

IAS MAINS 2024

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES — of — ART & CULTURE

Linkages of
Concepts
& Current
Dimensions



Topic wise
segregated
Previous Year
Questions



Practice
Questions
for High
Retention



Infused with
Case Studies,
Infographics,
& Maps"



AIR
4

P K SIDHARTH
RAMKUMAR



AIR
9

NAUSHEEN



AIR
10

AISHWARYAM
PRAJAPATI



AIR
13

MEDHA ANAND



AIR
15

KUNAL RASTOGI



AIR
16

AYAN JAIN



AIR
20

AKASH VERMA
... & many more.

Learn, How Toppers
benefitted from
GS SCORE!

Access **400+**
TOPPER'S COPIES



We are **MAINS...**



8448496262



iascore.in

TRUSTED *by* TOPPERS



MEDHA ANAND
AIR-13 (CSE-2023)

“ I was a part of with Mains Test Series interview guidance at GS Score and Sir helped me in enhancing both my answer writing skills in GS and Essay. I am truly grateful to sir for the personal guidance and mentorship he offered me. ”



NITESH KUMAR MISHRA
AIR-158 (CSE-2023)

“ GS SCORE has been really helpful in my preparation. I had used the Mains Test Series and the Feedback and guidance was really awesome. GS SCORE was the only mock which I gave and the feedback motivated and helped me alot. ”



AMBIKA RAINA
AIR-164 (CSE-2022)

“ Answer Writing is always considered as a vital part for success in UPSC. GS SCORE helped me in building a strong and solid foundation for development of Answer Writing skills. Thank you! ”



AISHWARYAM
AIR-10 (CSE-2023)

“ GS SCORE helped me during the preparation I practised lot of mock test on the GS Score platform to understand the structure of answer writing. I am grateful to this platform for providing such guidance to me and many more aspirants. ”



SAURABH SHARMA
AIR-23 (CSE-2023)

“ Mains Tests at GS SCORE in the simulated environment helped me thoroughly complete my preparation with discipline. I would like to thank GSSCORE. ”



SWATI SHARMA
AIR-15 (CSE-2022)

“ UPSC Style mock papers coupled with evaluation by faculty members of GS SCORE themselves enhanced my confidence to write answers as per the demand. I am thankful. ”

and many more...

Access
400+
TOPPERS
COPIES



Scan QR Code
to get the copies

We are **MAINS...**

CONTENT

1. INDIAN ART HERITAGE	1
▶ Coinage of India.....	1
▶ The Legacy of Devadasi Tradition	3
▶ Aadi Mahotsav & Empowerment of Tribal Communities	4
▶ Preserving India's Cultural Heritage	5
▶ The City of Dwarka	6
▶ India's Ancient Maritime Heritage	6
▶ Global Influence in Medieval Indian Art.....	7
▶ Rich Tradition of Indian Miniature Painting	8
▶ Nataraja Statue	8
▶ Pre-Historic age- Paintings: Reflecting Socio-Cultural Patterns and Practices	10
2. ARCHITECTURE	13
▶ Indian Temple Architecture	13
▶ Chalukyan Architecture	14
▶ Hoysalas Architecture.....	14
▶ Delhi Sultanate.....	15
▶ Khajuraho Group of Monuments	16
3. DYNASTY/EMPIRE	17
▶ Maratha Empire.....	17
▶ The rise of Transregional Empires	18
▶ Maritime Legacy of the Chola Dynasty	19
▶ Climate and Indian Empires	20
▶ Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty	21
4. RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY	23
▶ Adi Shankaracharya & his Philosophy	23
▶ Upanishads	24
▶ Bhakti Movemen	25

- ▶ Vedic Religion 26
- ▶ Brahma Samaj 27
- ▶ Ramakrishna Mission 28
- ▶ Socio-Religious Reform Movements in 19th Century 29

5. IMPORTANT PERSONALITIES31

- ▶ Rabindranath Tagore 31
- ▶ Mihir Bhoja 32
- ▶ Sri Aurobindo 33
- ▶ Alluri Sitha Rama Raju 33
- ▶ Swami Sahajanand Saraswati 34
- ▶ Sree Narayana Guru (1856-1928) 35
- ▶ Bhagwan Birsa Munda 36

6. HISTORICAL TRAVELLERS 40

- ▶ Ayodhya's historical narratives 40
- ▶ Chinese Pilgrim Travellers to India 41
- ▶ Arab Travellers and Cultural Encounters 41

7. MISCELLANEOUS43

- ▶ Development of India Through Different Historical Stages 43
- ▶ Keeladi Excavations 45
- ▶ Menhirs 46
- ▶ Phanigiri Artefacts 47
- ▶ Kuli Language 48
- ▶ Sundargarh Natural Arch 48
- ▶ Mewar school of painting 49
- ▶ Sisupalgarh 50

1

INDIAN ART HERITAGE

1. COINAGE OF INDIA

CONTEXT: In recent times, remarkable discoveries have been made of coins belonging to Ikshavu period (Phanigiri village, Telangana) and Kushana Empire.

Key-highlights of the Findings:

- ▶ **Ikshavu:** Dating back to the Ikshvaku period, these coins offer valuable insights into ancient economic and cultural practices. These coins feature an elephant motif on the obverse side and Ujjain symbol on the reverse.
 - Phanigiri village is surrounded by numerous Buddhist sites, including Vardhamanukota, Gajula Banda, Tirumalagiri, Nagaram, Singaram, Aravapalli, Iyyavaripalli, Arlagaddagudem, and Yeleswaram, indicating its historical significance.
 - The village has been inhabited since pre/proto-historic times and has witnessed various periods of occupation, ranging from early historic to early medieval and **Asaf Jahi periods**, flourishing from 1000 BCE to the 18th century CE.
- ▶ **Kushana:** The coins have been found with images consisting of **God and Goddesses** and are considered the first to use the image of '**Goddess Lakshmi**' on their coins. India has a long tradition of coinage with images of **gods and goddesses**.
- ▶ Kushans, who hailed from the **Central Asian region** and ruled till the 3rd century AD, were the first to use the **image of Goddess Lakshmi** on their coins, along with '**Ardochsho**', the **Iranic Goddess** of wealth.



- ▶ The Kushans also depicted Oesho (Shiva), moon deity Miro and Buddha in their coinage.

▣ Coinage of India

- ▶ The Coinage of India began anywhere between the early 1st millennium BCE to the 6th century BCE and consisted mainly of copper and silver coins in its initial stage.
- ▶ The coins of this period were 'Karshapanas' or 'Pana'.
- ▶ The kingdoms that minted their own coins were; Gandhara, Kuntala, Kuru, Magadha, Panchala, Shakya, Surasena, Surashtra, and Vidarbha, etc.
- ▶ The Vijayanagara kings also used coinage with Hindu idols.
- ▶ Harihara –II (1377-1404) introduced coins that had Brahma-Saraswati, Vishnu-Lakshmi, and Shiva-Parvati.
- ▶ The tradition of minting coins to win the confidence of local people continued when the French and Dutch minted coins showing Vishnu between 1715 and 1774 and Goddess Kali till the late 17th century.

FACT BOX

Ikshvaku period

- The Ikshvaku kingdom flourished for about one hundred years, from 220 to 320 CE.
- It patronised Buddhism, Brahminism, as well as older folk religions.
- Their capital city, Vijayapuri, had at least 18 Brahminical temples, mostly along the Krishna riverfront.

The Kushana Empire:

- Kushanas were descended from the Yuezhi, a people that ruled over most of the northern Indian subcontinent, Afghanistan, and parts of Central Asia during the first three centuries of the Common Era.
 - ▶ The Yuezhi conquered Bactria in the 2nd century BCE and divided the country into five chiefdoms, one of which was that of the Kushans (Guishuang).
- Under Kaniska I (flourished 1st century CE) and his successors, the Kushan kingdom reached its height.
- It was acknowledged as one of the four great Eurasian powers of its time (the others being China, Rome, and Parthia).
- The Kushans were instrumental in spreading Buddhism in Central Asia and China and in developing Mahayana Buddhism and the Gandhara and Mathura schools of art.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION

- Q. How do you justify the view that the level of the excellence of the Gupta numismatic art is not at all noticeable in later times? (2017)

PRACTICE QUESTION

- Q. Discuss the recent significant discoveries of coins belonging to the Ikshvaku period and Kushana Empire, highlighting their historical and cultural significance in shaping ancient India's economic and cultural landscape.



2. THE LEGACY OF DEVADASI TRADITION

CONTEXT: The Suchindram temple, situated in Tamil Nadu, stands as a testament to the rich cultural heritage intertwined with the practice of Devadasi tradition. From its soaring rajagopuram to its intricately sculpted precincts, the temple reflects centuries of patronage and artistic embellishment by successive dynasties.

o **Historical Significance:**

- ▶ The Suchindram temple, dedicated to **Sthanumalayan and Then Thiruvengkatanathan**, has been a focal point of worship and artistic expression since ancient times. While smaller shrines within the complex date back to earlier periods, the temple witnessed a surge in architectural splendor from the ninth century onwards, as each dynasty sought to enhance its grandeur.

