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## ANSWERS & EXPLANATIONS

### GENERAL STUDIES (P) TEST – 4130 (2024)

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#### Q 1.B

- The Harappan culture belongs to the Bronze Age. The people of Harappa used many tools and implements of stone, but they were very well acquainted with the manufacture and use of bronze.
- Bronze was made by the smiths by mixing tin with copper. Since none of the two metals was easily available to the Harappans, bronze tools are not prolific in Harappa.
- The bronze tools and weapons recovered from the Harappan sites contain a smaller percentage of tin. However, the kit of bronze goods left by the Harappans is considerable, which suggests that the bronze smiths constituted an important group of artisans in the Harappan society. **They produced not only images and utensils but also various tools and weapons such as axes, saws, knives and spears. But this civilization was much before Iron age, reference and use of iron is not there in Harappan civilization. Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- Several other important crafts flourished in the Harappan towns. A piece of woven cotton has been recovered from Mohenjodaro, and textiles impressions found on several objects. Spindle whorls were used for spinning. Weavers wove 'cloth of wool and cotton. Huge brick structures suggest that brick-laying was an important craft. They also attest to the existence of a class of masons.
- **The Harappans also practiced boat-making.** As will be shown later, seal-making and terracotta manufacture were also important crafts. The goldsmiths made jewellery of silver, gold and precious stones; the first two may have been obtained from Afghanistan and the last from south India. The Harappans were also experts in bead-making. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **The potter's wheel was in full use, and the Harappans produced their own characteristic pottery,** which was made glossy and shining. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

#### Q 2.B

- **Madanna and Akkanna** were two Brahmin brothers who rose to prominence in the 17th century in the final two decades of the **Golconda sultanate**.
- Abul Hasan Qutb Shah (1626-72 CE) was the Sultan of Golconda at that time. He had purchased peace with the Mughals in 1657 CE by giving away his daughter in marriage to Prince Muhammad Sultan, the eldest son of Aurangzeb. He was a Shia, and had entrusted the work of administration to his two capable Brahmin ministers, Madanna and Akhanna.
- Madanna and Akkanna helped the Maratha king Shivaji to an expedition into Bijapur, Karnataka. **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 3.D

- Indigenous literature about India can be supplemented by foreign accounts. To India came the Greek, Roman and Chinese visitors, either as travelers or religious converts, and they left behind accounts of the things that they saw. It is remarkable that Alexander's invasion finds no mention in Indian sources, and it is entirely on the basis of the Greek sources that we have to reconstruct the history of his Indian exploits.
- The Greek visitors mention Sandiokottas, a contemporary of Alexander the Great who invaded India in 326 B C. Prince Sandroktas is identified with Chandragupta Maurya, whose date of accession is fixed at 322 BC.
  - This identification has served as the sheet-anchor in ancient Indian chronology. The Indika of Megasthenes, who came to the court of Chandragupta Maurya, has been preserved only in fragments quoted by subsequent classical writers.
- Greek and Roman accounts of the first and second centuries A.D. mention many Indian ports and enumerate items of trade between India and the Roman Empire.

- **The Periplus of the Erythrean Sea and Ptolemy's Geography, both written in Greek, provide valuable data for the study of the ancient geography and commerce of India.** The date ascribed to the first ranges between A.D. 80 and 115, while the second is attributed to about A.D. 150.
- **Pliny's Naturalis Historia, which belongs to the first century AD., was written in Latin and tells us about trade between India and Italy.**
- **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 4.C

- Dhrupad is primarily a form of chant or worship where a singer offers prayer to the Lord through Nada or sounds. It is believed to have been a further elaboration of the prabandha structure. While it might have had an impetus for popularity even by the 14th century, it finds a blossoming period from the 15th century onwards to about the 18th century.
- **During these centuries we meet the most respected and renowned singers and patrons of this form. There was Man Singh Tomar, the Maharaja of Gwalior. It was he who was mainly responsible for the enormous vogue of dhrupad. There were Baiju, Bakshu and others. Swami Haridasa a hermit of Brindavan was not only a dhrupadiya, but one of the most central figures in the Bhakti cult in the Northern areas of India. By tradition, he was the guru of Tansen, one of the best-known dhrupad singers and one of the nine jewels of Emperor Akbar's court. Hence, statements 1 and 2 are correct.**
- In structure, dhrupad has two parts, the anibaddha section and the sanchari dhrupad proper. The first is free alap. The dhrupad proper is a song in four parts: the asthayee, the antara, the Sanchari and the abhoga. The essential quality of the dhrupadic approach is its sombre atmosphere and emphasis on rhythm.
- There were four schools or vanis of singing the dhrupad. The Gauhar vani developed the raga or unadorned melodic figures. The Dagarvani emphasized melodic curves and graces. The Khandar vani specialised in quick ornamentation of the notes. Nauhar vani was known for its broad musical leaps and jumps. These vanis 'are now indistinguishable.
- The dhrupad is even now highly respected and can be heard on the concert platform but more often in temples of North India. The dhrupad has somewhat receded to the background and is not so popular with the masses. The Been and Pakhawaj which were closely associated with the dhrupad also do not find much patronage these days.

#### Q 5.A

- **Vaisheshika philosophical system:** The Sanskrit philosopher Kanada Kashyapa is believed to have expounded its theories and is credited with founding the school.
- **The Vaisheshika system is a realistic, analytic, and objective philosophy of the world.**
- **It tries to distinguish between the various kinds of ultimate things and to classify all the objects under five elements - Earth, Water, Air, Fire, and Ether - existing in the form of Atoms, Time, Space, Minds, and Self. Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- The creation of the world begins when the atoms of these five elements start to combine, and when they disintegrate, the world comes to an end.
- **Vaisheshika, thus postulates a dualism of the matter and soul and declares that salvation depends on fully recognizing the atomic nature of the universe and its difference from the soul. Hence statement 1 is correct.**

#### Q 6.B

- The most important of the native successors of the Mauryas in the Deccan and in central India were the Satavahanas., The Satavahanas are considered to be identical with the Andhras who are mentioned in the Puranas The Puranas speak only of the Andhra rule and not of the Satavahana rule.
  - On the other hand, the name Andhra does not occur in Satavahana inscriptions. According to some Puranas altogether the Andhras ruled for 300 years and this period from about mid-1st century BCE to early 3rd century CE is assigned to the rule of the Satavahana dynasty.
- **The Satavahanas started the practice of granting tax-free villages to Brahmanas and Buddhist monks.** The cultivated fields and villages granted to them were declared free from molestation by royal policemen and soldiers, and all kinds of royal officers. These areas therefore became small independent islands within the Satavahana kingdom. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **The official language of the Satavahanas was Prakrit.** All inscriptions were composed in this language and written in the Brahmi script, as was the case in Asokan times. Some Satavahana kings may have composed Prakrit books. One Prakrit text called Gathasaptasati is attributed to a Satavahana king called Hala. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

- The Satavahanas may have used gold as bullion, for they did not issue gold coins as the Kushans did. **They issued mostly coins of lead**, which is found in the Deccan. They also issued potin, copper and bronze money. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**

#### Q 7.A

- In later Vedic times popular assemblies lost in importance, and 'royal power increased at their cost. The vidatha completely disappeared.' The sabha and samiti continued to hold the ground, but their character changed. They came to be dominated by princes and rich nobles. Women were no longer permitted to sit on the sabha, and it was now dominated by nobles and brahmanas.
  - The formation of wider kingdoms made the king more powerful. Tribal authority tended to become territorial.
  - **But even in later Vedic times the king did not possess a standing army.** Tribal units were mustered in times of war, and, according to one ritual for success in war, the king had to eat along with his people from the same plate.
- **The later Vedic society came to be divided into four varnas** called the brahmanas, rajanyas or kshatriyas, vaisyas and sudras. The growing cult of sacrifices enormously added to the power of the brahmanas.
- In later Vedic period, in addition to cows, which were usually given as sacrificial gifts, gold, cloth and horses were also given. Sometimes the priests claimed portions of territory as dakshina, **but the grant of land as sacrificial fee is not well established in the later Vedic period.**
- People worshipped gods for the same material reasons in later Vedic period as they did in earlier times. However, the mode of worship changed considerably.
  - **Prayers continued to be recited, but they ceased to be the dominant mode of placating the gods.** Sacrifices became far more important, and they assumed both public and domestic character. Public sacrifices involved the king and the whole of the community.
- **Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 8.D

- **The Mauryan state also provided irrigation facilities and regulated water supply for the benefit of agriculturists.** Megasthenes informs us that in the Maurya empire the officer measured the land as in Egypt and inspected the channels through which water was distributed into smaller channels. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- Striking social development of the Maurya period was the employment of slaves in agricultural operations. Megasthenes states that he did not notice any slaves in India. But there is no doubt that domestic slaves were found in India from Vedic times onwards.
- **For the first time in the Maurya period slaves were engaged in agricultural work on a large scale.** The state maintained farms, on which numerous slaves and hired labourers were employed. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- Kautilya advised that new settlements should be founded with the help of cultivators, who were apparently vaisyas, and with that of sudra labourers who should be drafted from overpopulated areas.
- **In order to bring the virgin soil under cultivation, the new peasants were allowed remission in tax and supplied with cattle, seeds and money.** The state followed this policy in the hope that it would get back what it had given. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

#### Q 9.B

- **Harisena was a 4th-century Sanskrit poet and a court official. He was an important figure in the court of Gupta emperor, Samudragupta.** His most famous poem, written c. 345 C.E., describes the bravery of Samudragupta and is inscribed on the Allahabad Pillar.
  - In a long inscription the poet enumerates the peoples and countries that Samudragupta conquered. The inscription is engraved at Allahabad on the same pillar as carries an inscription of the peace-loving Asoka.
- **Amarasimha was a Sanskrit grammarian and poet in the court of Chandragupta II.**
  - He wrote a book on Sanskrit grammar called Amarakosa.
- **Kalidasa was a Sanskrit poet and dramatist in the court of Chandragupta II.**
  - His works include Abhijnanashakuntala, Vikramorvashi, Malavikagnimitra, the epic poems Raghuvamsha and Kumarasambhava and the lyric "Meghaduta".
- **Ravikirti was court poet of Pulakesin II (Chalukyan King) who wrote famous Aihole inscription.**
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

### Q 10.C

- Jainism taught five doctrines:
  - do not commit violence
  - do not speak a lie
  - do not steal
  - do not acquire property
  - observe continence (brahmacharya)
    - ✓ It is said that only the fifth doctrine was added by Mahavira, the other four being taken over by him from previous teachers.
- **Jainism recognized the existence of the gods** but placed them lower than the *jina*. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- **It did not condemn the varna system, as Buddhism did. Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- According to Mahavira, a person is born in a high or in a lower varna is consequence of the sins or the virtues acquired by him in the previous birth. Mahavira looks for human values even in a chandala. In his opinion through pure and meritorious life members of the lower castes can attain liberation.
- **Jainism mainly aims at the attainment of freedom from worldly bonds.** It is not necessary to use any ritual for acquiring such liberation. It can be obtained through full knowledge and action. Full knowledge, action and liberation are considered to be the three gems or ratnas of Jainism. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- In order to spread the teachings of Jainism, Mahavira organized an order of his followers that admitted both men and women.

### Q 11.A

- Women slaves were prevalent during Rig Vedic age. **For example, we hear of gifts made to priests is stated in terms of cows and women slaves** and never in terms of the measurement of land.
  - The term for family (kula) is mentioned rarely in the Rig Veda. It comprised not only mother, father, sons, **slaves. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **The Rig Vedic people may have occasionally occupied pieces of land, but land did not form a well-established type of private property. Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- **In Rig Vedic times, we also notice the practice of levirate and widow remarriage.** There are **no examples of child marriage** and the marriageable age in the Rig Veda seems to have been 16 to 17. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
- The fourth division called the sudras appeared towards the end of the Rig Vedic period, because it is mentioned for the first time in the tenth Book of the Rig Veda, which is the latest addition.

### Q 12.C

- Odisha, on the eastern sea coast, is the home of Odissi, one of the many forms of Indian classical dance. **Sensuous and lyrical, Odissi is a dance of love and passion touching on the divine and the human, the sublime and the mundane.** The Natya Shastra mentions many regional varieties, such as the south-eastern style known as the Odhra Magadha which can be identified as the earliest precursor of present day Odissi.
- Archaeological evidence of this dance form dating back to the 2nd century B.C. is found in the caves of Udayagiri and Khandagiri near Bhubaneswar. Later, innumerable examples of the Buddhist sculptures, the tantric images of dancing Yoginis, the Nataraja, and other celestial musicians and dancers of early Shaivite temples bear testimony to a continuing tradition of dance from the 2nd century B.C.E to the 10th century C.E.
- **Odissi is a highly stylised dance and to some extent is based on the classical Natya Shastra and the Abhinaya Darpana. In fact, it has derived a great deal from the Abhinaya Darpana Prakasha by Jadunatha Sinha, the Abhinaya Chandrika by Rajmani Patra, and the Abhinaya Chandrika by Maheshwara Mahapatra.**
- **The techniques of movement are built around the two basic postures of the Chowk and the Tribhanga.** The chowk is a position imitating a square – a very masculine stance with the weight of the body equally balanced. The tribhanga is a very feminine stance where the body is deflected at the neck, torso and the knees.
- **The torso movement is very important and is a unique feature of the Odissi style. With the lower half of the body remaining static, the torso moves from one side to the other along the axis passing through the centre of the upper half of the body.** Great training is required for this control so as to avoid any shoulder or hip movement. There are certain foot positions with flat, toe or heel contact. These



are used in a variety of intricate combinations. There are also numerous possibilities of leg movements. Almost all leg movements are spiral or circular, whether in space or on the ground.

- For centuries maharis were the chief repositories of this dance. The maharis, who were originally temple dancers came to be employed in royal courts which resulted in the degeneration of the art form. Around this time, a class of boys called gotipuas were trained in the art, they danced in the temples and also for general entertainment. Many of today's gurus of this style belong to the gotipua tradition. **Hence, option (c) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 13.A

- **Recent context:**
  - **Starlink** has placed multiple satellites in the orbit.
  - Bharti-backed **satellite operator, OneWeb** recently completed the launch of all of its **low-Earth connectivity satellites** in March 2023.
- **Space-based internet** is the ability to use **satellites** to send and receive data. It is much **faster** and has the ability to **work across the globe**.
- The major difference between satellite-based internet and a satellite TV (DTH) is that, **unlike DTH, satellite internet is 2-way communication. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- Most of the existing space-based Internet systems use **satellites in geostationary orbit**, however, some also use the **Low Earth Orbit (LEO)**. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **Starlink** is the **world's first and largest satellite constellation using a low Earth orbit** to deliver broadband internet capable of supporting streaming, online gaming, video calls and more. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**
- **Geostationary orbit** is located at the height of **35,786 km** over the Earth's surface, **directly above the Equator**. Due to the **larger distance**, the **transmission** from a satellite in geostationary orbit has a **latency** of about **600 milliseconds**. The longer distance in comparison to the LEO results in greater latency.
- **Space Internet with Low Earth Orbit:** The LEO extends **up to 2,000 km above the Earth's surface**. The presence of satellites at a lower height helps to bring the **lag down to 20-30 milliseconds**, roughly the time it takes for terrestrial systems to transfer data.
- **Satellites in geostationary orbit (GEO)** circle Earth above the equator from **west to east** following Earth's rotation – taking **23 hours 56 minutes and 4 seconds** – by traveling at exactly the same rate as Earth. This makes satellites in GEO appear to be 'stationary' over a fixed position. In order to **perfectly match Earth's rotation**, the speed of GEO satellites should be about 3 km per second at an altitude of 35,786 km. Compared to this, LEO is relatively close to Earth's surface (less than 1000 km). Its close proximity makes it useful for several reasons including **satellite imaging**, placement of the **International Space Station (ISS)**, etc. Satellites in this orbit travel at a speed of around 7.8 km per second; at this speed, a satellite takes approximately **90 minutes to circle Earth**, meaning the **ISS travels around Earth about 16 times a day**.

