



ANSWERS & EXPLANATIONS

GENERAL STUDIES (P) TEST – 4712 (2025)

Q 1.D

- Dholavira is one of the most prominent archaeological sites of the Harappan civilization, also known as the Indus Valley Civilization. It is located in the Kutch district of Gujarat, India, on the arid island of Khadir in the Rann of Kutch.
- **Key Features of Dholavira:**
 - **Location and Layout:**
 - ✓ Dholavira is situated in the Rann of Kutch and is part of the Harappan civilization, dating back to approximately 4500 years ago. **It lies on the tropic of cancer.**
 - **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
 - ✓ **The site is divided into three main parts: the citadel (or castle), the middle town, and the lower town.** This tripartite division is unique among Harappan cities and indicates a well-planned urban settlement with distinct social hierarchies.
 - ✓ **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
 - **Urban Planning:**
 - ✓ The city is notable for its advanced town planning, with a sophisticated street grid and elaborate water management systems.
 - ✓ The citadel was likely the seat of authority and housed the ruling elite, while the middle town and lower town were occupied by the general populace and artisans.
 - **Water Conservation System:**
 - ✓ **One of the most remarkable features of Dholavira is its water conservation system, which includes a series of reservoirs, channels, and wells designed to collect and store rainwater.**
 - ✓ The inhabitants constructed several large reservoirs, some of which are among the earliest examples of water conservation systems in the world. These reservoirs were built using stone blocks and were used to store rainwater as well as water diverted from nearby streams.
 - ✓ Additionally, there is evidence of a sophisticated drainage system that managed both stormwater and sewage.
 - ✓ **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
 - **Architecture and Artifacts:**
 - ✓ The architecture of Dholavira includes large, well-built structures made of stone, unlike many other Harappan sites which primarily used mud bricks.
 - ✓ Excavations at Dholavira have uncovered a variety of artifacts, including pottery, beads, seals, tools, and ornaments, providing insights into the daily life, trade, and culture of the Harappan people.
 - ✓ The site also revealed an inscription made of large letters of the Indus script, although the script remains undeciphered.
 - **Recognition:**
 - ✓ **In July 2021, Dholavira was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site,** recognizing its outstanding universal value and the exceptional preservation of its urban planning and water management system.
 - ✓ **Hence, statement 4 is correct.**

Q 2.B

- **Achievements of Indian Cinema:**
 - Indian cinema has a rich and storied history, marked by significant milestones that have shaped its identity on the global stage. One of the foundational achievements in Indian cinema is the **creation of**

Raja Harishchandra in 1913 by Dadasaheb Phalke, recognized as India's first full-length feature film. It was a silent film and laid the groundwork for the burgeoning Indian film industry and is celebrated as a pioneering work in Indian cinema. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

- Another significant achievement is the global recognition of Indian filmmakers. Satyajit Ray, a masterful director known for his work in "Pather Panchali" and other films, was honored with an honorary Academy Award (Oscar) in 1992 for his lifetime contribution to cinema.
- **However, it's important to note that the first Indian to actually win an Academy Award was Bhanu Athaiya in 1983 for Best Costume Design for the film "Gandhi." Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- This milestone marked India's growing influence in global cinema, showcasing the talent and creativity emerging from the country.
- These achievements underscore the diverse and dynamic nature of Indian cinema, highlighting its evolution from the early days of silent films to its current status as a global cultural force. Indian cinema continues to produce works that resonate with audiences worldwide, reflecting the country's rich cultural heritage and storytelling traditions.

Q 3.C

- **Chandraketugarh**, located in the Ganga delta, actually consists of a cluster of villages in the **24 Parganas district of West Bengal, about 25 miles northeast of Kolkata.** The name 'Chandraketugarh' comes from a local legend of a medieval king of this name. In early historic times, Chandraketugarh was connected to the Ganga by the Vidyadhari river and must have been an important centre of trade, and possibly also a political centre. **Hence option (c) is not correct.**
- Various kinds of artefacts have been found at the site over the years, including coins, pottery, seals and sealings, and figurines made of ivory, wood, and bronze. There are some **interesting inscriptions in a combination of Brahmi and Kharoshthi**, mostly on pots, seals, and plaques. **Hence option (b) is correct.**
- However, the site is best known for its large number of **remarkable terracotta objects**, most of which can be assigned to c. 200 BCE–300 CE. **Hence option (a) is correct.**
- There was a great variety of representations of women, many of them ornamented with elaborate jewellery and associated with foliage and flowers. Some of them may have been yakshis or goddesses. One of the recurring types is known as the **panchachuda**—a woman with emblematic hairpins, usually in the form of five weapons (sword, arrow, battleaxe, trident, and elephant goad) radiating out of her hair. These intriguing sets of **hair ornaments sometimes appear on one side of the head, sometimes on both.** **Hence option (d) is correct.**
- Other figurines depict male figures, animals, winged human figures, fat dwarfs, carts, and rattles. Some plaques **depict erotic scenes.**

Q 4.D

- **Indian floor designs encompass a rich tapestry of cultural expressions, with various forms of traditional art reflecting regional identities and spiritual beliefs.** The creation of these floor designs often involves communal participation, especially among women, who use these artistic expressions as a means to convey cultural narratives and personal stories. The ephemeral nature of these designs, which are often washed away after a few days, symbolizes the transient beauty of life and the importance of celebrating moments.
- Many Indian floor art forms are believed to have protective qualities, serving as a barrier against evil spirits. They are commonly placed at the entrances of homes and places of worship, reinforcing the spiritual significance of these designs in daily life
- **Types of Indian Floor Designs:**
 - **Mandana:** Originating from **Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh**, Mandana involves creating intricate patterns using red and white pigments. The red color is typically derived from brick, while the white comes from chalk. This art form is traditionally practiced by women of the Meena community and is often used to decorate homes during festivals and auspicious occasions. Common motifs include geometric shapes and floral designs, symbolizing fertility and prosperity.
 - **Alpona:** This form of floor art is prominent in **Bengal** and is created using a paste made from rice flour. Alpona designs are often drawn during religious ceremonies and festivals, serving both decorative and spiritual purposes. The patterns can range from simple to highly intricate, often depicting natural elements and geometric shapes. Alpona is deeply embedded in the cultural practices of Bengali women, marking special occasions with their artistic expressions.

- **Jhonti:** Practiced primarily in **Odisha**, Jhonti involves creating designs using white chalk powder on the floor. This art form is characterized by its stylized motifs, which often include conch shells, fish, and floral patterns. Jhonti designs are typically created during festivals and are believed to bring good luck and ward off evil spirits.
- **Chowkpurna:** Chowkpurna is another traditional art form of **Punjab and Uttar Pradesh** that involves drawing square designs on the floor, often using rice flour or colored powders. This art is particularly significant during festivals and celebrations, where it serves as a welcoming gesture to guests and deities. The designs are usually symmetrical and can include various motifs, reflecting the artistic heritage of the region.
- **Santhias:** Santhias is associated with traditional floor designs in **Gujarat**. It involves creating patterns that harmonize with the overall aesthetics of the home, often using locally sourced materials and pigments. This art form emphasizes the connection between the environment and the artistic expression of the community.
- **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**

Q 5.C

- **Samantabhadra**
 - **Samantabhadra** is a significant figure in Mahayana Buddhism, revered as the Universal Bodhisattva who embodies the practice of vows and ethical conduct.
 - Unlike other bodhisattvas who focus on wisdom or compassion, Samantabhadra represents the action aspect of the bodhisattva path—emphasizing the **importance of practice, vows, and morality**.
 - He is often depicted riding a white elephant with six tusks, which symbolizes mental strength, purity, and the power of perseverance in spiritual practice.
 - **The white elephant is also indicative of Samantabhadra's commitment to the practice of the "Ten Great Vows,"** which are central to guiding a practitioner's journey toward enlightenment and benefiting all sentient beings.
 - His teachings encourage a steadfast adherence to one's spiritual commitments, reflecting the universal applicability of his role as a guide for all practitioners.
 - **Hence option (c) is the correct answer.**
- **Other Bodhisattvas:**
 - **Avalokiteshvara (Guanyin)**
 - ✓ **Role:** Bodhisattva of Compassion
 - ✓ **Iconography:** Often depicted with multiple arms, symbolizing his ability to help many beings simultaneously. Sometimes shown with eleven heads.
 - ✓ **Significance:** Embodies infinite compassion; often invoked for protection and mercy.
 - **Manjushri**
 - ✓ **Role:** Bodhisattva of Wisdom
 - ✓ **Iconography:** Typically shown holding a flaming sword (to cut through ignorance) and a scripture (Prajnaparamita Sutra).
 - ✓ **Significance:** Represents transcendent wisdom; frequently associated with scholarly pursuits and deep understanding.
 - **Ksitigarbha (Jizo)**
 - ✓ **Role:** Bodhisattva of Hell Beings
 - ✓ **Iconography:** Often depicted as a monk with a staff and a wish-fulfilling jewel.
 - ✓ **Significance:** Vows to help beings in hell realms and to assist deceased children and travelers.
 - **Maitreya**
 - ✓ **Role:** Future Buddha
 - ✓ **Iconography:** Usually depicted seated on a throne, ready to descend to Earth in the future.
 - ✓ **Significance:** Prophesied to be the next Buddha, who will appear on Earth to teach the Dharma anew.
 - **Tara**
 - ✓ **Role:** Female Bodhisattva of Compassion and Action
 - ✓ **Iconography:** Often depicted in green or white forms, seated in a relaxed posture.
 - ✓ **Significance:** Represents active compassion; invoked for swift aid and protection.

Q 6.B

- The Rashtrakuta rulers were great patrons of arts and letters. In their courts, we find not only Sanskrit scholars, but also poets and others who wrote in Prakrit and in the apabhramsha, the so-called corrupt languages which were the fore-runners of the various modern Indian languages.

- **Jinasena wrote the Adipurana of the Jains. The book deals with the story of the first Jain Tirthankar Rishabha Deva and his sons Bharata and Bahubali. Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**
- Krishna II's spiritual guide, Gunabhadra, wrote the Mahapurana of the Jains.
- **Please note: It was Pampa, who wrote Adipurana in Kannada in the tenth century.**

Q 7.C

- **Akbar's Land Revenue System:**
 - **The zabti system or Todarmal's bandobast system:**
 - ✓ In this system land revenue was fixed by the measurement of the land (using bamboo linked with iron rings) and the assessment based upon it.
 - ✓ Akbar introduced this system in the area from Lahore to Allahabad Malwa and Gujarat. The Dahsala system was a further development of the Zabti system.
 - **Dahsala:**
 - ✓ Akbar instituted it in 1580 under which 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 based on a schedule of average prices over the past ten years. **Hence option 3 is correct.**
 - **The batai or ghalla-bakhshi system:**
 - ✓ In this system, the produce was divided between the peasants and the state in a fixed proportion. The crop had been divided after it had been thrashed, or when it had been cut and tied in stacks, or while it was standing in the field. **Hence option 1 is correct.**
 - **Nasaq system or kankut:**
 - ✓ It is a rough calculation of the amount payable by the peasant based on what he had been paying in the past. In fixing the land revenue, the continuity of cultivation was taken into account.
 - ✓ **Polaj land** was the one which remained under cultivation; **parati** was uncultivated (fallow) land; **chachar land** had been fallow for 2 to 3 years and banjar, the land had fallen fallow for longer periods. **Hence option 2 is correct.**

Q 8.D

- Recently, the Colombo Security Conclave (CSC), a regional security grouping, officially welcomed Bangladesh as its fifth member state.
- The announcement came during the 8th Deputy National Security Adviser (DNSA) level meeting, hosted virtually by Mauritius. **The existing members – India, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, and the Maldives – warmly received Bangladesh into the fold, while Seychelles participated as an observer state. Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**
- The CSC, was formed in 2011 as a trilateral maritime security grouping of India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives.
- The roadmap of activities was later expanded, with Mauritius joining as the fourth member and Bangladesh & Seychelles participating as observer countries. The Conclave underlines regional cooperation and shared security objectives concerning all littoral nations in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). It aims to make maritime security, marine pollution response and maritime search & rescue priorities for the region.

Q 9.C

- India's interaction with the Greeks began with the invasion of Northwest India by Alexander. Later, Seleucus Nicator, one of Alexander's most capable generals, succeeded in making himself the master of vast territory. However, the Seleucid Empire began to disintegrate after 250 BCE.
- The Governor of Bactria revolted against the Seleucid Empire and established an independent ruler of Bactria. His descendant Demetrius defeated the local Indian kings and became the first Indo-Greek king.
- **The distinguished feature of Indo-Greek was their exquisite coinage. Their coins carried the royal portraits on the obverse side and on the reverse included religious symbols that were Indian rather than Greek in inspiration.** An interesting coin series was that of King Agathocles, which depicted the god Samkarshana Balarama on the obverse and Vasudeva Krishna on the reverse. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The Indo-Greeks were the first rulers in India to issue coins which can be definitely attributed to the kings. This is not possible in the case of the earlier punch-marked coins which cannot be assigned with

certainty to any dynasty. Out of the 42 Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek kings, as many as 34 are known only through their coins.

- The Indo-Greeks were the first to issue gold coins in India. Their coins had bilingual inscriptions in Greek and Kharosthi and followed an Indian weight standard. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

Q 10.A

- **Money mule**
 - **Context:** The Reserve Bank of India has warned banks about mule accounts and urged them to strengthen their security measures to curb digital fraud.
 - A money mule is someone who receives and moves money that came from victims of fraud. **Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**
 - A person may become a money mule intentionally or unintentionally and receive illegally acquired funds and help in its transfer to others.
 - The Money mules are frequently innocent individuals who are drawn into the plan by a variety of tactics, such as job offers, online classified ads, or social media postings.
 - **Financial Frauds:** Money Mule Actions are commonly associated with various types of financial crimes, such as money laundering, fraud, and cybercrime.
 - **Types of Money Mules:** The FBI categorizes money mules into 3 categories based on their goals and degree of involvement:
 - ✓ Unknowing/unwitting money mules
 - ✓ Witting money mules
 - ✓ Complicit money mules
 - **Process:**
 - ✓ Fraudsters contact customers via e-mails, chat rooms, job websites, or blogs and convince them to receive money into their bank accounts, in exchange for attractive commissions.
 - ✓ The fraudsters then transfer the illegal money into the money mule's account.
 - ✓ The money mule is then directed to transfer the money to another money mule's account starting a chain that ultimately results in the money getting transferred to the fraudster's account.
 - ✓ When such frauds are reported, the money mule becomes the target of police investigations.
 - **Mule Accounts:**
 - ✓ It is a bank account used to receive/transfer funds acquired illegally on behalf of others.
 - ✓ These accounts are often used for money laundering and tax evasion.
 - ✓ Mule accounts violate several rules and individuals involved in it can be prosecuted under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

Q 11.A

- **Vishnupad Temple and Mahabodhi Temple**
 - **Context:** The Finance Minister announced in the recent Union Budget Speech that corridor projects will be built for the Vishnupad Temple and the Mahabodhi Temple.
 - **Vishnupad Temple:**
 - ✓ Dedicated to Lord Vishnu and is located in Gaya, Bihar.
 - ✓ Built by Queen Ahilyabai Holkar in 1787 on the banks of the Phalgu River. **Hence statement 1 is correct & statement 2 is not correct.**
 - ✓ The temple is around 100 feet tall and has 44 pillars.
 - ✓ Contains Dharmasila, a footprint of Lord Vishnu etched into a slab of basalt.
 - ✓ Constructed using large grey granite stones joined with iron clamps.
 - **Mahabodhi Temple:**
 - ✓ One of the four sacred sites associated with the life of Lord Buddha.
 - ✓ Significant as the location where Buddha attained Enlightenment.
 - ✓ Located in Bodh Gaya, Bihar, on the banks of the Niranjana River.
 - ✓ Built by Emperor Ashoka in the 3rd century B.C.
 - ✓ Recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site.
 - ✓ Completely constructed in brick, influenced brick architecture development over the centuries.

Q 12.C

- **Sankara's philosophy is called advaitavada or the doctrine on non-dualism.**
 - According to Sankara, God and the created world are the one: the differences were apparent but not real, and aroused due to ignorance, maya being a part of it.

