

MEDIEVAL HISTORY UPSC Civil Services Exam Questions (2015-19)

Q1. The arrival of Babur into India led to the

1. Introduction of gunpowder in the subcontinent
2. Introduction of the arch and dome in the region's architecture
3. Establishment of Timurid dynasty in the region.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

Ans : B

Explanation

- Gunpowder was introduced during the mid-14th century. Hence, **Statement 1 is incorrect.**
- The introduction of Islamic architectural features was the greatest contribution of Delhi sultanates. Hence, introduction of the arch and dome in the region's architecture was done during the period of Delhi Sultanate. So, **Statement 2 is incorrect.**
- **Statement 3 is correct** : The members of the Timurid dynasty were strongly influenced by the Persian culture.
- It had established Timurid Empire in Persia and Central Asia and the Mughal Empire in the Indian subcontinent. Hence, arrival of Babur led to establishment of Timurid dynasty in the region.

Q2. Who of the following founded a new city on the south bank of a tributary to river Krishna and undertook to rule his new kingdom as the agent of a deity to whom all the land south of the river Krishna was supposed to belong?

- (a) Amoghavarsha I
(b) Ballala II
(c) Harihara I
(d) Prataparudra II

Ans : C

Explanation

- **Hari Hara I** founded the Vijayanagara empire in collaboration with his brother Bukka.
- In 1335, they founded the imperial city of Vijayanagara on the banks of the river Tungbhadara near Anegudi Fortress.
- Tungbhadara river is a tributary of **river Krishna**.
- The rulers were strict worshipers of the Hindu Gods and Goddess, but also tolerant towards the other religions.
- The emperors were great patrons of art and culture. The region influenced a development in the streams of music, literature and architecture.
- Many temples built in the territories of the south represent the style of Vijaynagar kingdom.
- The economy of the region flourished and several coins were introduced during the reign of the rulers of the Vijaynagar Empire.

Q3. With reference to the cultural history of medieval India, consider the following statements :

1. Siddhas (Sittars) of Tamil region were monotheistic and condemned idolatry.
2. Lingayats of Kannada region questioned the theory of rebirth and rejected the caste hierarchy.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans : C

Explanation

Statement 1 is correct :

- Siddhas(Sittars) of Tamil region were **monotheistic** and they condemned **idolatry**, they advocated renunciation of the world.

- According to them, the path to salvation lay in meditation on the formless ultimate reality and the realisation of oneness with it. For this, they advocated intense training of the mind and body through yogasanas, breathing exercises and meditation.

Statement 2 is correct :

- The Lingayat/Veerashaiva community, a politically dominant group in **Karnataka**, are devotees of Shiva. The Lingayats follow 12th-century saint-philosopher Basavanna .
- They challenged the **idea of caste and the pollution** attributed to certain groups by Brahmanas. They questioned the **theory of rebirth**. They believe that on death, the devotee will be united with Shiva and will not return to this world.

Q4. Banjaras during the medieval period of Indian history were generally

- (a) agriculturists
- (b) warriors
- (c) weavers
- (d) traders

Ans : D

Explanation

Banjaras

- The Banjaras were the most important **trader-nomads** with their origins in Rajasthan.
- They moved from one place to another in buying and selling goods.
- Other names : Lamans, Lambadi, Lambhani, Lambani, and Gormati.
- **Alauddin Khalji** used the Banjaras to transport grain to the city markets.
- Emperor **Jahangir** wrote in his memoirs that the Banjaras carried grain on their bullocks from different areas and sold it in towns.

Q5. With reference to the economic history of medieval India, the term Araghatta' refers to

- (a) bonded labour
- (b) land grants made to military officers

(c) waterwheel used in the irrigation of land

(d) waste land converted to cultivated land

Ans : C

Explanation

- Arghatta is a **Persian wheel** used in the irrigation.
- It is a mechanical device used to lift water.
- It uses animal power to lift water from sources, especially from open wells.
- The animals used here are cattle, bullocks, camels, etc.



