshatriyas). They had **rudimentary democratic features**, but not universal participation — only the ruling clans had voting rights.

**Q 95.B**

- **Context:** Gharial and Sloth Bear were recommended for inclusion under the Species Recovery Programme of Centrally Sponsored Scheme- Integrated Development of Wildlife (CSS-IDWH).
- Historically, gharial were found in the river system of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and southern part of Bhutan and Nepal. Today they survive only in the waters of India and Nepal. The surviving population can be found within the tributaries of the Ganges river system: Girwa (Uttar Pradesh), Son (Madhya Pradesh), Ramganga (Uttarakhand), Gandak (Bihar), Chambal (Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan) and Mahanadi (Orissa). **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The IUCN Red List status of Gharial is Critically Endangered due to severe population decline (once widespread, now restricted to fragmented habitats). Major threats: river pollution, sand mining, fishing nets, habitat loss, damming. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
- Male gharials develop a distinct bulbous growth (called ghara, after the Hindi word for pot) on the snout at sexual maturity. This structure amplifies sound and is absent in females, making gharial the only crocodilian species with visible sexual dimorphism.

**Q 96.A**

- **Pithora:** Ritual wall paintings by Rathwa/Bhilala communities in Gujarat & western Madhya Pradesh; horses and procession motifs; offered to Baba Pithora for vows/thanksgiving; natural earth pigments and milk-based binders on village house walls.



- **Phad:** Long horizontal painted scrolls from Rajasthan (Shahpura–Bhilwara) narrating epics of Pabuji and Devnarayan; performed by Bhopa–Bhopi singer-storytellers; mineral/natural colors on treated cloth.
- All three are indigenous/folk painting traditions tied to ritual or performative storytelling.
- **Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.**

**Q 97.A**

- **Alauddin Khalji ((1296-1316) ) took important steps in the field of land revenue administration.** He was the first monarch in the Sultanat who insisted that in the doab, land revenue would be assessed on the basis of measuring the land under cultivation.
  - **There were three taxes were levied on the peasants by the Alauddin viz. the Kharaj (also called Kharaj-I-jizya) or cultivation tax; Charai, a tax on milching cattle; and Ghari (a tax on houses). Kharaj was the land tax. Hence, statement 2 is correct**
  - **Under his rule, land taxes were collected directly from the cultivators.** The policy of direct collection of land revenue by the state, based on land measurement. The lands of all sizes were subject to the procedure of measurement of land called Masahat and fixation of the yield per Biswa (Wafa-I-Biswa). Also, Alauddin wanted that the landlords of the area—called khuts and muqaddams, should pay the same taxes as the others. Thereby, he tried to reduce the khuts and muqaddams (headmen in the villages) to the position of ordinary cultivators. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**

- **Muhammad binTughlaq (1324—51)** is best remembered as a ruler who undertook a number of bold experiments, and showed a keen interest in agriculture. Muhammad Tughlaq launched a scheme to **extend and improve cultivation in the doab. He set up a separate department called Diwan-i-Amir-i-Kohi.** The area was divided into development blocs headed by an official whose job was to extend cultivation by giving loans to the cultivators and to induce them to cultivate superior crops—wheat in place of barley, sugarcane in place of wheat, grapes and dates in place of sugarcane, etc. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