- ✓ **The way to salvation was devotion to God, strengthened by the knowledge that God and the created beings were one and the same. This philosophy is called Vedanta.** Thus, Sankara upheld Vedas as the fountainhead of true knowledge. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The path of knowledge put forward by Sankara could be followed by only a few. Sankara did not reject the path of bhakti by which the devotee merged with the God. But for this, the heart had to be cleaned through Janana or knowledge. It could not, thus, influence the masses.
- The acharyas from Nathamuni were all orthodox Brahmins, and had argued that the path of bhakti was open only to the three upper castes, and that for the purpose dutifully, following rituals prescribed by Brahmins, and the study of scriptures was necessary.
- In the 11th century, another famous acharya, Ramanuja, tried to assimilate bhakti to the tradition of the Vedas.
 - **He argued that in order to attain salvation, grace of God was more important than knowledge about him, Ramanuja emphasized that the path of prapatti or total reliance on, or surrendered to God was open to all, including the Shudras and the Dalits.** Thus, Ramanuja tried to build a bridge between the popular movement based on bhakti, and the upper cast movement based on the Vedas. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

Q 13.C

- Making objects out of clay has been one of the earliest crafts begun by man. The **earliest evidence has been found in the Neolithic site of Mehrgarh, now situated in Pakistan.**
- **In ancient India, potteries made of red ware and painted grey ware was in vogue especially during the later Vedic period. Dishes and bowls were made with these materials for meals. 'Jhuker pottery', is a famous clay art which was developed during the Harappan civilization and gained popularity during the Vedic and the later Vedic period. The northern black ware developed a little later, is made of a fine fabric and is glossy in appearance.**
- Currently, every part of India specializes in a particular type of clay work. Some of these are the following:
 - **Blue Pottery:** A unique pottery craft from Jaipur, Rajasthan. It has received GI Tag.
 - ✓ It is **made from a unique blend of quartz stone powder, powdered glass, Multani mitti, and borax, without any clay**
 - ✓ **Characterized by its distinctive blue color derived from cobalt oxide and intricate floral, geometric, and animal motifs created using techniques like hand painting and block printing.**
 - ✓ Blue pottery is typically fired at lower temperatures compared to other types of pottery, giving it a delicate and semi-transparent appearance.
 - **Surai Pottery:** Surai pottery, originating from West Bengal, is characterized by its unique construction method where four pieces are joined together to form a jug, rather than being wheel-thrown, and is often noted for its red polished finish.
 - **Kangra Pottery:** In Kangra the articles are basically made and colored in black and red. The products made are majorly for domestic use. The famous item called Kawradu and Dhialu are the small pots produced to set curd. The work is done in Himachal Pradesh is seasonal, in winter they work from November to January and in summer they work from May to July. The pottery work is believed to be sacred work and is worshiped at festive season like Diwali where the potter's wheel is decorated with a paste made from rice flour and pooja is performed with offerings.
 - **Khurja Pottery:** Khurja pottery is traditional Indian pottery work manufactured in Khurja of the Bulandshahr district in Uttar Pradesh state, India. Khurja pottery has been protected under the Geographical indication (GI) of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement. It is known for its vibrant colors, intricate designs, and utility as tableware and decorative items.
- **Hence option (c) is the correct answer.**

Q 14.A

- Evidence on the origin and antecedents of the Gupta dynasty is limited. The Gupta king seems to have risen from a modest origin, possibly Vaishyas. The kingship was hereditary, but royal power was limited by the absence of a firm practice of primogeniture. The throne did not always go to the eldest son. For example, Chandragupta II came to power after a secession struggle with his brother Rama Gupta.
- The judicial system was far more developed under Guptas than in earlier times. Several law books were compiled in this period. For the first time, civil and criminal laws were clearly demarcated. Like earlier times, many laws continued to be based on differences in Varanasi. The king tried cases with the help of a

Brahmana priest. However, the guilds of artisans, merchants, and others were governed by their own laws. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

- **The Gupta organized a system of provincial and local administration. The empire was divided into divisions [Bhuktis], headed by Uparika.** The Bhuktis were divided into districts [vishyas] placed under Vishyapati. However, the major part of the empire was held by feudatory chiefs. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- Since much of the imperial administration was managed by feudatories and beneficiaries, the Gupta rulers did not require as many officials as the Mauryas did. They did not require too many officers because, unlike the Mauryan state, the Gupta state did not regulate economic activities on any big scale. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**

Q 15.C

- **Rapid Apophis Mission for Space Safety (RAMSES)**
 - **Context:** The European Space Agency (ESA) will launch a mission to study the Apophis asteroid during its close pass by Earth in 2029.
 - **Agency:** European Space Agency (ESA). **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - **Objective:** Study the Apophis asteroid during its close pass by Earth in 2029
 - **Purpose:** Enhance understanding and preparedness for potential asteroid impacts
 - **Mission Details:**
 - **Launch Date:** April 2028
 - **Arrival at Apophis:** February 2029 (2 months before the close approach). **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - **Activities:**
 - ✓ Rendezvous with Apophis before it passes Earth
 - ✓ Observe the asteroid during the flyby
 - ✓ Track Apophis with high precision to refine its orbital parameters
 - ✓ Investigate physical properties such as size, shape, rotation, and surface composition
 - **Significance:**
 - ✓ Improve ability to mitigate risks associated with near-Earth objects (NEOs)
 - ✓ Assess any potential threat Apophis may pose
 - **About Apophis:**
 - ✓ **Name:** Asteroid 99942 Apophis
 - ✓ **Size:** Approximately 1,100 feet (340 meters) across
 - ✓ **Named After:** The demon serpent in Egyptian mythology
 - ✓ **Identification:** Recognized in 2004 as one of the most hazardous asteroids that could impact Earth

Q 16.B

- Large mosques, spanning huge spaces, also dotted the landscape of the Indian sub-continent in medieval times.
- Congregational prayers were held here every Friday afternoon which required the presence of a minimum of forty Muslim male adults.
- At the time of prayers (on Fridays) a was read out in the name of the ruler and his laws for the realm were also read out. **In medieval times, a city had one Jama Masjid, which along with its immediate surroundings became the focus of the lives of the people, both Muslim and non-Muslim.**
- Generally, such a mosque was large with an open courtyard, surrounded on three sides by cloisters and the Qibla Liwan in the west. It was here that the mihrab and the mimbar for the Imam were located. People faced the mihrab while offering prayers as it indicated the direction of the Kaaba in Mecca.
- **Mihrab:** Prayer niche indicating the direction of Mecca. **Hence pair 1 is not correctly matched.**
- **Minbar:** Stepped pulpit in the Jama Masjid or Friday mosque from where the Khutba was read. **Hence pair 3 is not correctly matched.**
- **Qibla Liwan:** The wall of the mosque in the direction of Mecca. **Hence pair 2 is correctly matched.**

Q 17.B

- Lakhudiyar and Bhimbetka paintings can be distinguished in terms of themes, artistic techniques, and color usage:
 - **Themes and Subject Matter:**
 - ✓ **Lakhudiyar:** The paintings at Lakhudiyar primarily depict **geometric patterns and simple stick-like human figures**. The subject matter often includes man, animals, and various geometric designs.

- ✓ **Bhimbetka:** The paintings at Bhimbetka display a **much broader range of scenes, including hunting, dancing, music, animal fighting, and various household activities.** These scenes are more complex and dynamic compared to the simpler forms found at Lakhudiyar.
- ✓ **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**
- **Artistic Techniques:**
 - ✓ **Lakhudiyar:** The paintings are characterized by the use of basic shapes and lines to create stick-like figures and geometric patterns. This simplicity reflects the early artistic expression in the region.
 - ✓ **Bhimbetka:** The artistic techniques at Bhimbetka are more advanced, showing a progression in the depiction of human and animal figures with more detail and dynamism. The scenes are often layered, indicating multiple phases of painting over time.
 - ✓ **Neither Lakhudiyar nor Bhimbetka paintings specifically focus on Hindu or Buddhist themes; they depict scenes from daily life, animals, and geometric patterns. Hence option (c) is not correct.**
- **Color Usage:**
 - ✓ **Lakhudiyar:** The paintings use a **limited color palette**, mainly comprising white, black, and red ochre. These colors are applied in a straightforward manner to create the simple figures and patterns. **Hence option (d) is not correct.**
 - ✓ **Bhimbetka:** The Bhimbetka paintings exhibit a wide range of colors, including white, yellow, red ochre, purple, brown, green, and black. This diverse palette contributes to the vivid and varied scenes depicted in the rock shelters.
 - ✓ Both Lakhudiyar and Bhimbetka paintings use **natural dyes, not synthetic colors. Hence option (a) is not correct.**



Hand-linked dancing figures, Lakhudiyar, Uttarakhand



Wavy lines, Lakhudiyar, Uttarakhand



Painting showing a man being hunted by a beast, Bhimbetka

Q 18.A

- **Karma and Samsara**

- Karma is a Sanskrit word whose literal meaning is 'action'. It refers to the law that every action has an equal reaction either immediately or at some point in the future.
- Good or virtuous actions, actions in harmony with dharma, will have good reactions or responses and bad actions, actions against dharma, will have the opposite effect.

- In Hinduism karma operates not only in this lifetime but across lifetimes: the results of an action might only be experienced after the present life in a new life.
- Hindus believe that human beings can create good or bad consequences for their actions and might reap the rewards of action in this life, in a future human rebirth or reap the rewards of action in a heavenly or hell realm in which the self is reborn for a period of time.
- **Samsara:**
 - **This process of reincarnation is called *samsara*, a continuous cycle in which the soul is reborn over and over again according to the law of action and reaction. Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**
 - At death many Hindus believe the soul is carried by a subtle body into a new physical body which can be a human or non-human form (an animal or divine being). The goal of liberation (*moksha*) is to make us free from this cycle of action and reaction, and from rebirth.

Q 19.D

- The title "Devaputra" meaning "son of god" was not used by the Mauryan kings. This title is more closely associated with the Kushan dynasty, particularly with the Kushan emperor Kanishka. The Mauryan rulers, such as Chandragupta Maurya, Bindusara, and Ashoka, did not use this title. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- The Mauryan administrative system did not assign land revenue as a form of salary to officials. Instead, officials were paid salaries from the central treasury. The Mauryan economy was monetized to an extent, and officials received their compensation in cash rather than kind or land revenue. This practice of paying officials in cash helps in maintaining control over the administration and avoids the feudalization of power. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- While Ashoka, one of the Mauryan Empire's most famous rulers, is known for his promotion of non-violence (Ahimsa) after the Kalinga War, it is not accurate to say that capital punishment was prohibited during the Mauryan administration for all severe crimes. The Arthashastra lays out the judicial system in detail with references to dharmasthas (judges) and pradeshtis (officers responsible for the suppression of criminals). Punishments for offences and crimes ranged from fines to mutilation of limbs, or even capital punishment. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**

Q 20.C

- **Bimetallic NiFe systems**
 - **Context:** A new study claims that a bimetallic Nickel-Iron layered double hydroxide system is the most efficient for oxygen production through water splitting. **Hence option (c) is the correct answer.**
 - **Research by:** The Institute of Advanced Study in Science and Technology (IASST).
 - **Nodal Agency:** Department of Science and Technology (DST)
 - **Finding:**
 - ✓ A bimetallic Nickel-Iron layered double hydroxide system efficiently produces O₂ through water splitting.
 - ✓ It eliminates the need for trimetallic solutions to enhance productivity.
 - **Note:** Water splitting is a sustainable and eco-friendly method to generate green and pure H₂ and O₂ on a large scale without harming flora and fauna.

Q 21.C

- **The Satavahana dynasty ruled a large part of central and southern India from approximately the 1st century BCE to the 3rd century CE.** The prominent Satavahana ruler Gautamiputra Satakarni defeated the Sakas and destroyed the Kshaharata lineages of Nahapana.
- They did not issue gold coins as they may have used gold as bullion. They issued mostly coins of lead. They were also the first rulers to make land grants to Brahmanas. The Satavahana retained some of the administrative units found in Ashokan time. Their district was called Ahara and officials were known as Amatyas and Mahamatyas.
- They appointed Senapati as provincial governor. The administration in the rural areas was placed in the hands of Gaulmika, the head of a military regiment. Therefore, the head of the army platoon was posted in the countryside to maintain peace and order.
- **The military character of the Satavahana rule is also evident from the common use of such terms as Kataka and Skandhavaras in their inscriptions. These were military camps and settlements which served as administrative centers so long as the king was there. Hence option (c) is the correct answer.**

Q 22.D

- **Skill Loan Scheme**
 - **Context:** The Union government has announced a new centrally-sponsored scheme for skilling the youth in the Union Budget 2024-25.
 - ✓ It is an institutional credit scheme for students who want to take courses in skill development aligned with National Occupations Standards and Qualification Packs.
 - **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Finance. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
 - **Duration of Course:** No minimum duration
 - **Quantum of Finance**
 - **Minimum loan amount:** Rs.5000
 - **Maximum loan amount:** Rs.1.5 lakh
 - **Eligibility Criteria:** Individuals who are eligible for the Skill Loan Scheme should have secured admission to a course that is conducted by any one of the following institutions:
 - ✓ Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs)
 - ✓ Polytechnics
 - ✓ Schools recognized by the State or Central Board of Education
 - ✓ Colleges affiliated with a recognized university
 - ✓ Training partners affiliated with the Sector Skill Councils, National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), State Skill Mission, or State Skill Corporation
 - **Repayment Period**
 - ✓ Loans up to Rs. 50,000 - Up to 3 years. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
 - ✓ Loans between Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 1 lakh - Up to 5 years.
 - ✓ Loans above Rs. 1 lakh - Up to 7 years.
 - **Collateral:** None.
 - **Recent Notification:** The Model Skill Loan Scheme will be revised to facilitate loans up to Rs.7.5 lakh with a guarantee from a government-promoted Fund. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**

Q 23.A

- **Rabatak inscription** – it is discovered in Rabatak in Baghlan province of Afghanistan. It was written in Bactrian language and Greek script, providing a valuable record belonging to Kanishka's reign. It describes Kanishka as the great deliverer, the righteous, the just, the autocrat, the god, one who is worthy of worship, who has obtained kingship from Nana [a West Asian goddess] and all the gods. The inscription throws an important light on Kushana's genealogy. The inscription also clearly indicates that Vima Khadphises and Kanishka were father and son. **Hence pair 1 is not correctly matched.**
- **Hathigumpha inscription** – it is found in the Udayagiri Hills near Bhubaneswar in Odisha. The inscription provides valuable insights into the life and achievements of King Kharvela, a ruler of the Kalinga dynasty. The inscription mentions that King Kharvela was an ardent follower of Jainism. This inscription refers to King Kharvela retrieving an image of a Jina. This is the earliest epigraphic reference to image worship in Jainism. **Hence pair 2 is correctly matched.**
- **Pugalur inscription** – it is a notable ancient Tamil-Brahmi inscription found in the Pugalur area of the Karur district in Tamil Nadu. This inscription provides a genealogy of the Chera Kings. **Hence pair 3 is not correctly matched.**
- **Mangulam inscription** – It is a Tamil-Brahmi inscription. It provides evidence of the Pandyan King Neduchezhiyan of the 2nd century BCE.
- **Naneghat inscription** – this inscription is in the Prakrit language and found near Junnar town of Pune. It gives information about the origin of Satvahana rule and the pattern of governance and power of the 3rd Satvahana King Satkarani I as well as his performance of various sacrifices.
- **Junagarh inscription** – this inscription is found near Girnar Hills of Gujarat. It is believed to be the first such long inscription in the Sanskrit language. It provides information about King Rudramana I, Ashoka, and Skandagupta. It talks about the restoration works of a reservoir known as Sudarshana Lake.

Q 24.D

- **Parallel Cinema,**
 - Parallel Cinema, often referred to as the Indian New Wave, is a film movement that emerged in India in the late 1940s as a counterpoint to the mainstream, commercial film industry. **This movement was characterized by its focus on realistic narratives, often addressing pressing social issues such as poverty, caste discrimination, and the human condition. Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**
 - Unlike the formulaic and entertainment-driven approach of Bollywood, Parallel Cinema prioritized artistic expression, character-driven stories, and a critical view of society.

- Satyajit Ray the Indian director is often associated with the “parallel cinema” movement.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Realistic Narratives:** Parallel Cinema is rooted in the depiction of real-life situations and societal challenges. The stories are often based on the everyday lives of common people, highlighting their struggles and aspirations.
 - **Social Issues:** The movement brought to light various social issues such as poverty, inequality, corruption, and exploitation. These films served as a mirror to the society, reflecting its flaws and urging for change.
 - **Minimalist Approach:** In contrast to the grandeur of mainstream Bollywood, Parallel Cinema often employed a minimalist approach, both in terms of production design and narrative style. The focus was more on the depth of content rather than on visual spectacle.