Q6. Regarding the taxation system of Krishna Deva, the ruler of Vijayanagar, consider the following statements :

- 1.The tax rate on land was fixed depending on the quality of the land.
2. Private owners of workshops paid an industries tax.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans : C

Explanation

During the reign of Krishna Deva Raya, land revenue was the main source of income of the government. The land was classified into four parts for proper assesment: the wet land, the dry land, the orchards and the woods. The tax rate on land was fixed depending on the quality of the land. Hence, **statement 1 is correct.**

The government also levied other taxes like the grazing tax, the customs duty, tax on gardening and **industries taxes** on manufacture of various articles. The private owners of workshops paid an industries tax. Hence, **statement 2 is correct.**

Q7. Which one of the following was a very important seaport in the Kakatiya kingdom?

- (a) Kakinada
- (b) Motupalli
- (c) Machilipatnam (Masulipatnam)
- (d) Nelluru

Ans : B

Explanation

- **Motupalli** was a famous sea port during Kakatiya Period.
- Marco polo, a Portuguese navigator, visited this place and wrote about the prosperity and power of Andhra during the reign of Kakatiya rulers in his travalogue.

Q8. Which one of the following foreign travellers elaborately discussed about diamonds and diamond mines of India?

- (a) Francois Bernier

- (b) Jean-Baptiste Tavernier
- (c) Jean de Thevenot
- (d) Abbe Barthelemy Carre

Ans : B

Explanation

Jean-Baptiste Tavernier was a 17th century French gem merchant and traveller. Tavernier travelled 120,000 miles at his own expense. He was making six voyages to Persia and India between the years 1630 and 1668.

He published an account of his voyages at the behest of his patron Louis XIV. He wrote about many **significant gems** in his book and also it states that Tavernier identified the **diamond mining sites** in India very clearly. Hence, option A is correct answer.

Q9. Consider the following statements:

1. In the revenue administration of Delhi Sultanate, the in-charge of revenue collection was known as 'Amil'.
2. The Iqta system of Sultans of Delhi was an ancient indigenous institution.
3. The office of 'Mir Bakshi' came into existence during the reign of Khalji Sultans of Delhi.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans : A

Explanation

Statement 1 is correct : The task of collecting revenue directly from peasant and measurement of land rested on **Amils** in the period of Delhi Sultanate.

Statement 2 is incorrect : Under the Iqta system, the land of the empire was divided into several large and small tracts called Iqta and assigned these Iqtas to his soldiers, office.

- Iltutmish established the "Iqta' system" based on Mohammad Gori's ideas. Thus, Iqta system was tax farming system and is not an indigenous system.

Statement 3 is incorrect : Mir Bhakshi headed military department, nobility, information and intelligence agencies during **Mughal period** and not during Delhi sultanate.

Q10. Consider the following statements:

1. Saint Nimbarka was a contemporary of Akbar.
2. Saint Kabir was greatly influenced by Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans : D

Explanation

Both are incorrect statements.

Statement 1 is incorrect : Saint Nimbaraka was probably lived in 12th or 13th century.

Akbar belongs to 16 century. So, both are not contemporaries.

Statement 2 is incorrect : Kabir belongs to 14th century and Ahmad sirhindi to 16th century. Kabir was influenced by Ramananda. Kabir lived much earlier as Ahmad sirhindi. So, there is no chance for influence.

Q11. With reference to Mian Tansen, which one of the following statements is not correct?

- (a) Tansen was the title given to him by Emperor Akbar.
- (b) Tansen composed Dhrupads on Hindu gods and goddesses.
- (c) Tansen composed songs on his patrons.
- (d) Tansen invented many Ragas.

Ans : A

Explanation

- Tansen was the title given to him by **Raja Vikramjit of Gwalior**. Hence, **option A was incorrect**. Akbar gave him the title 'Miyan'.
- Tansen was a court musician in the darbar of Raja Ramachandra of Bandavagarh (Rewa).
- When Akbar heard of his prodigious talent, he sent a 'firman' to the king asking for Tansen and made him one of the Navaratnas in his court.
- Tansen was famous for communicating with animals through his music.

For further reference : <https://www.thehindu.com/entertainment/music/the-legend-of-mian-tansen/article22893454.ece>

Q12. Who among the following Mughal Emperors shifted emphasis from illustrated manuscripts to album and individual portrait?

- (a) Humayun
- (b) Akbar
- (c) Jahangir
- (d) Shah Jahan

Ans : B

Explanation

- The emphasis was shifted from illustrated manuscripts to album and individual portrait was during **Akbar's reign**.
- Prior to Akbar's reign only narrative paintings were made. Akbar ordered making of portrait album of all his grandees/royal servants.