#### Q 14.A

- **Recent context:** Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Amendment **Bill** has been **reintroduced in the Budget session**.
- The **AMASR Act** was passed by the Parliament in **1958** for the purpose of **protection and preservation of archaeological and historical monuments and sites**. It also provides for the **regulation of archaeological excavations** and for the **protection of sculptures, carvings, and other such objects**. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- In the original Act of 1958, "**ancient monument**" is defined as "**any structure, erection, or monument, or any tumulus or place of interment, or any cave, rock-sculpture, inscription, or monolith which is of historical, archaeological, or artistic interest and which has been in existence for not less than 100 years**". Also, "**Archaeological sites and remains**" mean "**any area which contains or is reasonably believed to contain ruins or relics of historical or archaeological importance which have been in existence for not less than 100 years**". **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- The **AMASR Amendment Bill** was first introduced in Lok Sabha on July 18, 2017. Amendments in the Bill include **allowing the construction of public works in "prohibited areas"**, and the **approval and impact assessment of such public works**.
- The **original Act prohibits construction in an area of 100 meters** around protected monuments, and the **central government (not State) can extend this area beyond 100 meters**. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.** With the **Amendment**, the government will be allowed to take up infrastructure projects for

public works in this prohibited area. For the **construction (or reconstruction, repair, or renovation)**, the relevant central government department will be required to submit an application to the competent authority. **The central government will determine whether the construction works in question qualify as public works**, and the authority will then convey the decision of the central government to the applicant within ten days of the receipt of the decision.

#### Q 15.B

- The Harappans looked upon the earth as a fertility goddess and worshipped her in the same manner as the Egyptians worshipped the Nile goddess "Isis".
- Some Vedic texts show reverence to the earth goddess, although she is not given any prominence. It took a long time for the worship of | the supreme goddess to develop in Hinduism, **only from the sixth century A D. various mother-goddesses such as Durga, Amba, Kali, 'Chandi, etc., came to be regarded as goddesses in the Puranas and in the Tantra literature.** In course of time, every village came to have its own separate goddess. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- The male deity is represented on a seal 'This god has three heads and has horns. The seal immediately recalls to our mind the traditional image of Pasupati Mahadeva. The four animals surrounding the god look towards the four directions of the earth.
  - **In addition to the use of the image of Siva, we also come across the prevalence of phallus worship**, which became so intimately connected with Siva in later times. Numerous symbols of the phallus and female sex organs made of stone have been found in Harappa.
  - They were possibly meant for worship. The Rig Veda speaks of the non-Aryan people, who were phallus worshippers. **The phallus worship which started in the days of Harappa came to be recognized as a respectable form of worship in Hindu society. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- The people of the Indus region also worshipped trees. The picture of a god is represented on a seal in the midst of the branches of the pipal. This tree continues to be worshipped to this day.
- Animals were also worshipped in Harappan times, and many of them are represented on seals. The most important of them is the humped bull.
- Similarly the animals surrounding Pasupati Mahadeva indicate that these were worshipped.
- Obviously, the inhabitants of the Indus region worshipped gods in the form of trees, animals and human beings. **But the gods were not placed in temples, a practice that was common in ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia.** Nor can we say anything about the religious beliefs of the Harappans without being able to read their script.
- Amulets have been found in large numbers. Probably the Harappans believed that ghosts and evil forces were capable of harming them and therefore used amulets against them. The Atharva Veda, which is considered to be a non-Aryan work, contains many charms and spells, and recommends amulets for warding off diseases and evil forces.

#### Q 16.B

- The continuous quest by the sages gave birth to great philosophical systems, which looked upon man and the universe with an unbiased, free and rational mindset.
- The important systems are Charvaka, Jaina, Buddha, Vaisheshika, Nyaya, Samkhya, Yoga, Mimamsa and Vedanta.
- The first three systems are nastika i.e. do not believe in the authority of the Vedas and the God, while all others are astika, i.e. believe in the Vedas and the God.
- **The Charvaka system (also called Lokayata) believes only in materialism.**
- **The physical body composed of material elements is the only essence of man.**
- **Death only is the end of man ; and enjoyment of pleasures are the only objects in life.**
- There is no life beyond death, no heaven or hell, no 'Law of karma, and no rebirth.
- **The Charvaka system does not believe in soul, god, or any other life beyond the present one.**
- **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 17.B

- The Gupta bureaucracy was not as elaborate as that of the Mauryas, The most important officers in the Gupta empire were the kumaramatyas. They were appointed by the king in the home provinces and possibly paid in cash.
  - Since the Guptas were possibly vaishyas, recruitment was not confined to the upper varnas only. But several offices came to be combined in the hands of the same person, and posts became hereditary. This naturally weakened the royal control.

- The Guptas organized a system of provincial and local administration. **The empire was divided into divisions (*bhuktis*), and each *bhukti* was placed under the charge of an *uparika*. The *bhuktis* were divided into districts (*vishayas*), which were placed under the charge of *vishayapati*. In eastern India, the *vishayas* were divided into *vithis*, which again were divided into villages.**
- The village headman became more important in Gupta times. He managed the village affairs with the assistance of elders. With the administration, of a village or a small town leading local elements were associated. No land transactions could be effected without their consent.
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 18.B

- The Mansabdari system was a unique administrative system developed by the Mughals in India. It was **designed and established by Mughal Emperor Akbar. Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- The term Mansabdar referred to an individual who holds a mansab, meaning a position or rank. It was a grading system used by the Mughals to fix *Zat* or rank, Salary and *Sawar* or military responsibilities. **The Mansabdars were military commanders, high civil and military officers**
- **Ahadis were the individual troopers maintained/recruited by the Mughal rulers.** They were a highly trusted corps, being recruited directly by the emperors and having their own muster master. **They were not associated with the Mansabdars. The Mansabdars had to maintain their own force.** The *sawar* rank of a mansabdar indicated the number of horsemen needed to be kept by the Mansabdar. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **The salaries of the mansabdars were stated in rupees but they were generally not paid in cash, but by assigning them a jagir.** Mansabdars preferred a jagir because cash payments were likely to be delayed and sometimes entailed a lot of harassment. However, Jagirs were not hereditary and were transferred by rulers at any time. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
- **Tajwiz was a petition presented by a nobleman to the emperor,** recommending that an applicant be recruited as mansabdar. If the applicant was found suitable a mansab was granted to him.

#### Q 19.D

- **Recent Context:** As India assumes its **G20 presidency**, it has introduced the **Startup20 Engagement group (SUMup)** which has the potential to revolutionize the G20.
- It is the only **new group** by which **G20 has turned itself into an ambidextrous institution**, one where both **large corporations and startups have an equal voice** in taking the economies forward.
- In the new architecture, while the existing **B20 Engagement Group continues its focus on corporations**, the **Startup20** takes on the **policy issues concerning the global startup ecosystem**, with the necessary linkages between the two groups.
- **B20 Engagement Group-**
  - It is a **forum for international business leaders from the G20 countries.**
  - Established in **2010**, it is among the most prominent Engagement Groups in G20, with companies and business organizations as participants.
  - It aims to provide **recommendations to the G20** on issues such as **economic growth, trade, investment, digitalization, sustainability, and job creation.**
  - The **Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)** has been designated as the **B20 Secretariat** for India's G20 Presidency.
- **Startup20-**
  - Initiated under **India's G20 Presidency.**
  - It aims to create a **global narrative for supporting startups** and enabling **synergies between startups, corporates, investors, innovation agencies, and other key ecosystem stakeholders.**
  - The engagement group comprises **three task forces** where delegates will come together to discuss efficient policy frameworks to promote the scaling up of startups in the G20 nations-
    - ✓ **Foundation & Alliance**
    - ✓ **Finance, an**
    - ✓ **Inclusion & Sustainability.**

#### Q 20.B

- **Recent Context:** Pradhan Mantri particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTG) Development Mission will be launched as part of 'Reaching The Last Mile'.
- In order to improve the socio-economic conditions of the **particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs)**, the **Pradhan Mantri PVTG Development Mission** will be launched. This will **saturate PVTG families and habitations with basic facilities** such as **safe housing, clean drinking water, and**

sanitation, improved access to education, health and nutrition, road and telecom connectivity, and sustainable livelihood opportunities.

- **Rs.15,000 crores** will be made available to implement the Mission in the **next three years** under the **Development Action Plan for the Scheduled Tribes**.
- The **Pradhan Mantri PVTG Mission** will be launched as part of ‘**Reaching The Last Mile**’, one of the seven **Saptarishi** priorities enlisted in this year’s Budget. There are **75 PVTG groups** in India that will benefit from this scheme.
- In **1973**, the **Dhebar Commission** created **Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs)** as a **separate category**, which are less developed among the tribal groups. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- **PVTGs are more vulnerable among the tribal groups.** Due to this factor, more developed and assertive tribal groups take a major chunk of the tribal development funds, because of which PVTGs need more funds directed for their development. In this context, in **1975**, the Government of India initiated to identify the **most vulnerable tribal groups** as a separate category called PVTGs and declared 52 such groups, while in 1993 an additional 23 groups were added to the category, making it a total of **75 PVTGs out of 705 Scheduled Tribes**, spread over **17 states and one Union Territory (UT)**, in the country (**2011 census**). In **2006**, the Government of India renamed the **PTGs as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)**.
- PVTGs have some **basic characteristics** –
  - they are mostly **homogenous**,
  - they have a **small population**,
  - they are **relatively physically isolated**,
  - their social institutes are cast in a simple mold,
  - there is an **absence of written language**,
  - the technology used is relatively simple, etc.
- However, they are **identified Government of India** by following the below-mentioned criteria-
  - **Pre-agricultural level of technology**
  - **Low level of literacy**
  - **Economic backwardness**
  - **A declining or stagnant population.** **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- Examples of PVTGs include: **Cholanaikayan** (Kerala), **Kathodi** (Gujarat), **Jarawas** (Andaman & Nicobar Islands), **Koraga** (Karnataka). **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

#### Q 21.D

- The term that Indo-Persian sources of the Mughal period most frequently used to denote a peasant was *raiya* (plural, *riaya*) or *muzarian*. In addition, we also encounter the terms *kisan* or *asami*.
- **Sources from the seventeenth century refer to two kinds of peasants – *khud-kashta* and *pahi-kashta*.**
  - The former were residents of the village in which they held their lands. The latter were non-resident cultivators who belonged to some other village but cultivated lands elsewhere on a contractual basis.
  - People became *pahi-kashta* either out of choice—for example, when terms of revenue in a distant village were more favourable—or out of compulsion—for example, forced by economic distress after a famine.
- Seldom did the average peasant of north India possess more than a pair of bullocks and two ploughs; most possessed even less.
- In Gujarat, peasants possessing about six acres of land were considered to be affluent; in Bengal, on the other hand, five acres was the upper limit of an average peasant farm; 10 acres would make one a rich *asami*. Cultivation was based on the principle of individual ownership. Peasant lands were bought and sold in the same way as the lands of other property owners.
- **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 22.B

- Although Sakas established their rule in different parts of the country, only those who ruled in western India held power for any considerable length of time, for about four centuries or so. The most famous Saka ruler in India was Rudradaman I (AD 130-150) He ruled not only over Sindh, Kutch and Gujarat, but had also recovered from the Satavahanas Konkan, the Narmada valley, Malwa and Kathiawar.
- **He is famous in history because of the repairs he undertook to improve the Sudarsana lake in the semi-arid zone of Kathiawar. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
  - This lake had been in use for irrigation for a long time and was as old as the time of the Mauryas.
- **Rudradaman was a great lover of Sanskrit. Although a foreigner settled in India, he issued the first-ever long inscription in chaste Sanskrit. Hence statement 2 is correct.**



- All the earlier longer inscriptions that we have in this country were composed in Prakrit.
- **It was during the reign of Parthian king Gondophernes, St. Thomas is said to have come to India for the propagation of Christianity. Hence statement 3 is not correct.**

#### Q 23.D

- Kautilya's Arthashastra, a book on statecraft was written in the Maurya period. The text is divided into 15 chapters known as books.
- Different books deal with different subject matter concerning polity, economy and society.
- It appears that even before the final version of Arthashastra was written in the fourth century B.C. by Kautilya, there appeared a tradition of writing on and teaching of statecrafts because Kautilya acknowledges his debt to his predecessors in the field.
- **Mudrarakshasha, a play written by Vishakhadatta, also gives a glimpse of society and culture.**
- Kalidasa's Malavikagnimitram is based on some events of the reign of Pusyamitra Sunga, a dynasty which followed the Mauryas.
- Bhasa and Sudraka are other poets who have written plays based on historical events.
- **Banabhatta's Harshacharita throws light on many historical facts about which we could not have known otherwise.**
- **Vakpati wrote Gaudavaho, based on the exploits of Yasovarman of Kanauj.**
- Similarly, Bilhana's Vikramankadevacharita describes the victories of the later Chalukya king Vikramaditya.
- **Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 24.B

- The people of the Neolithic age used tools and implements of polished stone. They particularly used stone axes, which have been found in large numbers throughout the greater part of the country.
- **Burzahom is an important Neolithic settlement in Kashmir. The Neolithic people lived here on a plateau in pits, and probably had a hunting and fishing economy.**
- The people of Burzahom used coarse grey pottery. It is interesting that the Burzahom domestic dogs were buried with their masters in their graves. **Pit dwelling and the placing of domestic dogs in the graves of the masters do not seem to be the practice with Neolithic people in any other part of India. The earliest date for Burzahom is about 2400 B.C.**
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 25.B

- **Recent context: India has called upon G20 countries to adopt multilateral action for faster extradition of fugitive economic offenders.**
- **Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018:**
  - **The Act defines a Fugitive Economic Offender (FEO) as a person against whom an arrest warrant has been issued for committing an offense listed in the Act and the value of the offense is at least Rs. 100 crore. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
  - It seeks to **confiscate the properties of economic offenders who have left the country to avoid facing criminal prosecution** or refuse to return to the country to face prosecution. A notice is issued under the FEO Act requiring the accused to appear before the court within 6 weeks of the date of notice failing which the **court shall declare him a fugitive and confiscate his properties to the Central Government. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- Some of the **offenses listed in the act** are:
  - **Counterfeiting** government stamps or currency.
  - **Cheque dishonor.**
  - **Money laundering.**
  - Transactions **defrauding creditors.**
- The **G20 or Group of 20** is an intergovernmental forum comprising **19 countries and the European Union**. It works to **address major issues related to the global economy**, such as international financial stability, climate change mitigation, and sustainable development.

#### Q 26.B

- The judicial system was well developed under the Guptas than in earlier times. Several law-books were compiled in this period.
- **For the first time civil and criminal law were clearly defined and demarcated.** Theft and adultery came under criminal law. Disputes regarding various types of property came under civil law. Elaborate laws were laid down about inheritance. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

- **During this period also many laws continued to be based on differences in varnas.** It was the duty of the king to uphold the law. The king tried cases with the help of brahmana priests. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **The guilds of artisans, merchants and others were governed by their own laws,** Seals from Vaisali and from Bhita near Allahabad indicate that these guilds flourished exceedingly well in Gupta times. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

#### Q 27.C

- **Recent context: Recently in a case the CJI refused to accept information in a 'sealed cover'.**
- **Sealed Cover Jurisprudence** is a practice used by the Supreme Court and sometimes lower courts, of asking for or accepting information from government agencies in sealed envelopes that can only be accessed by judges.
- While a specific law does not define the doctrine of sealed cover, the Supreme Court derives its power to use it from Rule 7 of Order XIII of the Supreme Court Rules and Section 123 of the Indian Evidence Act of 1872.
- **Rule 7 of Order XIII of the Supreme Court Rules:** According to the rule, if the **Chief Justice or court directs certain information to be kept under sealed cover** or considers it of confidential nature, **no party would be allowed access** to the contents of such information, **except if the Chief Justice himself orders** that the opposite party be allowed to access it. It also mentions that information can be kept confidential if its publication is not considered to be in the interest of the public.
- **Section 123 of the Indian Evidence Act of 1872:** Under this act, **official unpublished documents relating to state affairs are protected and a public officer cannot be compelled to disclose such documents.**
- Other instances where information may be sought in secrecy or confidence are when its publication impedes an ongoing investigation, such as details that are part of a police case diary.