Q 25.C

- **Sarnath School of Sculpture emerged in Sarnath, near Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, during the Gupta period (4th to 6th centuries CE).**
 - **characteristics:**
 - ✓ **Exhibited a refined, elegant, and smooth style with delicate facial expressions and sensuous body forms. It lacked any form of nakedness.**
 - ✓ The Buddha was often depicted in the dhyana (meditation) mudra, dharmachakra pravartana (turning the wheel of law) mudra, and abhaya (protection) mudra. **The halo around the head of Buddha was intricately decorated.**
 - ✓ Emphasized spiritual calmness and serenity, with simplified and subtle ornamentation.
 - **It was characterized by the use of cream-colored sandstone and the use of metal.**
 - Example: Sultanganj Buddha (7.5 ft high) in Bihar. It is a copper sculpture
- **Hence option (c) is the correct answer.**

Q 26.C

- The early medieval period was also marked by many social and economic changes. Socially, an important phenomenon of this period was the proliferation or increase in the number of castes.
- The number of land grants increased, new areas were brought under cultivation. It made local tribal people leave hunting as their main profession and take up agriculture. They were then transformed into peasants, and assimilated in society as sudras. The land grants in fact resulted in movement and migration of Brahmanas to different internal areas where they were able to introduce and enforce their brahmanical social values.
- **The land grants also led to the increase in the number of Kayastha class. The Kayasthas were basically scribes and they specialized in drafting and writing land grant documents. Naturally, with increase in the number of land grants their importance also increased. Hence, option (c) is the correct answer.**

Q 27.B

- The Harappan civilization, also known as the Indus Valley Civilization, had several major urban centers located along various rivers.
 - **Chanhudaro:** It was excavated by NG Majumdar. **It is located in Sindh, Pakistan, on the banks of the Indus River.** Excavated items from this site include bronze statues of bullock carts and ekkas as well as a small jar that appears to be a ink well. Bead-making factory, the use of lipstick was found. It is the Harappan site without a citadel located along the Indus River. **Hence, pair 1 is correctly matched.**
 - **Kalibangan:** **Located on the banks of the Ghaggar River** (excavation by BB Lal in 1961). There has been evidence of a ploughed field, a wooden furrow, seven fire altars, camel bones, and two different kinds of burials (rectangular and circular graves). Baked/burnt bangles, fire altars, small circular pits containing large urns and accompanied by pottery, bones of camel have also been found. **Hence, pair 2 is correctly matched.**
 - **Banawali:** **Situated on the banks of the now-dry Saraswati River (also part of the Ghaggar-Hakra River system) in present-day Haryana, India.** Excavated in 1973 by RS Bisht. This area contains evidence of both pre-Harappan and Harappan culture as well. High-quality barley, terracotta figure of plough have been found. **Hence, pair 3 is not correctly matched.**
 - **Dholavira:** was Excavated in 1967–1968 by JP Joshi. **Located in the Gujarati district of Kachchh on the banks of the Luni River.** Here, traces of a stadium, a special water management system, and the Harappan inscription have been found. A figure of chariot tied to a pair of bullocks and driven by a

nude human, Water harvesting and a number of reservoirs, use of rocks for constructions, wooden "signboard" with Indus characters is found in a gatehouse.

Q 28.D

- **Kindlins**
 - A recent study on Kindlins has identified new and significant pathways for cancer treatment. **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**
 - Kindlins are a family of proteins involved in various cellular processes such as cell adhesion, migration, and signaling.
 - There are three members in the Kindlin family: Kindlin-1, Kindlin-2, and Kindlin-3.
 - **Functions of Kindlins:**
 - ✓ Interact with the cytoplasmic tails of integrins to activate them and enhance their binding to extracellular matrix (ECM) proteins.
 - ✓ Influence cell adhesion to the ECM and subsequent cell migration, which are essential for wound healing and immune responses.
 - ✓ Participate in signaling pathways that control cell survival, proliferation, and differentiation.

Q 29.B

- **The Gurjara- Pratihara dynasty-**
 - It was founded by Nagabhata I in the region of Malwa in the eighth century. He belonged to a Rajput clan.
 - Later one of his successors, **Vatsaraja extended his rule over to a large part of North India and made Kannauj in western Uttara Pradesh his capital. Vatsaraja's policy of expansion brought him in conflict with Dharamapala, the Pala King of Bengal and Bihar. Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**
 - Soon, the Rashtrakuta king Dhruva from south India jumped into the fight. And thus began what is known as 'Tripartite Struggle' i.e struggle among three powers. It continued for about the next hundred and fifty years under various succeeding kings with ups and downs.
 - The Gurjara-Pratiharas, however, could continue to maintain their hold over Kannauj till the last.

Q 30.C

- **Hindustani Classical Music**
 - **Historical Background**
 - ✓ Hindustani classical music can be traced back to the period of the Delhi Sultanate and Amir Khusrau (AD 1253-1325).
 - ✓ Amir Khusrau is credited with the invention of the sitar and tabla and the introduction of new ragas.
 - ✓ Most Hindustani musicians trace their lineage to Tansen, a legendary figure whose music had magical effects.
 - **Styles of Hindustani Music**
 - ✓ **Dhrupad**
 - ✓ **Dhamar**
 - ✓ **Thumri**
 - ✓ **Khayal**
 - ✓ **Tappa**
 - **Notable Musicians**
 - ✓ **Tansen:** Known for his magical musical abilities.
 - ✓ **Baiju Bawra**
 - ✓ **Surdas**
 - **Popular Ragas**
 - ✓ **Sindhu Bhairavi:**
 - Identified as a popular raga in Hindustani classical music.
 - Originates from the Bhairavi Thaata.
 - Often performed in light classical genres such as thumri, dadra, and bhajan.
 - Evokes a devotional and serene mood. **Hence option 1 is correct.**
 - ✓ **Todi:**
 - A prominent raga in Hindustani classical music.
 - Belongs to the Todi Thaata.
 - Known for its serious and meditative mood.

- Typically performed in the late morning. **Hence option 2 is correct.**
- ✓ **Khambaj (Khamaj):**
 - A well-known raga in Hindustani classical music.
 - Belongs to the Khamaj Thaata.
 - Extensively used in light classical music like thumri, dadra, and ghazals.
 - Conveys a romantic and delicate mood.
 - Typically performed at night. **Hence option 3 is correct.**
- ✓ **Other Important Ragas:** Bahar; Bhairavi; Bhim Palasi; Darbari; Desh Jai Jayanti; Megha Malhar; Yaman; Pilu; Shyam Kalyan.
- **Musical Instruments**
 - ✓ **Stringed Instruments:** Sitar, Sarod, Santoor, Sarangi
 - ✓ **Percussion Instruments:** Pakhawaj, Tabla, Mridangam
 - ✓ **Wind Instruments:** Flute, Shehnai, Nadaswaram
- **Gharanas in Hindustani Music**
 - ✓ Gharanas represent hereditary lineages of musicians distinguished by their unique styles.
 - ✓ **Famous Gharanas:**
 - **Gwalior Gharana**
 - **Kirana Gharana**
 - **Jaipur Gharana**

Q 31.D

- The last three centuries before the common era and the first three centuries of the common era are widely accepted as the Sangam period. The Chera, the Chola, and the Pandyas controlled major agrarian territories, trade routes, and towns in the deep south region.
- According to the thinai concept, widely mentioned in Sangam poems, the landscape was divided into five eco-regions namely Kurinji, Mullai, Marutham, Neytal, and Palai.
 - Kurinji - hilly region for hunting and gathering.
 - Mullai - forested region for shifting cultivation and pastoralism.
 - Marutham – Riverine tract for agriculture using plough and irrigation.
 - Neytal - Coastal land for fishing and short making.
 - Palai – parched land unsuitable for cultivation
- In a way, this thinai classification is said to reflect the uneven socio-economic development of the different localities. This is also seen in political forms as well. Three levels of rulers are found – Kizhar, velir, and Vendar.
 - **Kizhar were the heads of the village or a small territory, later known as Nadu.** They were the chief of tribal communities living in specific areas.
 - **The Vendar were kings controlling large, fertile territories.**
 - **The Velir controlled a territory of varied geographical nature, mainly hilly and forest areas.**
 - **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**
- The administrative units during the Sangam age were well-defined and organized. The kingdom was divided into Mandalam [Territory], Nadu [Province], Ur [Town], Perur [Big Village] and Sirur [Small Village].
- Terms related to taxes were karai [land tax], ulgu [custom duties], iravu [forced gift], irai [tribute paid by feudatories], and variyar [tax collector].

Q 32.A

- **Project PARI (Public Art of India)**
 - **Context:** Recently, the Ministry of Culture launched Project PARI at the 46th Session of the World Heritage Committee Meeting in Delhi.
 - **Aim:** It seeks to bring forth public art that draws inspiration from millennia of artistic heritage (lok kala/lok sanskriti) while incorporating modern themes and techniques. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Culture.
 - **Executed by:** The Lalit Kala Akademi and the National Gallery of Modern Art. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
 - ✓ The first intervention under Project PARI is taking place in Delhi.
 - ✓ The project aims to provide a platform to uplift the aesthetic and cultural outlook of Delhi while adding grandeur to the rich historical legacy of our national capital.
 - ✓ The artworks and sculptures draw inspiration from World Heritage Sites such as Bhimbetka and the 7 natural World Heritage Sites in India find a special place in the proposed artworks.

- ✓ Traditional art forms as well as sculptures, murals, and installations have been created under this beautification project.

Q 33.C

- **Understanding Reality:**
 - **The doctrine of Anekantavada is a core principle of Jain philosophy. Hence option (c) is the correct answer.**
 - Anekantavada asserts that reality is one and the same for all. However, the experience and understanding of this reality can differ based on individual perspectives, contexts, and viewpoints.
 - This philosophy suggests that all perspectives are partially true, and they collectively contribute to a fuller understanding of reality.
- **Illustration:**
 - A common example used to illustrate Anekantavada is the parable of the blind men and an elephant. Each man touches a different part of the elephant and describes it based on their limited experience, leading to differing conclusions. Although each description is partially correct, none of them fully capture the entire reality of the elephant.
 - **This parable emphasizes that while reality is consistent, our interpretations and experiences of it can vary.**
- **Other Philosophies:**
 - **Advaita Vedanta** emphasizes non-dualism, where the individual self (Atman) and the ultimate reality (Brahman) are one and the same, but it does not emphasize varied experiences of reality.
 - **Samkhya** is dualistic and focuses on the separation of Purusha (consciousness) and Prakriti (matter), with less emphasis on subjective experiences.
 - **Nyaya** is a logical and analytical school of philosophy, focusing on reasoning and epistemology, rather than subjective experiences of reality.

Q 34.B

- **Equity mutual funds**
 - **Context:** According to the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI), inflows into India's equity mutual funds hit a record high.
 - **About:** Equity mutual funds are investment vehicles that pool money from multiple investors to invest primarily in stocks or equity securities of publicly traded companies.
 - **Objective:** Equity mutual funds aim to provide capital appreciation over the long term by investing in stocks that are expected **to grow in value**.
 - **Features of an Equity Mutual Fund**
 - ✓ **Returns:** Equity mutual funds focus on stocks, offering potentially high returns compared to other types of mutual funds due to their concentration on equities. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
 - ✓ **Tax Benefits:** The investor can gain tax benefits with the investments in these funds.
 - ✓ **Risk:** The risk factor of equity funds is high. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - ✓ **Expense Ratio:** These funds also tend to have a higher expense ratio than their counterparts, given the requirement of constant management.

Q 35.D

- **Down syndrome**
 - **Context:** A recent research study has discovered the first Case of Down Syndrome in Neanderthals.
 - ✓ It is a genetic disorder caused when abnormal cell division results in an extra full or partial copy of chromosome 21. **Hence statement II is correct.**
 - ✓ Human cells normally contain 23 pairs of chromosomes, One chromosome in each pair comes from the father and mother.
 - **Causes:**
 - ✓ Down syndrome typically occurs spontaneously during fetal development due to errors in cell division, rather than being inherited. **Hence statement I is not correct.**
 - ✓ This can impact the development of the brain and body and is usually associated with developmental delays, mild to moderate intellectual disability, and characteristic physical features.
 - **Symptoms:** At birth, babies with Down syndrome usually have certain characteristic signs, including:
 - ✓ flat facial features
 - ✓ small head and ears

- ✓ short neck
- ✓ bulging tongue
- ✓ eyes that slant upward
- ✓ atypically shaped ears
- ✓ poor muscle tone

Q 36.A

- **Indian Gaur**
 - **Context:** Indian gaur makes a sudden appearance in Andhra Pradesh's Nallamala forest after decades.
 - **Diet:** Herbivore, primarily grazing on grasses, leaves, and fruits.
 - **Distribution:**
 - ✓ The Gaur also called Indian Bison, is the largest extant bovine, native to South Asia and Southeast Asia.
 - ✓ It is prevalent in the Western Ghats and is also found in northeast India Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh.
 - **Habitat:** They are largely confined to evergreen forests or semi-evergreen and moist deciduous forests, but also occur in deciduous forest areas at the periphery of their range. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
 - **Population diversity:** Mainland South and Southeast Asia, including Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Peninsular Malaysia, Myanmar, India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China and Nepal.
 - **Threat:** Gaur is highly threatened by poaching for trade to supply international markets.
 - **Conservation Status**
 - ✓ **IUCN Red List:** Vulnerable
 - ✓ **CITES:** Appendix I.
 - ✓ **Wild Life Protection Act, 1972:** Schedule I. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

Q 37.C

- The term Nayak is used from thirteenth century onwards in Telugu and Kannada areas in the sense of a military leader or simply soldier.
 - Assigning the revenue of a particular locality to the Nayak for their military service is found in the Kakatiya kingdom during the thirteenth century.
 - **This is similar to the iqta system practiced by the Delhi Sultanate at that time. Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
 - **One of the important characteristics of the Vijayanagar administration was the amara-nayaka system.**
 - ✓ In this system, the commander of the Vijayanagar army was called the nayaka. Each nayaka was given an area for administration.
 - ✓ **The nayaka was responsible for expanding agricultural activities in his area. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
 - ✓ He collected taxes in his area and with this income maintained his army, horses, elephants and weapons of warfare that he had to supply to the raya or the Vijayanagar ruler.
 - ✓ The nayaka was also the commander of the forts.
 - ✓ **Some of the revenue was also used for the maintenance of temples and irrigation works.**
 - ✓ The amara-nayakas sent tribute to the king annually and personally appeared in the royal court with gifts to express their loyalty.
 - ✓ In the seventeenth century, several of these nayakas became independent and established separate states. The feudal Nayankaras used to maintain their own soldiers, forces and elephants. They were a powerful section that challenged the Vijayanagar authority, weakened its internal structures and contributed to the defeat of the Vijayanagar in the battle of Talikota.
 - ✓ The practice became established during the reign of Krishnadevaraya and Achyuta Devaraya.
 - ✓ Most of these Nayak were the Kannadiga and Telugu warriors besides some local chiefs.
 - ✓ **They belonged to different castes, Brahmana as well as non-Brahmana.** The non-Brahmana Nayak again had different social backgrounds: traditional warrior groups, pastoral and forest clans (Yadava, Billama), peasant families (Reddi), merchants (Balija) and so on. Some of the prominent Nayak, like Chellappa under Krishnadevaraya, were brahmanas. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

Q 38.C

- Of all the Delhi rulers, Alauddin Khalji had the largest army. The strength of his army is placed at 3,00,000 by Barani which appears to be an exaggeration.
- **He was also the first sultan who paid his soldiers fully in cash.** Earlier, the Turkish soldiers had been assigned a number of villages in the doab for the payment of their salaries. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- **He introduced the branding system (dagh) of the horses so that the soldiers may not bring horses of poor quality to the muster.** A descriptive role of each soldier was also maintained. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- For contemporaries, Alauddin's measures to control the markets was one of the great wonders of the world. He sought to fix the cost of all commodities from foodgrains, sugar and cooking oil to a needle, and from costly imported cloth to horses, cattle, and slave boys and girls. For the purpose, he set up three markets at Delhi- one market for foodgrains, the second for costly cloth, and the third for horses, slaves and cattle.
- In order to ensure a regular supply of cheap foodgrains, he declared that the land revenue in the doab region, that is, the area extending from Meerut near the Yamuna to the border of Kara near Allahabad would be paid directly to the state, i.e., the villages in the area would not be assigned in iqta to anyone. **Further, the land revenue was raised half of the produce. Hence, statement 4 is not correct.**
- By raising the state demand, and generally obliging the peasants to pay it in cash, the peasants were forced to sell their foodgrains at a low price to banjaras who were to carry them to the towns and to sell them at prices fixed by the state. **To ensure that there was no hoarding, all the banjaras were registered, and their agents and their family were held collectively responsible for any violations.** As a further check, the state itself set up warehouses and stocked them with foodgrains which were released whenever there was a famine or a threat of shortfall in supply. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