#### Q 98.D

- **The story of Malik Ambar, an African slave turned warrior, is an unusual one.** Sold and bought several times by slave dealers during his youth, fate brought him miles away from his home in Ethiopia to India, not only did Ambar get his freedom back, but he also rose up the social ladder, got an army, vast estates, and founded a city that today goes by the name ‘Aurangabad’. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- In the early 1570s, Ambar was taken to the Deccan. Here he was purchased by a certain Chengiz Khan. Khan himself was a former slave who had risen to hold the office of Peshwa or chief minister of the Nizam Shahi sultanate of Ahmadnagar in India. However, in Deccan society, the slaves did not have a permanent status. Upon the death of their masters, they were usually “set free” and served as per their free will in service of powerful commanders in the Empire.
- Five years after taking him on, Ambar’s master and patron Chenghiz Khan died, and Ambar was set free. For the next 20 years, he served as a mercenary for the Sultan of neighboring Bijapur. It is here he was given charge of a small troop and bestowed with the title “Malik”.
- In 1595, Malik Ambar returned to the Ahmadnagar Sultanate and served under another Habshi lord. This was the time when Mughal Emperor Akbar laid eyes on the Deccan and began a significant military expedition towards Ahmednagar. This was also Akbar’s last expedition before he passed away.
- It was really during the Mughal invasion of Ahmednagar in the late 1590s that Malik Ambar truly came into his own. The Mughals took the capital of the Ahmadnagar Sultanate, but the wider country around it was still in rebellion. Edging out a rival, **Ambar became the leader of the resistance. Other Deccan princes sent money and resources to Ambar to prevent inroads by Akbar and Jahangir’s armies into their territories. Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- Apart from being an able fighter, Ambar was also a fine administrator. In 1610, after briefly expelling the Mughals from Ahmednagar, Ambar established a new capital, a city named Khirki (present-day Aurangabad in Maharashtra) for the sultanate.

#### Q 99.C

- The term Neolithic has been derived from two Latin words i.e. Neo meaning New and lithic meaning stone, hence Neolithic period is also known as New Stone Age. This period is considered as one of the significant cultural stages when man started producing food and shifted to production economy from their previous hunting-gathering stage. Man started making specialised tools to suit this economic behaviour and also modified their social behaviour in a large extent which is reflected in the material record.
- In the world context the New Stone Age began in 9000B.C. Some neolithic sites found on the northern spurs of the Vindhyas are considered to be as old as 5000B.C. but generally neolithic settlements found in south India are not older than 2500 B.C.
- **Statement 1 is not correct:** The neolithic settlers were earliest farming communities. They broke the ground with stone hoes and digging sticks at the end of which ring stones weighing one to half kilogram were fixed.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The people of this age used tools and implements of polished stone. Besides polished tools of stone they used microlithic blades.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Since in the neolithic phase several settlements came to be acquainted with the cultivation of cereals and the domestication of animals they needed pots in which they could store their foodgrains. Hence, pottery first appears in this phase. Hand made pottery is found in early stage. Later neolithic people used footwheels to turn up pots.

#### Q 100.D

- **The peak of Chola power was reached during the reign of Arumolivarman, who assumed the title of Rajaraja on his accession.** From Rajaraja’s reign (985–1014) right up to the 13th century, the Cholas remained the major political power in South India. Through a series of successful military campaigns, Rajaraja broke the confederation between the Pandyas and the rulers of Kerala and Sri Lanka.



- **A successful naval expedition to Sri Lanka led to the destruction of Anuradhapura, and a Chola province was established in the northern part of the island.** Rajaraja also achieved victories against the Western Chalukyas and Rashtrakutas. **The Maldives were conquered towards the end of his reign. Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.**
  - **Raja Raja built the Brihadeswarar Temple in Thanjavur.** During his reign, the texts of the Tamil poets Appar, Sambandar and Sundarar were collected and edited into one compilation called Thirumurai.
- The founder of the **Chola empire was Vijayalaya, who was at first a feudatory of the Pallavas.** He captured Tanjore in AD 850. And by the end of the ninth century, the Cholas had defeated both the Pallavas of Kanchi (Tondaimandalam) and weakened the Pandyas, bringing the southern Tamil country under their control.
- **Aditya I (871–907), the successor of Vijayalaya,** achieved significant military successes and expanded the Chola kingdom. He confederated with the Pallavas to defeat the Pandyas in the battle at Shripurambiyam and obtained some territories in the Tanjore area as recompense.
- **Parantaka I (907–953), who succeeded Aditya I,** won several victories with the help of his allies such as the Western Gangas, the Kodumbalur chiefs, and the ruler of Kerala. He succeeded in conquering Madurai, after which he took the title of Madurantaka (destroyer of Madura) and Maduraikonda (capturer of Madurai). **He defeated the combined armies of the Pandyas and the king of Sri Lanka at the battle of Vellur, and the Pandya territories fell into Chola hands.** These victories were, however, followed by a resounding defeat at the hands of the Rashtrakutas in 949.

**Copyright © by Vision IAS**

*All rights are reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission of Vision IAS.*