#### Q 28.D

- **Antonio Monserrate (1536-1600) was a Portuguese priest who accompanied two other priests,** Father Rodolfo Acquaviva, and Father Francisco Enriquez, on the first Jesuit mission to the court of **Emperor Akbar (1542-1605; reigned 1556-1605).** Acquaviva and Monserrate went back in 1583, belying the hopes the Portuguese entertained of Akbar's conversion to the Christian faith. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- **François Bernier, a Frenchman, was a doctor, political philosopher, and historian.** Like many others, he came to the Mughal Empire in search of opportunities. He was in India for twelve years, from 1656 to 1668, and was closely associated with the Mughal court, **as a physician to Prince Dara Shukoh,** the eldest son of Emperor Shah Jahan.
- Jahangir was the Mughal emperor who ruled from 1605 until his death in 1627. Thus, his reign preceded the arrival of François Bernier to India. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- **Sir Thomas Roe was an English Diplomat who visited Mughal emperor Jahangir's court.** In 1615, Sir Thomas Roe came as an accredited ambassador of James I to the court of Jahangir, staying there till February 1619. Sir Thomas Roe obtained more trading rights and privileges for the East India Company. Accordingly, the English set up business centers at Agra, Ahmedabad and Broach. Slowly the English East India Company succeeded in expanding its area of trade. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**
- Earlier Captain Hawkins arrived in the court of Jahangir in April 1609. But the mission to establish a factory at Surat didn't succeed due to opposition from the Portuguese, and Hawkins left Agra in November 1611.

#### Q 29.C

- The Virashaiva Tradition emerged during the twelfth century in Karnataka. **Basavanna (1106-68) is regarded as the founder of this Virashaiva tradition.** He 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).
- **Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya (1238 to 1325) was a Sufi saint of the Chishti Order.** He thus belonged to the thirteen and fourteen centuries AD and was not a contemporary of Basavanna. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- **Lingayats believe that on death the devotee will be united with Shiva** and will not return to this world. **Thus they do not believe in the theory of rebirth.** Therefore they do not practice funerary rites such as cremation, prescribed in the Dharmashastras. Instead, they ceremonially bury their dead. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**

- The vachanas (literally, sayings) composed in Kannada by women and men who joined the movement serve as an important source to study the Virshaiva Movement.
- **Virashaivism did not advocate the worship of idols** and the worship of a multitude of Gods and Goddesses. It emphasized the worship of only one God namely Lord Shiva. **Shiva was the only Supreme Being to be worshipped in the form of a Linga. Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

**Q 30.A**

- **During the year 1333, Muhammad bin Tughlaq commanded the Qarachil expedition to the Kullu-Kangra region** of present-day Himachal Pradesh in India. According to historical accounts from Badauni and Ferishta, Tughluq's initial plan was to **cross the Himalayas and launch an attack on China.**
- Despite his intentions, **Muhammad bin Tughlaq encountered opposition from the locals in Himachal.** The army of Tughlaq, which was not accustomed to fighting in the hills, was defeated by Prithvi Chand II of the Katoch clan, a Hindu Rajput kingdom of Kangra. As a result, almost all of **Tughlaq's troops, which numbered around 100,000, were killed and compelled to withdraw.**
- **Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**

**Q 31.A**

- **Vedic Literature**
  - **Six vedangas (limbs of Vedas) were evolved for the proper understanding of the Vedas.**
  - **These are Siksha (phonetics), Kalpa (rituals), Vyakarna (grammar), Nirukta (etymology), Chhanda (metrics), and Jyotisha (astronomy).**
  - Each vedanga has developed a credible literature around it which are in the sutra form i.e., precepts.
  - This is a very precise and exact form of expression in prose which was developed by the ancient Indians.
  - Panini's Ashtadhyayi, book on grammar in eight chapters is the final culmination of this excellent art of writing in sutra (precepts) in which every chapter is precisely interwoven.
  - Besides the Vedas, the Brahmanas, the Aranyakas and the Upanishads are also included in the vedic literature and are known as the later vedic literature.
- **Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.**

**Q 32.B**

- **The smritis have played a very important role in Hindu life during the last two thousand years.**
- These smritis define the religious duties, usage, laws, and social customs. In general, the smritis may be regarded as the expanded and contemporary version of the Dharmasutras which covered the period from about the sixth century to the third century B.C.
- The works on the smritis follow almost immediately afterward and continue for almost eight hundred years or even more.
- **The Manava Dharmasastra or Manusmriti is not only the oldest work of this class but is also the most well-known and has its hold even today all over India.**
- This was composed in about the first century B.C. Some other important smritis are Naradasmriti, Vishnismriti, Yajnavalkyasmriti, Brihaspatismriti, and Katyayanasmriti.
- They are all very important sources of law and social customs of contemporary society. These smritis were declared to be of divine origin.
- **The most outstanding work in the field of grammar, Mahabhasya written by Patanjali in the second century B.C., is a commentary on Panini's Asthadhyayi. Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- After Patanjali, the center of Sanskrit grammar learning shifted to the Deccan where the Katantra school flourished in the first century A.D.
- **Sarvavarman, a scholar of great repute in the court of the Satavahana King Hala, composed the grammar of Katantra.** This work was short and handy which helped the learn of Sanskrit in about six months. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **Hala wrote a great poetical work Gathasaptasati in Prakrit. Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
- An important literary figure of the period was Asvaghosha. He was not only a play writer and poet but a great Buddhist philosopher.
- He wrote Saundarananda, Buddhacharita, Vajrasuchi, and a number of other works. Buddhacharita is a complete life of Buddha written in the form of Mahakavya.

**Q 33.A**

- **Recent Context:** The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published its **Synthesis Report (SYR)** on March 20, 2023, summarizing the findings of reports released during its **Sixth Assessment Cycle** —

- The 1.5 C report of 2018,
- The Special Reports on Land and Oceans of 2019, and
- The three Assessment Reports published between 2021 and 2022.
- The SYR is presented in the wake of major global upheavals brought about by the **COVID-19 pandemic**, the **Russian invasion of Ukraine**, and the subsequent **global energy crisis**.
- **Key Findings of the Report:**
  - The sea surface temperature over the Indian Ocean is likely to increase by 1° to 2° C when there is 1.5°C to 2°C global warming.
  - In the report, scientists showed that the western Indian Ocean region experienced the largest increase in marine heatwaves at a rate of about 1.5 events per decade, followed by the north Bay of Bengal at a rate of 0.5 events per decade. The western Indian Ocean experienced 66 events while the Bay of Bengal had 94 events over the last four decades, between 1982 and 2018.
  - Temperature breaching the 1.5° C threshold: Average temperatures have already touched 1.1°C (about 1.07°C was contributed by human activities) above pre-industrial times.
  - By 2030 there is a 50% chance that global surface temperature in any single year could exceed 1.5°C.
  - The world is still not doing enough to limit global temperatures from breaching the 1.5° C threshold despite there being multiple, feasible, and effective options to do so.
  - Overshooting 1.5°C will result in irreversible adverse impacts on certain ecosystems with low resilience, such as polar, mountain, coastal ecosystems, etc.
  - To keep within the 1.5°C limit, emissions need to be reduced by at least 43% by 2030 compared to 2019 levels, and at least 60% by 2035. This is the decisive decade to make that happen.

**Q 34.A**

- The style of temple architecture that became popular in northern India is known as nagara. **In North India, it is common for an entire temple to be built on a stone platform with steps leading up to it. Further, unlike in South India it does not usually have elaborate boundary walls or gateways. While the earliest temples had just one tower or shikhara, later temples had several. The Garbhagriha is always located directly under the tallest tower.**
- Unlike the Nagara temple, the Dravida temple is enclosed within a compound wall. The front wall has an entrance gateway in its center, which is known as a gopuram. The shape of the main temple tower known as Vimana in Tamil Nadu is like a stepped pyramid that rises up geometrically rather than the curving shikhara of North India.
- **In the South Indian temple**, the word ‘shikhara’ is used only for the crowning element at the top of the temple which is usually shaped like a small stupika or an octagonal cupola— this is equivalent to the amlak and kalasha of North Indian temples. Whereas at the entrance to the North Indian temple’s garbhagriha, it would be usual to find images such as mithunas and the river goddesses, Ganga and Yamuna, in the south you will generally find sculptures of fierce dvarapalas or the door-keepers guarding the temple. **It is common to find a large water reservoir or a temple tank enclosed within the complex.** Subsidiary shrines are either incorporated within the main temple tower, or located as distinct, separate small shrines beside the main temple. The North Indian idea of multiple shikharas rising together as a cluster was not popular in South India. **Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.**

**Q 35.C**

- **Bhavai is the traditional theatre form of Gujarat.**
- The centers of this form are Kutch and Kathiawar. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **The instruments used in Bhavai are:**
  - bhungal,
  - tabla,
  - flute,
  - pakhaawaj,
  - rabaab,
  - sarangi, manjeera, etc. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- **In Bhavai, there is a rare synthesis of devotional and romantic sentiments. Hence statement 3 is correct.**

**Q 36.D**

- The **Gurjara-Pratihara** was a dynasty that ruled much of **Northern India from the mid-8th to the 11th century**. They ruled first at Ujjain and **later at Kannauj**. The power of the Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty was weakened by dynastic strife. It was further diminished as a result of a great **raid led by the Rashtrakuta**



**ruler Indra III** who, in about 916, sacked Kannauj. Under a succession of rather obscure rulers, the dynasty never regained its former influence.

- **Pratihara break into number of Rajput states.** These are the **Gahadavalas of Kannauj**, which was a Rajput dynasty that ruled parts of present-day Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, during the 11th and 12th centuries. Their capital was located at Banaras. in the Gangetic plains, and for a brief period, they also controlled Kannauj.
- **The Paramara** was a Rajput dynasty that ruled the Malwa region between the 9th and 14th centuries.
- **Chauhans of Delhi and Ajmer** were a Rajput dynasty, also known as the Chahamanas of Shakambhari, who ruled over part of modern-day Rajasthan and neighboring areas.
- **Kalachuri dynasty** ruled between the 10-12th century. **Chandela of Jejakabhukti was a Rajput dynasty** in Central India. The Chandelas ruled much of the Bundelkhand region (then called Jejakabhukti) between the 9th and 13th centuries. They belonged to the Chandel clan of the Rajputs.
- **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 37.B

- During the Mughal Period the term ‘**muzarians**’ was used to **describe the tenants who generally paid land revenue** at a higher rate. These two groups were the largest section among the cultivators in the village. **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**
- The **peasants who owned the land they tilled were called khudkasht**. They paid land revenue at customary rates. Some of them had many ploughs and bullocks which they let out: to their poorer brethren tenants (Muzarians).
- The **landless peasants and laborers** often belonged to the class of people called **kamin**. Whenever there was a famine—and famines were frequent—it was this class of peasants and the village artisans who suffered the most.

#### Q 38.A

- **The Rashtrakuta dynasty**, a Hindu royal family that governed the Deccan region and adjacent territories of India, held power between **approximately 755 and 975 CE**. The **kingdom was founded by Dantidurga** who fixed his capital at Manyakheta or Malkhed near modern Sholapur.
- The greatest Rashtrakuta rulers were Govinds III (793-814) and **Amoghavarsha** (814-878). Amoghavarsha ruled for 68 years. He was a great builder and **built the capital city Manyakheta** so as to excel in the city of Indra.
- **Al-Masudi paid a visit** to India, During the period of 914 to 928 CE when Indra-III was in power and ruled over the Rashtrakuta Empire. According to Al-Masudi, the Rashtrakuta king **Balhara or Vallbharaja** was the greatest king of India and most of the Indian rulers accepted his suzerainty and respected his envoy.
- **The Kailash Rock-cut temple** was constructed between **756 and 773 AD** by the **Rashtrakuta King Krishna I**, who ruled during the 8th century. The renowned temple is located at Ellora.
- **Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 39.B

- The Maurya period constitutes a landmark in the system of taxation in ancient India. Kautilya names many taxes to be collected from peasants, artisans and traders. This required a strong and efficient machinery for assessment, collection and storage.
- **The Mauryas attached greater importance to assessment than to storage and depositing.**
- **The samaharta was the highest officer in charge of assessment and the sannidhata was the chief custodian of the state treasury and store-house.**
- The harm done to the state by the first is thought to be more serious than the harm caused by the second. In fact, an elaborate machinery for assessment first appears in the Maurya period The list of taxes mentioned in the Arthashastra is impressive, and if these were really collected very little would be left to the people to live on.
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

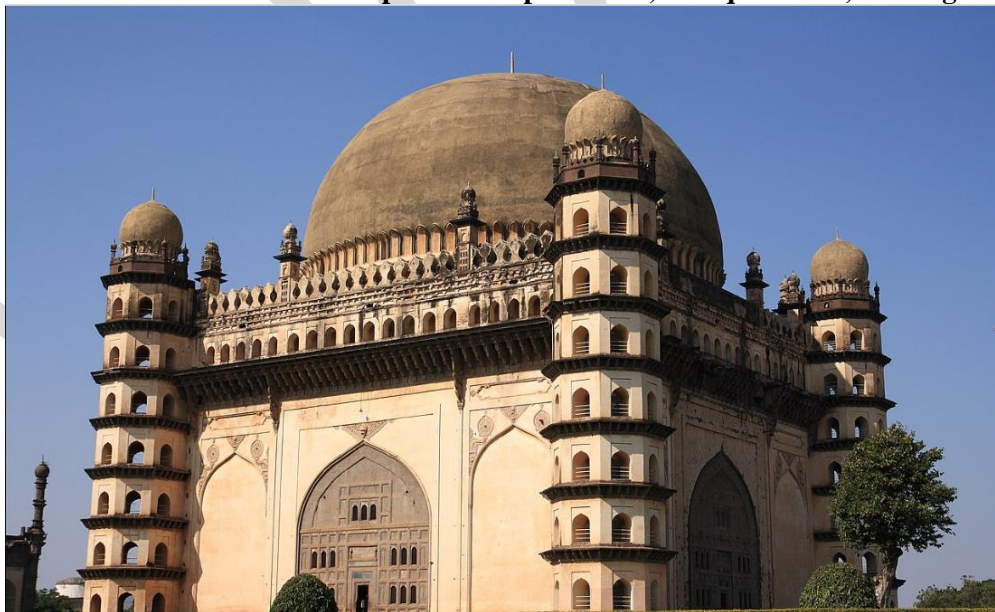
#### Q 40.C

- Akbar divided the empire into twelve provinces called Subhas in 1580. These were Bengal, Bihar, Allahabad, Awadh, Agra, Delhi, Lahore, Multan, Kabul, Ajmer, Malwa and Gujarat. A governor (subedar), a diwan, a **bakhshi**, a **sadr**, a **qazi**, and a **waqia-navis** were appointed to each of the provinces. Thus, an orderly government based on the principle of checks and balances was extended to the provinces. **Hence options 2 and 4 are correct.**

- The waqia-navis were the news reporters posted to all parts of the empire. Their reports were presented to the emperor at the court through the mir bakhshi.
- The provinces were divided into sarkars which were further divided into Parganas. The chief officers of the sarkar were the faujdar and the amalguzar, the former being in charge of law and order, and the latter responsible for the assessment and collection of the land revenue. Thus, Amalguzar was one of the principal officials at the Sarkar level and not the provincial level. **Hence options 1 and 3 are not correct.**
- The amalguzar was required to exercise general supervision over all types of land holdings so that the imperial rules and regulations for the assessment and collection of land revenue were followed uniformly.
- Faujdar was responsible for maintaining law and order (In the Sarkars/districts, the Faujdars were usually in charge of maintenance of law and order) in his jurisdiction and executed the royal decrees and regulations. He also kept the powerful Zamindars under check.

#### Q 41.A

- **Gol Gumbad**
- **It is situated in Bijapur in the Bijapur District of Karnataka.**
- **It is the mausoleum of Muhammad Adil Shah (1626–1656) the seventh Sultan of the Adil Shahi Dynasty of Bijapur (1489–1686).**
- Built by the ruler himself it is a striking edifice in spite of being unfinished. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The tomb is a complex of buildings such as a gateway, a Naqqar Khana, a mosque, and a sarai located within a large-walled garden.
- The Gumbad is a monumental square building topped with a circular drum over which rests a majestic dome, giving the building its nomenclature. It has an outer wall (which is square in shape). **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- **It is built of dark gray basalt and decorated plasterwork.**
- **Each wall of the tomb** is one hundred and thirty-five feet long and one hundred and ten feet high and ten feet thick.
- With the drum and the dome, the building rises to a height of over two hundred feet.
- **The tomb has only one square chamber and a dome**, with a diameter of one hundred and twenty-five feet.
- **The tomb covers an uninterrupted floor space of 18,337 square feet, the largest in the world.**



#### Q 42.A

- **Recent context:** Microsoft Research India is creating tools to help preserve fast disappearing languages.
- To bring 'rare' Indian languages online, Microsoft launched **Project ELLORA i.e., Enabling Low Resource Languages in 2015**. Under this project, researchers are building **digital resources of the languages**. **Hence statement 1 is not correct and statement 2 is correct.**
- The purpose is to **preserve a language for posterity** so that users of these languages "can participate and interact in the digital world." The researchers are mapping out **resources**, including **printed literature**, to

create a dataset to train their **AI model**. The team is also working with these communities on the project. By **involving the community** in the data collection process, researchers hope to create a dataset that is both accurate and culturally relevant.