Q 39.D

- The Rashtrakutas were originally known to be the feudatories of the Western Chalukyas of Vatapi. Though Rashtrakutas were early rulers, the greatest ruler of the dynasty was Dantidurga. After Dantidurga's death in 758 CE, his uncle (father's brother) Krishna I ascended the throne.
- Krishna I (756–775 CE) defeated the Gangas of Mysore. His eldest son Govinda II succeeded him in 775CE. He defeated the Eastern Chalukyas. He left the affairs of country to his brother Dhruva who eventually crowned himself as the ruler.
- During the reign of Dhruva (780–794 CE), the Rashtrakuta power reached its zenith. Vatsarya, the Pratihara king, and Dharmapala, the Pala ruler, who were contenders for supremacy in the region, were defeated by Dhruva. He nominated his third son Govinda III as the heir-apparent.
- **The accession of Govinda III (794–814 CE) to the throne heralded an era of success like never before. After a successful expedition against Nagabhata of Kannauj and the annexation of Malwa, Govinda III turned to the south. Dantika, the Pallava king, was subdued by Govinda III. Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
- Govinda III was succeeded by his son Amoghavarsha (814–880 CE). **His grandson, Indra III, re-established the empire. After the defeat of Mahipala and the sack of Kannauj in 915.** Indra III was the most powerful rulers of his times. After Amoghavarsha, his successors were able to sustain the vast empire, but the ablest among them was Krishna III (939–968 CE). **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Krishna III was the last great ruler the Rashtrakuta dynasty. He was engaged in a struggle against the Paramaras of Malwa and the eastern Chalukyas of Vengi. He also launched a campaign against the Chola ruler of Tanjore, who had supplanted the Pallavas of Kanchi. **He defeated the Chola king, Parantaka I(949 AD), and annexed the northern part of the Chola empire.** He marched upto Rameshvaram where he built a pillar of victory. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

Q 40.C

- **Some of the new crafts introduced by the Turks under the Delhi Sultanate included the manufacturing of paper.** The art of manufacturing of paper had been discovered by the Chinese in the second century, and it was known in the Arab world in the 8th century which travelled to Europe only during the fourteenth century. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- **The production of textiles also improved by the introduction of the spinning-wheel.** Cotton could be cleaned faster and better by wider use of the cotton carder's bow (dhunia). **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- **Mention may also be made of the introduction of a superior mortar which enabled the Turks to erect magnificent buildings based on the arch and the dome.** **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

Q 41.C

- **Madhubani**
 - **Location:** Bihar
 - **Features:**
 - ✓ Depictions of mythology and folklore, especially episodes from Hindu epics.
 - ✓ Use of natural colors made from plants, flowers, and other natural sources.
 - ✓ Characterized by intricate patterns, but more focused on vibrant color fills than strong, bold outlines.
 - While Madhubani uses natural colors and depicts folklore, it does not emphasize strong, bold outlines with intricate detailing as much. **Hence pair 1 is correctly matched.**
- **Pithora**
 - **Location:** Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh
 - **Features:**
 - Focuses on tribal deities and daily life rather than Hindu epics.
 - Use of natural colors, but mainly on walls of houses.
 - The style is less about intricate detailing and more about symbolic representation.
 - **Conclusion:** Pithora does not typically depict Hindu epics or use palm leaves and does not emphasize intricate detailing. **Hence pair 3 is correctly matched.**
- **Patachitra**
 - **Location:** Odisha and West Bengal
 - **Features:**
 - Strong focus on Hindu epics and local folklore, especially scenes from Ramayana, Mahabharata, and the life of Krishna.
 - Use of natural colors on cloth, palm leaves, and paper.
 - Characterized by strong, bold outlines with intricate detailing. **Hence pair 2 is correctly matched.**

Q 42.B

- **Ralph Fitch** was the first Englishman to **visit Akbar's court**. He visited Akbar's court in 1585 AD. Ralph Fitch was an English merchant and traveler. He traveled to India by land route. According to Ralph Fitch, Agra and Fatehpur Sikri were larger than London, which was then one of the biggest towns in Europe. **Hence option 1 is correct.**
- **Monserate**, the Jesuit priest who **came to Akbar's court**, says that Lahore was second to none of the cities in Europe or Asia. **Hence option 2 is correct.**
- **Francois Bernier** arrived in India in 1658. He worked as a **physician to Mughal prince Dara Shikoh**, the eldest son of the Mughal emperor **Shah Jahan**. After Dara Shikoh's execution, he was attached to the court of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. Bernier says that Delhi was not less than Paris and that Agra was bigger than Delhi. **Hence option 3 is not correct.**

Q 43.C

- **Mihira Bhoja-**
 - The real founder of the Pratihara empire and the greatest ruler of the dynasty was Mihira Bhoja. He rebuilt the empire, and by about AD 836 he had recovered Kannauj which remained the capital of the Pratihara empire for almost a century.
 - Bhoja tried to extend his sway in the east, but he was defeated and checkmated by the Pala ruler, Devapala. He then turned towards central India and the Deccan and Gujarat. This led to a revival of the struggle with the Rashtrakutas.
 - In a sanguinary battle on the bank of Narmada, Bhoja was able to retain his control over considerable parts of Malwa, and some parts of Gujarat. But he could progress no further in the Deccan. Hence, he turned his attention to the north again.
 - **According to an inscription, his territories extended to the western side of the river Sutej. Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
 - After the death of Devapala, Bhoja also extended his empire in the east.
 - **Bhoja was a devotee of Vishnu, and adopted the title of "Adivaraha" which has been found inscribed in some of his coins.**
 - **Amoghavarsha (800 AD - 878 AD) I was an emperor of the Rashtrakuta dynasty, and one of the most notable monarchs of Early Medieval India. His reign of 64 years is one of the longest precisely dated monarchical reigns on record. Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
 - **An Arabian scholar Sulaiman visited during the reign of Mihira Bhoja and highly praised him for keeping his empire safe from robbers. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

Q 44.A

- **Vaccine for Shigella**
 - **Context:** The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has recently found an Indian partner to manufacture the breakthrough vaccine for the Shigella infection. It is not currently a part of the immunization schedule for infants in India. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
 - **Shigella:**
 - ✓ It is an intestinal infection caused by a bacterium that belongs to the enterobacter family. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - ✓ The main sign of shigella infection is diarrhea, which often is bloody.
 - **Symptoms:**
 - ✓ Diarrhea (often containing blood or mucus), Stomach pain or cramps, Fever, Nausea, or vomiting.
 - ✓ Some people have no symptoms after they've been infected with shigella but their feces may still be contagious for up to a few weeks.
 - **Transmission:**
 - ✓ Shigella is very contagious.
 - ✓ People get infected with shigella when they come in contact with and swallow small amounts of bacteria from the stool of a person who is infected with shigella.
 - ✓ Eating or drinking contaminated food or water.
 - ✓ It can also be spread during sexual activity with a sick person.
 - **Vulnerable Age:** Children under age 5 are most likely to get shigella infection, but it can occur at any age.

Q 45.C

- Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar khalji, succeeded in expelling the Sena king, Lakshmana Sena, from Lakhnauti.
- After some confusion, a person called Iwaz who took the title of Ghiyasuddin Sultan began to function as an independent ruler there.
- Taking advantage of Iltutmish's preoccupations in the northwest, he extended his authority over Bihar and exacted tribute from the ruler of **Jajnagar(Orissa), Tirhut (Bihar), Bang (East Bengal) and Kamrup (Assam)**.
- When Iltutmish was free from his preoccupations in 1225, he marched against Iwaz. He submitted at first, then asserted his independence once Iltutmish had turned his back.
- A son of Iltutmish, who was the governor of Awadh defeated and killed Iwaz in the battle. However, affairs continued to be confused till in Iltutmish led a second expedition in 1230.
- After the death of Iltutmish, governors of Bengal sometimes asserted their independence and sometimes submitted to Delhi according to their convenience. During this period Bihar generally remained under the control of Lakhnauti.
- The governors who acted as independent rulers tried, though without much success to bring the areas between Awadh and Bihar under their control, they also attempted to extend their rule over **Radha (South Bengal)**, Orissa and Kamrup (Assam).
- In this conflict, the rulers of Orissa and Assam more than held their own. In 1244, the ruler of Orissa badly defeated the Muslim forces near Lakhnauti. Subsequent efforts of the Muslims against Jajnagar, the capital of Orissa also failed. This showed that the independent Muslim rulers of Lucknow were not strong enough to bring the neighbouring Hindu areas under their control.
- **Hence, option(c) is the correct answer.**

Q 46.C

- **Lahari Bandar, also called Lahori Bandar or Lari Bandar, was a historical port city in southern Sindh. From the early 1300s until the late 1600s, it was the main port in Sindh and one of the main ports in western India.**
- Lahari Bandar was first mentioned in the early 11th century, by **Al-Biruni**.
- The city was also called **Larrybunder by English merchants** in the early modern period. The **Portuguese called it Diul**, after the older port city of **Debal**, and the English also sometimes called it that too.
- **The English explored Lahri Bandar at the mouth of the river Indus** which could draw the produce of Multan and Lahore by transporting goods down the river Indus. However the trade there remained subsidiary to the Gujarat trade.
- **Hence option (c) is the correct answer.**

Q 47.A

- **Salvinia molesta**
 - **Context:** An exotic beetle, *Cyrtobagous salviniae* released into a reservoir in Madhya Pradesh has successfully eradicated an invasive weed species, *Salvinia molesta* recently.
 - **Common name:** Giant salvinia.
 - It is an invasive aquatic fern that floats on the surface of the water. **Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**
 - *Salvinia molesta* is named after Antonio Maria Salvini, an Italian naturalist.
 - It is locally known as “Chinese Jhalaar” which was first spotted in India in 2018 and had completely carpeted the reservoir by 2019.
 - **Appearance:**
 - ✓ *Salvinia molesta* consists of floating leaves and submerged root-like structures.
 - ✓ The floating leaves are oval to oblong, measuring about 2-5 cm in length.
 - **Habitat:** It thrives in slow-moving, nutrient-rich freshwater bodies like ponds, lakes, rivers, and irrigation channels.
 - **Distribution**
 - ✓ **Native Range:** Southeastern Brazil.
 - ✓ **Invasive Range:** It has spread to many parts of the world, including North America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia.

Q 48.B

- Saint or Sant Tukaram was born in 1608 in a village near Poona, Maharashtra.
 - **He was a contemporary of Chhatrapati Shivaji and other Bhakti saints like Eknath and Ramdas.**
 - **After his early life as a trader he started spending his time singing devotional songs in praise of his favourite deity Lord Vithoba of Pandarpur.**
 - **Tukaram believed in a formless God.** According to him, it was not possible to enjoin spiritual joy with worldly activities. He stressed the all-pervasiveness of God.
 - **He rejected Vedic sacrifices, ceremonies, pilgrimages, idol worship, etc.**
 - He also preached the virtue of piety, forgiveness and peace of mind.
 - He spread the message of equality and brotherhood.
 - He tried to foster Hindu-Muslim Unity.
 - **Some of his verses are devoted to this theme. He wrote his abhangas in Marathi.**
- **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**

Q 49.C

- **The Ellora Caves one of the finest examples of rock-cut architecture were declared a World Heritage Site in 1983.**
- **Of the 34 caves, 12 are Buddhist, 17 are Hindu and 5 are Jain. Prominent amongst this series of caves at Ellora are those numbered 10, 15, 16, 21, and 29.**
 - **The intricately carved Cave 10 is popularly known as Vishvakarma (the architect of gods), and contains a huge image of Buddha in front of the stupa. It also features a rock-cut balcony. Hence option 3 is correct.**
 - Cave 15 is a Hindu monument that resembles some of the Buddhist caves in Ellora. It has a huge court that has been made of solid rock. An inscription in the cave traces the genealogy of the Rashtrakutas, who ruled in the region from 600 AD to the 10th century. The exterior of the two-storey cave boasts intricate carvings and the roof has been crowned by figurines of humans and animal.
 - Ellora's Cave 16, known as, **the Kailasanath temple (Cave 16) is the most remarkable of the cave temples at Ellora. It is a massive rock-cut monolithic temple complex named after the mountain in the Himalayas where the Hindu god Shiva resides.** Construction of the temple in the 8th century involved the removal of 150,000 to 200,000 tons of solid rock. **Hence option 1 is correct.**
 - **Cave 21, known as the Rameshwar cave, is adorned with images of Ganga and Yamuna. Hence option 2 is correct.**
 - Ellora's Cave 29, locally famous as Sita ki Nahani, resembles the great cave at Elephanta. It has a number of impressive statues as well.
- **The Dashavatara temple at Deogarh, Uttar Pradesh is dedicated to Vishnu.** It also includes small footprint images of various deities such as Shiva, Parvati, Kartikeya, Brahma, Indra, the river goddesses Ganga and Yamuna, as well as **a panel showing the five Pandavas of the Hindu epic Mahabharata.**

Built in the Gupta Period, the Dashavatara Temple at Deogarh shows the ornate Gupta style architecture. Hence option 4 is not correct.

Q 50.A

- The Imperial style of architecture flourished under the various dynasties that ruled during the period of Delhi Sultanate, i.e. 1206-1526 AD. Each ruler imparted certain flavors of his own, but the broad stylization remained the same.
- **Slave dynasty:** The Slave dynasty or the Ilbari dynasty remained in power from 1206 to 1290 AD. During this period, the style of architecture came to be known as the Mamluk style of architecture. Hence pair 1 is not correctly matched.
 - During this period, most of the constructions were remodellings of the existing Hindu structures. They also started the erection of a number of monuments, Qutub Minar being a prime example.
- **Khilji Dynasty:** They ruled from 1290 AD to 1320 AD and established the Seljuk style of architecture. The constructions of this period were marked by the use of red sandstone. Also, the prominence of Arcuade style began from this period. Mortar began to be used prominently in all construction as a cementing agent. Hence pair 3 is not correctly matched.
 - Examples: Alai Darwaza by Ala-ud-din Khilji, Siri Fort, etc.
- **Tughlaq Dynasty:** It was the period of crisis for architecture during the Delhi Sultanate period. However, some construction works that used grey sandstone were still undertaken. During this period, the focus was more on the strength of the building and so there was less emphasis on decoration. The constructions combined both arch and lintel methods of entrance design. They also introduced a style of construction known as “batter” which was characterized by sloping walls to give more strength to the building. Hence pair 2 is correctly matched.
- **Lodi Dynasty:** Under the Lodi dynasty, architecture continued to take a back seat. Only tombs were commissioned during this period. However, one important feature of architecture during this period was the introduction of double domes. It consisted of a hollow dome inside the top dome.

Q 51.D

- Travelling overland through Central Asia, Ibn Battuta reached Sind in 1333.
- He had heard about **Muhammad bin Tughlaq**, the Sultan of Delhi, and lured by his reputation as a generous patron of arts and letters, set off for Delhi, passing through Multan and Uch.
- The Sultan was impressed by his scholarship, and appointed him the qazi or judge of Delhi. He remained in that position for several years, until he fell out of favour and was thrown into prison.
- Once the misunderstanding between him and the Sultan was cleared, he was restored to imperial service, and was ordered in 1342 to proceed to China as the Sultan’s envoy to the Mongol ruler.
- Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.

Q 52.A

- **Agarwood**
 - **Context:** India successfully prevented agarwood from being included in the CITES Review of Significant Trade (RST).
 - **About Agarwood:**
 - ✓ **Species:** Agarwood comes from the heartwood of the Aquilaria tree.
 - **Habitat and Distribution:**
 - ✓ Typically grows in tropical rainforests up to 1000 meters in elevation.
 - ✓ Found primarily in Southeast Asia, including India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Thailand.
 - **Appearance:**
 - ✓ The tree can grow up to 40 meters tall and has a diameter of up to 60 centimeters.
 - ✓ Features oblong, leathery leaves and produces small, fragrant flowers.
 - **Applications:**
 - ✓ Produces a dark, fragrant resin known as agarwood or "oud."
 - ✓ Used in perfumes, incense, traditional medicines, air fresheners, and purifiers.
 - ✓ The essential oil from agarwood has anti-inflammatory, anti-rheumatic, analgesic, and antioxidant properties.
 - **Conservation Status:**
 - ✓ **IUCN:** Critically Endangered. Hence statement 1 is correct.
 - ✓ **CITES:** Listed under Appendix II.

