

UPSC 2021 Prelims

ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL HISTORY Answer Key with Explanation

1. Which one of the following ancient towns is well-known for its elaborate system of water harvesting and management by building a series of dams and channelizing water into connected reservoirs?

- (a) Dholavira
- (b) Kalibangan
- (c) Rakhigarhi
- (d) Ropar

Answer: A

Explanation

- One of the unique features of Dholavira is the sophisticated water conservation system of channels and reservoirs, the earliest found anywhere in the world, built completely of stone. The city had massive reservoirs, three of which are exposed. They were used for storing fresh water brought by rains or to store water diverted from two nearby rivulets.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dholavira#Architecture_and_material_culture

2. From the decline of Guptas until the rise of Harshavardhana in the early seventh century, which of the following kingdoms were holding power in Northern India?

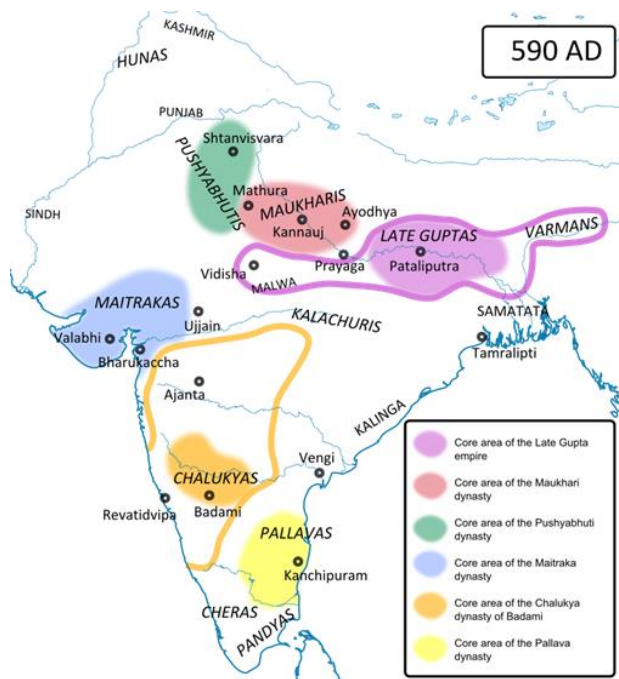
1. The Guptas of Magadha
2. The Paramaras of Malwa
3. The Pushyabhutis of Thanesar
4. The Maukharis of Kanauj
5. The Yadavas of Devagiri
6. The Maitrakas of Valabhi

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1, 2 and 5
- (b) 1, 3, 4 and 6
- (c) 2, 3 and 4
- (d) 5 and 6

Answer: B

Explanation



3. Consider the following pairs: (Historical place) (Well-known for)

1. Burzahom : Rock- cut shrines
2. Chandra-ketugarh : Terracotta art
3. Ganeshwar : Copper artefacts

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

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

Answer: D

Explanation

- The Burzahom archaeological site is located in the Kashmir Valley of Jammu and Kashmir. It is the northernmost excavated Neolithic site of India. Rock-cut shrines were not found during the Neolithic period. Hence **pair 1 is incorrectly matched.**
- Chandraketugarh is an archaeological site located near the Bidyadhari river, about 35 kilometres (22 mi) north-east of Kolkata, India. Chandraketugarh features many examples of **terracotta art**, displaying an unusual degree of precision and craftsmanship. These plaques are comparable to those found at other better-known sites such as Kaushambi and Ahichhatra. The terracotta plaques from these sites often carry similar motifs executed in nearly identical fashion. This similarity suggests an established

communication link and common cultural heritage among these sites. Hence **statement 2 is Correct**

- Ganeshwar is a village in Neem-Ka-Thana Tehsil (Mandal) in the Sikar District of the Indian state of Rajasthan. Ganeshwar mainly supplied **copper objects** to Harappa. Hence **statement 3 is Correct.**

4. With reference to the history of ancient India, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Mitakshara was the civil law for upper castes and Dayabhaga was the civil law for lower castes.
2. In the Mitakshara system, the sons can claim right to the property during the lifetime of the father, whereas in the Dayabhaga system it is only after the death of the father that the sons can claim right to the property.
3. The Mitakshara system deals with the matters related to the property held by male members only of a family, whereas the Dayabhaga system deals with the matters related to the property held by both male and female members of a family.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