- It includes rare languages like Gondi, Mundari, Idu Mishmi, etc.
- Marathi, Telugu, Bengali, Malayalam, etc. are popular languages in India.

#### Q 43.A

- The march of the Magadhan empire during the two centuries preceding the rise of the Mauryas is like the march of the Iranian empire during the same period.
- The formation of the largest state in India during this period was the work of several enterprising and ambitious rulers such as Bimbisara, Ajatasatru and Mahapadma Nanda. They employed all means, far and foul, at their disposal to enlarge their kingdoms and to strengthen their states. But this was not the only reason for the expansion of Magadha.
- **Magadha enjoyed an advantageous geographical position in the age of iron because the richest iron deposits** were situated not far away from Rajgir, the earliest capital of Magadha.
  - The ready availability of the rich iron ores in the neighbourhood enabled the Magadhan princes to equip themselves with effective weapons, which were not easily available to their rivals.
- Magadha enjoyed certain other advantages. The two capitals of Magadha, the first at Rajgir and the second at Pataliputra, were situated at very strategic points. Rajgir was surrounded by a group of five hills, and it was rendered impregnable in those days.
- Magadha lay at the centre of the middle Gangetic plain. The alluvium, once cleared of the jungles, proved immensely fertile.
- Magadha enjoyed a special advantage in military organization, **Although the Indian states were well acquainted with the use of horses and chariots, it was Magadha that first used elephants on a large scale in its wars against its neighbours. The eastern part of the country could supply elephants to the princes of Magadha**, and we learn from Greek sources that the Nandas maintained 6000 elephants.
- **The unorthodox character of the Magadhan society.** It was inhabited by the Kiratas and Magadhas, who were held in low esteem by the orthodox Brahmanas.
  - **But it underwent a happy racial admixture on account of the advent of the Vedic people. Since it was recently Aryanized it showed more enthusiasm for expansion than the kingdoms which had been brought under the Vedic influence earlier,** On account of all these reasons Magadha succeeded in defeating the other kingdoms and in founding the first empire in India.
- **Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 44.A

- **Arabesque is a form of artistic decoration consisting of "surface decorations based on rhythmic linear patterns of scrolling and interlacing foliage, tendrils" or plain lines, often combined with other elements. It was extensively used in Indo-Islamic architecture. Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**
- The 'arabesque' is a French term derived from the Italian word arabesco meaning Arabic style. The design can be 'tiled' or repeated seamlessly to create an endless pattern in the eyes of the viewer. The arabesques made in the West are based on either ancient Roman ornament or derived from Islamic art. The patterns are used to mostly decorate architecture and seem to disappear under a framing edge without an ending.

#### Q 45.C

- The tallest figure in the sphere of epic poetry is Kalidasa (between A.D. 380-A.D. 415).
- **He wrote two great epics, Kumarasambhava (the birth of Kumar), and Raghuvamsa (the dynasty of the Raghus).**
- In the Kavya tradition, more care is bestowed on the form, such as the style, figure of speech, conceits, descriptions, etc., and the story theme is pushed to the background.
- The overall purpose of such a poem is to bring out the efficacy of a religious and cultured way of life, without flouting any ethical norms.
- **Other distinguished poets, like Bharavi (550 A.D.), wrote Kiratarjuniyam (Kirat and Arjun) and Magha (65-700 A.D.) wrote Sishupalavadham (the killing of Shishupal).**
- There are several other poets like Sriharsha and Bhatti who are of great merit.
- The main purpose of Kavya or even Nataka (drama) is to offer the reader or spectator diversion or entertainment, (Lokaranjana), and also stimulate his feelings, and ultimately give him a perspective to illuminate his vision of life.

- The drama is, therefore, stylized and packed with poetry and descriptive prose. It moves on a level of worldliness as well as on another level of other-worldliness.
- The rules and prescriptions regarding performance, the theatre hall, acting, gestures, Rasa, and stage direction, are all given in the first book of dramaturgy, *Natyashastra*, by Bharata (1st-century B.C.-1st century A.D.).
- **Kalidasa is the most distinguished dramatist and his treatment of the rasa of love in all its possible manifestations in the three plays *Malavikagnimitram* (Malavika and Agnimitra), *Vikramorvasiyam* (Vikram and Urvashi) and *Abhigyanashakuntala* or *Abhigyanashakuntalam* (the recognition of Shakuntala) is unparalleled.**
- He is the poet of love and beauty, and believes in the affirmation of life, the joy of which lies in pure, sacred, and ever-widening love.
- **Hence, option (c) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 46.B

- The administrative machinery of the Aryans in the Rig Vedic period worked with the tribal chief in the centre, because of his successful leadership in war, He was called Rajan. **It seems that in the Rig Vedic period, the king's post was hereditary.**
  - However, the king did not exercise unlimited power, for he had to reckon with the tribal organizations, **Although his post was hereditary, we have also some traces of election by the tribal assembly called the samiti.** The king was called the protector of his tribe. He protected its cattle, fought its wars and offered prayers to gods on its behalf. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- Several tribal assemblies such as: the sabha, samiti, vidatha, gana are mentioned in the Rig Veda. These assemblies exercised deliberative, military and religious functions.
  - Even women attended the samiti and vidatha in Rig Vedic times, **But the two most important assemblies from the political point of view seem to have been the sabha and the samiti.** These "two were so important that the kings showed' eagerness to win their support. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
  - In the day-to-day administration, the king was assisted by a few functionaries. The most important functionary seems to have been the pirohita.
- **The Rig Veda does not mention any officer for administering justice.** But it was not an ideal society. There were cases of theft and burglary, and especially we hear of the theft of cows. Spies were employed to keep an eye on such unsocial activities. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- The officer who enjoyed authority over the pasture ground is called vrajapati.

#### Q 47.D

- The course of the evolution of Indian music saw the emergence of two different sub-systems as Hindustani and Carnatic music. In Haripala's "Sangeeta Sudhakara", written in the 14th century A.D., the terms Carnatic and Hindustani are found for the first time. The two distinct styles, Hindustani and Carnatic came into vogue after the advent of the Muslims, particularly during the reign of the Mughal Emperors of Delhi.
- Both systems of music received their nourishment from the same original source. Whereas the Indian music of the Northern part of India assimilated some features of the music of the Persian and Arabic musicians who adorned the courts of the Mughal rulers of Delhi, the music of the South continued to develop along its own original lines. But the fundamental aspects of both the systems of the North and South have been the same. Following are some of the significant forms of Carnatic music:
- **GITAM:** Gitam is the simplest type of composition. Taught to beginners of music, the gitam is very simple in construction, with an easy and melodious flow of music. The music of this form is a simple melodic extension of the raga in which it is composed. The tempo is uniform. It has no sections dividing one part of the song from the other. It is sung without repetition from the beginning to the end. There are no intricate variations in the music. Purandaradasa's introductory gitas in praise of Ganesha, Maheswara and Vishnu, collectively referred to as Pillari gitas, form the very first set of gitas taught to the students of music.
- **SULADI:** Very much like the gitam in musical structure and arrangement, the Suladis are of a higher standard than the gitam. The Suladi is a talamalika, the sections being in different talas. The sahitya syllables are fewer than in the gitas and there is a profusion of vowel extensions. The theme is devotional. Suladis are composed in different tempos vilambita, madhya and druta. Purandaradasa has composed many Suladis.
- **SSVARAJATI:** This is learned after a course in gitams. More complicated than the gitas, the Svarajati paves the way for the learning of the Varnams. It consists of three sections, called Pallavi, Anupallavi and



Charanam. The theme is either devotional, heroic or amorous. It originated as a dance form with jatis (tala, solfa syllables like taka tari kita naka tatin gina tam) tagged on.

- **JATISVARAM:** Very similar to the svarajati in musical structure, this form- Jatisvaram-has no sahitya or words. The piece is sung with solfa syllables only. It is noted for its rhythmical excellence and the jati pattern used in it. This is a musical form belonging to the realm of dance music. In some Jatisvarams, the Pallavi and Anupallavi are sung to jatis and the Charanas are sung to a mixture of svaras and jatis. There are also Ragamalika Jatisvarams.
- **PADA:** Padas are scholarly compositions in Telugu and Tamil. Though they are composed mainly as dance forms, they are also sung in concerts, on account of their musical excellence and aesthetic appeal. A padam also has the sections, pallavi, anupallavi and charana. The music is slow-moving and dignified. There is a natural flow of music and, a sustained balance between the words and the music is maintained throughout. The theme is madhura bhakti, portrayed as bahir srngara and antar bhakti.
- **Khyals are musical forms of Hindustani music. The pride of place in classical Hindustani Music is occupied by the Khyal. As sung today, the khyal has two varieties: the slow or vilambit khyal and the fast or drut khyal. In form both are similar, they have two sections – the asthayee and the antara. The vilambit is sung in slow tempo and the drut at a faster speed. In technique, the exposition is less grave than the dhrupad. There are more delicate gamkas and ornamentations. Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 48.D

- Warli paintings are narrative paintings that require performance gestures and movement with little scope for facial expression. Most of the characters are in dialogue with each other. **The art form deals with themes that narrate the social lifestyle and activities of the Warlis i.e. hunting, fishing, farming, forest activities and village life.** During the harvest season, weddings and births, their houses are adorned with paintings. The Warlis are predominantly farmers whose life is governed by the monsoon cycle. As their life is closely linked to nature, they worship it in different forms—Sun and moon, god of thunder, lightning, wind, rain and several others. Gods are worshipped according to the seasons. Men and women are depicted engaged in a harvest scene, cultivating land and hunting and many more day-to-day activities. Spiral formations of men and women and concentric circular designs in Warli Paintings are symbolic of the Tarpa dance.
- **The Warli painting is simplistic in character with human figures made of triangles and stick-like hands and legs and a variety of flora and fauna in geometrical shapes. Warli paintings are practised generation after generation and there is no formal training given to the artists.**
- They simply paint on mud and cow dung-based surface, coated with geru (red mud) first and then with rice paste for the color white. These paintings are simplistic but full of life. Salati grass or bamboo sticks are used in place of a brush for painting.
- Warli is the main tribe to be found on the northern outskirts of Mumbai, in Western India and extends up to the Gujarat border. The Warlis inhabit small villages of thatched mud huts, which are constructed in such a way that they all surround a central cell. **Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 49.C

- **Cherial scroll paintings belong to Telangana. Cherial in the Warangal district is the traditional center of this art.** The traditional caste-based groups from Jingor, Muchi and Mera known as nakkash, paint these paintings. Such scrolls were used by the story tellers accompanied by the musicians, along with dolls and masks made of a coconut shell while the larger ones are made out of sawdust and wood called tella puniki smeared with tamarind seed paste. The common themes are from the Krishna Leela, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Shiva Puranam, Markandeya Puranam interspersed with the ballads and folk stories of communities like Gauda, Madiga and so on. Irrespective of the subject matter, Cherial paintings begin with the painting of Lord Ganesha, a remover of obstacles and then of Saraswati, goddess of learning. **Hence, pair 1 is not correctly matched.**
- **Madhubani is a village in the district of Mithilanchal in Bihar. The Madhubani painting originated in the area named ‘Mithilanchal’ where King Janak ruled or in other words the birthplace of Sita.** The origin of this art form can be traced to the epic of Ramayana as Tulsidas gives a vivid account of Mithilanchal being decorated with Mithila paintings at the wedding of Sita with Ram. These paintings are drawn on auspicious occasions such as the birth of a child, the sacred-thread ceremony of the Brahmins, etc. -sathhudi, a ritual observed during the seventh and ninth month of pregnancy; chatiyar puja, done on the sixth day after the birth of a child; annaprashan, to mark a child’s first eating of grain; akshararambh, to mark a child’s entry into the world of learning. One of the important themes of Mithila painting is kohabara. The main area of the house where these paintings are done is – the kohabara ghar– a room

prepared for a groom where he stays at his in-laws place after the Wedding. **Hence, pair 2 is correctly matched.**

- **The Patachitra is the traditional painting of Odisha.** The word is derived from the Sanskrit word “pata” which means canvas and “chitra” which means picture. This art style is dedicated to Lord Jagannath of Puri. Unlike the scroll paintings of Bengal, Rajasthan or South India, the Patachitras of Puri, Kalighat paintings of Bengal and Chitrakathi paintings of Maharashtra are separate pieces of paintings complete in themselves. The Patachitras are oblong, stiff and glazed pieces of painting. Painted on cloth, it follows a traditional process of canvas preparation. It is painted with stone colours, shell powders and organic lac on paper or cloth stiffened with tamarind seed and chalk powder. **Hence, pair 3 is correctly matched.**
- **The word ‘Pichhvai’ literally means ‘at the back’.** Pichhvai paintings are done on cloth and serve as painted backdrops for installed icons of Shrinathji at Nathadwara in Rajasthan. There are three different types of Pichhvais—those made for specific festivals (celebrating the life of Krishna); those made for specific seasons (monsoon and winter); and those which express general themes not necessarily linked to Shrinathji. There are pichhvais inspired by the festival of Sharad Purnima Govardhan Dhanna (the Mount Govardhan pichhvai), and Varsha (the Varsha pichhvai). Pichhvai paintings are done on similar lines as that of miniature paintings. **Hence, pair 4 is correctly matched.**

**Q 50.D**

- **Recent context:** The Geological Survey of India has for the first-time established **Lithium ‘inferred’ resources(G3) of 5.9 million tonnes in the Salal-Haimana area of the UT of Jammu & Kashmir.** This recent discovery of lithium reserves is a significant development that has the potential to revolutionize various industries, including **electric vehicles (EVs) and electronics.**
- Lithium is a **rare and valuable mineral.** Known as the ‘**white gold of energy storage technology**’, it is one of the key components used in **electric batteries.** Besides **EV, Lithium-based semiconductors** are also playing a key role in areas of national security, nuclear medicine, and other scientific research.
- Due to a **lack of sufficient resources until yet, India** has been **heavily dependent on imports** to meet its lithium requirements, with **more than 80% of its lithium needs imported from countries like China, Argentina, and Chile.**
- The discovery of lithium reserves in India presents an opportunity for the country to **reduce its dependence on imports, become self-reliant** in the production of lithium-ion batteries, and position itself as a major player in the global lithium-ion battery market.
- The **current discovery** has also **placed India in the seventh position in terms of Lithium reserves** in the world.
- **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**

**Q 51.A**

- The Vijayanagara Empire was a South Indian empire that ruled from the **14th to the 17th century**, based in the city of Vijayanagara (now **Hampi, Karnataka**). The Vijayanagara Empire was founded in **1336 and was attributed to the Sangama dynasty siblings Harihara I and Bukka Raya I**, who hailed from a **cowherd community with a Yadava lineage.** **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The Vijayanagara Empire, held dominion over a vast area in South India, encompassing **present-day Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Goa**, and portions of Telangana and Maharashtra. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- The rising power Vijayanagar empire brought it **into a clash with many powers both in the south and to the north.** In the south, **its main rivals were the sultans of Madurai.** The struggle between the sultan and Madurai lasted for about four decades. By 1377, the sultana of Madurai had been wiped out. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**

**Q 52.A**

- **Recent Context:** US-FDA has **approved computer-based and experimental alternatives to animals** to test new drugs. This move is expected to boost the research and development of “organ on a chip”. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- **Organ-on-a-chip** is a **microfluidic device** that aims to **mimic the structure and function** of specific **human organs** or tissues in vitro. It is a **multi-channel 3-D microfluidic cell culture, integrated circuit (chip)** that **simulates the activities, mechanics, and physiological response** of an entire organ or an organ system. It constitutes the subject matter of significant biomedical engineering research. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- It is a **small, transparent chip** made of **biocompatible materials** such as **silicon, glass, or polymers**, and contains tiny channels **lined with living cells.** These living cells are **derived from human tissues** and

can be cultured to replicate the microenvironment of the specific organ being modeled. **Hence, statement 2 not is correct.**

- **Mechanism-** Each organ-on-a-chip contains a complex network of microfluidic channels and chambers that can simulate the mechanical and chemical environment of a specific organ. It can **mimic the flow of blood and air**, while the living cells provide a realistic environment for **drug testing and disease modeling**.
- **Potential applications-**
  - It has numerous potential applications, including **drug development, disease modeling, and toxicity testing**.
  - By replicating the structure and function of human organs, researchers can **study how organs interact with drugs** and other compounds.
  - This could lead to the development of more **effective and personalized treatments** for a variety of diseases.
  - It provides a more **ethical and effective approach to testing drugs** and other compounds, **reducing the reliance on animal testing**.