- ▶ **Devadasi Community and Endowments:** Central to the temple's history is the Devadasi community, whose strong connection with the shrine is evident from inscriptions dating back to the **13th century**, though the practice likely predates these records.
 - Divided into two principal groups—**sirappukkudi and murakkudi**—the Devadasis played a crucial role in temple rituals and ceremonies. They were honored by kings and endowed the temple with their wealth, leaving behind a legacy of contributions.
- ▶ **Ceremonial Induction and Retirement:** The induction of a Devadasi into the shrine was a meticulously observed ceremony, and their retirement followed a proper procedure. Throughout their service, Devadasis were richly honored by successive dynasties, with some even bestowed with titles like 'Rayar' during the period of Venad rulers.
- ▶ **Architectural Commemorations:** Many parts of the Suchindram temple are attributed to the donations of Devadasis, underscoring their social importance. The entrance porch and other spaces within the temple bear statues and inscriptions commemorating the contributions of Devadasis, such as the eight pillars representing eight Devadasis who contributed to the construction in the **16th century**.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. How did the Devadasi community contribute to the artistic embellishment and spiritual ethos of temple architecture in medieval India?

3. AADI MAHOTSAV & EMPOWERMENT OF TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

CONTEXT: The Aadi Mahotsav, a national tribal festival, celebrates the vibrant culture, crafts, cuisine, and commerce of India's tribal communities. Organized by the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation Limited (TRIFED), the event highlights the rich legacy of tribal traditions while also shedding light on the challenges faced by these communities.

- ▶ **Tribal Vulnerability:** India is home to the second-largest tribal population globally, constituting approximately 8.9% of the total population. However, tribal communities are often labeled as 'vulnerable' due to factors such as primitive traits, geographical isolation, and backwardness. Dependency on traditional livelihood practices like **hunting and gathering**, coupled with low literacy rates, exacerbates their socio-economic challenges.
- ▶ **Government Initiatives:** The **Ministry of Tribal Affairs**, established in 1999, spearheads efforts for the holistic development of **Scheduled Tribes (STs)**. Initiatives such as **Eklavya Model Residential Schools**, **Pradhan Mantri Vanbandhu Vikas Yojana**, and **Pradhan Mantri Adi Adarsh Gram Yojana** aim to provide quality education, promote entrepreneurship, and enhance infrastructure in tribal areas.
- ▶ **TRIFED and Tribal Livelihoods:** TRIFED plays a crucial role in supporting retail marketing and livelihood development among tribal communities through initiatives like the **Van Dhan Yojana**. By ensuring **Minimum Support Price for Minor Forest Produce** and facilitating marketing support, TRIFED empowers tribal artisans and entrepreneurs.
- ▶ **Healthcare and Recognition:** The government's health initiatives, including **Mission Indradhanush** and efforts to combat diseases like **Sickle Cell Anemia**, prioritize tribal well-being. Furthermore, the establishment of **10 Tribal Freedom Fighters' Museums** honors the contributions of tribal heroes to India's freedom struggle.
- ▶ **Challenges and the Way Forward:** Despite these initiatives, challenges persist in addressing the multifaceted needs of tribal communities. Geographical isolation, lack of access to quality education and healthcare, and limited economic opportunities continue to hinder their socio-economic progress.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the vulnerabilities faced by tribal communities in India and examine the government's initiatives aimed at their socio-economic empowerment. What are the persistent challenges in ensuring holistic development, and how can they be addressed effectively?

4. PRESERVING INDIA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

CONTEXT: Urban centers serve as hubs of cultural, social, and economic activity, with historical sites forming the heart of these cities. India, renowned for its ancient and diverse civilization, boasts a rich tangible and intangible cultural heritage. However, preserving these heritage sites amidst rapid urbanization poses significant challenges.

- ▶ **India's Cultural Heritage:** India's cultural heritage encompasses archaeological sites, monuments, artifacts, languages, festivals, music, and social practices. This rich diversity reflects centuries of assimilation of various cultural trends, contributing to India's identity and regional diversity.
- ▶ **Significance of Cultural Heritage:** Cultural heritage conveys values, represents social identity, fosters mutual comprehension, and drives economic development. However, accelerating globalization, urban growth, environmental issues, and demographic changes threaten the preservation of these heritage sites.
- ▶ **Legal Framework for Heritage Conservation:** The Indian Constitution mandates the protection of monuments, places, and objects of artistic or historic interest under Article 49. Citizens are also duty-bound to value and preserve India's rich heritage under Article 51 A (f). Additionally, laws like the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958, empower authorities to safeguard heritage structures.
- ▶ The National Monuments Authority (NMA) established in accordance with the AMASR Act is responsible for the conservation and preservation of monuments and sites (and banned/restricted areas surrounding centrally designated monuments).
- ▶ One of the NMA's roles is to evaluate granting permits to applicants for construction-related activities in restricted and regulated areas.
- ▶ **Efforts and Challenges in Conservation:** The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) oversees the preservation of nationally protected monuments, while state governments manage state-protected ones. Despite these efforts, challenges persist, including the selection process, financial constraints, and reconciling heritage conservation with urban development.
- ▶ The main challenges facing heritage preservation in India include the trade-off between heritage site conservation and the demands of urbanization and economic development. The impact of urbanization on cultural heritage sites is a significant concern, as increasing urbanization pressures may lead to a reevaluation of the value of these sites.,
- ▶ **City-Level Conservation Initiatives:** Several Indian cities have developed Heritage Lists to conserve local heritage sites of significance. These lists classify structures based on their historical and cultural importance, facilitating focused conservation efforts.

▣ Suggested Measures:

- ▶ **Effective Strategy Formulation:** Balancing heritage preservation with urban development requires careful strategy formulation.
- ▶ **Learning from Experts:** Guidance from UNESCO's World Heritage List can inform heritage selection and conservation strategies.
- ▶ **Increasing Public Awareness:** Educating the public about the importance of heritage preservation is crucial for fostering a culture of conservation.
- ▶ **Investment:** Governments should allocate funds to enhance the surrounding conditions of heritage sites, ensuring their long-term preservation.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION

Q. Safeguarding the Indian art heritage is the need of the moment. Discuss. [2018]

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the significance of India's cultural heritage in urban centers and analyze the challenges faced in its conservation. What measures can be adopted to ensure effective preservation while accommodating urban development needs?

5. THE CITY OF DWARKA

CONTEXT: Dwarka, often referred to as the kingdom of Lord Krishna, holds immense significance in Hindu mythology and historical narratives. Recent underwater prayers by Prime Minister Narendra Modi have reignited interest in the ancient city, prompting a closer examination of its mythical roots and archaeological evidence.

- ▶ **The Legendary City of Dwarka:** Derived from Sanskrit, 'Dwarka' translates to 'gate' and has historically served as a gateway to India, facilitating trade between the subcontinent and West Asia. According to Hindu mythology, Dwarka was reclaimed from the sea by Lord Krishna and later submerged as he departed, marking the onset of the Kali Yuga.
- ▶ **The Dwarkadhish Temple:** Today, the Dwarkadhish Temple stands as a focal point for devotees, believed to have been established over 2500 years ago by Lord Krishna's great-grandson, Vajranabh. Despite renovations over the centuries, the temple retains ancient echoes, bearing imprints from the 16th and 19th centuries.
- ▶ **Archaeological Revelations:** While Dwarka's mythical narrative is deeply entrenched in the Puranas, archaeological excavations have unearthed tangible evidence of its existence. Offshore explorations have revealed remnants of a city-state dating back to 2000 BC, with Bet Dwarka island serving as a focal point for discoveries.
- ▶ **Excavations and Discoveries:** The quest to uncover Dwarka's submerged secrets began in the 1930s, with subsequent excavations shedding light on ancient artefacts and submerged structures. Notably, material examination and carbon dating of recovered objects suggest habitation dating back to pre-Harappan times, validating Dwarka's historical reality.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. What are the underwater archaeological sites in India? Discuss the potential of underwater archaeology in understanding the history.

6. INDIA'S ANCIENT MARITIME HERITAGE

CONTEXT: A significant initiative has been launched by the Central government, in collaboration with the Navy, the Culture Ministry, and Goa-based shipbuilding company Hodi Innovations, to revive an ancient maritime heritage of India – the stitched shipbuilding method.

- ▶ **About the Initiative:** The project aims to construct a 21-meter "stitched ship" using traditional techniques, wherein wooden planks are stitched together using ropes, cords, coconut fibers, natural resins, and oils. Costing approximately Rs 9 crore, the project is expected to take around 22 months to complete. Once ready, the ship will embark on a voyage from Odisha to Bali, Indonesia, in November 2025, with a crew of 13 Indian Navy members.

- ▶ **Historical Linkage:** The maritime heritage of India, particularly in the region of **Kalinga (present-day Odisha)**, dates back to ancient times. Ports like **Tamralipti, Manikpatna, and Pithunda** facilitated trade with countries across the sea, including Indonesia. Festivals like **Bali Yatra** in Odisha commemorate this rich maritime history, reflecting the cultural exchange between India and Indonesia.
- ▶ **Stitched Shipbuilding Method:** The stitched shipbuilding method, also known as the **Tankai method**, is a 2000-year-old technique used to construct ships by stitching wooden planks together instead of using nails. This method offers flexibility and durability, making the ships less susceptible to damage from shoals and sandbars. Despite the advent of **European shipbuilding techniques**, this traditional method has persisted in certain coastal regions of India, primarily for small fishing boats.
- ▶ **Benefits of Stitched Shipbuilding:**
 - **Durability:** Ships constructed using the stitched method are more durable as nails are not used, reducing the risk of corrosion.
 - **Maneuverability:** These ships are less prone to damage from shoals and sandbars, allowing for safer navigation in shallow waters.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the significance of reviving India's ancient maritime heritage through the stitched shipbuilding method, highlighting its historical relevance and potential benefits for contemporary maritime trade.

