# Ancient History

2019 · UPSC CSE · Ancient History

**Q1.**

**With reference to forced labour (Vishti) in India during the Gupta period, which one of the following statements is correct?**

**A.** It was considered a source of income for the State, a sort of tax paid by the people.

**B.** It was totally absent in the Madhya Pradesh and Kathiawar regions of the Gupta Empire.

**C.** The forced labourer was entitled to weekly wages.

**D.** The eldest son of the labourer was sent as the forced labourer.

**Correct answer:** Option A — It was considered a source of income for the State, a sort of tax paid by the people.

## Explanation

**Correct Answer: (a) — It was considered a source of income for the State, a sort of tax paid by the people**

1. *Vishti* referred to forced or unpaid labour imposed on people by the state or authorities.
2. It could function as a form of tax or obligation, requiring labour rather than payment in money or goods.

3. It was not generally a system of weekly paid employment, and historical evidence does not support the other options.

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**Q2.**

**In which of the following relief sculpture inscriptions is ‘Ranyo Ashokan’ (King Ashoka) mentioned along with the stone portrait of Ashoka?**

**A.** Kanganahalli

**B.** Sanchi

**C.** Shahbazgarhi

**D.** Sohgaura

**Correct answer:** Option A — Kanganahalli

## Explanation

**Correct Answer: (a) — Kanganahalli**

1. Kanganahalli, an important Buddhist archaeological site in Karnataka, yielded a relief sculpture depicting Ashoka.
2. The inscription includes the Prakrit expression “Ranyo Ashoka,” meaning “King Ashoka.”
3. The find is significant evidence of the representation and memory of Ashoka in early Buddhist art.

**Q3.**

**Which one of the following is not a Harappan site?**

**A.** Chanhudaro

**B.** Kot Diji

**C.** Sohgaura

**D.** Desalpur

**Correct answer:** Option C — Sohgaura

## Explanation

**Correct Answer: (c) — Sohgaura**

1. Chanhudaro was an important Harappan settlement known for craft production.
2. Kot Diji is a significant pre-Harappan and early Harappan archaeological site in present-day Pakistan.
3. Desalpur is a Harappan site in Gujarat.
4. Sohgaura is known for an ancient copper-plate inscription, not as a Harappan site.

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**Q4.**

**With reference to cultural history of India consider the following pairs:**

| | Term | Meaning |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Parivrajaka | Renunciant and Wanderer |
| 2. | Shramana | Priest with a high status |
| 3. | Upasaka | Lay follower of buddhism |

**Which of the pairs given above are correctly matched?**

**A.** 1 and 2 only

**B.** 1 and 3 only

**C.** 2 and 3 only

**D.** 1,2 and 3

**Correct answer:** Option B — 1 and 3 only

## Explanation

**Correct Answer: (B) — 1 and 3 only**

1. **Pair 1 is correctly matched:** Parivrajaka refers to a wandering ascetic or renunciant who gives up worldly life in pursuit of spiritual knowledge.
2. **Pair 2 is incorrectly matched:** Shramana refers to an ascetic or renunciant belonging to non-Vedic religious traditions. It does not mean a priest with high status.

3. **Pair 3 is correctly matched:** Upasaka refers to a lay follower of Buddhism who accepts its teachings without becoming a monk.

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**Q5.**

**With reference to the period of Gupta dynasty in ancient India, the towns Ghantasala, Kadura and Chaul were well known as**

**A.** ports handling foreign trade

**B.** capital of powerful kingdoms

**C.** places of exquisite stone art and architecture

**D.** important Buddhist pilgrimage centres

**Correct answer:** Option A — ports handling foreign trade

## Explanation

**Correct Answer: (A) — ports handling foreign trade**

Ghantasala, Kadura and Chaul were important ancient port towns associated with maritime trade. They facilitated commercial exchanges with regions beyond the Indian subcontinent, reflecting the importance of overseas trade during ancient India.

**Q6.**

**With reference to the history of India, consider the following pairs:**

| | Famous Place | Present State |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Bhilsa | Madhya Pradesh |
| 2. | Dwarasamudra | Maharashtra |
| 3. | Girinagar | Gujarat |
| 4. | Shaneshwara | Uttar Pradesh |

**Which of the pairs given above are correctly matched?**

**A.** 1 and 3 only

**B.** 1 and 4 only

**C.** 2 and 3 only

**D.** 2 and 4 only

**Correct answer:** Option A — 1 and 3 only

## Explanation

**Correct Answer: (A) — 1 and 3 only**

1. **Pair 1 is correctly matched:** Bhilsa, identified with present-day Vidisha, is located in Madhya Pradesh.