Answer: B or D

<http://incometaxmanagement.com/Pages/HUF/4-Mitakshara-Law-Dayabhaga-Law-HUF.html>

<https://blog.lawtantra.org/2021/04/Mitakshara-Law--Dayabhaga-Law.html>

5. With reference to the history of ancient India, Bhavabhuti, Hastimalla and Kshemeshvara were famous

- (a) Jain monks
- (b) Playwrights
- (c) Temple architects
- (d) Philosophers

Answer: B

Explanation

- Bhavabhuti was an 8th-century scholar of India noted for his plays and poetry, written in Sanskrit. His plays are considered the equal of the works of Kalidasa.
- Hastimalla is a 13th century scholar who wrote about the Hoysala kingdom.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Karnataka_literature

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhavabhuti#Works>

MEDIEVAL HISTORY

1. According to Portuguese writer Nuniz, the women in the Vijayanagara Empire were experts in which of the following areas?

1. Wrestling
2. Astrology
3. Accounting
4. Soothsaying

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

Answer: D

Explanation

- Women in general occupied a high position in Vijayanagara society and instances of the active part they took in the political, social and literary life of the country are not rare, besides being trained in **wrestling, handling swords and shields, music and other fine arts**, some of them at any rate received a fair amount of **literary education**.
- Nuniz writes: "he (the king of Vijaynagar) has also women who **wrestle**, and others who are **astrologers and soothsayers**; and he has woman who write all the **accounts** of expenses that are incurred inside the gates and others whose duty it is to write all the affairs of the kingdom and compare their books with those of the writers outside; he has women also for **music**, who play instruments and sing. Even the wives of the king are well versed in music...it is said that he has **judges**, as well as bailiffs and watchmen who every night guard the palace, and these are women.

<https://ykcollege.ac.in/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/ADMINSTRATION-OF-VIAJANAGAR-converted.pdf>

2. Consider the following statements:

1. It was during the regin of Iltutmish that Chengiz Khan reached the Indus in pursuit of the fugitive Khwarezm prince.
2. It was during the regin of Muhammad bin Tughluq that Taimur occupyes Multan and crossed the Indus.
3. It was during the regin of Deva Raya II of Vijayanagara Empire that Vasco da Gama reached the coast of Kerala.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: A

Explanation

- It was during the reign of Iltutmish that Chengiz Khan reached the Indus in pursuit of the fugitive Khwarezm prince. Hence **statement 1 is correct.**
- The period of Mahmud bin Tughlaq was 1325 to 1351. During the reign of Nasrud-din Muhammad Shah(1394-1412), the last Tughlaq ruler, Taimur invaded India in 1398. Hence **statement 2 is incorrect.**
- Devaraya –II reign was from 1422 to 1446. Vasco Da Gama came to India in 1498. Hence **statement 3 is incorrect.**

3. With reference to medieval India, which one of the following is the correct sequence in ascending order in terms of size?

- (a) Paragana-Sarkar-Suba
- (b) Sarkar-Pragana-Suba
- (c) Suba-Sarkar-Pragana
- (d) Pragana-Suba-Sarkar

Answer: A

Explanation

The Mughals retained many features of the administrative system of the Sultanate and Shershah. Under Shershah the administrative units of **Pargana** (a group of vil- lages), **sarkar** (a group of parganas) and groups of sarkars (some what like **subas or province**) were placed under specific offices. The Mughals formalized a new territo- rial unit called suba. Institutions of Jagir and Mansab system were also introduced by the Mughals. Thus change and continuity both marked the Mughal administrative structure which brought about a high degree of centralisation in the system.

<https://nios.ac.in/media/documents/SrSec315NEW/315 History Eng/315 History Eng Lesson12.pdf>

Page: 222 - Satish chandra (Private edition)

4. With reference to Indian history, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. The Nizamat of Arcot emerged from Hyderabad State.
2. The Mysore Kingdom emerged from the Vijayanagara Empire.
3. Rohilkhand Kingdom was formed out of the territories occupied by Ahmad Shah Durrani.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

Answer: A

Explanation

- The Carnatic (Arcot) was a dependency of Hyderabad Deccan, and was under the legal purview of the Nizam of Hyderabad, until their demise. Hence **statement 1 is correct**.
- The Mysore kingdom, which was founded and ruled for most part by the Hindu Wodeyar family, initially served as a vassal state of the Vijayanagara Empire. Hence **statement 2 is correct**.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carnatic_Sultanate