7. GLOBAL INFLUENCE IN MEDIEVAL INDIAN ART

CONTEXT: In the tranquil town of Moodbidri near Mangalore, Karnataka, stands a Jain temple adorned with unexpected carvings—sinuous dragons and uncertainly carved giraffes—testifying to the global interactions of 15th-century India. The presence of these exotic motifs in a South Indian shrine prompts a closer examination of medieval globalization and its impact on Indian art and culture.

- ▶ **African Trade and Indian Ocean Networks:** While premodern Indian trade with Southeast Asia, China, and Arabia is well-documented, the role of Africa in these networks often goes unnoticed.
 - The east coast of Africa, home to Swahili-speaking cities and kingdoms, engaged in intensive trade with the Indian subcontinent, exchanging goods such as ivory, leopard skins, and tortoiseshell for textiles, jewelry, and spices.
 - Chinese ceramics, a prized commodity, were also imported into Africa through Indian merchants, particularly Gujaratis.
- ▶ **Chinese Diplomacy and Exotic Animals:** The emergence of the **Ming dynasty** in China brought a new player into the Indian Ocean arena. Under the **Yongle emperor, Admiral Zheng He** led massive naval expeditions aimed at reworking economic and political networks in the region.
 - Alongside diplomatic missions, these expeditions brought exotic treasures, including **giraffes, considered auspicious beasts that legitimized the emperor's rule.**
 - African states, such as **Malindi and Aden**, sent **giraffes as diplomatic gifts to China**, showcasing their prestige and trading capabilities.
- ▶ **Artistic Expression and Globalization:** The arrival of giraffes and other exotic goods from Africa left a lasting impression on Indian merchants and artisans. When commissioning the **Moodbidri temple in 1430**, these merchants incorporated motifs of dragons and giraffes, symbols of the vast globalized world in which they operated. These carvings not only celebrated **India's participation in transregional trade networks** but also reflected the cosmopolitan outlook of Indian society during this period.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. How did transregional trade networks influence artistic expression and cultural exchange in premodern India?

8. RICH TRADITION OF INDIAN MINIATURE PAINTING

CONTEXT: The recent demise of Brijinder Nath Goswamy, a Padma Bhushan awardee and renowned Indian art historian, has brought into focus his significant contributions to the study of Indian miniature painting tradition. Through his groundbreaking research and scholarly insights, Goswamy shed light on the intricate family lineages of artists and the evolution of miniature painting styles in India.

- ▶ **The Tradition:** Indian miniature paintings, characterized by their **small size and vibrant colors**, have a rich history dating back to ancient times. These intricate artworks, crafted on diverse materials, encapsulate religious, mythological, and historical narratives, reflecting the spiritual and cultural ethos of the times.
- ▶ **Historical Roots and Evolution:** The tradition of miniature painting in India traces its origins to the Buddhist Pala dynasty, flourishing during the **8th to 11th centuries**.
 - Initially inscribed on palm leaves, these paintings later transitioned to paper, gaining prominence during the **Mughal Empire's expansion** in the **16th century**.
- ▶ **Mughal Influence and Beyond:** Under Mughal patronage, miniature paintings attained new heights of sophistication, characterized by meticulous detailing and vibrant colors. However, the decline during Aurangzeb's rule led to the emergence of regional styles like **Pahari and Deccan painting**, each with its distinct aesthetic and thematic focus.
- ▶ **Goswamy's Contributions:** Goswamy's seminal article on Pahari painting revolutionized the understanding of miniature painting styles by emphasizing the pivotal role of family lineages. Through meticulous research, he reconstructed artist networks and restored the identities of obscure painters, enriching our knowledge of India's artistic heritage.
 - Goswamy's work transcended the realm of art history, serving as a beacon of historical restoration. By recognizing the contributions of individual artists and their familial legacies, he preserved the cultural heritage embedded in miniature paintings, ensuring their enduring legacy.
- ▶ **Famous Miniature Painting Schools:** The Indian miniature painting tradition encompasses diverse regional schools, each with its unique stylistic nuances and thematic motifs. From the bold colors of the Rajput school to the fusion of Persian and Indian styles in the Mughal school, these artistic traditions showcase the richness and diversity of Indian artistry.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the contributions of Brijinder Nath Goswamy to the study of Indian miniature painting tradition. How did his research on family lineages and artistic networks enrich our understanding of this rich cultural heritage?

9. NATARAJA STATUE

CONTEXT: Ashtadhatu Natraja Statute at Bharat Mandapam and importance of Natraja (Chola Bronze sculpture) in Indian Culture.

▣ Key specifications

- ▶ The remarkable Nataraja statue, crafted from an ashtadhatu (eight-metal alloy) by artisans from Tamil Nadu, weighs 18 tonnes.
- ▶ The design of the Nataraja statue is inspired by three esteemed Nataraja idols from the Thillai Nataraja Temple in Chidambaram, the Uma Maheswarar Temple in Konerirajapuram, and the UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Brihadeeswara (Big) Temple in Thanjavur.
- ▶ This blend offers profound insights into the history and religious symbolism of Lord Shiva's dancing form. The Nataraja sculpture at Bharat Mandapam was crafted using the lost wax method.

▣ Emergence of Nataraja Form:

- ▶ The concept of Shiva as Nataraja, the dancer, began around the 5th century AD. Early depictions of Shiva's dance laid the foundation for the symbolism of Nataraja.
- ▶ During the Chola dynasty (9th-11th centuries AD), the Nataraja form evolved significantly.
- ▶ The Cholas, devout followers of Shiva, emphasized his worship. They built grand Shiva temples, like the Brihadeeswara Temple in Thanjavur, focusing on Shaiva figures in their sculptures.

▣ Evolution of Nataraja Iconography:

- ▶ Under the Cholas, Nataraja's symbolism became more complex. Lord Shiva embodies both destructive and ascetic qualities. Nataraja, the 'Lord of Dance,' is known for inventing 108 dances.
- ▶ The dancing Shiva represents both creation and destruction, symbolizing life's dualities. Shiva's dance is seen as a cosmic dance, with the world as his stage.

▣ Iconic Elements of Nataraja:

- ▶ Nataraja is depicted within a flaming halo, symbolizing the world's cycle.
- ▶ His long, flowing dreadlocks signify the energy of his dance.
- ▶ Nataraja has four arms, each holding symbolic objects.

▣ Symbolism in Nataraja's Attributes:

- ▶ Nataraja holds a damru (hand drum) in his upper right hand, symbolizing the rhythm of life.
- ▶ In his upper left hand, he holds Agni (fire), symbolizing his power to destroy the universe.
- ▶ A crushed dwarf under his foot represents illusion and worldly distractions.
- ▶ Shiva has a male earring in one ear and a female earring in the other, representing the fusion of male and female (Ardhanarishwar).
- ▶ A snake around his arm symbolizes the kundalini power, which, when awakened, leads to true consciousness.

▣ Nataraja as Protector and Reassure:

- ▶ **Nataraja also serves as a protector.** His front right hand makes the 'abhayamudra' (fear-allaying gesture), offering protection from fear. His raised foot and front left hand gesture point to his feet, inviting devotees to seek refuge.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION

Q. Discuss the Tandava dance as recorded in the early Indian inscriptions. (2013)

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. The art forms of India serve as important medium to reflect the Indian Religious and Philosophical thought. Elucidate

10. PRE-HISTORIC AGE- PAINTINGS: REFLECTING SOCIO-CULTURAL PATTERNS AND PRACTICES

CONTEXT: Painting has been a very powerful medium of art in India. Painting as an art in India has a long heritage and history. The very early traces of painting can be seen in rock art. In the Indus period, the painted pottery had colourful patterns and designs. In the historical period painting was used as a means of communicating religious principles and also to narrate stories or incidents. In the medieval times painting acquired a very important position as an independent art.

▢ Rock Art of the Stone Age:

- ▶ **Period:** Belongs to the pre-historic Stone Age, a time without written records.
- ▶ **Lifestyle:** Early humans relied on hunting, gathering fruits, roots, honey, and other foods.
- ▶ **Art Representation:** Depicted life around them, including hunting scenes, animals, geometric forms, floral motifs, and hand imprints.
- ▶ **Locations in India:** Predominantly found in the Narmada Valley and Kaimur mountain ranges of central India, and later discovered in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Gujarat, and Kerala.
- ▶ **Bhimbetka:** Recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site, with paintings dated between 10,000-1,000 BC.
- ▶ **Style and Materials:** Paintings were line drawings, often with heavy outlines or hatched patterns. Colors were made from minerals, natural vegetable substances, mixed with animal fat or tree gum, applied to rock surfaces to become permanent over time. Paintings had religious, magical, or natural expressive purposes, serving as records of early human life.

▢ A look at the Pre-Historic Art in India throughout the ages

- ▶ **Locations and Discoveries**
 - **Kumaon Hills, Uttarakhand:** Prehistoric paintings found at Lakhudiyar, on the banks of the River Suyal, about 20 km from Almora on the Almora–Barechina road. The name Lakhudiyar means “one lakh caves.”
 - **Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh:** Granite rocks served as canvases for Neolithic man. Notable sites include Kupgallu, Piklihal, and Tekkalkota.
 - **Vindhya Ranges, Madhya Pradesh:** Rich in paintings from the Upper Palaeolithic phase and extending into Uttar Pradesh.

▢ Types of Paintings

- ▶ **Lakhudiyar Paintings:**
 - ▶ **Categories:** Human figures, animals, and geometric patterns.
 - ▶ **Colors:** White, black, and red ochre.
 - ▶ **Human figures:** Stick-like forms.
 - ▶ **Animal motifs:** Long-snouted animals, foxes, and multiple-legged lizards.
 - ▶ **Patterns:** Wavy lines, rectangles, and dots.
 - ▶ **Notable scene:** Hand-linked dancing human figures.