2. **Pair 2 is incorrectly matched:** Dwarasamudra, the capital of the Hoysala dynasty, is present-day Halebidu in Karnataka, not Maharashtra.
3. **Pair 3 is correctly matched:** Girinagar, associated with ancient Junagadh, is located in Gujarat.
4. **Pair 4 is incorrectly matched:** Shaneshwara is not correctly located in Uttar Pradesh in this historical context.

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**Q7.**

**Who among the following rulers advised his subjects through this inscription?**

**"Whosoever praises his religious sect or blames other sects out of excessive devotion to his own sect, with the view of glorifying his own sect, he rather injures his own sect very severely."**

**A.** Ashoka

**B.** Samudragupta

**C.** Harshavardhana

**D.** Krishna Deva Raya

**Correct answer:** Option A — Ashoka

## Explanation

**Correct Answer: (a) — Ashoka**

1. **Option (a) is correct:** The inscription reflects Ashoka's policy of Dhamma and religious tolerance. In his Major Rock Edict XII, Ashoka emphasised respect for all religious sects and discouraged excessive praise of one's own religion and criticism of others.

2. **Option (b) is incorrect:** Samudragupta is known for his military conquests, as described in the Allahabad Pillar inscription.

3. **Option (c) is incorrect:** Harshavardhana was a ruler of the Pushyabhuti dynasty and is associated with the promotion of Buddhism and other religious traditions, but this inscription is attributed to Ashoka.

4. **Option (d) is incorrect:** Krishna Deva Raya was a prominent ruler of the Vijayanagara Empire and was known for patronising literature, art and temple architecture.

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**Q8.**

**With reference to the history of India, the terms "kulyavapa" and "dronavapa" denote**

**A.** measurement of land

**B.** coins of different monetary value

**C.** classification of urban land

**D.** religious rituals

**Correct answer:** Option A — measurement of land

## Explanation

**Correct Answer: (a) — Measurement of land**

1. **Option (a) is correct:** Kulyavapa and Dronavapa were ancient Indian units used for measuring land. These terms are found in historical land grants and inscriptions, particularly from the Gupta period. They were associated with the quantity of seed required to sow a particular area of land.

2. **Option (b) is incorrect:** These terms did not refer to coins or monetary denominations.

3. **Option (c) is incorrect:** They were units of land measurement, not categories of urban land.

4. **Option (d) is incorrect:** They were not religious rituals or ceremonial practices.

**Q9.**

**Consider the following events in the history of India:**

1. Rise of Pratiharas under King Bhoja

2. Establishment of Pallava power under Mahendravarman - I

3. Establishment of Chola Parantaka – I

4. Pala dynasty founded by Gopala

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

**A.** 2-1-4-3

**B.** 3-1-4-2

**C.** 2 -4-1-3

**D.** 3-4-1-2

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**Correct answer:** Option C — 2 -4-1-3

## Explanation

**Correct Answer: (c) — 2 -4-1-3**

The correct chronological sequence is:

1. **Establishment of Pallava power under Mahendravarman I:** Mahendravarman I ruled approximately from 600 to 630 CE and was an important ruler of the Pallava dynasty.

2. **Pala dynasty founded by Gopala:** Gopala established the Pala dynasty in Bengal around 750 CE.

3. **Rise of Pratiharas under King Bhoja:** Mihira Bhoja, one of the most powerful Gurjara-Pratihara rulers, ruled approximately from 836 to 885 CE.

4. **Establishment of Chola Parantaka I:** Parantaka I ruled the Chola kingdom from approximately 907 to 955 CE and expanded Chola power in South India.

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**Q10.**

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

1. Sthaviravadins belong to Mahayana Buddhism.

2. Lokottaravadin sect was an offshoot of Mahasanghika sect of Buddhism.

3. The deification of Buddha by Mahasanghikas fostered the Mahayana Buddhism.

**Which of the statements given above are correct?**

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**A.** 1 and 2 only

**B.** 2 and 3 only

**C.** 3 only

**D.** 1, 2 and 3

**Correct answer:** Option B — 2 and 3 only

## Explanation

**Correct Answer: (b) — 2 and 3 only**

1. **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Sthaviravadins belonged to an early Buddhist school associated with the conservative tradition of Buddhism. They were not a Mahayana Buddhist sect.

2. **Statement 2 is correct:** The Lokottaravada sect was a branch of the Mahasanghika school of Buddhism. It emphasised the transcendental or supramundane nature of the Buddha.

3. **Statement 3 is correct:** The Mahasanghika tradition increasingly emphasised the transcendental nature and exalted status of the Buddha. These ideas contributed to the philosophical and religious developments that fostered the emergence of Mahayana Buddhism.

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