Q 53.A

- **Krishnattam, folk theatre of Kerala, came into existence in the middle of 17th century A.D. under the patronage of King Manavada of Calicut.**
- **Krishnattam is a cycle of eight plays performed for eight consecutive days.** The plays are Avataram, Kaliyamandana, Rasa krida, kamasavadha, Swayamvaram, Bana Yudham, Vivida Vadham, and Swargarohana.
- The episodes are based on the theme of Lord Krishna – his birth, childhood pranks and various deeds depicting victory of good over evil.
- **Mudiyettu, traditional folk theatre form of Kerala is celebrated in the month of Vrischikam (November-December).**
- It is usually performed only in the Kali temples of Kerala, as an oblation to the Goddess. **Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**
- **It depicts the triumph of goddess Bhadrakali over the asura Darika.** The seven characters in Mudiyettu-Shiva, Narada, Darika, Danavendra, Bhadrakali, Kooli and Koimbidar (Nandikeshvara) are all heavily made-up.

Q 54.B

- **Yellowstone National Park** is widely considered to be the **first national park in the world**. It is the **first national park in the US** that set forth the process of protecting places for their intrinsic and recreational value. Hence, **statement 1 is correct.**
- It is located in the **northwest corner of Wyoming** and extends into Montana and Idaho. The **Gardner River** originates in the northwest corner of the park and flows to the Missouri River. The **Gardner flows** into Yellowstone first, joining near Rattlesnake Butte at the north entrance to the park. Hence, **statement 2 is not correct.**



- it was established by the 42nd United States Congress with the **Yellowstone National Park Protection Act** signed into law on March 1, 1872. It spans an area of over 9,000 sq. km comprising **lakes, canyons, rivers, iconic geothermal features** such as the **Old Faithful geyser, and mountain ranges**.
- Over the years, it has been at the center of many successful **conservation endeavors**, and today is the most famous **megafauna location** in the contiguous United States, home to **grizzly bears, wolves**, and free-ranging herds of the endangered **bison and elk**. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

#### Q 55.B

- The **first Mughal invasion of Deccan happened during the reign of Akbar** (reign 1556-1605). In 1591, Akbar launched a diplomatic offensive. He sent embassies to all the Deccani states 'inviting' them to accept Mughal suzerainty. However, only Khandesh accepted this proposal and rest others did not pay heed.
- The **instability in Ahmednagar gave an opportunity for the Mughals to intervene in the Deccan**. The Mughal invasion was led by prince Murad, who was the governor of Gujarat, and by Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan.
- The fight against invading Mughal forces was led by Chand Bibi. However, the factionalism in the Deccani forces led to their defeat. A treaty was signed in 1596 by the Mughals got Berar and the Mughal suzerainty was also recognised by Ahmednagar. The Mughals in return for their recognition of the claim of Bahadur. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The **Coup D'état of Mahabat Khan occurred during the reign of Jahangir in 1626**. Mahabat Khan was one of the most capable commanders of Jahangir. He was loyal to the throne and but he was one of those nobles who did not like the increased influence of Nur Jahan in the administration of the state.
- **In 1626, Mahabat Khan came with a trusted body of Rajputs and seized the emperor** at an opportune moment when the royal camp was crossing the river Jhelum on its way to Kabul. Nur Jahan after a failed attempt to defeat Mahabat Khan surrendered herself in order to be close to Jahangir. However, later she was able to wean away most of the nobles from Mahabat Khan's side. Realising his precarious position, Mahabat Khan abandoned Jahangir and fled from the court. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- The **Mughal emperor Shah Jahan (1628 –1658) annexed the state of Ahmednagar in 1636** and a treaty was concluded with Bijapur. According to the treaty, the **Nizam Shahi state came to an end**. The territory of Ahmednagar was divided between the Mughals and Bijapur; the territory lying in the north of the Bhima river went to the Mughals while the area lying in the south to Adil Shah.
- **Aurangzeb became the Mughal ruler in 1658**, twenty years later when the state of Ahmadnagar came to an end. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

#### Q 56.D

- Mauryan state controlled almost all the economic activities in the realm The state brought new land under cultivation with the help of cultivators and sudra labourers.
- The virgin land which was opened to cultivation yielded handsome income to the state in the form of revenue collected from the newly settled peasants.
- It seems that taxes collected from the peasants varied from one-fourth to one-sixth of the produce. Those who were provided with irrigation facilities by the state had to pay for it.
- In addition to this in times of emergency peasants were compelled to raise more crops. Tolls were levied on commodities brought to town for sale, and they were collected at the gates.
- **Moreover, the state enjoyed a monopoly mining, sale of liquor, manufacture of arms, etc.** This naturally brought money to the royal exchequer.
- **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 57.B

- During the post-Mauryan period, foreign princes patronized and cultivated Sanskrit literature. The earliest specimen of kavya style is found in the inscription of Rudradaman in Kathiawar in about A.D. 150. From then onwards inscriptions began to be composed in chaste Sanskrit, although the use of Prakrit in composing inscriptions continued till the fourth century A.D and even later.
- It seems that some of the great creative writers such as Asvaghosha enjoyed the patronage of the Kushans. **Asvaghosha wrote the Buddhacharita, which is a biography of the Buddha, He also composed Saundarananda, which is a fine example of Sanskrit kavya.**
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**



**Q 58.D**

- **Recent context:** Budget has announced **computerization of over 63000 PACS**. A **Primary Agricultural Credit Society (PACS)** is a **basic unit and the smallest cooperative credit institution** in India. It works on the **grassroots level** (gram panchayat and village level).
- PACSs serve as the **last link in a three-tier cooperative credit structure headed by the State Cooperative Banks (SCB) at the state level**. Hence **statement 2 is correct**.
- These **provide short-term, and medium-term agricultural loans** to the farmers for the various agricultural and farming activities **for the period of the crop cycle**. Credit from the SCBs is **transferred to the district cooperative central banks, or DCCBs**, that operate at the **district level**. The DCCBs work with PACSs, which **deal directly with farmers**. At the start of the cropping cycle, farmers avail credit to finance their requirement of seeds, fertilizers etc. Banks extend this credit at **7% interest**, of which **3% is subsidized by the Centre and 2% by the state government**. Effectively, **farmers avail the crop loans at 2% interest only**.
- **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Since these are cooperative bodies, **individual farmers are members of the PACS, and office-bearers are elected from within them**.
- A village can have multiple PACS, which are **regulated by the RBI and governed by Banking Regulations Act, of 1949 and the Banking Laws (Co-operative Societies) Act of 1955**. Hence **statement 3 is correct**.
- A report published by the **Reserve Bank of India in 2022** put the number of PACS at **1.02 lakh**.

**Q 59.C**

- India had a unique **system of communication** during the fourteenth century, **Ibn Battuta in his book 'Rihla'** explained the unique system of communication of India which impressed him very much.
- In India, **the postal system was of two kinds**. The **horse post, called uluq**, is run by royal horses stationed at a distance of every four miles. The **foot-post has three stations per mile; it is called dawa**.
- At every third of a mile, there is a well-populated village, outside which are three pavilions in which men sit with girded loins ready to start. This **foot post is quicker than the horse post**, and often it is used to transport the fruits of Khurasan which are much desired in India. Also, this postal system allowed merchants to not only **send information and remit credit across long distances** but also to dispatch goods required at short notice.
- **Hence option (c) is the correct answer.**

**Q 60.C**

- **Indian sculptors had mastered the bronze medium and the casting process as much as they had mastered terracotta sculpture and carving in stone**. The **cire-perdu or 'lost-wax' process for casting** was learned as long ago as the **Indus Valley Culture**. Along with it was discovered the process of making an alloy of metals by mixing copper, zinc and tin which is called bronze. Hence, **statement 2 is not correct**.
- **Vakataka bronze images of the Buddha from Phophnar, Maharashtra, are contemporary with the Gupta period bronzes**. They show the influence of the **Amaravati style of Andhra Pradesh in the third century CE** and at the same time there is a significant change in the draping style of the monk's robe. Buddha's right hand in **abhaya mudra** is free so that the drapery clings to the right side of the body contour. The result is a continuous flowing line on this side of the figure. At the level of the ankles of the Buddha figure the drapery makes a conspicuous curvilinear turn, as it is held by the left hand. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct**.
- **The additional importance of the Gupta and Vakataka bronzes is that they were portable and monks carried them from place to place for the purpose of individual worship or to be installed in Buddhist viharas**. In this manner, the refined classical style spread to different parts of India and to Asian countries overseas. Hence, **statement 3 is correct**.

**Q 61.C**

- **The hybridisation and incorporation of several styles was the hallmark of Chalukyan buildings**. The most elaborate of all Chalukyan temples at **Pattadakal made in the reign of Vikramaditya II (733-44)** by his chief queen **Loka Mahadevi**, for instance, shows complete knowledge of **Pallava buildings at Kanchipuram and as a corollary, Mahabalipuram**. The temple is one of the best early examples of the **Dravida tradition**. **Virupaksha Temple** is the oldest known temple built by a queen in India.
- **The Lakshmana temple dedicated to Vishnu is the grandest temple of Khajuraho, built in 954 by the Chandela king, Dhanga**. A Nagara temple is placed on a high platform accessed by stairs. There are

four smaller temples in the corners, and all the towers or shikharas rise high, upward in a curved pyramidal fashion, emphasizing the temple's vertical thrust ending in a horizontal fluted disc called an amalaka topped with a kalash or vase. The crowning elements: amalaka and kalash, are to be found on all nagara temples of this period. The temple also has projecting balconies and verandahs.

- **At Konark, on the shores of the Bay of Bengal, lie the majestic ruins of the Surya or Sun temple built in stone around 1240.** Its shikhara was a colossal creation said to have reached 70m, which, proving too heavy for its site, fell in the nineteenth century. The vast complex is within a quadrilateral precinct of which the jagamohana or the dance-pavillion (mandapa) has survived, which though no longer accessible is said to be the largest enclosed space in Hindu architecture. The Sun temple is set on a high base, its walls covered in extensive, detailed ornamental carving. These include twelve pairs of enormous wheels sculpted with spokes and hubs, representing the chariot wheels of the Sun god who, in mythology, rides a chariot driven by eight horses, sculpted here at the entrance staircase. The whole temple thus comes to resemble a colossal processional chariot.
- **The Sun temple at Modhera dates back to the early eleventh century and was built by Raja Bhimdev I of the Solanki Dynasty in 1026.** The Solankis were a branch of the later Chalukyas. There is a massive rectangular stepped tank called the surya kund in front of it. The proximity of sacred architecture to a water body such as a tank, a river or a pond has been noticed right from the earliest times. By the early eleventh century they had become a part of many temples. This hundred-square-meter rectangular pond is perhaps the grandest temple tank in India. A hundred and eight miniature shrines are carved in between the steps inside the tank. A huge ornamental arch-torana leads one to the sabha mandapa (the assembly hall) which is open on all sides, as was the fashion of the times in western and central Indian temples. **Hence, option (c) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 62.A

- **Bharatanatyam of Tamil Nadu in southern India has grown out of the art of dancers dedicated to temples and was earlier known as Sadir or Dasi Attam. It is the first of India's traditional dances to be refashioned as theatre art and to be exhibited widely both at home and abroad. Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**
- Bharatanatyam rests on principles of performance and aesthetics set down in classics such as Bharata's Natyashastra. It has a rich repertoire of songs in Telugu, Tamil and Sanskrit. **The present-day format of a Bharatanatyam recital, as well as a valuable part of its musical compositions, was created by the famed 'Tanjore Quartet' of the nineteenth century: the brothers Ponniah, Chinnaiah, Sivanandam and Vadivelu.**
- **Alarippu is the opening item which is a nritta item. Alarippu can be sometimes preceded by an item called Todayamangalam or Pushpaanjali. Todayamangalam is quite often than not followed by an item called "Kautavam".**
- **Tillaanaa is a pure nritta item performed as the concluding offering in a Bharata Natyam recital.**
- Apart from these, the repertoire of Bharatanatyam consists of the following:
  - Jatisvaram: This again is a nritta item. It is a combination of jatis (string of adavus) danced to the svaras of a raaga.
  - Shabdam: A nritya item that makes use of the saattvika abhinaya for the first time in a recital. It is addressed to a deity and expresses spiritual love.
  - Varnam: An intricate and complex item that has a judicious blend of both nritta and nritya. It is usually addressed to a deity wherein bhakti for the Lord is expressed in terms of endearment. It has both jatis as well as svaras of the raaga employed. These are interspersed with lyrics as saahitya.
  - Jaavali : Yet another variety of nritya composition which is usually secular in character. It usually represents the love of a naayikaa (heroine) for the naayaka (hero).

#### Q 63.C

- **Recent context:** The World Bank has released "Women, Business and the Law 2023 report".
- Women, Business and the Law 2023 is the 9th in a series of annual reports that analyze laws and regulations affecting women's economic opportunity in 190 economies. The data is available for the period from 1971 to 2023
- It has eight indicators- Mobility, Workplace, Pay, Marriage, Parenthood, Entrepreneurship, Assets, and Pension.
- The Data can be used to build evidence of the relationship between legal gender equality and women's entrepreneurship and employment.
- Findings-
  - Globally:

- ✓ **Only 14 scored a perfect 100:** Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Luxemburg, The Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.
- ✓ In 2022, the **global average** score is **76.5 out of 100**.
- ✓ At the current pace of reform, it would take **at least 50 years to approach legal gender equality** everywhere.
- **India:**
  - ✓ India has a score is **74.4 out of 100**.
  - ✓ This score is **above the regional average** observed across **South Asia (63.7)**. Within this region, the maximum score observed is 80.6 (Nepal).
  - ✓ The report used **data** on laws and regulations in **Mumbai**.
  - ✓ India received a **perfect score for laws related to freedom of movement, women's work decisions, and marriage constraints**.
  - ✓ In India, a thriving civil society also contributed to identifying gaps, drafting legislation, and organizing public opinion through campaigns, discussions, and protests, leading to the enactment of the 2005 Domestic Violence Act.
- **More: World Bank Index on the Life Cycle of Working Women-** It is a tool developed by the World Bank to **measure and track the progress of women's economic participation and opportunities over their lifetimes**. It is based on a set of **indicators** that measure factors such as **laws and regulations** affecting women's **employment, access to finance, and gender-based violence and harassment in the workplace**.
  - The purpose of the index is to provide policymakers and stakeholders with data and insights that can be used to inform policies and programs aimed at improving women's economic opportunities and outcomes.
  - **India has scored 74.4 out of 100 on the World Bank Index on the life cycle of working women**. This score places India at **140th** out of 190 countries surveyed in the index.
- **Hence option (c) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 64.D

- **Saint Shankaradeva** emerged as one of the leading proponents of **Vaishnavism in Assam in the late fifteenth century**. His teachings, often known as the **Bhagavati dharma** because they were based on the **Bhagavad Gita and the Bhagavata Purana**, focused on absolute surrender to the supreme deity, in this case, Vishnu.
- He emphasized the need for **naam kirtan, recitation of the names of the lord in sat sanga or congregations of pious devotees**. He also encouraged the establishment of **satra or monasteries for the transmission of spiritual knowledge, and naam ghar or prayer halls**. Many of these institutions and practices continue to flourish in the region. His major compositions include the **Kirtana-ghosha**. **Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 65.B

- **Ala-Ud-Din Hasan Bahman Shah** also known as **Hasan Gangu** was the founder of the Bahmani Sultanate. He reigned over Sultanate from 1347 to 1358. The **capital of the Bahmani dynasty was Gulbarga (Hasanbad)**. Hasan Gangu began his career as a general serving under Sultan Mohammed Bin Tuglaq. He was made a governor in Daultabad. After establishing his kingdom, he handed it over his kingdom to his eldest son.
- **Alaudin Hasan was an Afghan adventurer.**
- The Bahamani kingdom was founded in **1347 by Ala-ud-Din Bahman Shah or Alauddin Hasan**.
- **He had risen in the service of a brahmana, named Ganga**, and is therefore known as Hasan Gangu. After his coronation, he assumed the title of Alaudin Hasan Bahman Shah.
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 66.D

- **The Tungabhadra Doab** is a region located in southern India, specifically in the states of **Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh**. It is the area between the **Tungabhadra and Krishna rivers**. During the medieval period in India, the Tungabhadra Doab region played a significant role in the history and politics of the Deccan Plateau. The area was ruled by various dynasties, including the Chalukyas, the Rashtrakutas, the Hoysalas, and the Vijayanagara Empire. **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**
- From 992 CE to 1120 CE, the Chola Empire and the **Western Chalukya Empire engaged in a series of battles, now known as the Chola-Chalukya Wars**, in the southern region of India. The battles were fought on two fronts: the Western Front, **where the capture of Manyakheta and Kalyani were the**

**Cholas' objectives**, and the Eastern Front, which revolved around the strategic location of Vengi, essential to both sides.