▢ Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh Paintings:

- ▶ **Phase:** Upper Palaeolithic.
- ▶ **Style:** Linear representations in green and dark red.
- ▶ **Motifs:** Large animals like bisons, elephants, tigers, rhinos, and boars, along with stick-like human figures.

▣ Mesolithic Paintings

- ▶ **Themes:** Expanded and became more varied, with smaller-sized paintings.
- ▶ **Hunting Scenes:** Depicted group hunting with spears, sticks, arrows, and bows.
- ▶ Primitive men shown with traps and snares.
- ▶ Hunters wearing simple clothes, ornaments, elaborate head-dresses, and head masks.
- ▶ **Animals:** Painted naturally, including elephants, bisons, tigers, boars, deer, antelopes, leopards, panthers, rhinos, fish, frogs, lizards, and squirrels.
- ▶ **Human Figures:** Depicted in a stylized manner, sometimes showing internal organs (x-ray style).

▣ Cultural Connections

- ▶ The paintings suggest interactions and exchanges between cave dwellers and settled agricultural communities in the Malwa plains.
- ▶ Common motifs in Chalcolithic ceramics and rock paintings include cross-hatched squares and lattices.

▣ Painting Techniques

- ▶ **Materials:** Minerals ground into powder, mixed with water and sticky substances like animal fat or tree gum/resin.
- ▶ **Tools:** Brushes made from plant fiber.
- ▶ **Preservation:** Colors have remained intact due to chemical reactions with oxides on the rock surfaces.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION

Q. The rock-cut architecture represents one of the most important sources of our knowledge of early Indian art and history. Discuss. (2020)

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Bring out the characteristics of early paintings (pre-historic) in India. How these paintings have survived for a longer period of time?

GS SCORE

An Institute for Civil Services

IAS MAINS 2024



Learn, How Toppers
benefitted from
GS SCORE!

Access
400+
TOPPER'S COPIES



Scan QR Code
to get the copies

We are **MAINS...**

GS MAINS ADVANCE CLASSES

Complete GS MAINS
(Paper 1, 2, 3 & 4)
Revision & Updation

in **30** DAYS

Scan the
QR Code
for
more details



- 120+ Hrs Classes for Mains 2024
- Answer Writing Session for every Topic
- Personalised Mentorship
- Mains Contemporary Issues Study Material

GS MAINS TEST SERIES 2024

COMPLETE
GS SYLLABUS
& ESSAY *through*
300+
QUESTIONS

Scan the
QR Code
for
more details



- Total 18 Tests including 10 Sectional, 2 Essay, 2 Case Study & 4 Mock Tests
- Attempt Tests according to your preference
- Pre-Test & Post-Test Mentorship
- Detailed Test Discussion
- Subject wise Strategy Session & PYQ Revision

MMP MAINS MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME

- 34 Thematic Classes to cover High Probable Topics of GS Mains
- Targeted Completion of Syllabus *through* 44 Tests
- Attempt Tests according to your preference
- Pre-test & Post-test Mentorship

Scan the
QR Code
for
more details



THEMATIC
SYLLABUS
COVERAGE

ANSWER
WRITING

COPY
EVALUATION

PERSONALIZED
MENTORSHIP

GS SCORE, Second Floor, Metro Tower, 1B, Pusa Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi - 110005



8448496262



iascore.in

2

ARCHITECTURE

1. INDIAN TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE

CONTEXT: The inauguration of the Ram Lalla temple in Ayodhya, designed in the Nagara architectural style, marks a significant milestone in India's cultural and religious landscape.

- ▶ **Origin and Development:** The concept of temples emerged during the **Vedic period**. Initial constructions were rudimentary, serving the purpose of housing deities and facilitating worship rituals. However, over time, temple architecture evolved, incorporating **regional styles and cultural elements**, reflecting **cosmological and philosophical beliefs**.
- ▶ **Significance of Temples:** Temples served as **spiritual and cultural hubs**, fostering community gatherings and religious practices. They became symbols of architectural prowess and spiritual devotion, contributing to India's rich cultural heritage.
- ▶ **Gupta Period and Beyond:** During the **Gupta Empire**, temple construction witnessed a significant transformation, with the introduction of free-standing structures.
 - **Notable examples** include the **Dashavatara temple dedicated to Vishnu**, featuring a single-celled sanctum and a portico supported by pillars.
 - Subsequent dynasties like the **Chalukyas, Pallavas, and Cholas** further refined temple architecture, creating grand, towering structures that exemplify India's architectural diversity.
- ▶ **Nagara and Dravida Styles:** The Nagara and Dravida architectural styles emerged as prominent regional variations. The Nagara style, prevalent in northern India, features curvilinear shikharas and intricate carvings, while the Dravida style, found in southern India, is characterized by towering gopurams and sculpted mandapas.
- ▶ **Unique Features of Ram Lalla Temple:** The Ram Lalla temple exemplifies the fusion of tradition and innovation, drawing inspiration from the **Nagara and Gurjara-Chalukya styles**. Its robust foundation, constructed using innovative techniques and traditional materials, ensures durability and seismic resistance, projecting its longevity for centuries to come.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the evolution of Indian temple architecture from its origins. Highlight the distinctive regional styles and architectural innovations that have shaped India's temple heritage.

2. CHALUKYAN ARCHITECTURE

CONTEXT: Recent archaeological excavations in Mudimanikyam village of Nalgonda district, Telangana, have unearthed two ancient temples dating back to the Badami Chalukyan period, offering invaluable insights into the region's rich cultural and religious heritage.

Key Findings:

- ▶ **Age and Location:** Estimated to be at least 1,300 years old, these temples exhibit a unique blend of Badami Chalukyan and Kadamba Nagara architectural styles. Situated en route to the Krishna river, they represent a significant historical and religious site.
- ▶ **Architectural Features:** One temple houses a panavattam in the sanctum sanctorum, while the other contains a Vishnu idol. These structures reflect the distinct architectural influences prevalent during the Badami Chalukyan era.
- ▶ **Inscription Discovery:** Among the notable discoveries is an inscription named 'Gandaloranru', dating back to the 8th or 9th century AD. This inscription provides valuable historical context and sheds light on the religious practices of the region during that period.
- ▶ **Temple Architecture of Chalukya Period:** The Chalukyas of Badami, a prominent force in Deccan from the 5th century CE onwards, contributed significantly to temple architecture. Their architectural style, known as the **Besar style**, is a fusion of **Nagar and Dravida influences**.
- ▶ **Kadamba Architecture:** The Kadamba style, characterized by the **Kadamba Shikara**, constitutes another significant architectural tradition. Drawing inspiration from the **Satavahanas**, Kadamba temples feature pyramid-like shikharas without elaborate decorations.
- ▶ **Nagara Temple Architecture:** Originating in the 5th century AD, **Nagara temple architecture** is associated with regions spanning from **Northern India to Karnataka**. These temples are known for their tower-like structures, symbolizing **Mount Meru**, and are adorned with sculptural elements depicting scenes from Hindu epics.
- ▶ **Significance of the Discovery:** The discovery of the ancient temples in **Mudimanikyam** sheds light on the religious practices and architectural styles prevalent during the **Badami Chalukyan period**. These shrines, blending **Badami Chalukyan and Kadamba Nagara styles**, hold historical and cultural significance, offering a glimpse into Telangana's rich heritage.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the architectural features of the temples unearthed in Mudimanikyam village and analyze their significance in understanding the religious and cultural landscape of the Badami Chalukyan period.

3. HOYSALAS ARCHITECTURE

CONTEXT: Recently, the Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas, consisting of three temples in Karnataka, have been inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List, marking a significant recognition of India's rich cultural heritage.

Key Points:

- ▶ **Hoysala Temples:** Constructed during the **12th and 13th centuries** by the Hoysala kings, these temples are dedicated to Shiva and Vishnu. The ensemble includes the **Chennakeshava temple** in Belur, the **Hoysaleswara Temple** in Halebidu, and the **Keshava Temple** in Somanathapura.
- ▶ **UNESCO Recognition:** The inscription of the Hoysala Temples as a **World Heritage Site** adds to India's prestigious list of cultural landmarks. It is the country's **42nd UNESCO World Heritage Site** and underscores the architectural and artistic brilliance of the **Hoysala dynasty**.
- ▶ **Historical Significance:** The Hoysalas ruled over parts of Southern India from the **11th to the 14th centuries**. Their empire, with its capital initially in **Belur** and later in **Halebidu**, left a lasting legacy in art, architecture, and religion.
- ▶ **Architectural Marvels:** The excellence of sculptural art is evident in the intricate carvings and architectural details of the **Hoysala Temples**. These structures represent a significant stage in the evolution of Hindu architecture, blending indigenous styles with external influences.
- ▶ **Hoysala Kingdom Overview:**
 - **Area of Rule:** Karnataka and parts of the Kaveri delta in present-day Tamil Nadu.
 - **Time Period:** Between the 10th and 14th centuries.
 - **Important Rulers:** Notable rulers include Bittaga Vishnuvardhana and Veera Ballala III.
 - **Capital:** Initially Belur, later shifted to Halebidu.
 - **Legacy:** Known for their contributions to art, architecture, and literature, the Hoysalas were patrons of Jainism, Vaishnavism, and Lingayatism.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the architectural and cultural significance of the Hoysala Temples.

4. DELHI SULTANATE

CONTEXT: The Delhi Sultanate was a prominent Muslim kingdom in northern India, reigning from the 13th to the 16th century (spanning from 1206 to 1526 in India). The Delhi Sultanate saw the rule of several dynasties, each contributing to the cultural and political landscape of India. These dynasties included the Khilji, Tughlaq, Sayyid, and Lodi dynasties.