- The bark of the Sandalwood tree is an ashy white color and the surface has a smooth texture. The leaves and bark of the tree have almost no smell, yet the center of the trunk is very aromatic, whereas Agarwood has no smell until it ages and goes through an aroma-producing process. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**

Q 53.B

- The Harappan seals are among the most distinctive and significant artifacts of the Indus Valley Civilization, dating back to around 2600-1900 BCE. These seals provide valuable insights into the socio-economic, religious, and cultural aspects of one of the world's earliest urban civilizations.
- **The Pashupati seal is one of the most famous artifacts of the Indus Valley Civilization, discovered in the ruins of Mohenjo-daro. It is named after the central figure on the seal, who is often interpreted as a proto-Shiva figure, sometimes referred to as "Pashupati" (lord of animals). The seal is notable for its depiction of various animals around the central figure.**



- This shows a male figure with a buffalo horn headdress seated on a dais with his legs bent double under him, heels together, and toes pointed down. His outstretched arms are adorned with bangles, his hands rest lightly on his knees.
- **He is flanked by four animals—an elephant, rhinoceros, water buffalo, and tiger. Beneath the dais are two antelopes or ibexes.**
- **Hence, options 1, 2, 5, and 6 are correct.**
- **However, the lion and cow are not depicted on the Pashupati seal. Hence, options 3 and 4 are not correct.**
- A striking resemblance between this deity and the Shiva of later Hindu mythology, who is also known as Mahayogi (the great yogi) and Pashupati (lord of the animals) is observed.

Q 54.D

- **New Food Packaging Rules**
 - **Context:** Recently, The FSSAI approved an amendment to the Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2020, concerning nutritional information labeling during its 44th meeting.
 - **New rules on Nutritional information:** It has mandated the display of nutritional information on total sugar, salt, and saturated fat in bold letters and larger font sizes.
 - **Aim of the new rules:** The proposed amendments aim to empower consumers to better understand the nutritional value of the products they consume, promoting healthier decisions.
 - **e-commerce:** FSSAI advised e-commerce sites to remove the term "health drink" and directed food businesses to stop labeling and advertising reconstituted fruit juices as "100% fruit juice."
 - As per Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2020 following details must be included on the package labeled: Quantity, Name or description of the food, Veg/Non-Veg Icon, Nutrition information panel, direction for use and storage, percentage labeling, food allergy information, food recall information, ingredient list, FSSAI No., Date of expiration, country of origin, Quantity of certain ingredient. **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**

Q 55.D

- The Gupta Empire [320-550 CE] is often referred to as the golden age of ancient India due to its significant achievement in various fields including economics, science, art, and literature. The economic situation during the Gupta period was marked by prosperity, trade expansion, and a well-structured taxation system.
- Agriculture flourished in the Gupta period due to the establishment of irrigation work. The Paharpur copper plate inscription indicates that the king was the sole proprietor of the land. Even when he made a land grant, he reserved his prerogatives over it. An officer called Ustapala maintained records of all the land transactions in the district. During the Gupta period, the land was classified as kshetra [cultivable land], Khila [wasteland], Aprahata [jungle], Vasti [habitable land], and Gapata Saraha [pastoral land].
- The Gupta Empire had a well-organized taxation system that contributed to the state's revenue and supported its administrative and military expenditure.
- **The main taxes included:**
 - Bhaga – King's customary share of the produce normally accounting for one-sixth of the produce paid by cultivators.
 - Bhoga – periodic supply of fruits, firewood, flowers, etc. which the village had to provide to the king.
 - **Kara** – A periodic tax levied on the villagers, not a part of the annual land tax.
 - Bali – A voluntary offering by the people to the king but later became compulsory.
 - **Udianga** – A sort of police tax for the maintenance of the police station.
 - **Vata-Bhuta** – Different kinds of cess for maintenance of rites for the winds and the spirits.
 - Halivakara – A plough tax paid by every cultivator owning a plough.
 - Sulka – A royal share of merchandise brought into a town or harbour by merchants, hence it can be equated with the custom or tolls.
 - **Klipta and Upakilpata** – related to sale and purchase of land.

Q 56.C

- **Organization of Trade and Commerce:**
 - Some Indian trading classes specialized in long-distance, inter-regional trade. And some in local, retail trade. The former were called **seth, bohra or modi**, while the latter were called **beoparis or banik**. Hence options 1 and 2 are correct.
 - In addition to retailing goods, the baniks had their agents, in the villages and townships, with whose help they purchased foodgrains and cash crops.
 - A special class of traders, the **banjaras**, specialized in carrying bulk goods. The banjaras used to move long distances, sometimes with thousands of oxen carrying food grains, pulses, ghee, salt, etc. Hence option 3 is correct.

Q 57.B

- **Chandipura virus**
 - **Context:** Recently 6 children have died due to suspected Chandipura virus Infection (CHPV) in Gujarat.
 - Chandipura virus, aka Chandipura vesiculovirus (CHPV), is an RNA virus.
 - It is a non-contagious disease. Hence option (b) is the correct answer.
 - **Virus Family:** Rhabdoviridae family.
 - **First identified:** In 1965 in Chandipura, Maharashtra.
 - **Transmission:**
 - ✓ Chandipura virus is primarily transmitted through the bite of infected sandflies (genus Phlebotomus).
 - ✓ The virus primarily affects children and has been associated with outbreaks of acute encephalitis in India.
 - ✓ It is a serious pathogen with a rapid onset of severe symptoms, primarily affecting children in certain regions.
 - ✓ The virus resides in the salivary gland of these insects and can be transmitted to humans or other vertebrates like domestic animals through bites.
 - **Vector-borne transmission:** The primary mode of transmission is through sandfly bites.
 - **Animal reservoirs:** Certain animal species may act as reservoirs for the virus, though this is still under investigation.
 - **Environmental factors:** Outbreaks have been linked to specific environmental conditions that favor the breeding of sandflies.
 - **Symptoms:** Fever, Headache, Vomiting, Convulsions, Coma.

- **Treatment:** There is no specific antiviral treatment or vaccine for Chandipura virus infection.
- **Prevalence of Disease in India:**
 - ✓ Significant outbreaks of the disease in India were seen in 2003-04 in states such as Maharashtra, northern Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh.
 - ✓ The infection has largely remained endemic to the central part of India, where the population of CHPV infection-spreading sandflies and mosquitoes is higher.

Q 58.C

- The Mauryan rulers commissioned a large number of architectural works for political as well as religious reasons. These works are referred to as Court Art.
- **Palaces: The Mauryan Empire was the first powerful empire in India. The capital at Pataliputra and palaces at Kumrahar reflected the splendor of the Mauryan Empire.**
 - Chandragupta Maurya's palace was inspired by Achaemenid palaces at Persepolis in Iran.
 - **Wood was the principal building material. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - Megasthenes described the palace as one of the greatest creations of mankind.
 - Ashoka's Palace at Kumrahar was a massive three-storey wooden structure with a high central pillar.
 - Palace walls were decorated with carvings and sculptures.
- **Pillars: During Ashoka's reign, pillars became significant symbols of the State and commemorated battle victories. Ashoka used pillars to propagate imperial sermons.**
 - **Usually, the Ashokan pillars were typically around 40 ft. tall and made of chunar sandstone. Hence statement 3 is correct.**
 - Comprised of a Shaft and Capital.
 - ✓ **Shaft: Long base, usually a monolith.**
 - ✓ Capital: Either lotus-shaped or bell-shaped, influenced by Iranian pillars, with a polished and lustrous finish.
 - ✓ Above the capital was an abacus with an animal figure. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**

Q 59.C

- **Overview of Hindustani and Carnatic Music:**
 - Hindustani Classical Music is the classical music tradition of Northern India, while Carnatic Classical Music is predominant in the southern part of India. Both styles share a common origin but have evolved separately since the 13th century, resulting in distinct differences in their structure, performance, and instrumentation.
- **Distinguishing Characteristics:**
 - **Greater emphasis on improvisation during performance:**
 - ✓ Hindustani classical music places a significant emphasis on improvisation. **The performer often explores the raga extensively through improvisational sections such as alap (slow, unaccompanied improvisation), jor, jhala, and taans.**
 - ✓ This improvisational nature allows the artist to bring personal expression and creativity into the performance. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - ✓ Hindustani classical music often features the Sitar as one of its primary melodic instruments. This instrument is closely associated with the North Indian style of music, whereas Carnatic music uses instruments like the Veena and Violin.
 - **Performance typically starts with an Alap:**
 - ✓ Kriti compositions are central to Carnatic music and usually form the core of performance, while Hindustani performances typically start with an Alap. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
 - **Use of Tabla as the main percussion instrument:**
 - ✓ The Mridangam is primarily associated with Carnatic music. It is the main percussion instrument used in Carnatic concerts. In contrast, the **Tabla is the predominant percussion instrument in Hindustani classical music. Hence statement 3 is correct.**
 - **Equal emphasis on both vocal and instrumental music**
 - ✓ Carnatic music places a greater emphasis on vocal music, while Hindustani music gives significant importance to both vocal and instrumental music. However, it is still known for its extensive use of instruments like the sitar and tabla.

Q 60.D

- **The Kashmiri temple architecture has unique features suited to local geography and is renowned for its exquisite stone carvings.** Due to its location on the important trade routes, the architectural style is inspired by many foreign sources. Temple-making reached a great height under the rulers of the Karkota dynasty and Utpala dynasty.

- The main features of the Kashmir style of architecture are:
 - Trefoil arches (Gandhara influence)
 - Cellular layout and enclosed courtyard
 - Straight-edged pyramidal roof
 - Column walls (Greek influence)
 - Triangular pediments (Greek influence)
 - Relatively more steps
- **Some temples located in Kashmir are:**
 - **Martand Sun Temple:** It is located in Anantnag, Kashmir, and was built in the 8th century AD under the aegis of Karkota Dynasty ruler Lalitaditya Muktapida.
 - ✓ It is considered to be a synthesis of various schools of architecture. The influences of Gandhara, Chinese, and Gupta can be observed on the monuments. The complex is in the shape of a courtyard, surrounded by columns.
 - ✓ The main temple has a pyramidal top and carvings of gods like Vishnu, river goddess Ganga and Yamuna, and the Sun God.
 - **Temples at Awantipura:** There are two temples namely Avantismwami for Lord Vishnu and Avantismvara dedicated to Lord Shiva. It was built by King Avantivarman, the first king of the Utpala dynasty, in the 9th century AD. The temple is inside a paved courtyard and has four shrines in its four corners. The gateway has two chambers and is carved out eloquently. Roman and Gandharan influence is clearly found.
 - **Pandrethan Temple:** It is also called Meruvardhana-swami and is dedicated to Vishnu, but Shiva images also exist. It was carved out of a single block of stone and has exquisite carvings on its walls. It was made in the early 10th century AD and is located near Srinagar. It has domed roof and arches.
 - **Mamleshwar Shiva temple:** It is located in Pahalgam and was built around 400 AD. It finds mention in the classic Sanskrit text Rajatarangini.
- **The Konark Sun Temple, located in Konark, Odisha, India, was built in the 13th century CE and is renowned for its chariot-like structure with twelve pairs of stone wheels and intricately carved sculptures.** It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a masterpiece of Kalinga architecture, dedicated to the sun god Surya.
- **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**

Q 61.C

- **Traditional Theatre Forms in India**
- **Introduction** India has a rich heritage of traditional theatre forms, each with unique characteristics, reflecting the cultural diversity of the region. This document explores several traditional theatre forms and their associated states.
- **Theatre Forms and Their Characteristics**
 - **Bhand Pather**
 - ✓ **Associated State:** Jammu and Kashmir.
 - ✓ **Description:** A unique combination of dance, music, and acting, Bhand Pather employs satire, wit, and parody to induce laughter. The music is provided by instruments like surnai, nagaara, and dhol. The actors, primarily from the farming community, reflect their way of living, ideals, and sensitivity. **Hence pair 1 is correctly matched.**
 - **Krishnattam**
 - ✓ **Associated State:** Kerala
 - ✓ **Description:** Created in the 17th century under the patronage of King Manavada of Calicut, Krishnattam is a cycle of eight plays performed over eight consecutive days, depicting episodes from the life of Lord Krishna, such as Avataram, Kaliyamandana, Rasa krida, Kamasavadha, Swayamvaram, Bana Yudham, Vivida Vadham, and Swargarohana. **Hence pair 2 is correctly matched.**
 - **Therukoothu**
 - ✓ **Associated State:** Tamil Nadu
 - ✓ **Description:** Known as "street play," Therukoothu is primarily performed during annual temple festivals to achieve a rich harvest. The repertoire centers around a cycle of eight plays based on the life of Draupadi. The Sutradhara (Kattikaran) narrates the play's gist, while Komali entertains the audience with buffoonery. **Hence pair 3 is correctly matched.**

Q 62.A

- There are various types of handicraft techniques that are used on cloth like weaving and printing. The artists use wooden blocks or printed cloths to make patterns on other materials. The technique of tie and dye gives beautiful designs on fabrics and there are different techniques used for it in India. Some of them are the following:
 - **Patola:** Patola is a prestigious form of silk weaving that originates from Patan, Gujarat. It is renowned for its intricate double ikat technique, where both the warp and weft threads are tie-dyed before weaving to create complex patterns. Patola sarees are known for their vibrant colors and geometric patterns. Historically, Patola weaving was patronized by the Mughal and Maratha courts.
 - **Kanchipuram Weaves:** These are silk sarees from the town of Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu. They are known for their rich colors and broad contrast borders but are not known for the double ikat technique.
 - **Pashmina:** Pashmina refers to a type of fine cashmere wool and the textiles made from it. Originating from Kashmir, Pashmina shawls are known for their softness and warmth, not for the double ikat technique.
 - **Chikan:** Chikan is a traditional embroidery style from Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. It involves delicate and intricate hand embroidery, often on lightweight fabrics like muslin. It is not related to the double ikat weaving technique.
 - **Banarasi Silk:** Intricate brocade with gold and silver threads, originating from Varanasi.
 - **Kanchipuram Silk:** Durable silk sarees with contrasting borders from Kanchipuram.
 - **Chanderi Silk:** Lightweight, glossy, and sheer sarees from Chanderi.
 - **Baluchari:** Sarees featuring mythological scenes on the pallu from Bengal.
 - **Paithani:** Richly colored sarees with peacock and floral motifs from Maharashtra.
 - **Bandhani:** Tie-dye technique sarees with intricate dot patterns from Gujarat and Rajasthan.
- Hence option (a) is the correct answer.

Q 63.A

- **Snowblind malware**
 - **Context:** A new Android-targeting banking malware named 'Snowblind' is stealing banking credentials.
 - It is a new Android malware that uses a built-in Android security feature to bypass anti-tamper mechanisms and steal banking credentials. Hence option (a) is the correct answer.
 - It is a type of Trojan malware that cover-ups as legitimate software to infiltrate Android devices.
 - A Trojan Horse Virus is a type of malware that downloads onto a computer disguised as a legitimate program.