- There were several instances of **conflict between the Yadavas and the Hoysalas over** control of the Tungabhadra Doab region.
- The clashes between the **two powers Vijayanagar and Bahmani** over the control of the Tungabhadra Doab region were frequent and intense. The Bahmani Sultanate launched several campaigns against the Vijayanagara Empire, seeking to gain control of the region. However, the Vijayanagara Empire was able to repel these attacks and establish its dominance over the region.
- **Kakatiya dynasty ruled over the eastern Deccan region and the Gajapati dynasty ruled over present-day Odisha** and North coastal Andhra, so there was no direct fight between the two empires to control Tungabhadra doab.

#### Q 67.A

- The Ajanta and Ellora caves are the finest examples of cave architecture in Ancient India. While Ajanta is mostly about beautiful paintings made on cave walls on the theme of Buddhism, Ellora is all about sculpture and architecture belonging to three different religions prevailing in the country during those times—Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism.
- **Ajanta is a cluster of 30 caves of different sizes excavated in a horseshoe-shaped stretch of rock embedded in a hill facing a narrow stream called Waghora. Each cave was connected to the stream by a flight of steps, which are now demolished with few remnants left behind. The caves were built in two phases—starting around the 2nd century BC, with the second group of caves built around 400–650 AD. While Ajanta has two-storeyed caves, three-storeyed caves in Ellora is a unique achievement. Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Both Ajanta and Ellora have elaborate Buddhist paintings and structures. At Ajanta, The themes of the paintings are the events from the life of the Buddha, the Jatakas and the Avadanas. Some paintings such as Simhala Avadana, Mahajanaka Jataka and Vidharpundita Jataka cover the entire wall of the cave. It is worth noting that Chaddanta Jataka has been painted in the early Cave No. 10 with many details and events grouped according to their geographical locations. Events that happened in the jungle and events that happened in the palace are separated by their locations. The best-preserved images of Padmapani and Vajrapani are in cave no. 1 of Ajanta.
- **Ellora is also unique in terms of stylistic eclecticism, i.e., the confluence of many styles at one place. The caves of Ellora and Aurangabad show the ongoing differences between the two religions—Buddhism and Brahmanical. There are twelve Buddhist caves having many images belonging to Vajrayana Buddhism like Tara, Mahamayuri, Akshobhya, Avalokiteshwara, Maitreya, Amitabha, etc. Buddhist caves are big in size and are of single, double and triple storeys. Their pillars are massive. The shrine Buddha images are big in size; they are generally guarded by the images of Padmapani and Vajrapani. Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**

#### Q 68.B

- The Maratha administration under King Shivaji was organized into eight councils of ministers known as Ashtapradhan.
- Peshwa was one most important ministers of the Ashtapradhan. **Peshwas looked after the finances and general administration. The Sar-i-naubat (Senapati) was the commander-in-chief of the army. was a post of honor and was generally given to one of the leading Maratha chiefs. Hence, pair 1 is not correctly matched.**
- Other important members of the Ashtapradhan were the **Majumdar, Surunavis or Chitnis, Dabir, Nyayadhish and Panditrao, etc.**
- The Majumdar was the accountant, while the Wakenavis was responsible for intelligence, posts and household affairs.
- The Surunavis or Chitnis helped the king with his correspondence.
- **Senapati was the Commander-in-Chief.**
- **The Dabir was the master of ceremonies and also helped the king in his dealings with foreign powers.** The Nyayadhish and Panditrao were in charge of justice and charitable grants. **Hence, pair 2 is correctly matched.**
- The **Mirasdars were hereditary holders of rights in land** in the Maratha kingdom. They belong to the affluent strata of rural society.
- The **'silahdars' were the loose auxiliaries** in the army Maratha army placed under havaldars who received fixed salaries. **Hence, pair 3 is not correctly matched.**



#### Q 69.D

- **The Tughlaq dynasty** was a Muslim royal family of Turko-Mongol or Turkic descent that held sway over the Delhi Sultanate during medieval India. The dynasty came into power in Delhi in 1320 CE. Their reign continued until 1412 CE when the dynasty came to an end. The Tughlaqs provided three competent rulers: **Ghiyasuddin, Muhammad bin Tughlaq, and Firuz Shah Tughlaq.**
- **Muhammad bin Tughlaq transferred the capital from Delhi to Deogir.** As Deogir had been a base for the expansion of Turkish rule in South India. The attempt to bring entire South India under control had led to serious political difficulties. Later Deogir was renamed to Daulatabad. Soon he decided to abandon Daulatabad. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- **Muhammad bin Tughlaq introduced token currency** in order to avoid dependency upon the supply of gold, and silver. There was a shortage of silver in the world in the 14th century. Later people started forging the coins, this experiment turned out to be a failure. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- **Firuz Shah Tughlaq extended the principle of heredity to the army.** Old soldiers were allowed to rest in peace and to send in their place their sons or sons-in-law, and if they were not available, their slaves. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- During the time of **Firuz Shah Tughlaq, Jizyah became a separate tax.** Earlier it was a part of **Kharaj** since this was not provided for in the sharia. **Hence statement 4 is correct.**

#### Q 70.B

- **The Chola kingdom** was called Cholanmandalam or Coromandal. It was situated to the north-east of the territory of the Pandyas, between the Pennar and the Velur rivers. We have some idea of the political history of the Cholas, whose chief centre of political power lay at Uraiyur, a place famous for cotton trade.
  - It seems that in the middle of the second century B.C. a Chola king named Elara conquered Sri Lanka and ruled over it for nearly 50 years.
  - **A firmer history of the Cholas begins in the second century A.D. with their famous king Karikala, who flourished around A.D. 100. He founded Puhar and constructed 160 km of embankment along the Kaveri river. Hence pair 1 is not correctly matched.**
  - This was built with the labour of 12,000 slaves who were brought as captives from Sri Lanka. Puhar is identical with Kaveripattanam, which was the Chola capital. It was a great centre of trade and commerce, and excavations show that it had a large dock.
- **The Chera or the Kerala country** was situated to the west and north of the land of the Pandyas. It included the narrow strip of land between the sea and the mountains and covered a portion of modern Kerala state.
  - In the early centuries of the Christian era, the Chera country was as important as the country of the Cholas and the Pandyas. It owed its importance to trade with the Romans. The Romans set up two regiments at Muziris identical with Cranganore in the Chera country to protect their interests. It is said that they also built there a temple of Augustus.
  - **According to the Chera poets their greatest king was Senguttuvan, the Red Chera, He routed his rivals and established his cousin securely on the throne. Hence pair 2 is not correctly matched.**
- The Chalukyas set up their kingdom towards the beginning of the sixth century A.D. in the western Deccan. They established their capital at Vatapi, modern Badami, in the district of Bijapur which forms a part of Karnataka.
  - Later they branched off into several independent ruling houses, but the main branch continued to rule at Vatapi for two centuries. In this period no other power in the Deccan was so important as the Chalukyas of Badami until we come to Vijayanagara in late medieval times.
  - **Pulakesin II (609- 642) is the most famous Chalukya king.** He is known to us from his eulogy written by the court poet Ravikirti in the Aihole inscription. This inscription is an example of poetic excellence reached in Sanskrit, and in spite of its exaggeration is a valuable source for the biography of Pulakesin. **Hence pair 3 is correctly matched.**
  - Pulakesin overthrew the Kadamba capital at Banavasi and compelled the Gangas of Mysore to acknowledge his suzerainty. He also defeated Harsha's army on the Narmada and checked his advance towards the Deccan.
  - In his conflict with the Pallavas, he almost reached the Pallava capital, but the Pallavas purchased peace by ceding their northern provinces to Pulakesin II.

#### Q 71.D

- **Kuchipudi derives its name from the village of Kuchelapuram, in Andhra Pradesh, India. As a classical form of dance, drama and music Kuchipudi enjoys a unique place among the Indian classical idioms. Kuchipudi grew largely as a product of the Bhakti movement beginning in the**

seventh century A.D. However, it was in the 14th century that the ascetic Siddhendra Yogi appeared on the scene and gave Kuchipudi a new definition and direction.

- Kuchipudi was originally a male dance tradition. Groups of men traveled from village to village enacting stories from Hindu mythology. As in Elizabethan theatre men portrayed the roles of women. It was only in the last 9 or 10 decades that women were introduced to this art form. Kuchipudi in its present form is the result of the vision of stalwarts like Vempati Chinna Satyam and the late Vedantam Laxminarayana Shastry. It consists of both male and female performers.
- A recital of Kuchipudi begins with an invocatory number, as is done in some other classical dance styles. Earlier the invocation was limited to Ganesha Vandana. Now, other gods are also invoked. It is followed by nritta, that is, non-narrative and abstract dancing. Usually, jatiswaram is performed as the nritta number. Next is presented a narrative number called shabdam. The Shabdam is followed by a natya number called Kalaapam. Many Kuchipudi dancers prefer to perform entry of Satyabhama from the traditional dance-drama Bhaamaakalaapam. Next in the sequence comes a pure nritya abhinaya number based on literary-cum musical forms like padam, jaavli, shlokam, etc. In such a number each of the sung words is delineated in space through dance, drishya-kavita (visual poetry). A Kuchipudi recital is usually concluded with tarangam. Excerpts of Krishna-leela-tarangini are sung with this number. In this, the dancer usually stands on a brass plate locking the feet in shakatavadanam paada and moves the plate rhythmically with great dexterity.
  - Rukmini Devi Arundale was Bharatnatyiyam dancer. Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.
- The music that accompanies the dance is according to the classical school of Carnatic music and is delightfully syncopatic. The accompanying musicians, besides the vocalist, are: a mridangam player to provide percussion music, a violin or veena player or both for providing instrumental melodic music, and a cymbal player who usually conducts the orchestra and recites the sollukattus (mnemonic rhythm syllables).

#### Q 72.D

- The Treaty of Purandar was signed in June 1665, between the Maratha King Shivaji and Raja Jai Singh I representing Aurangzeb. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- The terms of the treaty were:
  - Out of 35 forts held by Shivaji, 23 forts with the surrounding territory which yielded a revenue of four lakhs of *huns* every year were to be surrendered to the Mughals, while the remaining 12 forts with an annual income of one lakh of *huns* were to be left to Shivaji 'on condition -of service and loyalty to the throne'. Hence, statement 2 is correct.
  - Territory worth four lakhs of *huns* a year in the Bijapuri Konkan, which Shivaji had already held, was granted to him. In addition, Bijapur territory worth five lakhs of *huns* a year in the uplands (Balaghat), which Shivaji was to conquer, was also granted to him. In return for these, he was to pay 40 lakhs *huns* in installments to the Mughals. Hence, statement 3 is correct.
  - Shivaji asked to be excused from personal service. Hence, a mansab of 5000 was granted in his place to his minor son, Sambhaji.

#### Q 73.A

- King Shivaji supplemented his income by levying a contribution on the neighboring Mughal territories. This contribution which came to one-fourth of the land revenue began to be called chauthai (one-fourth) or chauth.
- Chauth was a levy imposed on the territories not directly controlled by the Marathas. It was a levy of twenty-five percent paid to the Marathas by the adjoining/outside rulers to the Maratha kingdom in order to avoid the Maratha raids. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- Sardeshmukhi was imposed by Shivaji in his own dominion (swaraj) on the basis of his claim as hereditary sardeshmukh (landlord) of the dominion. Thus, it was claimed by Shivaji as a matter of right, unlike Chauth. It was 10 percent of the total revenue realized. Thus, it was a tax on landlords and not peasants. Hence, statement 2 is not correct.

#### Q 74.B

- The rock-cut cave tradition also existed in Odisha. The earliest examples are the Udaigiri-Khandagiri caves in the vicinity of Bhubaneswar. These caves are scattered and have inscriptions of Kharavela kings. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.
- According to the inscriptions, the caves were meant for Jain monks. There are numerous single-cell excavations. Some have been carved in huge independent boulders and given the shape of animals.

**The big caves include a cave with a pillared veranda with cells at the back. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

- The upper part of the cells is decorated with a series of chaitya arches and narratives that still continue in the folklores of the region. The figures in this cave are voluminous, move freely in the picture space, and are an excellent example of qualitative carving. Some caves in this complex were excavated later, sometime in the eighth–ninth centuries CE.

#### Q 75.B

- **Recent Context:** A recent initiative called the ‘Anmol Jeevan Abhiyan’ (Precious Life Campaign) in Barmer, Rajasthan has motivated village panchayats and homeowners to add **hand pumps and locked covers to tankas** (associated with local deities) or sacred forest groves 10 km away from the village.
- The **lightweight hand pumps** made of **fiber** serve a **dual purpose**-
  - **Preventing accidents and suicides** (171 suicide cases reported last year)
  - **Drawing water from the tank.**
- The campaign has been started **jointly** by the **district administration, United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and Action Aid.**
- Though the campaign has made an impact during the last three to four months, it cannot be measured in quantitative terms at present because of its continuity, even as the reports of suicides have gradually reduced.
- **Tanka-** It is a **traditional rainwater harvesting technique** indigenous to the **Thar desert region of Rajasthan.** A Taanka is a cylindrical paved underground pit into which rainwater from rooftops, courtyards or artificially prepared catchments flows.
- Other **traditional water conservation systems** in India include- **Jhalaras, Bawari, Ahar Pynes,** etc.
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 76.C

- Land grants to the brahmanas on a large scale suggest that the brahmana supremacy continued in Gupta times. The Guptas who were originally vaisyas came to be looked upon as kshatriyas by the brahmanas. The brahmanas represented the Gupta kings as possessing the attributes of gods, and the Gupta princes became great supporters of the brahmanical order.
- **The castes proliferated into numerous subcastes as a result of two factors (there was no consolidation of castes).** On the one hand a large number of foreigners had been assimilated into the Indian society, and each group of foreigners was considered a kind of Hindu caste. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
  - Since the foreigners mainly came as conquerors they were given the status of the kshatriya in society. The Hunas, who appeared in India towards the close of the fifth century, ultimately came to be recognized as one of the thirty-six clans of the Rajputs.
- The other reason for the increase in the number of castes was the absorption of many tribal peoples into brahmanical society by way of land grants. To the ruling chiefs of the tribes was ascribed a respectable origin. But most of the rest of the tribal people were given a low origin, and every tribe now became a kind of caste in Hindu society.
- **In some ways, the position of sudras and women improved in this period. They were now permitted to listen to the epics and the Puranas, They could also worship a new god called Krishna.**
  - From the seventh century onwards the sudras were mainly represented as agriculturists; in the earlier period they always appeared as servants, slaves and agricultural labourers working for the three higher varnas.
- **But during this period the untouchables increased in number, especially the chandalas. The chandalas appeared in society as early as the fifth century B.C. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
  - By the fifth century A.D their number had become so enormous and their disabilities so glaring that it attracted the attention of the Chinese pilgrim Fa-hsien. He informs us that the chandalas lived outside the village and dealt in meat and flesh.

#### Q 77.C

- The Guptas with their seat of power in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar ruled over north and western India for about 160 years, till the middle of the sixth century A.D. Then north India again split up into several kingdoms. The white Hunas established their supremacy over Kashmir, Punjab and western India from about A.D. 500 onwards. North and western India passed under the control of about half a dozen feudatories who parcelled out Gupta empire among themselves.