- **Features of Delhi Sultanate:** The Sultanate period in India marked a significant shift with the introduction of Islamic law and culture, leaving a profound impact on Indian society. Let's delve into the key aspects that defined this era.
 - ▶ **Patronage of Islamic Institutions:** Under the rule of various dynasties, including the Slave, Khaliji, Tughlaq, and Lodi, Islamic scholars were supported, and mosques, madrasas, and religious institutions were constructed across the empire. This patronage played a crucial role in spreading Islamic teachings and fostering cultural exchange.
 - ▶ **Language and Literature:** Another noteworthy development was the adoption of Persian as the official language of the court. This shift not only influenced administrative matters but also left a lasting impact on Indian literature and culture, enriching it with Persian influence.
 - ▶ **Dynastic Successions:** Throughout the Sultanate period, India witnessed the rise and fall of several dynasties, each with its distinct characteristics. The Slave dynasty, followed by the Khaliji, Tughlaq, and finally the Lodi dynasty, shaped the political landscape of medieval India.
 - ▶ **Key Rulers and Reforms:** Notable figures like Alauddin Khaliji and Muhammad bin Tughlaq implemented administrative and military reforms, aiming to centralize authority and expand territorial boundaries. While Alauddin Khaliji is remembered for his effective reforms, Muhammad bin Tughlaq's ambitious projects, such as the capital transfer and currency changes, faced challenges and sparked unrest.

- ▶ **Challenges and Decline:** Despite the efforts of rulers like Bahlul Khan Lodi, internal conflicts and external invasions plagued the later years of the Sultanate period. These challenges ultimately led to the downfall of the Lodi dynasty, paving the way for the emergence of the Mughal Empire.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION

Q. How will you explain the medieval Indian temple sculptures represent the social life of those days? (2022)

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. "The Sultanate period in India marked a significant shift with the introduction of Islamic law and culture". Comment

5. KHAJURAHO GROUP OF MONUMENTS

CONTEXT: Nestled in the heart of Madhya Pradesh, the Khajuraho Group of Monuments stands as a testament to India's rich architectural and cultural legacy. Constructed between 950 and 1050 AD, these temples, renowned worldwide for their intricate carvings, offer a glimpse into a bygone era of artistic splendor and spiritual devotion.

- ▶ **Historical Enigma:** The origins of Khajuraho and its temples remain shrouded in mystery, with various theories attributing their construction to different rulers of the **Chandela dynasty**. While the purpose behind the elaborate sculptures is open to interpretation, they are believed to celebrate diverse facets of life, ranging from the sensual to the divine.
- ▶ **Architectural Marvel:** Representing the zenith of medieval Indian architecture, the Khajuraho Temples showcase a unique fusion of Hindu and Jain styles. Originally comprising around 85 temples, the complex now houses 25 surviving structures, designated as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. These temples are divided into **Western, Eastern, and Southern clusters**, each exuding unparalleled grandeur and craftsmanship.
- ▶ **The Western group, which includes the Kandariya Mahadeva Temple**, is the most developed and best-preserved. It also consists of a rich display of intricate carvings depicting gods, goddesses, celestial beings, animals, warriors, and other scenes from everyday life.
- ▶ The erotic sculptures are often misunderstood; they represent the Tantric traditions and the concept of balance between the physical and spiritual aspects of life.
- ▶ **The erotic sculptures at Khajuraho** are often interpreted as expressions of the kama (desire), one of the four purusharthas (goals of human life) in Hindu philosophy, along with dharma (duty), artha (prosperity), and moksha (liberation). The depiction of such themes underscores the idea that desire is an integral part of life and must be transcended to achieve spiritual enlightenment.
- ▶ The Khajuraho Temples **provide valuable insights into the social, economic, and cultural life of medieval India**. The meticulous carvings depict musicians, dancers, warriors, and daily activities, offering a glimpse into the lifestyle of that era.
- ▶ **The temples are dedicated to two religions: Hinduism and Jainism**, showcasing the religious tolerance and diversity of the Chandela rulers.
- ▶ They serve as a testament to the co-existence of different religious practices and philosophies in ancient India.
- ▶ **Spiritual Sanctity:** Beyond their aesthetic allure, **the Khajuraho Temples hold profound spiritual significance, serving as sanctuaries for worship and contemplation**. Despite enduring centuries of tumultuous history, they continue to draw pilgrims and devotees from across the globe, offering a serene haven for spiritual reflection and cultural immersion.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. While the purpose behind the elaborate sculptures is open to interpretation, they are believed to celebrate diverse facets of life. Elaborate the statement in the context of Khajuraho temples.

3

DYNASTY/EMPIRE

1. MARATHA EMPIRE

CONTEXT: The “Maratha Military Landscapes of India” (dating back to the 17th to 19th centuries) is going to be India’s nomination for recognition as UNESCO World Heritage List for the year 2024-25.

- ▶ **Historical Context:** The genesis of the Maratha Military ideology can be traced back to the visionary leadership of King Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in the 17th century. Continuing through subsequent reigns until the era of Peshwa rule, which lasted until 1818 CE, the Maratha Military Landscapes of India evolved as a strategic defense mechanism against external threats and internal strife.
- ▶ **Maratha Military Fortifications:** With over 390 forts dotting the landscape of Maharashtra, the Maratha Military Landscapes of India encompass a selection of 12 forts, each chosen for its historical significance and architectural splendor.
 - Among these, eight forts fall under the protection of the Archaeological Survey of India, while the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Maharashtra safeguard the remaining four.
- ▶ **Diversity in Fort Typology:** Spanning **hill forts, coastal forts, island forts, and even a hill-forest fort**, the selected forts showcase the diverse typological features integrated into the Maratha military strategy. From the rugged terrain of hill plateaus to the strategic positioning along the **Konkan Coast**, each fort is a testament to the adaptability and foresight of the Maratha rulers.
- ▶ **Maratha Empire (1674 to 1818)**
 - **The Maratha Empire** was the **most powerful empire in India**, founded by **Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Sahu**.
 - The empire, at its peak in the mid-18th century, stretched from Tamil Nadu in the south to Peshawar in the north, and Orissa and West Bengal up to the Hooghly River in the east.
 - **Important Rulers:** Shivaji, Sambhaji and Rajaram, Shahu

- **Important Battle:** Third Battle of Panipat in 1761
- **Reason for decline:** Weakening authority, increasing internal conflicts, British intervention.
- ▶ **End:** Baji Rao II (last Peshwa of the dynasty) was defeated by East India Company.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the role of Maratha Military Landscapes in shaping the strategic defense mechanisms of the Maratha Empire during the 17th to 19th centuries, and its significance in the context of Indian history.”

2. THE RISE OF TRANSREGIONAL EMPIRES

CONTEXT: During the 15th century CE, the Deccan Plateau witnessed the rise of two influential states: Vijayanagara and the Bahmani Sultanate. Positioned on either side of the Tungabhadra River, these states emerged as multiethnic and multicultural entities, reflecting the diverse linguistic and cultural landscape of the Deccan.

- ▶ Historically, the Deccan had served as a vibrant crossroads, encompassing three linguistic zones: Marathi, Telugu, and Kannada. Early medieval dynasties, such as the Chalukyas and Rashtrakutas, dominated the region through decentralized systems of vassalage and marriage alliances. However, by the 12th century, these decentralized systems became untenable, leading to the emergence of regional dynastic structures within each linguistic zone.
- ▶ The political landscape of the Deccan underwent significant changes in the 14th century with the decline of the Delhi Sultanate, paving the way for Vijayanagara and the Bahmani Sultanate to fill the ensuing power vacuum.
 - **Vijayanagara**, expanding its influence across the South Indian peninsula and reaching the Coromandel Coast, capitalized on the allegiance of migrating Telugu and Kannada peasant-warriors. However, assimilating the diverse urban and social systems of Tamil Nadu into Deccan domination proved to be a gradual process, spanning nearly a century.
- ▶ To garner acceptance in Tamil Nadu, Vijayanagara strategically patronized temple centers commanding local loyalties, such as the Nataraja temple at Chidambaram and the Ranganatha Swamy temple at Srirangam. Moreover, Emperor Krishna Raya of Vijayanagara, hailing from Tulu descent, composed the Amuktamalyada, a Telugu courtly text celebrating Andal, a Tamil Vaishnavite saint believed to be Ranganatha's consort.
- ▶ In conclusion, the rise of Vijayanagara and the Bahmani Sultanate in the Deccan Plateau during the 15th century marked a significant shift in the region's political landscape, reflecting its multiethnic and multicultural fabric while also highlighting the complexities of transregional empire-building in a diverse linguistic milieu.

FACT BOX

Vijayanagara empire

- The Vijayanagara empire was based in the Deccan, in peninsular and southern India, from 1336 onwards. It was founded by Harihara, also known as Hakka, and his brother Bukka Raya.
- It is named after its capital city (now ruined) of Vijayanagara, in modern Karnataka, India.

Bahmani sultanate

- The Bahmani sultanate, or the Bahmani empire, was established in 1347 by a Turkish general named Alauddin Bahman Shah, who had revolted against Mohammed bin Tughlaq of the Delhi Sultanate.
- Bahman Shah made Kalaburgi (or Gulbarga) his capital in Karnataka, and set up an empire that would rule the Deccan for nearly 200 years.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION

Q. Krishnadeva Raya, the King of Vijayanagar, was not only an accomplished scholar himself but was also a great patron of learning and literature. Discuss. (2016)

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the emergence of transregional empires in the Deccan Plateau during the 15th century CE, focusing on the roles of Vijayanagara and the Bahmani Sultanate in shaping the cultural and political landscape of the region.