Q 64.C

- The Iberian style of architecture, primarily associated with the Portuguese advent in India, represents a significant cultural and architectural influence during the colonial period. This style is characterized by its unique features and notable constructions that reflect both European and local traditions.
- Characteristics of Iberian Architecture:
 - **Introduction by the Portuguese:** The Iberian style was introduced to India by the Portuguese during their colonial expansion in the 16th century. They initially constructed trading posts and warehouses along the Indian coastline, which later evolved into fortified towns and cities. Hence statement 1 is correct.
 - **Architectural Features:** Iberian architecture is marked by elaborate and theatrical designs, often incorporating Baroque elements. The use of contrasting colors and intricate detailing is common, aimed at creating a dramatic effect. The Portuguese also introduced the concept of 'patio houses,' which featured central courtyards, enhancing ventilation and light.
 - **Materials Used:** The primary materials employed in Iberian architecture include brick and local stone, with wooden roofs and staircases. This combination allowed for both durability and aesthetic appeal.
 - **Notable Constructions include the Church of St. Anne in Goa, Diu Fort Built in 1535, Sé Cathedral in Goa, Basilica of Bom Jesus, etc. Hence statement 2 is correct.**

Q 65.D

- **Indo-Saracenic architecture (also known as Indo-Gothic, Mughal-Gothic, Neo-Mughal often Indo-Islamic style) was a revivalist architectural style mostly used by British architects in India in the later 19th century, especially in public and government buildings in the British Raj, and the palaces of rulers of the princely states.**
 - This architectural style represents a unique fusion of Indian, Persian, and Gothic elements, reflecting the cultural and aesthetic interactions between the British and Indian traditions. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **The Indo-Gothic style, also known as Indo-Saracenic architecture, emerged in the late 19th century during British colonial rule in India.**
- **Structural Features:**
 - **Pointed Arches:** Unlike the rounded arches typical of Indo-Islamic architecture, Indo-Gothic structures prominently feature pointed arches.
 - **Large Windows:** The style incorporates expansive windows that allow ample natural light, a hallmark of Gothic architecture.
 - **Ornate Decorations:** Elaborate carvings and decorative elements are common, often showcasing intricate designs that reflect both local craftsmanship and Western influences. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **It adhered to the advanced structural engineering standards of Britain. Steel, iron, and poured concrete started being used.**
- **Examples:**
 - **Victoria Memorial in Kolkata:** This iconic structure exemplifies the Indo-Gothic style with its grand dome and extensive use of white Makrana marble, combining British architectural styles with Indian motifs.
 - **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus in Mumbai:** Originally known as Victoria Terminus, this railway station is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and showcases the Indo-Gothic style through its ornate façade and detailed interiors. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

Q 66.C

- Ancient Tamil texts reflect the process of interaction between North Sanskrit and South Tamil culture. The Sangam poets were familiar with the Mahabharata and Ramayana legends. Buddhism, Jainism, and the worship of God Vishnu and Shiva travelled from north to south. There was evidence of reciprocal exchange between Sanskrit and Dravidian languages.
- The social classification of Varna was known to Sangam poets. There is a mention of Arashar [kings], Vaishiyar [traders] and Velalar [farmers]. The Brahmanas are also described as performing yajnas including one on the battlefield to ensure victory. However, the Sangam society was mainly tribal-dominated and the four-fold classification had little application to Sangam society. The jati system was not a feature of this society either. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- Women were actively engaged in economic production and there were a significant number of women poets in the Sangam age. Women also had the right to own property and were entitled to a share in family wealth. Various women participated in the activities like agriculture, spinning, weaving, and trade. **Hence statement 2 is not correct**

Q 67.A

- The reign of the Cholas began in the 9th century when they defeated the Pallavas to come into power. This rule stretched over for over five long centuries until the 13th century. The Chola Empire was founded by Vijayalaya. Chola inscriptions mention several categories of land:
- **Vellanvagai referred to the land of non-Brahmana peasant proprietors. Hence, pair 1 is not correctly matched.**
- Brahmadeya referred to land gifted to Brahmanas.
- **Shalabhoga referred to land for the maintenance of a school. Hence, pair 2 is correctly matched.**
- Devadana, tirunamattukkani referred to land gifted to temples.
- **Pallichchhandam referred to land donated to Jaina institutions. Hence, pair 3 is not correctly matched.**
- Brahmanas often received land grants or brahmadeya. As a result, a large number of Brahmana settlements emerged in the Kaveri valley as in other parts of south India. Each brahmadeya was looked after by an assembly or sabha of prominent Brahmana landholders. These assemblies worked very efficiently. Their decisions were recorded in detail in inscriptions, often on the stone walls of temples.

Associations of traders known as nagarams also occasionally performed administrative functions in towns.

Q 68.B

- Recently, Reports highlighted that artists of Kuchipudi dance struggling for survival.
 - Kuchipudi is one of the classical styles of Indian dance. It originated in the Kuchipudi village in the Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh. **In the 17th century Kuchipudi style of Yakshagaana was conceived by Siddhendra Yogi a talented Vaishnava poet and visionary who could give concrete shape to some of his visions.** He was steeped in the literary Yakshagaana tradition being guided by his guru Teerthanaaraayana Yogi who composed the Krishna- Leelatarangini a kaavya in Sanskrit.
 - At that time all the actors were male and the female impersonation was of superb quality. **Vedaantam Satyanarayana Sharma, a great Kuchipudi female dancer,** is famous for playing the role of Satyabhaama. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
 - It was Lakshminarayanan Shastri who introduced many new elements including solo dancing and training of female dancers in this dance style. **To show the dexterity of the dancers in footwork and their control and balance over their bodies, techniques like dancing on the rim of a brass plate and with a pitcher full of water on the head were introduced.** Acrobatic dancing became part of the repertoire. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
 - By the middle of the century, **Kuchipudi fully crystallized as a separate classical solo dance style. Thus, there are now two forms of Kuchipudi, the traditional musical dance drama and the solo dance. Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

Q 69.A

- **Mohammed I-**
 - He succeeded Bahman Shah.
 - **He established a good system of government that was followed by all the successor sultanates as well as by the Marathas later.**
 - He appointed a council of eight ministers of state:
 - ✓ **Vakil-us-saltana or lieutenant of the kingdom, the immediate subordinate of the sovereign. Hence, pair 1 is correctly matched.**
 - ✓ Waziri-kull, who supervised the work of all other ministers;
 - ✓ **Amir-i-jumla, minister of finance; Hence, pair 2 is NOT correctly matched.**
 - ✓ **Wasir-i-ashraf, minister of foreign affairs and master of ceremonies; Hence, pair 3 is NOT correctly matched.**
 - ✓ Nazir, assistant minister for finance;
 - ✓ Peshwa who was associated with the lieutenant of the kingdom;
 - ✓ Kotwal or chief of police and city magistrate in the capital, and
 - ✓ Sadr-i-jahan or chief justice and minister of religious affairs and endowments.

Q 70.D

- Historian R. N. Nandi (1989–90) has drawn attention to the many references to **agricultural activity** in the Rig Veda.
- The words *vap* (to sow) and *krish* (to cultivate) occur, along with references to various agricultural implements. **Phala, langala, and sira** are words for the plough, which must have been made of wood. Other implements included the hoe (*khanitra*), sickle (***datra, srini***), and axe (*parashu, kulisha*). The word *kshetra* has a range of meanings, including a cultivated field. **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**
- Hymns refer to the leveling of fields for cultivation, the desire for fertile fields (*urvara*), and furrows (*sita*) drenched by rain, producing rich harvests. The only terms for cereals are *yava* (barley or a generic term for cereal) and *dhanya* (a generic term for cereals).
- There are references to seed processing, food prepared from cereals, and large jars that were probably used to store grain. Some hymns refer to conflicts among people for the protection of sons, grandsons, cattle, water courses, and fertile fields. Prayers were offered to *Indra* to grant or enrich the fields. *Indra* is described as the protector of crops, winner of fertile fields (*urvarajit*), and one who showers such fields on those who perform sacrifices for him.

Q 71.B

- **Important Nobles**

- **Wazir:** Wazir was in charge of the revenue department. Generally, the wazir did not hold a high mansab under Akbar.
- **Mir Bakshi:** The head of the military department was known as the mir bakhshi. The mir bakhshi, not the diwan, was considered the head of the nobility.
- **Mir Saman:** Mir Saman was in charge of the imperial household, including the supply of all provisions and articles for the haram or female apartments' inmates. **Pair 3 is not correctly matched.**
- **Chief Qazi:** The chief qazi oversaw the judicial department. This position was occasionally combined with that of the chief sadr, who was in charge of all charitable and religious endowments.
- **Ghusal Khana:** For confidential consultations, the ministers were generally called to a chamber which was situated near Akbar's bathing apartment (ghusal khana). In course of time, this private consultation chamber came to be called ghusal khana. **Pair 1 is correctly matched.**
- **Note:** The scholars and religious divines etc. were granted small tracts of land for their maintenance. Such grants were called '**madad-i-maash**'. **Pair 2 is correctly matched.**

Q 72.B

- **CHAPEA project**

- **Context:** Recently, 4 volunteer crew members of NASA's Mars simulation mission emerged after a year of living in a habitat replicating the Red Planet.
- **About:** Crew Health and Performance Exploration Analog (CHAPEA) project.
 - ✓ It was the first of three planned simulations to understand the challenges Mars poses for space explorers.
- **Organization:** NASA.
- **Mars simulation:**
 - ✓ A 3D printed airlocked habitat of 1,700 sq feet was created and set up at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas, called "Mars Dune Alpha".
 - ✓ Simulated Martian soil and a backdrop of red, rocky cliffs were provided for an immersive experience.
 - ✓ **Aim:** NASA aimed to collect data for insight into the potential impacts of long-duration missions to Mars on crew health and performance and to understand and counter the physical and mental challenges astronauts will face. **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**
 - ✓ The data will also help them prepare for long-term presence on the Moon as part of its Artemis program.
 - ✓ **Significance:** Mars remains NASA's horizon goal for human exploration because it is one of the only other places we know where life may have existed in the solar system.

Q 73.A

- The Rashtrakuta rule in the Deccan lasted for almost two hundred years, till the end of the tenth century.
 - The Rashtrakuta rulers were tolerant in their religious views and patronised not only Saivism and Vaishnavism but Jainism as well. **The Rashtrakutas allowed Muslim traders to settle, and permitted Islam to be preached, in their dominions. The Muslims had their own headman, and had large mosques for their daily prayers in many of the coastal towns in the Rashtrakuta empire.** This tolerant policy helped to promote foreign trade which enriched the Rashtrakutas. **Hence statement 1 is not correct and statement 2 is correct.**
 - The court was not only a centre of political affairs and justice, but cultural life as well. Dancing girls and skilled musicians attended the court. Women of the King's household also attended the darbar on festive occasions. **According to Arab writers, women did not veil their faces.**
 - **The rules about succession were not rigidly fixed. The eldest son often succeeded, but there are many instances when the eldest son had to fight his younger brothers, and sometimes lost to them. Thus, the Rashtrakuta rulers Dhruva and Govinda IV, deposed their elder brothers. Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

Q 74.B

- **Semaglutide vs tirzepatide**

- **Context:** India's drug regulator could soon approve the weight-loss drug tirzepatide.
- Semaglutide and tirzepatide are small proteins that increase levels of hormones like GLP-1, helping to control weight via the brain and digestive tract. **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**
- **Manufacturer:** Eli Lilly, an American pharmaceutical company.

- The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved Wegovy (semaglutide) and Zepbound (tirzepatide) for chronic weight management in adults.
- **Prescription:** These drugs can be prescribed to adults who are obese (BMI over 30) or overweight (BMI between 27 and 30) with at least one weight-related health condition, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or type 2 diabetes.

Q 75.B

- **Manipuri Dance**
 - The Manipuri classical dance form emphasizes devotion, particularly focusing on the love stories of Krishna and Radha. Lasya, the graceful and gentle aspect of dance, is given more importance than Tandava, the vigorous and masculine aspect. This dance form is characterized by its devotion rather than sensuality, with themes like **Rasleelas, Sankirtana, and Thang-ta being prominent. Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**
- **Details:**
 - **Origin:** Manipur
 - **Description:** Manipuri dance is one of the most devotional dance forms among Indian classical dances. It is known for its emphasis on devotion and spiritual themes rather than sensuality.
 - **Themes:** Central themes include the love stories of Krishna and Radha, often depicted through Rasleelas. Other popular themes include Sankirtana and Thang-ta.
 - **Style:** The dance focuses on Lasya, emphasizing grace and gentleness, while also incorporating Tandava elements in a subdued manner.
- **Key Features**
 - **Devotion and Spirituality:** Manipuri dance is deeply rooted in devotion, with performances often centered around religious festivals and rituals.
 - **Rasleelas:** These are dramatizations of the divine love between Krishna and Radha, performed with intricate and lyrical movements.
 - **Costumes and Music:** The dance features elaborate costumes and traditional Manipuri music, with instruments like the Pung (Manipuri classical drum) and various kinds of cymbals.

Q 76.A

- Larger kingdoms were formed during the **later Vedic period**. Many jana or tribes were amalgamated to form janapadas or rashttras in the later Vedic period. Hence the royal power had increased along with the increase in the size of kingdom. **The king performed various rituals and sacrifices to strengthen his position. They include Rajasuya (consecration ceremony), Asvamedha (horse sacrifice) and Vajpeya (chariot race).**
- **Rajasuya sacrifice, which was supposed to confer supreme power on the king. Hence, pair 1 is not correctly matched.**
- **Asvamedha, meant unquestioned control over an area in which the royal horse ran uninterrupted. the ritual culminates in the horse's sacrifice, symbolizing the king's sovereignty. Hence, pair 2 is correctly matched.**
- **Vajapeya or the chariot race, in which the royal chariot was made to win the race against his kinsmen. Hence, pair 3 is not correctly matched.**
- All these rituals impressed the people with the increasing power and prestige of the king.

Q 77.A

- **The Urs festival is an annual event celebrated primarily by Muslims in South Asia to commemorate the death anniversary of a Sufi saint. The word "Urs" means "wedding" in Arabic, symbolizing the union of the saint with the Divine.** The festival is marked by prayers, devotional music (Qawwali), and various rituals. Key Features of Urs Festival:
 - **Urs festivals are held at the dargahs (shrines) of Sufi saints across South Asia. Some of the most famous Urs celebrations take place at the Ajmer Sharif Dargah in Rajasthan, India, dedicated to Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti, and the Nizamuddin Dargah in Delhi, dedicated to Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya.**
 - Devotees engage in prayers, recitation of the saint's teachings, and offer chadars (sacred cloths) at the shrine. Food is often distributed to the poor as a form of charity (langar).
 - Qawwali performances are a central part of Urs celebrations, where musicians sing Sufi devotional songs to honor the saint.

- Urs festivals attract thousands of devotees from different religions and backgrounds, reflecting the inclusive nature of Sufism.
- **Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**

Q 78.C

- The influence of Indo-Islamic culture on Indian music and dance is significant and can be seen in the development of various musical instruments, dance forms, and performance styles:
 - **Hindustani Classical Music:**
 - ✓ Hindustani classical music **evolved through the fusion of Perso-Arabic and Indian classical music traditions** during the Sultanate period.
 - ✓ **New musical instruments like the sitar, tabla, and sarangi were developed during this time.**
 - ✓ **The sitar is believed to have been invented by the Persian poet Amir Khusrau, who combined elements of the South Indian veena with the Persian tanpura. Hence statement 3 is correct.**
 - ✓ The **tabla**, a popular percussion instrument, likely **evolved from the South Indian drum.**
 - ✓ Born in Gwalior, **Tansen was one of the Navratanas in the court of Akbar.** Tansen was a proponent of Dhrupad music based on Hindu Gods and Goddesses and created many new ragas. He also composed songs for his patrons such as Akbar. Tansen is often regarded as one of the greatest figures in Hindustani classical music. His contributions significantly shaped the genre and he is credited with the development of various musical forms and ragas. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - **Kathak:**
 - ✓ Tracing its **origins from the Ras Leela of Brajbhoomi, Kathak is the traditional dance form of Uttar Pradesh.** Kathak derived its name from the 'Kathika' or the story-tellers who recited verses from the epics, with gestures and music.
 - ✓ **During the Mughal era, the dance form degenerated into lascivious style and branched off into court dance. It was also influenced by Persian costumes and styles of dancing. Hence statement 2 is correct.**

Q 79.C

- **Du-aspah sih-aspah system:**
 - **It was introduced by Jahangir. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - The system was popular as 'du-aspah' (a trooper with two horses) or 'sih-aspah' (a trooper with three horses) system. This was the du-aspah system which implied that a mansabdar holding this rank had maintained and was paid for double the quota of troopers indicated by his sawar rank.
 - **Under this system, selected nobles could be allowed to maintain a large quota of soldiers, without making any change in their Zat rank. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - **It implied that a mansabdar or noble holding du-aspah sih-aspah rank had to maintain double the quota of troopers indicated by his sawar rank. They were paid accordingly.**

Q 80.B

- **Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1556–1627):**
 - He was a prominent **ruler of the Bijapur Sultanate** in South India. He was very solicitous of the poor, and had the title of '**abla baba**' or '**friend of the poor**'.
 - **Cultural Patronage**
 - ✓ **Syncretism:** Ibrahim was known for his syncretic approach to religion and culture. He was a follower of both Islam and Hinduism and sought to bridge the gap between the two communities. In his songs, he freely invoked the goddess of music and learning, Saraswati. Due to his broad approach, he came to be called "**Jagat Guru**".
 - ✓ **Art and Music:** He composed a famous book called "**Kitab-i-Nauras**," which included poems and songs in praise of Hindu gods and goddesses, as well as Islamic figures.
 - ✓ **Architecture:** Ibrahim Adil Shah II commissioned several architectural projects, including Ibrahim Rauza, his mausoleum, which is considered one of the most beautiful structures in Bijapur. He **built a new capital, Nauraspur**, in which a large number of musicians were invited to settle.
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

Q 81.B

- **Enemy Property**
 - **Context:** The Indian government has begun auctioning properties belonging to erstwhile citizens of the country who now hold Pakistani and Chinese citizenship.
 - **Enemy Property:** This is the property of the erstwhile citizens of India, who now hold the passports of Pakistan and China, the enemy countries of India. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
 - The 'enemy properties' are any property that belongs to and is held or managed on behalf of an enemy, an enemy subject, or an enemy firm.
 - **Custodian of Enemy Property for India (CEPI):**
 - ✓ This is a department under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
 - ✓ The "enemy properties" are vested by the central government under the CEPI. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - ✓ The vested properties are further divided into moveable and immovable enemy properties.
 - **Regulation:** The enemy properties are regulated by the Enemy Property Act, of 1968.
 - The Act enables the state to regulate and appropriate real estate belonging to erstwhile citizens of the country who now hold Pakistani and Chinese passports.
 - **Amendment: In 2017, Parliament passed two acts:**
 - **The Enemy Property (Amendment and Validation) Act, 2017**, which amended **The Enemy Property Act, 1968** and
 - **The Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971.**
 - The amendment expanded the meaning of the term "enemy subject", and "enemy firm" to include:
 - ✓ The legal heir and successor of an enemy, whether a citizen of India or a citizen of a country which is not an enemy and
 - ✓ The succeeding firm of an enemy firm, irrespective of the nationality of its members or partners.
 - ✓ Even if the enemy or enemy subject or enemy firm ceases to be an enemy due to death, the enemy property vests with CEPI.