- Gradually one of these dynasties ruling at Thanesar in Haryana extended its authority over all the other feudatories. **The ruler who brought it about was Harshavardhana (A.D. 606-647).**
- **Harsha made Kanauj the seat of his power** and there from extended his authority in all directions. During this period Pataliputra fell on bad days and Kanauj came to the forefront. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The early history of Harsha's reign is reconstructed from a study of Banabhatta, who was his court poet and who wrote a book called - Harshacharita. This can be supplemented by the account of the Chinese pilgrim Hsuan Tsang, who visited India in the seventh century "A.D. and stayed in the country for about 15 years.
- Harsha governed his empire on the same lines as the Guptas did, except that his administration had become more feudal and decentralized.
- **Land grants continued to be made to priests for special services rendered to the state.** In addition, Harsha is credited with the grant of land to the officers by charters. These grants allowed the same concessions to priests as were allowed by the earlier grants. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- **The feudal practice of rewarding and paying officers with grants of land seems to have begun under Harsha.** This is natural because we do not have many coins issued by Harsha.
- **In the empire of Harsha, law and order was not well maintained. The Chinese pilgrim Hsuan Tsang, about whom special care may have been taken by the government, was robbed of his belongings,** although he reports that according to the laws of the land severe punishments were inflicted for the crime. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

#### Q 78.B

- **Mimamsa literally means the art of reasoning and interpretation.** But reasoning was used to provide justifications for various Vedic rituals, and the attainment of salvation was made dependent on their performance.
- **According to the Mimamsa, the Vedas contain the eternal truth. The principal object of this philosophy was to acquire heaven and salvation.**
- A person will enjoy the bliss of heaven as long as his accumulated acts of virtue last. When his accumulated virtues are exhausted, he will come back to the earth.
- But if he attains salvation, he will be completely free from the cycle of birth and death in the world. In order to attain salvation the **Mimamsa strongly recommended the performance of Vedic sacrifices, which needed the services of the priests and legitimised the social distance between various varnas.**
- Through the propagation of the Mimamsa the brahmanas wanted to maintain their ritual authority and preserve the social hierarchy based on brahmanism.
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 79.C

- **Alauddin Khalji (1296-1316)** introduced market policy, which was a groundbreaking and distinctive measure that garnered the interest of both domestic and international historians.
- During the early 14th century, **Alauddin Khalji implemented a series of reforms** that included price controls throughout his empire. This involved setting **fixed prices for a wide range of commodities**, such as grains, cloth, slaves, and animals. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- Alauddin also prohibited hoarding and regrating, employed overseers and spies to enforce the regulations, and imposed harsh penalties on those who disobeyed.
- **According to Barani, Alauddin set up three markets in Delhi, first for food grains, the second for cloth and expensive items** such as sugar, ghee, oil, dry fruits, etc., and the **third for horses, slaves, and cattle.** **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- **Grains were stored in government warehouses.** The storage was meant for emergencies like times of scarcity and famine. Any trader or vendor who cheated in weights and measurements was punished with cutting an equal weight of flesh from his body. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

#### Q 80.A

- **Recent context: Windfall tax on crude oil slashed** by the Indian government.
- A windfall tax refers to the **tax levied against certain industries by the government when economic conditions permit those industries to experience significantly above-average profits.** Such economic conditions come from a sudden windfall gain to a certain business or industry, typically as a result of a **geopolitical disruption, natural disaster, or war** that causes **unusual spikes in demand or supply interruptions.** A good example is a confrontation between Russia and Ukraine.



- They are also imposed if there is an **acute need for a temporary spurt in public spending** at the same time.
- There have been varying **rationales** for governments worldwide to introduce windfall taxes-
  - **Redistribution** of unexpected gains when high prices benefit producers at the expense of consumers
  - **Funding social welfare schemes**, and
  - **The supplementary revenue stream for the government.**
- Windfall taxes are **imposed retrospectively**, one-off over and above normal taxes are often influenced by unexpected events, and they can cause **uncertainty in the market about future taxes**.
- IMF says that taxes in response to price surges may suffer from **design problems**—given their expedient and political nature. It added that introducing a **temporary windfall profit tax reduces future investment** because prospective investors will internalize the likelihood of potential taxes when making investment decisions.
- Another issue is who should be taxed- only the big companies responsible for the bulk of high-priced sales or smaller companies as well.

#### Q 81.D

- **Ulugh Khan**, known in history by his later **title of Balban**, ascended the throne in 1265. The growing authority of Balban alienated many of the Turkish chiefs who had hoped to continue their former power and influence in the affairs of government since Nasiruddin Mahmud was young and inexperienced.
- **Iltutmish**, who is widely regarded as the true founder of the slave dynasty, **established the 'Chalisha', Turk-i-Chahalghani, and Chahalgani systems. This arrangement comprised a group of 40 nobles who held significant sway in the governance of the Delhi Sultanate. Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- During the earlier period, **Balban held the position of naib or deputy to Nasiruddin Mahmud** whom Balban had helped in securing the throne in 1246.
- **An era of centralized government began for the first time. Balban constantly sought to increase the prestige and power of the monarchy**, because he was convinced that this was the only way to face the internal and external dangers facing him. He refused to entertain important government posts for anyone who did not belong to a noble family. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- **He reorganized the military department (diwan-i-arz)**, and pensioned off those soldiers and troopers who were no longer fit for service. While **Alauddin Khalji first set up a separate ariz's department. Hence statement 3 is not correct.**

#### Q 82.A

- **MISHTI (Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes)** is a new program declared in Union Budget 2023-23. It will **facilitate mangrove plantations along India's coastline and on saltpan lands.**
- **Importance of MISHTI Initiative-**
  - **Mangrove areas** are some of the most **bio-diverse** locations in India.
  - They also **protect the coastlines** from the vagaries of inclement weather.
  - As **climate change** increases the incidence of **extreme weather events** across the world, **mangrove plantations** have been shown to **make coastal lands resilient, preventing flooding, and land erosion** and acting as a **buffer for cyclones.**
  - They are also excellent **carbon sinks** and can **sequester up to four times more carbon than tropical rainforests.**
- MISHTI program will be operated through **convergence between MGNREGS, CAMPA Fund (Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority)**, and other sources, which will be a game changer for protecting Mangroves. Mangrove saplings will be planted along the coastal regions of the country. Its main objective is to **"preserve Mangrove forests"**. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **Mangrove forests** are spread across **Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Odisha, Andaman and Nicobar, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu.**
- **Distribution of mangrove cover-**
  - **About 40% of the world's mangrove cover is found in South East Asia and South Asia.**
  - India has about 3% of the total Mangrove cover in South Asia.
- **Mangroves distribution in India-**
  - Mangroves are found in the following states and Union Territories in India: **West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Kerala, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra, and Gujarat.**

- The **major concentrations** of mangroves are in the **Sunderbans delta** and **Andaman & Nicobar Islands**.
- Mangroves are also found in the deltaic areas of the Mahanadi, Godavari, and Krishna river basins.
- **West Bengal has 42.45% of India's mangrove cover**, followed by **Gujarat at 23.66%** and **A&N Islands at 12.39%**. Hence statement 2 is not correct.

**Q 83.B**

- From the early centuries of the Common Era, we find grants of land being made, many of which were recorded in inscriptions.
- Some of these inscriptions were on stone, but most were on copper plates which were probably given as a record of the transaction to those who received the land. The records that have survived are generally about grants to religious institutions or to Brahmanas.
- **An agrahara was land granted to a Brahmana**, who was usually exempted from paying land revenue and other dues to the king and was often given the right to collect these dues from the local people. **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

**Q 84.D**

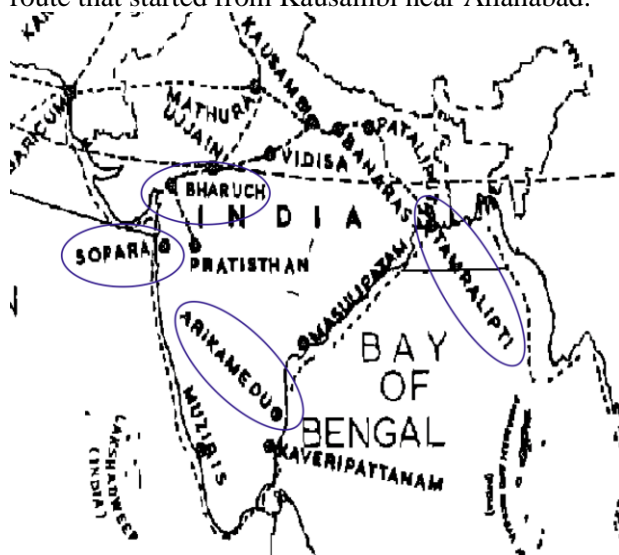
- **Fernao Nuniz** was a traveler, chronicler, and horse trader of Portuguese-Jewish origin who **resided in the city of Vijayanagara**, the capital of the Vijayanagara Empire, for a duration of three years spanning from **1535 to 1537 during the reign of Achyuta Raya**.
- **Nicolo de Conti**, a merchant hailing from Venice, journeyed through the eastern lands between 1414 and 1438. Among his destinations was the **Vijayanagara Kingdom**, where he arrived during the reign of **Dev Raya II**. In his writings, he describes the city's fortifications and the vast number of soldiers serving in the rulers' army.
- **Abdur Razzak**, a Persian traveler, traveled to India and visited the **Vijayanagara Kingdom during the reign of Dev Raya II**. In "**Matla as-Sadain Wa Majma ul-Bahrain**," he provides a detailed narrative of the rule of Devaraya II.
- **Ibn Battuta**, a renowned geographer, and explorer of the 14th century. Hailing from Morocco, he spent three decades of his life journey in different parts including the Indian subcontinent, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and East China. **In his book "Rehla,"** he also recounted the reign of Harihara I.
- **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**

**Q 85.B**

- Akbar instituted a new system called the dahsala system of land revenue in 1580. **It was a further development of the Zabti system of land revenue.** Zabti system was the system of measurement and assessment based on the productivity of the soil. It was influenced by the Sher Shah's system of land revenue.
- Akbar introduced this system in the area from Lahore to Allahabad, and in Malwa and Gujarat. However local prices and productivity was not taken into consideration in the Zabti system.
- The qanungos, who were hereditary holders of land as well as local officials conversant with local conditions often concealed the real produce in many cases. So to reform the system Akbar appointed officials known as Karoris who reported the true prices. **Based on these findings the dahsala system was introduced. Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Under dahsala system of land revenue, **the average produce of different crops as well as the average prices prevailing over the last ten (dah) years were calculated. One-third of the average produce was the state share.** The state demand was, however, stated in cash. This was done by converting the state share into money on the basis of a schedule of average prices over the past ten years. Thus, the produce of a bigha of land under share was given in maunds. But on the basis of average prices, the state demand was fixed in rupees per bigha.
- Besides, dahsala system other systems were also prevalent during the Mughal rule. **One such was batai or ghallabakhshi. In this system, the produce was divided between the peasants and the state in a fixed proportion.** The crop was divided after it had been thrashed, or when it had been cut and tied in stacks, or while it was standing in the field. This system was considered a very fair one, but it needed an army of honest officials to be present at the time of the ripening or the reaping of the crops. The peasants were allowed to choose between zabti and batai under certain conditions. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**

#### Q 86.D

- The most important economic development of the post Mauryan period was the thriving trade between India and the eastern Roman Empire. In the beginning a good deal of this trade was carried on by land, but the movement of the Sakas, Parthians and Kushans from the first century B.C. disrupted trade by land route.
- Although the Parthians of Iran imported iron and steel from India they presented great obstacles to India's trade with the lands further west of Iran. But from the first century A.D. trade was carried on mainly by sea.
- It seems that around the beginning of the Christian era, the monsoons were discovered, So the sailors now could sail in much less time directly from the eastern coast of the Arabian Sea to its western coast.
- They could call easily at the various ports such as **Broach and Sopara situated on the western coast of India, and Arikamedu and Tamralipti situated on its eastern coast.**
  - Of all these ports Broach seems to have been the most important and flourishing. To it were brought not only the commodities produced in the Satavahana kingdom but also the goods produced in the Saka and Kushan kingdoms.
- The Sakas and the Kushans used two routes from the north-western frontier to the western sea coast. Both these routes converged at Taxila, and were connected with the lower Indus basin from where it "passed on to Broach. The second route called the Uttarapatha was in more frequent use.
  - From Taxila it passed through the modern Panjab up to the western coast of the Yamuna. Following the course of the Yamuna it went southward to Mathura. From Mathura it passed on to Ujjain in Malwa and again from Ujjain to Broach on the western coast. Ujjain was the meeting point of another route that started from Kausambi near Allahabad.



- Hence option (d) is the correct answer.

#### Q 87.C

- Magadha came to prominence under the leadership of Bimbisara, who belonged to the Haryanka dynasty. He was a contemporary of the Buddha. He started the policy of conquests and aggrandizement which ended with the Kalinga war of Asoka.
- Magadha's most serious rival was Avanti with its capital at Ujjain. Its king Chanda Pradyota Mahasena fought Bimbisara but ultimately the two thought it wise to become friends. Later when Pradyota was attacked by jaundice at the Avanti king's request Bimbisara sent the royal physician Jivaka to Ujjain.
- **The Sisunagas of Magadhas were succeeded by the Nandas, who proved to be the most powerful rulers of Magadha. So great was their power that Alexander, who invaded Punjab at that time, did not dare to move towards the east.**
- All this took place in the reign of Mahapadma Nanda, He claimed to be ekarat, the sole sovereign who destroyed all the other ruling princes.
- It seems that he acquired not only Kalinga but also Kosala which had probably rebelled against him.
- Hence option (c) is the correct answer.

#### Q 88.C

- Major traditional theatre form of South India:
- **Dashavatar is the most developed theatre form of the Konkan and Goa regions.** The performers personify the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu-the god of preservation and creativity. The ten

incarnations are Matsya (fish), Kurma (tortoise), Varaha (boar), Narsimha (lion-man), Vaman (dwarf), Parashuram, Rama, Krishna (or Balram), Buddha and Kalki. Apart from stylized make-up, the Dashavatara performers wear masks of wood and papier mache.

- **Koodiyaattam, one of the oldest traditional theatre forms of Kerala**, is based on Sanskrit theatre traditions. The characters of this theatre form are: Chakyaar or actor, Naambiyaar, the instrumentalists and Naangyaar, those taking on women's roles. The Sutrathar or narrator and the Vidushak or jesters are the protagonists. It is the Vidushak alone who delivers the dialogues. **Emphasis on hand gestures and eye movements makes this dance and theatre form unique.**
- **Yakshagaana, traditional theatre form of Karnataka**, is based on mythological stories and Puranas. **The most popular episodes are from the Mahabharata** i.e. Draupadi swayamvar, Subhadra vivah, Abhimanyu vadh, Karna-Arjun yuddh and from Ramayana i.e. Raajyaabhishek, Lav-kush Yuddh, Baali-Sugreeva yuddha and Panchavati.
- **Therukoothu, the most popular form of folk drama of Tamil Nadu**, literally means "street play". It is mostly performed at the time of annual temple festivals of Mariamman (Rain goddess) to achieve rich harvest. At the core of the extensive repertoire of Therukoothu there is a cycle of eight plays based on the life of Draupadi. Kattiakaran, the Sutrathara of the Therukoothu performance, gives the gist of the play to the audience and Komali entertains the audience with his buffoonery.
- **Hence, option (c) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 89.B

- Cultural traditions from various regions of the country reflect the rich diversity of Regional Music of India. Each region has its own particular style. Tribal and folk music is not taught in the same way that Indian classical music is taught. There is no formal period of apprenticeship where the student is able to devote their entire life to learning the music, the economics of rural life does not permit this sort of thing. The musical practitioners must still attend to their normal duties of hunting, agriculture or whatever their chosen profession is. Some of the important regional music traditions are discussed below:
- **Rasiya Geet, Uttar Pradesh:** The rich tradition of singing Rasiya Geet flourished in Braj which is the sacred land of Lord Krishna's charming leelas from time immemorial. This is not confined to any particular festival but is closely woven into the very fabric of daily life and day-to-day chores of its people. 'Rasiya' word is derived from the word rasa (emotion) because rasiya means that which is filled with rasa or emotion. It reflects the personality of the singer as well as the nature of the song.
- **Lotia, Rajasthan:** 'Lotia' is sung in the Chaitra month during the festival – 'Lotia'. Women bring lotas (a vessel to fill water) and kalash (a vessel considered to be auspicious to fill water during worship) filled with water from ponds and wells. They decorate them with flowers and come home. **Hence, pair 1 is not correctly matched.**
- **Pandavani, Chhattisgarh:** In Pandavani, tales from Mahabharata are sung as a ballad and one or two episodes are chosen for the night's performance. The main singer continuously sits throughout the performance and with powerful singing and symbolic gestures he assumes all the characters of the episode one after another. **Hence, pair 4 is correctly matched.**
- **Alha, Uttar Pradesh:** Alha, typical ballad of Bundelkhand narrates the heroic deeds of Alha and Udal, the two warrior brothers who served Raja Parmal of Majoba. This is the most popular regional music of Bundelkhand which is popular elsewhere in the country as well.
- **Chhakri, Kashmir:** Chhakri is a group song that is the most popular form of Kashmir's folk music. It is sung to the accompaniment of the noot (earthen pot) rababs, sarangi and tumbaknari (an earthen pot with high neck). **Hence, pair 2 is correctly matched.**
- **Teej Songs, Rajasthan:** Teej is celebrated with great involvement by women of Rajasthan. This is a festival celebrated on the third day after the new moon or amavasya of shraavana month. The theme of the songs sung during this festival revolves around the union of Shiva and Parvati, the magic of monsoon, greenery, peacock dance, etc.
- **Daskathia, Odisha:** Daskathia is a form of ballad singing prevalent in Odisha. Daskathia is a name derived from a unique musical instrument called "Kathi" or "Ram Tali", wooden clappers used during the presentation. The performance is a form of worship and offering on behalf of the "Das", the devotee. **Hence, pair 3 is correctly matched.**

#### Q 90.B

- In the Sushira Vadya group, the sound is produced by blowing air into a hollow column. The pitch of the note is determined by controlling the air passage and the melody is played by using the fingers to open and close the instrument. The simplest of these instruments is the flute. Generally, flutes are made of bamboo or wood and the Indian musician prefers these due to the tonal and



musical attributes of these materials. However, there are references to flutes made of red sandalwood, black wood, cane, ivory, bronze, silver and gold also. Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.