3. MARITIME LEGACY OF THE CHOLA DYNASTY

CONTEXT: "India" was the first nation that had blue water naval capabilities. The roots of the Indian Blue Water Forces date back centuries ago during the era of Chola Dynasty in Southern India.

▢ Expansion and Control:

- ▶ Under the visionary rule of **Rajaraja Chola and Rajendra Chola**, India embarked on a quest for blue water dominance, extending its influence across the **Indian Ocean Region (IOR)** through a network of ports, offshore bases, and strategic alliances.
 - Rajaraja Chola's strategic vision propelled India's maritime ambitions, culminating in the conquest of Sri Lanka and the establishment of bases such as Anuradhapura.
 - Subsequent campaigns in Southeast Asia solidified Chola authority, with trade outposts evolving into vital offshore bases.
 - The construction of ports like **Nagapattinam and Mamallapuram** underscored the Cholas' commitment to maritime infrastructure, positioning India as a dominant power in the **IOR**.
- ▶ **Rajendra Chola's Legacy:** Under Rajendra Chola's reign, the Chola Empire reached unprecedented heights, with conquests in **Maldives and Southeast Asia** further enhancing India's maritime footprint. Notable victories over **Srivijaya** solidified Chola suzerainty. Rajendra Chola's expeditions exemplified strategic planning, advanced weaponry, and superior seafaring tactics, establishing India as a formidable maritime power. For the years during his reign, the Bay of Bengal was also called as the "Chola Lake".
- ▶ **Global Connections:** Beyond Southeast Asia, the Cholas forged maritime links with **East Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, and China**, pioneering sea lanes of communication for trade and diplomacy. Chola ports emerged as hubs of economic activity, attracting merchants from distant lands and expanding India's influence across the seas.

▢ The Chola Dynasty (9th to 13th Century)

- ▶ **Introduction:** The Chola dynasty was a powerful ruling family for about 1500 years, making it one of the oldest and longest-lasting dynasties ever.
- ▶ **Expansion and Leadership:** **Rajaraja I** was one of the best Chola kings.
- ▶ **Architectural Marvels:** **Brihadisvara Temple** in Thanjavur
- ▶ **Military Might:** **Rajaraja Chola** had a big army that he used to defend his kingdom. He made sure to have a strong military, unlike rulers before him.
- ▶ **Cultural Flourishing:** Under Rajaraja Chola's rule, art and literature thrived in southern India. Famous Tamil poets like **Appar, Sambandar, and Sundarar** wrote important works.
- ▶ **Tamilakam's Three Kings:** The Chola Dynasty was one of the three important kingdoms in Tamilakam, along with **Chera and Pandya**.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION

Q. Chola architecture represents a high watermark in the evolution of temple architecture. Discuss. (2013)

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the significance of the Chola Dynasty in shaping India's maritime legacy. How did the Cholas' maritime endeavors contribute to India's emergence as a dominant maritime power in the Indian Ocean Region during the medieval period?

4. CLIMATE AND INDIAN EMPIRES

CONTEXT: The annals of history bear testimony to the disastrous impact of climate disasters on the fate of ancient civilizations.

▣ Angkor:

- ▶ In the 12th–13th centuries CE, **Angkor, Cambodia**, stood as a beacon of urban sophistication, surpassing even the largest cities of its time.
 - However, the city's reliance on this **intricate water system** proved to be its Achilles' heel when confronted with the twin onslaught of **prolonged droughts and torrential monsoons in the 14th century**.
 - These climate disasters, compounded by inherent flaws in the hydraulic infrastructure, precipitated Angkor's decline.
- ▶ **Climate and Indian Empires:** From the **Indus Valley Civilization** to the **Chola Empire** in South India, the historical record is replete with instances where climatic fluctuations catalyzed the unraveling of once-potent realms.
 - **Mismanagement of floods in river systems**, exacerbated by socioeconomic inequities, hastened the decline of the Chola Empire, highlighting the perils of shortsighted governance in times of crisis.

A sustainable water management system in India and Indian Sub-continent

- The Karez system consists of underground vertical shafts connected by a gently sloping tunnel, which channels water from an upland aquifer to the ground level. This system is energy-efficient and eco-friendly as it relies on gravity instead of fuel-powered machines. Originating in Persia, it later spread to Arab and Turkic regions.
- The system is designed to manage watershed forces effectively. Importantly, wastewater is never mixed with drinking water. The water in the Karez system does not evaporate and is filtered until it reaches the surface. Aquifers are not depleted since excessive use is not possible, making it a sustainable solution. Additionally, the system requires low maintenance.
- The first Karez system in India was constructed in Bidar, Karnataka, during the reign of Bahamani Sultan Ahmad Shah Wali (1422-1436), who moved the capital from Gulbarga to Bidar.

- ▶ **Lessons for the Present and Future:** building resilient infrastructures, accurate climate modeling, emerges, prioritizing public health, addressing socioeconomic disparities, adaptability of smaller urban centers to environmental perturbations

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the role of climate disasters in shaping the decline of ancient Asian empires. How can the lessons drawn from these historical episodes inform contemporary approaches to climate resilience and sustainable development?

5. GURJARA-PRATIHARA DYNASTY

CONTEXT: Samrat Mihir Bhoj (c. 836-885 CE), a ruler from the 9th century Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty, is making news in western Uttar Pradesh. Gurjars say he was from their caste, but Rajputs argue that 'Gurjara' was a place, not a caste, and claim him as a Rajput king.

▢ Rajput Dynasty

- ▶ **Dominated during period of:** 8th to 12th Century AD
- ▶ The Gurjara-Pratiharas, who were prominent in northern India from the 8th to 10th centuries, are sometimes regarded as the first major Rajput dynasty.
- ▶ In the early 11th century, new attacks by Islamic armies began. They destroyed Gurjara power, and new Rajput kingdoms rose to meet this challenge- and also to contest control of northern India amongst themselves. Notable among these were the Paramas and Chauhanas.
- ▶ They ruled many small kingdoms in North India from the beginning of the 7th century.
- ▶ **Prominent Ruler:** Prithviraj Chauhan, Maharana Pratap
- ▶ **Defeated by:** Ghazni, Ghuri, Khilji, Babur, Akbar, the Marathas and the British.
- ▶ **Important Battles:** Second battle of Tarain in 1192 CE, Khanua (1527), battle of Haldighati in 1576
- ▶ **Important Rajput states:** Paramaras of Malwa, Chandellas in Bundelkhand, Chaulukyas (Solankis) of Gujarat, Chauhans of Ajmer and the Gahadavalas of Kanauj.
- ▶ **Factors that led to decline:** Establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, narrow outlook, lack of foresight and failure to realize the impending danger knocking at their gates, mutual jealousies
- ▶ **Contributions:**
 - **Architecture:** It encompasses a wide range of structures that can be broadly classified as either secular or religious- **Temples, forts, stepwells, gardens, and palaces.**
 - **Fortresses:** Chittorgarh, Ranathanbhor and Kumbalgarh in Rajasthan along with Mandu, Gwalior, Chandai and Asirgarh in Madhya Pradesh.
 - **Temples:** Khajuraho, Lingaraja Temple at Bhubaneshwar, The Sun Temple at Konark, The Dilwara Temple at Mount Abu. They constructed Rathas of Mahabalipuram, the Kailash temple at Ellora, and the Elephanta engravements between 600 and 900 AD.
 - **Features:** Vimana, Garbha Griha, Shikhara, Amalaka
 - **Foundations of many cities** like Jaipur, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Bikaner, were laid down by the Rajput kings.
 - **Paintings:** The Rajasthani and the Pahari schools of painting, Mural paintings and Miniatures paintings were also popular

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Evaluate the factors that led to the decline of Rajput power. Elaborate on the cultural contributions of Rajputs.

GS SCORE

An Institute for Civil Services

IAS MAINS 2024



Learn, How Toppers
benefitted from
GS SCORE!

Access
400+
TOPPER'S COPIES



Scan QR Code
to get the copies

We are **MAINS...**

MASTER CLASS ON **ESSAY** WRITING

Mentor: MANOJ. K. JHA

- 5 Learning Sessions: Classroom Session on Essay Writing through Worksheets
- Session on Brain Storming & Critical Thinking
- 5 Mock Tests
- Special Session on Philosophical Essays
- Content Enrichment Class on major Issues/themes and how to use the existing content in Essay

Scan the
QR Code
for
more details



ETHICS MASTER CLASS

COMPLETE SOLUTION

for **250 Marks**

Mentor: MANOJ. K. JHA

- 15 Sessions with Daily Answer Writing through Practice Tests & Mentorship
- Theme-based Complete Coverage of GS Paper 4 Syllabus
- Total 15 Tests: 13 Practice Tests & 2 Mock Tests
- Special Sessions on Case Studies
- Class Handouts for Value Addition

Scan the
QR Code
for
more details



ETHICS TEST SERIES & MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME

Complete Revision of GS Paper IV
Syllabus through Tests & Mentorship

- 5 Sectional Tests & 1 Mock Test for Comprehensive Revision of Syllabus.
- Detailed Discussions to enhance Understanding & Approach.
- One-on-one Mentorship with Manoj K. Jha for Marks Improvement.
- Model Hints to Enrich and Improve Quality in Answers.