Q 82.A

- Megalithic culture in India is characterized by the construction of large stone structures, known as megaliths, which were primarily used for burial and commemorative purposes. These structures date back to the Neolithic and early Iron Age periods, roughly between 1500 BCE and 500 CE.
- **Geographical Distribution:**
 - **Southern India:** The majority of megalithic sites are found in the states of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Kerala. Notable sites include Brahmagiri, Hire Benakal, and Adichanallur.
 - **Northeastern India:** Meghalaya has significant megalithic sites, such as those in the Khasi and Jaintia hills.
 - **Central and Eastern India:** There are also sites in parts of Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Odisha.
 - **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- **Types of Megaliths:**
 - **Dolmens:** These are table-like structures consisting of two or more vertical stones supporting a large flat horizontal stone.
 - **Menhirs:** Tall, upright stones that often served as memorial stones.
 - **Cairns:** Piles of stones arranged in a mound over a burial site.
 - **Cist burials:** Small stone-built coffin-like boxes used to hold the deceased.
 - **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- **Functions and Significance:**
 - **Burial Sites:** Many megaliths served as graves or burial chambers. They were often built to honor the deceased and were sometimes accompanied by grave goods such as pottery, tools, and ornaments.
 - **Commemorative Structures:** Some megaliths were erected as memorials to commemorate important events or individuals. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**
 - **Astronomical Alignments:** Certain megalithic sites show evidence of being aligned with astronomical events, suggesting they may have been used for calendrical or ritual purposes.
- **Cultural and Social Aspects:**
 - **Community Effort:** The construction of megaliths would have required considerable communal effort and cooperation, indicating a structured and organized society.
 - **Ritualistic Practices:** The presence of grave goods and the elaborate nature of some megaliths suggest that rituals and ceremonies were an integral part of the Megalithic culture.

- **Archaeological Discoveries:**
 - **Artifacts:** Excavations at megalithic sites have yielded a variety of artifacts, including pottery, iron tools, weapons, and ornaments made of gold, silver, and semi-precious stones. Hence, **statement 4 is correct.**
 - **Human Remains:** Skeletal remains found in megalithic burials provide insights into the health, diet, and physical characteristics of the people of that era.
 - The Megalithic culture in India provides valuable insights into the early societies of the subcontinent, their burial practices, social organization, and interactions with their environment.

Q 83.B

- **Background:**
 - The earliest treatise on dance available to us is Bharat Muni's Natyashastra, the source book of the art of drama, dance and music. It is generally accepted that the date of the work is between the 2nd century B.C.E- 2nd century C.E. The Natyashastra is also known as the fifth veda. According to the author, he has evolved this Veda by taking words from the Rigveda, music from the Samaveda, gestures from the Yajurveda and emotions from the Atharvaveda. There is also a legend that Brahma himself wrote the Natyaveda, which has over 36,000 verses.
- **Basic elements:**
 - Contemporary classical dance forms have evolved out of the musical play or sangeet-nataka performed from the 12th century to the 19th century.
 - The Indian classical dances have two basic elements - Tandava (movement & rhythm) and Lasya (grace, bhava & rasa).
 - It is an ancient classification that is followed and basic in all styles of dances: **Tandava and Lasya. Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**
 - ✓ **Tandava the masculine, is heroic bold and vigorous. Lasya the feminine is soft, lyrical and graceful.** Abhinaya, broadly means expression. This is achieved through angika, the body and limbs, vachikasong and speech and aharya, costume and adornment; and satvika, moods and emotions.
- The three main components of dance are-
 - **Natya** (the dramatic element of the dance i.e. the imitation of characters)
 - **Nritta** (the dance movements in their basic form)
 - **Nritya** (expressional component i.e. mudras or gestures).

Q 84.C

- Embroidery is a long-standing tradition in India, with roots that date back centuries. Each region of India has its own unique embroidery style, which tells the story of the community and its culture. Following are some embroidery styles:
- **Nakshi Kantha:** In modern usage, **kantha more generally refers specifically to the type of stitch used.** The earliest and most basic kantha stitch is a simple, straight, running stitch, like the type used on our Kantha Sari Scarves.
- Over time, more elaborate patterns developed, which became known as "nakshi kantha". **Nakshi comes from the Bengali word, naksha, which refers to artistic patterns. Nakshi kantha is made up of motifs influenced by religion, culture and the lives of the women stitching them.**
- **It is a GI Tag embroidery.**
- Kantha can be categorised by stitch type:
 - **Running kantha**, which is a straight running stitch and the original and earliest form of kantha. Running kantha can be **further classified into that using figures and story telling (nakshi kantha) or geometric patterns (par tola kantha).**
 - **Lik or Anarasi (pineapple) kantha** is practiced in the Chapainawabgonj and Jessore areas of northern Bangladesh. There are numerous variations of this form.
 - **Lohori kantha or 'wave' kantha.** This type is popular in Rajshahi (Bangladesh) and is divided into (a) soja (straight or simple), (b) kautar khupi ('pigeon coop' or triangle), and (c) borfi ('diamond') forms.
 - **Sujni kantha;** this type is only found in the Rajshahi area of Bangladesh. A popular motif is an undulating floral and vine pattern. It's worth noting that Sujni is also practiced in Bihar.
 - **Cross-stitch or carpet kantha** was introduced by the English under the British Rule in India.
- **Kashidakari:** This craft is defined by its captivating mirror work and exquisite stitching. The **Bikaner Kashidakari** Craft's close ties to wedding-related merchandise, especially gifts, add to its uniqueness.

- The **Meghwal community of Bikaner** is credited with carrying on the tradition of the Bikaner Kashidakari Craft. Artists employ **canvas made of cotton, silk, and velvet, which they then skillfully weave together and adorn with captivating mirror work to create truly magnificent works of art.**
- Bikaner Kashidakari Craft of Rajasthan was awarded with the **GI tag in 2023.**
- **Zari Zardoji:** Zari work involves the use of metallic threads (gold or silver) to create elaborate designs on fabric. This opulent embroidery is often embellished with sequins, beads, and stones, making it a popular choice for bridal wear and festive attire.
 - **Bareilly Zari Zardoji of Uttar Pradesh has received GI Tag in 2024.**

Q 85.A

- **Olympic Order:**
 - **Context:** Abhinav Bindra, a sports shooter, has been honored with the prestigious Olympic Order.
 - **About the Olympic Order:**
 - ✓ The highest accolade awarded by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for exceptional service.
 - ✓ Given to individuals who have rendered outstanding services to the Olympic cause.
 - **Established in:** 1975.
 - **Nomination and Selection:**
 - ✓ Candidates are typically nominated by members of the Olympic family, including National Olympic Committees (NOCs), International Sports Federations (IFs), and IOC members.
 - ✓ The final decision is made by the IOC Executive Board.
 - ✓ Recipients are chosen by the IOC Executive Board.
 - **Award Grades:**
 - ✓ The Olympic Order is awarded in three grades: gold, silver, and bronze, with the gold medal being the most prestigious. **Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**
 - **Significance and Symbolism:**
 - ✓ Represents the recipient's dedication to the Olympic spirit and their contributions to promoting excellence, friendship, and respect in sports.
 - ✓ A symbol of recognition for those who embody the spirit of Olympism and have made exceptional contributions to the global sports community.
 - **Award Ceremony:**
 - ✓ The award ceremony was held during the 142nd IOC Session in Paris on August 10, a day before the closing of the Olympics.

Q 86.D

- **Bhil tribe**
 - **Context:** The Rajasthan tribal community has reiterated their demand for a new state called 'Bhil Pradesh'
 - **Bhil tribe:** They are one of the largest indigenous tribal communities in India.
 - **Historical origin:** They belong to the race of the pre-Aryans.
 - The word "Bhil" is derived from the Dravidian word "Billu," meaning bow, reflecting their traditional archery skills.
 - **Geographic distribution:** They are predominantly found in the states of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Maharashtra.
 - Some populations are also found in the northeastern parts of Tripura.
 - **Classification:** They are classified as:
 - ✓ Central or pure bills
 - ✓ Eastern or Rajput Bhils
 - **Language:**
 - ✓ Bhili is a language that has many dialects and variations.
 - ✓ Bhili is part of the Western Zone of the Indo-Aryan languages.
 - ✓ In different regions, Bhils may also speak the local state languages such as Marathi, Gujarati, or Rajasthani.
 - **Economy:**
 - ✓ Traditionally, the Bhils are forest dwellers and their livelihood is closely linked with the forest.
 - ✓ They practice agriculture, hunting, and gathering.
 - ✓ Shifting cultivation is common among them.
 - **Festivals:** Baneshwar fair is their main festival. **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**

- **Kakad Bhairav:** Also known as Bhilat Baba, a stone deity worshipped by the Bhils in Madhya Pradesh's Bagh was recently proved to be a fossilized dinosaur egg.

Q 87.B

- **Trinity of Carnatic Music**
 - **Introduction:** The Trinity of Carnatic music refers to the three most revered composers of Carnatic music, whose contributions have significantly shaped its tradition and repertoire. **These composers are Tyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar, and Shyama Shastri. Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**
- **Key Features of the Trinity**
 - **Philosophical Depth:** Their compositions go beyond mere music, embodying philosophical and spiritual messages.
 - **Emotional and Intellectual Elements:** Their works are both emotionally moving and intellectually stimulating, projecting an image of religion, devotion, and spirituality.
 - **Nadopasana (Practice of Music):** Tyagaraja, in particular, viewed music as a path towards moksha (liberation).
- **Biographical Sketches**
 - **Syama Sastri (1762-1827)**
 - ✓ **Early Life:** Born as Venkata Subrahmanya in 1762 to Visvanatha Iyer and Vengalakshmi.
 - ✓ **Musical Training:** Initial training from cousins, later from Sangitha Swami and Pachimiriyam Adiyappayya.
 - ✓ **Major Works:** Known for Swarajatis and Navaratnamalika.
 - ✓ **Compositions: Mostly in Telugu**, in praise of Goddess Parvathi.
 - ✓ **Contribution:** Introduced the Viloma Chapu tala, highlighted rhythm, and used swarakshara (notes matching syllables).
 - ✓ **Famous Compositions:** Kamakshi Anudinamu, Kamakshi Ni Padayugame, Rave Himagiri Kumari.
 - **Muthuswami Dikshitar (1776-1835)**
 - ✓ **Early Life:** Born in 1776 to Sri Ramaswamy Dikshitar and Subbulakshmi Ammal.
 - ✓ **Musical Training:** Learnt from Chidambaranatha Yogi.
 - ✓ **Major Works:** Over 450 compositions, including Navagraha Kirtanas and Navavarna kirtanas.
 - ✓ **Compositions: Mostly in Sanskrit**, in the kriti format.
 - ✓ **Contribution:** Integrated Hindustani music elements, used all seven talas and 72 melakartha ragas.
 - ✓ **Famous Compositions:** Srinathadi Guruguho Jayati Jayati, Prithvi Chintaya, Jambupathe Mampahi, Arunachala.
 - **Tyagaraja (1767-1847)**
 - ✓ **Early Life:** Born in 1767 to Ramabrahmam and Seetamma.
 - ✓ **Musical Training:** Learnt from Sonti Venkataramana.
 - ✓ **Major Works:** Composed about 24,000 songs, including Pancharathanas.
 - ✓ **Compositions: Mainly in Telugu**, addressing societal issues and spiritual themes.
 - ✓ **Contribution:** Developed kriti form, introduced variations (Sangati), and used anagata eduppu (compositions starting after the first beat).
 - ✓ **Famous Compositions:** Jagadanandakaraka, Nowka Charitham, Prahlada Baktha Vijayam.

Q 88.B

- Indo-Islamic architecture, a fascinating fusion of Indian and Islamic influences, emerged from the 7th century onwards and evolved through distinct periods. **New elements such as calligraphy, ornamentation using inlay work, etc. were introduced to reflect the tastes and preferences of the new rulers.**
- **However, the local architects retained certain flavours of the local architectural traditions as well.** Thus, the architecture of this following period sees a confluence of the Persian style with the Indian style. Hence, it is known as Indo-Islamic architecture or Indo-Saracenic architecture.
- **Some of the features of Indo-Islamic architecture are given as follows:**
 - **The use of arches and domes gained prominence during this period. It was known as the 'Arcuate' style of architecture and replaced the traditional Trabeate style of architecture. Hence option 1 is not correct and option 4 is correct.**
 - ✓ **The Trabeate Style is characterized by the use of horizontal beams or lintels supported by vertical columns, forming a post-and-lintel structure.**

- The Islamic rulers introduced the use of minars around the mosques and the mausoleums.
- Mortar was used as a cementing agent in their constructions.
- The Indo-Islamic architecture avoided the use of human and animal figures.
- While the Hindu architecture had become too congested, the Indo-Islamic architecture introduced spaciousness, massiveness, and breadth to it.
- **While the previous structures used sculptures as a means of decoration, the Indo-Islamic architecture used calligraphy as a means of decoration. Hence option 2 is correct.**
- **The Arabesque method was also used for decoration.**
 - ✓ Arabesque meant the use of geometrical vegetal ornamentation and was characterized by a continuous stem that split regularly, producing a series of counterpoised, leafy, secondary stems. The secondary stems, in turn, split again or returned to merge with the main stem creating a decorative pattern.
- The architecture of this period heavily used the **principles of geometry** - from decorative patterns to imbuing a sense of symmetry.
- **The buildings had intricate jaali works, which signifies the importance of light in Islamic religion. Hence option 3 is correct.**
- An important feature of the architecture during this period was the **use of water in the premises** of the constructions in the form of courtyard pools, fountains, and small drains. Water was used primarily for three purposes: Religious purpose, To cool the premises, and Decorative purpose.
- The Islamic rulers introduced the **Charbagh style** of gardening, in which a square block was divided into four adjacent identical gardens. The architects of these times also used the **pietra-dura technique** for the inlay of precious colored stones and gems into the walls for decoration.

Q 89.A

- **Classical Language Status:**
 - The current criteria evolved by the government to determine the declaration of a language as a classical language are:
 - ✓ It should have **high antiquity** in its early texts/recorded history over 1,500-2,000 years.
 - ✓ A body of ancient literature or texts that is considered a **valuable heritage by generations** of speakers.
 - ✓ The literary tradition **should be original and not borrowed from another speech community. Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**
 - ✓ The said language and literature should be **distinct from its modern format**; there may also be a discontinuity between the classical language and its later forms or its offshoots.
 - Once a language is notified as a classical language, the **Education Ministry provides certain benefits to promote it**, which include two major annual international awards for scholars of eminence in the said languages.
 - Apart from this, a **center of excellence for studies in the classical language is set up**, and the University Grants Commission is requested to create a certain number of Professional Chairs in Central universities for the languages that get the classical tag.
 - **Classical Languages in India:**
 - ✓ To date, **six languages have been conferred the status of 'Classical Language' in India.**
 - ✓ The **first language** to be accorded that status is **Tamil**, which was declared a classical language back in 2004.
 - ✓ In the following year, **Sanskrit** was accorded the status.
 - ✓ In 2008, **Telugu and Kannada** were conferred with the status, followed by **Malayalam** in 2013.
 - ✓ **Odia** is the latest addition to the list and received status in 2014.