- In the **Avanaddha Vadya** category of instruments, the sound is produced by striking the animal skin which has been stretched across an earthen or metal pot or a wooden barrel or frame. The earliest references to such instruments have been found in the Vedas where there is mention of Bhumi Dundhubhi; this was a hollow pit dug in the ground and covered with the hide of a buffalo or ox which was stretched across the pit. The tail of the animal was used for striking the animal hide and thus sound was produced.
- The earliest instruments invented by man are said to be the **Ghana Vadya**. Once constructed, this variety of instrument does not need special tuning prior to playing. In early times these instruments were the extension of the human body such as sticks, clappers, rods, etc. and were also closely related to objects of utility in daily life such as pots and pans, jhanj, falams, etc. They are principally rhythmic in function and are best suited as an accompaniment to folk and tribal music and dance.
- The **tata vadya** is a category of instruments in which sound is produced by the vibration of a string or chord. These vibrations are caused by plucking or by bowing on the string which has been pulled taut. The length of the vibrating string or wire, the degree to which it has been tightened, determines the pitch of the note and also to some extent the duration of the sound.

**Q 91.C**

- **Qalandars, Madaris, Malangs, and Haidaris were the Sufi saints** who observed extreme forms of asceticism. They initiated movements based on a radical interpretation of sufi ideals. They defied the laws of shari'a. Thus, they were often referred to as be-shari'a, in contrast to the ba-shari'a sufis who complied with it. **Hence, pair 1 is not correctly matched.**
- **Ziyarat in Sufism referred to a practice of pilgrimage** to the grave of a sufi saint. Such pilgrimages were undertaken particularly on his death anniversary or urs (or marriage, signifying the union of his soul with God). **Hence, pair 2 is correctly matched.**
- **Khalifa was the successor of a Sufi saint** appointed by the saint himself. The Sufi saints were known by different names such as shaikh (in Arabic), pir or murshid (in Persian). Saints established rules for spiritual conduct and interaction between inmates as well as between laypersons and the master. He enrolled disciples (murids) and appointed a successor (khalifa). **Hence, pair 3 is correctly matched.**
- **Masnavis were a series of long poems** written by the Sufi saints to express ideas of divine love using human love as an allegory. **Hence, pair 4 is correctly matched.**

**Q 92.B**

- The **Pala dynasty** was a powerful Indian dynasty that ruled parts of eastern India from the **8th to the 12th century CE**. The **Pala empire was founded by Gopala**, probably in 750 AD. He was succeeded in 770 by his son Dharmapala who ruled till 810. He was defeated by the Rashtrakuta ruler, Dhruva. **Hence Statement 1 is not correct.**
- The **Pala rulers were great patrons of Buddhist learning and religion**. **Dharmapala revived Nalanda University and founded the Vikramshila University** which became second only to Nalanda in fame. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- A conflict between Dharmapala and Vatsaraja, the Pratihara king, arose as a consequence of the Kannauj dispute. Later, **Dharmapala recaptured Kannauj** and installed his vassal Chakrayudha as the ruler. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- This move solidified his position as the most dominant leader in Northern India, and he proclaimed himself as the Uttarapatha Swamin or "Lord of Northern India".

**Q 93.B**

- **Odisha is famous for temple architecture and with varieties of temples presents the Kalingan School of Architecture in its well-developed forms**. According to Silpa Sastras, there are three different types of temples in the Kalingan School. These are 'Rekha', 'Bhadra' or 'Pidha' and 'Khakhara'. **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**
- The **rekha temple** or the vimana is characterized by a curvilinear superstructure. It can be divided into four parts. The four divisions are pista, bada, gandi and sira or mastaka. From the bottom to the finial, each part of the temple has a separate name. The Odishan craftsmen considered the temple as the body of the Cosmic Being. Therefore, the different parts. of the temple are named after limbs of the body. Just as

the different parts of a human body are organically related to each other, so the different divisions of the temple bear a vital relationship with each other and are integrated into an artistic composition.

- The **Khakhara temple** is very unique in its style. This type is very limited in Odisha. This is exclusively meant for the Sakti worship. The gandi of the khakhara is composed either like that of a rekha or of a pidha with certain minor differences.<sup>25</sup> The plan of the deula is oblong, and its mastaka is distinguished by its barrel vaulted elongated roof called khakhara by the treatisers due to its faint resemblance to kakharu or voita kakharu. Over the khakhara are placed either miniature amlas or kalasa flanked by lions.
- There is no difference between Rekha temple and **Pidha temple** in the treatment of the bada, but they differ in the disposition of the gandi. The gandi of the jagamohana is of pyramidal shape. It is composed of a number of pidhas or horizontal platforms, piled up in the form of a pyramid. The pidhas rapidly decrease in size from bottom upwards. The diminution proceeds until the topmost pidha is half in size to the lower most one. The pidhas may be arranged in one or two tiers, with moderate height of vertical wall intervening between them. Each of these tiers is called a potala. The cross-section at any point of the gandi is square. Above the gandi comes the mastaka, composed of several elements which are circular in cross-section. First comes the beki, then the ghanta, an enormous ribbed structure shaped like a bell. On the top of the ghanta is a succession of beki, amla, khapuri and kalasa as in the Rekha.

#### Q 94.A

- The Sangam classics, consisting of 18 works (eight anthologies of lyrics and ten long poems), are well known for their directness of expression.
- These were written by 473 poets, among whom 30 were women, the famous poetess Avvaiyar being one of them.
- In the case of 102 poems, the authors are unknown. Most of these anthologies are of the 3rd century B.C.
- During this time, a Tamil grammar Tolkappiyam was written, to understand early Tamil poetry.
- **Tolkappiyam indicates five landscapes or types of love and outlines their symbolic conventions.**
- Critics say that Sangam literature is not just the earliest evidence of the Tamil genius. The Tamils, in all their 2000 years of literary effort, wrote nothing better.
- **The famous Thirukkural by Thiruvalluvar, in the 6th century A.D., serves as a manual of precepts to guide one to noble living. It expounds a secular, moral, and practical attitude towards life.**
- **The twin epics, Silappadikaram (the story of the anklet), written by Ilango-Adigal, and Manimekalai (the story of Manimekalai) by Chattanar, were written sometimes in A.D. 200-300 and give vivid accounts of Tamil society during that period.**
- These are valuable storehouses and epics of dignity and sublimity, laying stress on the cardinal virtues of life. In **Manimekalai there is an elaborate exposition of the doctrines of Buddhism.**
- If Tamil reveals a triumph of Brahmanic and Buddhist knowledge, Kannada shows Jain's ascendancy in its ancient phase. Malayalam absorbed a rich treasure contained in the Sanskrit language.
- **Nannaya (A.D.1100) was the first Telugu poet.** In ancient times, Tamil and Telugu spread to distant places.
- **Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.**

#### Q 95.B

- The Harappan cities did not possess the necessary raw material for the commodities they produced. **They did not use metallic money. We have no idea about their currency. Most probably they carried on all exchanges through barter** in return for finished goods and possibly foodgrains. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- They procured metals from the neighboring areas by boats and bullock carts. They practiced navigation on the coast of the Arabian Sea.
- They knew the use of wheel and carts with, solid wheels were in use in Harappa. It also appears that the Harappans used some kind of modern *ekka*.
- **The Harappans had commercial links with Rajasthan, Afghanistan and Iran.** Their cities also carried on commerce with those in the land of the Tigris and Euphrates. Many Harappan seals have been discovered in Mesopotamia, and it seems that the Harappans imitated some cosmetics used by the urban people of Mesopotamia. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- The Mesopotamian records from about 2350 B.C. refer to trade relations with Meluha, which was the ancient name given to the Indus region. The Mesopotamian texts speak of two intermediate trading stations called Dilmun and Makan, which lay between Mesopotamia and Meluha: Dilmun can probably be identified with Bahrain on the Persian Gulf.

Q 96.A

- **The Qutb Minar also spelled Qutub Minar and Qutab Minar, is a minaret and "victory tower"** that forms part of the Qutb complex, which lies at the site of Delhi's oldest fortified city, Lal Kot, founded by the Tomar Rajputs. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the Mehrauli area of South Delhi, India. **The monument was started by Qutubuddin Aibak, but completed by Iltutmish.** It is believed to have been dedicated to the Sufi saint Qutubuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- **The Qutub Minar, built in the thirteenth century, is a 234-foot-high tapering tower divided into five stories.**
- The minar is a mix of polygonal and circular shapes.
- **It is largely built of red and buff sandstone with some use of marble in the upper storeys.**
- It is characterized by highly decorated balconies and bands of inscriptions intertwined with foliated designs.
- **Alai Darwaza (southern door to the Qutub Minar)** is the southern gateway of the Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque in the Qutub complex, Mehrauli, Delhi, India. Built by Sultan Alauddin Khalji in 1311 and made of red sandstone, it is a square domed gatehouse with arched entrances and houses a single chamber. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

Q 97.D

- Recently, **OpenAI** introduced a new **chatbot** called **ChatGPT**. It is a '**conversational**' AI (hence the word "chat") that can answer queries **similar to how a human would**. It can answer "**follow-up questions**", and can also "admit its mistakes, challenge incorrect premises, and reject inappropriate requests." **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**
- Here, GPT stands for **Generative Pre-trained Transformer 3** and its relevance is derived from the fact that it was trained using **Reinforcement Learning from Human Feedback (RLHF)**.
- **Applications:** Its usages are immense right from **coding** to drafting a **personal message** for a loved one.

Q 98.B

- **Recent context: Northern Ireland Protocol will be replaced by the "Windsor Framework".**
- A **new agreement** to alter the **Northern Ireland Protocol's** functioning was announced by the **European Commission and the UK**. The Protocol entered into force in January 2021, and since then, the **EU and the UK** have been in negotiations for two years.
- According to the Windsor Framework, **Northern Ireland can continue to be a part of the EU's single market and customs union**. It will remove many of the onerous procedures that were put in place on products coming from the British mainland as part of the first **Brexit agreement**.
- With the new arrangement, **commodities moving from Great Britain to Northern Ireland** and those **continuing into the EU** will be divided into "**green**" and "**red**" lanes.
- **Significance-** The Windsor Framework will still **give the EU some influence over Northern Ireland**. Several industries will continue to be subject to EU legislation, particularly those that deal with food and animal products, and the **European Court of Justice** will continue to be the deciding body in these cases.
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

Q 99.A

- **Yaosang:** The festival is celebrated **every year** on the **full moon of Lamta (February-March)** of the **Meitei lunar** calendar. It begins just after sunset followed by **Yaosang Mei Thaba (Burning of the Straw Hut)**. Unlike Holi, it is celebrated with a traditional twist. During these five days, Manipur comes alive with sporting events during the day and traditional "**thabal chongba**" dance the night. The **thabal chongba** is a **traditional dance of the Meitei**, where boys and girls gathered in an open ground and dance in a circle. But these days thabal chongba is performed throughout the month of Lamta. Business activities and public transportation come to a grinding halt during Yaoshang. All educational institutions, both private and government, will also remain shut. **Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.**
- **Losar:** It is a major festival in **Arunachal Pradesh** as it marks the **Tibetan New Year**. Tribes like **Monpa, Sherdukpens, Memba, Khamba** and **Nah** following the **Mahayana sect of Buddhism** celebrate this festival with all pomp. This three-day festival begins on **February 11** each year. On the first day of the festival, the priests make offering to the highest priest called the **Dharmapala** or **Palden Lhamo**, whereas the masses visit friends and family and wish them **Tashi Delek (best wishes)**. Also according to the local tradition, **sprouted barley seeds** and **buckets of tsampa (roasted barley flour with butter)** and other grains are offered on home altars to ensure a **good harvest**. On the second day of the festival, which is also called **Gyalpo Losar**, national leaders and kings are honoured. On the third and

final day of the festival known as **Choe-Kyong Losar**, people make offerings to Dharmapala and tie prayer flags on rooftops and across the locality. Although the spiritual observance ends on the third day, the celebration can extend for 10 to 15 days.

- **Saga Dawa** is one of the major **Buddhist festivals in Sikkim** and is celebrated in the Tibetan lunar month. The **full moon day** that falls in the middle of the lunar month is known as Saga Dawa and it is considered as an auspicious day by the Buddhists. It is called the '**Month of Merits**' and is celebrated between **May and June**. The festival commemorates the **birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha**. On the occasion of Saga Dawa in Sikkim, people gather at the monasteries and offer water, incense sticks and dhog. Also, many participate in the circumambulation of the Gompas, where they chant mantras, carry the religious text and turn the prayer wheels.

#### Q 100.D

- **Recent Context:** Common Eligibility Test is to be conducted in India. It aims to replace multiple examinations conducted by different recruiting agencies for selection to government jobs advertised each year, with a single online test.
- At present, **candidates seeking government jobs have to appear for separate examinations conducted by multiple recruiting agencies** for various posts. The **common eligibility test (CET) aims to replace multiple examinations** conducted by different recruiting agencies for selection to government jobs advertised each year, with a **single online test**.
- The **Union Cabinet has approved the setting up of the National Recruitment Agency, an independent body** to conduct examinations for government jobs. It will be a **Society** registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860. Hence **statement 2 is correct**
- Initially, it will organize a CET to screen/shortlist candidates for the **Group B and C (non-technical) posts**, which are now being conducted by the **Staff Selection Commission (SSC), Railways Recruitment Board (RRBs) and Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS)**. Later on, more exams may be brought under it. Hence **statement 1 is correct**.
- As the **multiple recruitment examinations** are a **burden on the candidates**, as also on the **respective recruitment agencies**, involving **avoidable/repetitive expenditure**, **law and order/security-related issues** and **venue-related problems**. On average, **2.5 crore to 3 crore candidates appear in each of these examinations**. A CET would enable these candidates to appear once and apply to any or all of these recruitment agencies for a higher level of examination. This would indeed be a boon to all the candidates.
- **Salient features of the NRA and CET:**
  - NRA to conduct **online CET twice a year**.
  - Registration of applicants, generation of roll number/admit cards, display of marks, merit list, etc, will be done online.
  - The CET would be available in a number of **languages**. This would greatly facilitate people from different parts of the country to take the exam and have an equal opportunity of being selected.
  - The CET will be based on **multiple choice objective type** question paper and it will be a **computer-based exam**.
  - The CET **score** of a candidate will be **valid for three years**. Hence **statement 3 is correct**.

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