Scan the
QR Code
for
more details



GS SCORE, Second Floor, Metro Tower, 1B, Pusa Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi - 110005



8448496262



iascore.in

4

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

1. ADI SHANKARACHARYA & HIS PHILOSOPHY

CONTEXT: The recent inauguration of a 108-foot-tall statue of Adi Shankaracharya by Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan in Omkareshwar marks a significant milestone in celebrating India's spiritual heritage. The statue, named the 'Statue of Oneness,' pays homage to the revered 8th-century philosopher and spiritual leader who left an indelible mark on Indian philosophy and religious thought.

- ▶ **Adi Shankaracharya:** Adi Shankaracharya, born in 788 AD in Kalady, Kerala, was a prodigious child who displayed remarkable proficiency in Sanskrit and scriptural knowledge from an early age. His quest for superior knowledge led him to renounce worldly pursuits and embark on a spiritual journey in search of a guru.
- ▶ **Philosophical Contributions:** Adi Shankaracharya is renowned for championing the Advaita Vedanta philosophy, which emphasizes the unity of the individual soul (Atman) with the ultimate reality (Brahman). He propagated the message of Vedas across India, engaging in debates and establishing his supremacy over diverse philosophical schools.
 - Adi Shankaracharya's profound insights into Vedanta philosophy are encapsulated in his numerous literary works, including commentaries on scriptures like the Brahma Sutras and the Bhagavad Gita. His devotional hymns and meditative compositions continue to inspire spiritual seekers to this day.
- ▶ **Founding of Ashrams:** Recognizing his philosophical eminence, Adi Shankaracharya founded four ashrams in different corners of India, each dedicated to the elucidation of a specific Vedic tradition. These ashrams served as centers for disseminating the principles of Advaita philosophy and nurturing spiritual seekers.
- ▶ **Legacy and Influence:** Adi Shankaracharya's profound teachings and philosophical insights continue to shape the spiritual landscape of India. His legacy transcends sectarian boundaries, inspiring millions to seek spiritual enlightenment and embrace the timeless wisdom of Vedanta.

- ▶ **The 'Statue of Oneness':** The unveiling of the 'Statue of Oneness' in Omkareshwar, depicting Adi Shankaracharya as a 12-year-old child, symbolizes the spiritual journey of the revered sage. The statue serves as a reminder of his transformative impact on Indian spirituality and philosophy.

PRACTICE QUESTION

- Q. Discuss the philosophical contributions of Adi Shankaracharya and their significance in shaping the spiritual landscape of India. How did his teachings on Advaita Vedanta philosophy inspire a quest for spiritual enlightenment among seekers across the country?**

2. UPNISHADS

CONTEXT: PM Modi presented US President Biden with the first edition print of the book The Ten Principal Upanishads from 1937. The Ten Principal Upanishads, is considered to be one of the best translations of the Upanishads, some of the most important Hindu religious texts.

▢ About Hindu scriptures:

- ▶ There are broadly two categories of Hindu sacred texts:
 - **Shruti:** It is considered to be the most authoritative and consists of the four Vedas (**Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva**) and accompanying texts. These include Brahmanas (ritual texts), Aranyakas ("forest" or "wilderness" texts), and Upanishads (philosophical texts).
 - **Smriti:** These include Brahmanas (ritual texts), Aranyakas ("forest" or "wilderness" texts), and Upanishads (philosophical texts). These include the great epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata, Dharmashastras, Puranas and all other post-Vedic scriptures.
- ▶ **Upanishads and their relevance:** The Upanishads are a collection of Hindu philosophical texts composed in late Vedic Sanskrit, forming the foundational pillars for subsequent Hindu philosophical thought.
 - The Upanishads delve into meditation, philosophy, consciousness, and ontological knowledge, holding a paramount position in Indian religions and culture. They cover a diverse spectrum of topics such as rites, incarnations, and esoteric knowledge, moving away from the ritualistic emphasis of earlier Vedic traditions, thus paving the way for varied interpretations in later commentarial traditions.
 - The Upanishads were composed between 700 BCE and 300 BCE within the larger context of the Vedas. These texts mark a transition towards a more reasoned examination of fundamental questions about the nature of reality, the self, life's purpose, afterlife, ethics, and relationships. They are considered seminal foundations for later Indian philosophical schools and traditions.

Thirteen Principal Upanishads

- Brihadaranyaka Upanishad
- Chandogya Upanishad
- Taittiriya Upanishad
- Aitareya Upanishad
- Kausitaki Upanishad
- Kena Upanishad
- Katha Upanishad
- Isha Upanishad
- Svetasvatara Upanishad
- Mundaka Upanishad
- Prashna Upanishad
- Maitri Upanishad
- Mandukya Upanishad

▢ Principal Upanishads

- ▶ There are thirteen principal Upanishads, attributed to multiple authors and displaying diversity in style. Composed in a ritual setting, they go beyond ritual to philosophical inquiry. These texts introduce key philosophical concepts, including Atman (the individual self/soul), Brahman (the ultimate reality),

karma, yoga, samsara (the repeating cycle of birth and rebirth), moksha (spiritual liberation), purusha (the individual), and prakriti (the phenomenal world).

- ▶ **Origins and Authorship:** The origin and chronological placement of the Upanishads are subjects of scholarly debate. The first six Upanishads, including Brihadaranyaka and Kena, are commonly dated between 800 and 500 BCE, while the subsequent seven are considered later compositions. Conservative Hindu perspectives regard the Upanishads as Shruti, asserting their eternal existence similar to the Vedas.

▣ Core Concepts

- ▶ The Upanishads encapsulate the ultimate objective of the Vedas - moksha or supreme bliss achieved through self-realization. They explore the concept of Brahman as the incomprehensible divine essence and source of all existence, from which the soul (Atman) arises.
- ▶ Though beyond intellectual grasp, Brahman resides within each being, and unifying one's Atman with this universal Brahman is the purpose of life.
- ▶ The texts emphasize pursuing self-actualization, fully knowing one's true self in alignment with the cosmic order, so the individual soul reunites with the divine after death.
- ▶ Karma (action) plays a crucial role, with actions having predictable consequences. Rebirth allows further opportunities to fulfill one's duty if not achieved in a lifetime.
- ▶ The Upanishads have not only shaped core Hindu theology but also significantly influenced Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and other religious traditions. Their translation into European languages in the 19th century extended their impact globally, shaping intellectual thought worldwide.
- ▶ Upanishads define the core Hindu theology of a universal soul interconnected with God, the path to enlightenment through self-realization, the concepts of karma and reincarnation, and the ultimate aim of moksha - being freed from the cycle of rebirth. They represent the highest point of Indian philosophical thought, offering profound insights into the nature of existence and the pursuit of spiritual liberation.

PRACTICE QUESTION

- Q. Discuss the philosophical and spiritual significance of the Upanishads in the context of Vedic literature. How do the Upanishads contribute to the development of Hindu philosophy?**

3. BHAKTI MOVEMEN

CONTEXT: Karnataka government has agreed to declare 12th century social reformer Basavanna (part of the Bhakti Movement in Hinduism) as Karnataka's "cultural leader."

- ▶ **Origin:** The Bhakti movement is believed to have originated in **Tamil Nadu** around the 7th and 8th centuries. It spread to present day Karnataka and Maharashtra and then northwards. It continued into the 15th to 17th Centuries in different parts of India.
- ▶ **Important Leaders:** Basavanna, Akkamahadevi, Allama Prabhu, Jnanadev, Namdev, Tukaram, Ramananda, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Guru Nanak, Kabir Das, Ravi Das, Nanak, Meerabai
- ▶ **Factors that led to its rise:** rigidity of caste system, irrelevant rituals and religious practices, blind faiths and social dogmas.
- ▶ **Features:** Unity of God or one God, Self-Surrender, Condemnation of rituals, ceremonies and blind faith, Rejection of idol worship by many saints, Open- mindedness about deciding religious matters.
- ▶ **Historical Evolution:** Originating in Tamil Nadu, the Bhakti movement expanded to Karnataka in the 10th to 12th centuries and reached its zenith in Maharashtra by the 13th century. By the 16th century, it had encompassed the entirety of India, catalyzing change through art and music dedicated to spiritual devotion rather than violent rebellion.
- ▶ **Poet-saints-** Shaivaite Nayannars and the Vaishnavaites Alvars preached the Bhakti movement under the **Pallavas, Pandyas, and the Cholas.**

- ▶ **Purpose and Ideals:** Initially a religious revival aimed at countering Jainism, Buddhism, and oppressive caste systems, the movement evolved to emphasize love, faith, and devotion as means to address social injustices and inspire unity among people of diverse backgrounds.
- ▶ **Characteristics:** The movement was led by saints who advocated for human rights and spiritual transcendence. It fostered tolerance, breaking away from rigid conventions and serving as a unifying force across India's diverse landscape.
- ▶ **Impact and Legacy:** The movement perpetuated spiritual discourse, leading to deeper insights into the human condition and sparking socio-political activism. It played a pivotal role in India's history, resisting cultural and religious suppression by invaders and championing the rights of marginalized communities.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION

- Q. Evaluate the nature of Bhakti Literature and its contribution to Indian culture. (2021)
- Q. The Bhakti movement received a remarkable re-orientation with the advent of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Discuss. (2018)

PRACTICE QUESTION

- Q. Examine the origins, leaders, and impact of the Bhakti movement in medieval India, with a focus on its evolution from a religious revival to a catalyst for social change.

4. VEDIC RELIGION

CONTEXT: India doesn't need to look at other countries to build on its democratic institutions. The answers lie in the country's Vedic past. India is a secular, liberal and democratic nation. The roots of the fundamental principles of the Indian Constitution are enshrined in the Vedas.