Q 90.B

- **New Pension Scheme 'VATSALYA'**
 - **Context:** The Union Budget 2024-25 has proposed a new pension scheme named 'Vatsalya' for minors.
 - The scheme enables parents and guardians to start a National Pension Scheme (NPS) for minors until the child turns 18. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - **Objective:** The scheme offers families a systematic approach to ensure the future financial security of their children and contribute towards their retirement savings.
 - **Eligibility:** All parents and guardians, whether Indian citizens, NRIs, or OCIs, are eligible to open an NPS Vatsalya account for their minor children.
 - **Benefits:** The NPS Vatsalya Scheme will promote savings habits in children.

- The NPS Vatsalya account, opened when a child is a minor, allows significant accumulation for retirement, with 60% available for withdrawal at retirement. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- The Scheme instills financial responsibility, converting to a standard NPS account at 18, allowing independent contributions. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
- It provides a structured way for families to secure their children's financial future and build a retirement corpus.
- **Conversion to normal NPS account:** On attaining the age of majority, the plan can be converted seamlessly into a normal NPS (National Pension Scheme) account.

Q 91.A

- Three prominent schools of sculpture developed in Post Mauryan period in three different regions of India – centred at Gandhara, Mathura, and Amaravati.
 - **Gandhara School:**
 - ✓ Developed in the region of Gandhara (modern-day Pakistan and Afghanistan) during the Kushan period (1st to 5th centuries CE).
 - ✓ Influenced by Greek, Roman, Persian, and Indian art, resulting in a unique Greco-Buddhist style.
 - ✓ **Mainly used green phyllite and gray-blue mica schist. Marble was prominently used in Amravati school of art. Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
 - ✓ Characterized by realistic human figures, intricate drapery, and detailed facial expressions. **The Gandhara artists were heavily influenced by the Hellenistic style of sculpture, which emphasized naturalism and idealized human forms.** The Buddha figures in Gandhara art have a youthful, Apollo-like face, curly hair, and a halo behind the head, all of which are characteristic of Greco-Roman art. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - ✓ Primarily focused on Buddhist themes, including images of the Buddha, Bodhisattvas, and scenes from the Jataka tales.
 - ✓ **The depiction of the Buddha in various mudras (hand gestures) is a traditional Indian artistic convention and not directly influenced by Greco-Roman art. Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
 - **Mathura School:**
 - ✓ Developed in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh, characterized by an indigenous Indian artistic style.
 - ✓ Primarily used red sandstone for creating sculptures.
 - ✓ Produced significant images of Buddha and Jain Tirthankaras, marked by robust and well-proportioned figures.
 - ✓ Early depictions of Yaksha and Yakshini figures, which later influenced Buddhist and Hindu iconography.
 - **Amaravati School:**
 - ✓ Known for its intricate and detailed carvings on white marble.
 - ✓ Focused on depicting scenes from the life of Buddha and Jataka tales.
 - ✓ Emphasized elaborate narrative panels with complex compositions and dynamic movement.
 - ✓ Developed in the Andhra Pradesh region, it significantly influenced South Indian art and architecture.

Q 92.B

- **DIGIPIN**
 - **Context:** The Department of Post has released a beta version of DIGIPIN (Digital Postal Index Number), intended as a permanent digital infrastructure for national addressing.
 - **DIGIPIN code:** It is designed as a permanent digital infrastructure that will not change with changes in the names of the state, city, or locality, or changes in the road network. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - **Developed by:** The postal department and IIT Hyderabad.
 - DIGIPIN will use one of the 16 alphanumeric symbols (2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9, G, J, K, L, M, P, W, X). **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - The first character for the DIGIPIN will identify one of these 16 regions.
 - The entire country will first be divided into 16 regions (4X4), including the maritime Exclusive Economic Zone (up to 200 nautical miles from the coastline). **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
 - This code will then be used as the offline addressing reference for any specific location within the DIGIPIN system.
 - It can be used to provide addresses for Indian assets in the sea such as oil rigs, future artificial islands, etc.

- It will act as a pillar of Geospatial Governance, leading to enhancements in public service delivery, faster emergency response, and logistics efficiency.
- It will serve as an addressing reference system, using a logical naming pattern to provide directional properties for accurately locating addresses.
- The DIGIPIN is proposed to be fully available in the public domain and can be easily accessed by everyone.
- DIGIPIN can also be used for emergency rescue operations and national disasters such as floods.

Q 93.C

- When the popularity of the Bhakti movement in south India reached its peak, the doctrine of bhakti was expounded at the philosophical level by a series of Vaishnava scholars and saints.
 - Ramanujar expounded the philosophy known as Vishistadvaita, or qualified monism. His teaching qualified Adi Sankara's emphasis on absolute monism or the oneness of the 'supreme' and the 'souls'.
- **Salient Features of Bhakti Movement:**
 - **The bhakti reformers preached the principles of monotheism (oneness of God). Hence, option (a) is correct.**
 - **They believed in freedom from the cycle of life and death.** They advocated that the salvation could be attained only by deep devotion and faith in God. **Hence, option (b) is correct.**
 - They emphasized the self-surrender for obtaining the bliss and grace of God
 - Gurus could act as guides and preceptors.
 - They advocated the principle of Universal brotherhood.
 - They criticized idol worship.
 - They stressed the singing of hymns with deep devotion.
 - **Arguing that all living beings, including humans, were god's children they strongly denounced caste system which divided people according to their birth. Hence, option (d) is correct.**
 - **They condemned ritualism, pilgrimages and fasts. Hence, option (c) is NOT correct.**
 - They did not consider any language as sacred and composed poems in the language of the common people.

Q 94.C

- **The Mool Mantar and the Concept of Ik Onkar in Sikhism**
 - **The Mool Mantar:** The Mool Mantar is the Sikh statement of belief, encapsulating the core tenets of Sikhism. It is the most important composition in Sikhism, serving as the opening text of the Guru Granth Sahib, the holy scripture of the Sikhs. Sikhs believe that the Guru Granth Sahib is the word of Waheguru (God) and is thus infallible. The Mool Mantar is taught to all young Sikh children, highlighting its foundational significance.
- **Key Elements of the Mool Mantar:**
 - **Ik Onkar:** There is only one God
 - **Sat Nam:** Eternal truth is His name
 - **Kurtah Purakh:** He is the creator
 - **Nir Bhau:** Without fear
 - **Nir Vair:** Without hate
 - **Akaal Moorat:** Immortal without form
 - **Ajooni:** Beyond birth and death
 - **Saibhang:** Self-existent
 - **Gurprasaad:** By the Guru's grace
- **Ik Onkar:**
 - The first line of the Mool Mantar is "**Ik Onkar,**" which translates to "**There is only one God.**" **This phrase is symbolic of the belief in the oneness of God and the oneness of humanity,** emphasizing that everyone is equal. **Hence option (c) is the correct answer.**
- **Symbol of Ik Onkar:**
 - The symbol meaning "Ik Onkar" is commonly seen in Gurdwaras (Sikh places of worship) and Sikh homes. Its widespread use highlights its importance in Sikhism, serving as a constant reminder to Sikhs of their belief in the oneness of God. This symbol helps Sikhs focus on Waheguru during prayers and meditation.



- The Symbol of "IK Onkar"

Q 95.B

- The two brothers Harihara and Bukka, the eldest sons of one Sangama, earlier serving the Hoysala rulers of Karnataka, asserted their independence and laid foundation for a new kingdom in about 1336.
 - This happened soon after the death of the Hoysala king Ballala III at the hands of the Madurai Sultan.
 - Historians call this dynasty started by Harihara as Sangama after the name of his father or forefather.
 - ✓ **Vijayanagara rulers adopted the emblem of the Chalukyas, the boar, or varahaas their royal insignia.**
 - ✓ **Hence , statement 1 is not correct.**
 - In order to wage continuous warfare there was a need to keep a large army. Artillery was important and well bred horses were maintained. The Vijayanagar rulers imported high quality horses from across the Arabian Sea from Arabia and other Gulf countries. Like the Bahamanis, the Vijayanagar state also was familiar with the use of firearms and employed Turkish and Portuguese experts to train the soldiers in the latest weaponry of warfare
 - ✓ **One of the rayas, Deva Raya II enrolled Muslims in his armed services, allotted them jagirs and erected a mosque for their use in the city.**
 - There was a confusion in the Vijayanagara empire after the death of Deva Raya II (1446). **Since the rule of primogeniture was not established in the Vijayanagara empire**, there was a series of civil wars among the various contenders to the throne. Many feudatories assumed independence in the process.
 - ✓ **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

Q 96.A

- **Bhaona**
 - **Bhaona** is a traditional form of theatre from Assam, created by Mahapurusha Srimanta Sankardeva in the 16th century.
 - It is characterized by religious messages, mythological themes, and performances in Namghars (community prayer halls) and Xatras (monasteries).
 - The Dialogues are in Brajawali (a language created by Sankardeva) and Assamese.
 - **The Ankiya Nats is one of the major act plays with religious themes, depicting the triumph of good over evil. Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**
- **Performance Structure:**
 - **Sutradhar:** The narrator who explains the story and acts as a chorus.
 - **Agni Garh:** Archway of lights through which performers pass.
 - **Scenes:** Connected by lyrical songs performed by the Sutradhar and his companions.
 - **Setting:** Open space in Namghars, surrounded by the audience on three sides.
- **Other options:**
 - **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 Dashavatar performers wear masks of wood and papier mache.

- **Maach** is the traditional theatre form of Madhya Pradesh. The term Maach is used for the stage itself as also for the play. In this theatre form songs are given prominence in between the dialogues. The term for dialogue in this form is bol and rhyme in narration is termed vanag. The tunes of this theatre form are known as rangat.
- Originally the theatre form **Swang**, was mainly music-based. Gradually, prose too, played its role in the dialogues. The softness of emotions, accomplishment of rasa along with the development of character can be seen in this theatre form. The two important styles of Swang are from Rohtak and Haathras. In the style belonging to Rohtak, the language used is Haryanvi (Bangru) and in Haathras, it is Brajbhasha

Q 97.A

- **Introduction**
 - The classical dance forms of India are accompanied by various traditional musical instruments that add to the richness and authenticity of the performance. The dance form discussed here uses instruments such as Chenda, Maddalam, Chengila, Ilathalam, Idakka, and Shanku.
- **Kathakali**
 - **Origin:** Kerala
 - **Description:** Kathakali is a classical dance-drama known for its elaborate costumes, intricate makeup, and detailed gestures. It dramatizes stories from Indian epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata.
 - **Instruments Used:** Chenda, Maddalam, Chengila, Ilathalam, Idakka, and Shanku. **Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**
 - **Performance Elements:** Combines dance, music, and acting with a focus on facial expressions and mudras (hand gestures). The dance is interpretative, relying heavily on the narrative sung by the accompanying musicians.
- **Other Classical Dance Forms**
 - **Kuchipudi**
 - ✓ **Origin:** Andhra Pradesh
 - ✓ **Instruments:** Mridangam, violin, veena, flute, and tambura.
 - **Kathak**
 - ✓ **Origin:** Northern India
 - ✓ **Instruments:** Tabla, harmonium, sarangi, and sitar.
 - **Odissi**
 - ✓ **Origin:** Odisha
 - ✓ **Instruments:** Mardala, flute, sitar, and violin.

Q 98.D

- **Military:**
 - Shivaji preferred to give cash salaries to regular soldiers, though sometimes the chiefs received revenue grants (Saranjam). **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
 - The regular army (paga) consisting of about 30,000 to 40,000 cavalry, as distinct from the loose auxiliaries (silahdars), was supervised by havaldars who received fixed salaries.
 - The forts were carefully supervised, Maval foot soldiers and gunners being appointed there.
- **Revenue System:**
 - It seems to have been patterned on the system of Malik Ambar. A new revenue assessment was compiled by Annaji Datto in 1679.
 - It is not correct to think that Shivaji abolished the zamindari system, or that he did not award jagirs (mokasa) to his officials. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
 - However, Shivaji strictly supervised the mirasdars that is those with the hereditary rights in land.

Q 99.B

- **The remains of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro reveal a remarkable sense of town planning. The towns were laid out in a rectangular grid pattern. The roads ran in north-south and east-west directions and intersected at right angles.**
- **Mainly three types of buildings have been found in the excavation sites: Dwelling houses, Public buildings, and Public baths.**
- **The Harappans used burnt mud bricks of standardized dimensions for construction.** Many layers of well-baked bricks were laid out and joined together using gypsum mortar.

- **The city was divided into two parts:**
 - **An upraised citadel in the western part**
 - **The lower part of the city**
- The upraised citadel was used for constructing buildings of large dimensions, such as:
 - Granaries
 - Administrative buildings
 - Pillared halls and courtyards
- Some buildings in the citadel might have been residences of the rulers and aristocrats.
- **Unlike the Egyptian and Mesopotamian Civilisations, Indus Valley Civilisation sites do not have large monumental structures such as temples or palaces for rulers. Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- Granaries were designed with strategic air ducts and raised platforms to protect grains from pests.
- Public baths were prevalent, indicating the importance of ritualistic cleansing in their culture. These baths had galleries and rooms surrounding them.
 - The most famous example is the 'Great Bath' in Mohenjo-daro.
- **In the lower part of the city, small one-roomed houses have been found, possibly used by the working class.**
 - **Some houses had stairs, indicating they might have been double-storied.**
 - **Most buildings had private wells and properly ventilated bathrooms. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **The most striking feature of Harappan Civilisation is the advanced drainage system:**
 - **Small drains from each house connected to larger drains alongside main roads.**
 - **Drains were covered loosely for regular cleaning and maintenance.**
 - **Cesspits were placed at regular intervals.**
- **The emphasis on both personal and public hygiene is impressive. Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- Wells were also present at many sites.

Q 100.C

- **Makhana Cultivation**
 - **Context:** Makhana has become a popular 'super snack', with prices rising sharply in both domestic and international markets since 2019.
 - **About:** Foxnuts or Makhana is an aquatic crop traditionally grown in India.
 - **Common Names:** Fox nut, Gorgon nut, Phool Makhana.
 - **Production:** Makhana, is mainly cultivated in the states of Bihar, West Bengal, and Assam. **Hence statement I is correct.**
 - **Climate:** Makhana is an aquatic crop and requires a warm, humid climate. It is typically cultivated in areas with temperatures ranging from 20°C to 35°C. **Hence statement II is not correct.**
 - **Soil:** It thrives in loamy and clayey soils with good water retention capacity. The pH of the soil should be between 5.5 to 7.5.
 - **Nursery Preparation:**
 - ✓ Seeds are collected from mature Makhana fruits.
 - ✓ Seeds are soaked in water for 24-48 hours before sowing.
 - ✓ Seeds are sown in nursery beds or trays filled with a mixture of soil and cow dung.
 - **Main Field Preparation:** Select low-lying areas or water bodies like ponds, lakes, or wetlands.
 - **Transplanting:** Seedlings are transplanted into the main field after 30-40 days when they are about 15-20 cm tall.
 - **Fertilization:** Organic fertilizers like cow dung can be applied. Chemical fertilizers are generally avoided.
 - **Harvesting:**
 - ✓ Makhana plants take about 4-5 months to mature.
 - ✓ The seeds are harvested when the fruits start to crack and the seeds float on the water surface.
 - **Nutritional value:**
 - ✓ The crop is a good source of vegetarian protein, at 10%, and contains five of the nine amino acids.
 - ✓ There are also quercetin and kaempferol flavonoids, both of which protect against diabetes and obesity.
 - ✓ It is considered a 'super snack' because they are low in calories, rich in protein, and contain essential nutrients.

- **Makhana Development Scheme:** The Bihar government runs the Makhana Development Scheme that gives a 75% subsidy on the Suvarna Vaidehi variety of seeds, calculated at ₹97,000 per hectare.
- Makhana is approved under the Union government's One District One Product scheme, which provides subsidies to food processors for branding, marketing, and infrastructure development.

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