▣ Main Features of Vedic Society:

- ▶ **Family Structure:** Rigvedic society revolved around patriarchal families, although they were not strictly joint families.
- ▶ **Varna System:** Towards the end of the Vedic era, society was divided into four varnas: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras.
- ▶ **Marriage:** Monogamous marriages were preferred, with Sanskrit as the primary language.
- ▶ **Importance of Vedas:** Vedic literature held significant importance in society.
- ▶ **Nature:** Initially pastoral, society later transitioned to agriculture-based.
- ▶ **Property Rights:** Community ownership was favored over private property.
- ▶ **Occupation:** Social status was determined by occupation rather than birth.

▣ Main Features of Vedic Religion:

- ▶ **Source of Practices:** The Vedas were the main source of religious practices.
- ▶ **Polytheism:** Vedic society believed in numerous gods, each associated with natural phenomena.
- ▶ **Rituals and Sacrifices:** Sacrifices, performed through Yajnas, were central to rituals, often conducted by priests. Important ceremonies included ashvamedha, vajapeya, and rajasuya.

▣ Continuation in Modern Indian Society:

- ▶ **Patriarchy:** Despite modernization, patriarchy persists, especially in religious and cultural contexts.
- ▶ **Polytheism:** Belief in multiple gods, such as Indra and Vishnu, remains prevalent.
- ▶ **Agriculture:** Much of Indian society remains agrarian, akin to Vedic times.

- ▶ **Family Structure:** Joint families are still common in Indian society.
- ▶ **Marriage:** Monogamous marriages continue to be the norm.
- ▶ Aspects of Vedic society and religion still influence modern India, with certain positive aspects, like respect for women and minimal emphasis on idol worship, worth adopting while discarding negative traits.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION

Q. What are the main features of Vedic society and religion? Do you think some of the features are still prevailing in Indian society? (2023)

PRACTICE QUESTION

- Q. Discuss the main facets of vedic religion. Why this soon transformed into a ritualistic religion in the later years?
- Q. Discuss the influence of Vedic society and religion on modern Indian culture and governance.

5. BRAHMO SAMAJ

CONTEXT: The Sadharan Brahma Samaj paid tribute to Raja Rammohun Roy, the pioneer of Bengal Renaissance and the first modern man of India to mark his 250th birth anniversary.

▣ Origin:

- ▶ Brahma faith was founded by Raja Rammohun Roy alongside Maharshi Debendranath Tagore, father of Rabindranath in 1828.
- ▶ It is noted for its pronounced monotheism, the belief in a single all-powerful God, and vigorous policy of social and political reforms.
- ▶ The Brahma Samaj denotes community of men who worship Brahman reality, the highest.
- ▶ It is an assembly of all sorts and descriptions of people without distinction, meeting publicly for the sober, orderly, religious and devout adoration of "the (nameless) unsearchable Eternal, Immutable Being who is the Author and Preserver of the Universe."
- ▶ **Important personalities associated:** Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Debendranath Tagore, Keshab Chandra Sen, Rabindranath Tagore, Anandamohan Bose

▣ Features:

- ▶ In reality Brahma Samaj does not discriminate between caste, creed or religion.
- ▶ It forbade idol-worship and discarded meaningless rites and rituals. The Samaj also forbade its members from attacking any religion.
- ▶ The Brahma Samaj does not accept the authority of the Vedas, has no faith in avatars (incarnations), and does not insist on belief in karma (causal effects of past deeds) or samsara (the process of death and rebirth).

▣ Reasons for the Growth of Brahma Samaj:

- ▶ **Social Reform:** Addressed prevalent injustices and orthodox practices.
- ▶ **Raja Ram Mohan Roy:** His leadership inspired many to join.
- ▶ **Intellectual Awakening:** Increased interest in philosophical debates.
- ▶ **Middle Class Appeal:** Attracted professionals and reformers.
- ▶ **Indian Renaissance:** Contributed to cultural and intellectual revival.
- ▶ **Flexibility:** Adapted to diverse regional and community needs.

▢ Contributions to Education and Literature:

- ▶ **Hindu College (1817):** Co-founded in Calcutta with David Hare.
- ▶ **Vedanta College and Anglo-Hindu School (1822-1826):** Established to teach monotheistic ideas and a modern, Western curriculum.
- ▶ **Scottish Church College (1830):** Initially known as General Assembly's Institution, provided the location for its establishment.
- ▶ **Press and Literature:** Bengali Weekly "Samvad Kaumudi" (1821), Persian Weekly "Mirat-ul-Akbar", "The Brahmanical Magazine"
- ▶ **Legacy in Reform and Education:** Established trends in the Indian press and Bengali literature, significantly impacting Indian education and society.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION

Q. Trace the rise and growth of socio-religious reform movements with special reference to Young Bengal and Brahma Samaj. (2021)

PRACTICE QUESTION

- Q. Discuss the contributions of Brahma Samaj in regard to socio and religious reform movements.
- Q. Examine the evolution and impact of Brahma Samaj in the context of 19th-century socio-religious reform movements in India.

6. RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

CONTEXT: Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, founded by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, are global spiritual organizations dedicated to humanitarian service, devoid of sectarianism.

- ▶ **Origin:** The organizations trace their roots to Sri Ramakrishna (1836-1886), revered as the Prophet of the Modern Age, and his chief disciple, Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), a renowned religious leader hailed for shaping the modern world.
- ▶ **Factors that Led to Rise:** Inspired by ideals of renunciation and service, the Math and Mission emerged to serve humanity, transcending barriers of caste, religion, and race.

▢ Features:

- ▶ **Non-sectarian Approach:** Embracing all humanity without discrimination, reflecting the vision of seeing the divine in every individual.
- ▶ **Spiritual Orientation:** Focused on personal spiritual growth and selfless service rather than conversion or sensationalism.
- ▶ **Universal Spiritual Movement:** Catalyzed by the ancient philosophy of Vedanta, revitalized by Sri Ramakrishna and expounded by Swami Vivekananda.

▢ Contribution:

- ▶ **Spiritual Regeneration:** Spreading the message of Vedanta worldwide, emphasizing harmony among all faiths.
- ▶ **Humanitarian Service:** Engaging in diverse social and humanitarian activities for over a century, benefiting millions irrespective of background.
- ▶ **Intellectual Legacy:** Swami Vivekananda's teachings continue to inspire and shape contemporary thought, fostering a holistic approach to spirituality and social welfare.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the role and contributions of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission in fostering spiritual regeneration and humanitarian service.

7. SOCIO-RELIGIOUS REFORM MOVEMENTS IN 19TH CENTURY

CONTEXT: In the 19th century, India witnessed a surge of Socio-Religious Reform Movements aimed at modernizing society through social restructuring. These movements, led by visionary leaders, recognized the intricate link between religious beliefs and social norms. The British colonial presence in India unearthed profound flaws in social institutions, prompting a collective effort to reform and rejuvenate society.

▫ Factors Leading to Socio-Religious Reform Movements:

- ▶ **Impact of Western Education:** The introduction of modern Western education sparked a new intellectual awakening across India.
- ▶ **Exposure of Social Weaknesses:** British conquest exposed societal maladies like sati, infanticide, and child marriage, igniting a sense of urgency for change.
- ▶ **Favorable Conditions under British Rule:** The British administration, with its freedom of press, facilitated the dissemination of information, educating society about harmful social practices.
- ▶ **Quest for Social Reform:** Thoughtful Indians embarked on a quest to identify and rectify societal defects through legislation and social activism.
- ▶ **Embrace of Modern Western Thought:** Some segments of Indian society embraced modern Western ideologies, recognizing them as catalysts for societal regeneration. Modern science, reason, and humanism left a profound impact on reformist movements.
- ▶ **Influence of New Social Groups:** Emerging social groups such as the capitalist class, working class, and modern intelligentsia advocated for modernization to serve their own interests.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the Socio-Religious Reform Movements that emerged in 19th-century India, analyzing their causes, objectives, and impact on Indian society.

GS SCORE

An Institute for Civil Services

IAS MAINS 2024



Learn, How Toppers
benefitted from
GS SCORE!

Access
400+
TOPPER'S COPIES



Scan QR Code
to get the copies

We are **MAINS...**

OPTIONAL

ADVANCE CLASS

- 60+ Hrs. Advance Classes to cover meticulously selected topics.
- Daily Answer Writing Practice
- Personalised Mentorship

TEST SERIES

- Total 12 Tests: 8 Sectional & 4 Mock Tests
- Pre-Test and Post-Test Mentorship
Elaborate Discussion after each Test Discussion
- Detailed Model Answer Hints


POL. SCIENCE


GEOGRAPHY


LAW


HISTORY


SOCIOLOGY


ANTHROPOLOGY


PUB. AD.

Scan the QR Code
for more details



GS SCORE, Second Floor, Metro Tower, 1B, Pusa Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi - 110005



8448496262



iascore.in

5

IMPORTANT PERSONALITIES

1. RABINDRANATH TAGORE

CONTEXT: Santiniketan, founded in 1901 by the iconic poet and philosopher Rabindranath Tagore, has earned a coveted spot on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The Ashram was originally founded by Maharshi Devendranath Tagore (Rabindranath's father) in 1863. Later on Rabindranath himself founded the Brahma Vidyalaya school and later on in the year 1901 he established Santiniketan.

▣ Contribution of Rabindranath Tagore

- ▶ He was a leader of the **Brahmo Samaj**, which was a new religious sect in nineteenth-century Bengal and which attempted a revival of the ultimate monistic basis of Hinduism as laid down in the Upanishads.
- ▶ From time to time he participated in the Indian nationalist movement, though in his own non-sentimental and visionary way; and Gandhi, the political father of modern India, was his devoted friend.
- ▶ He was the first non-European to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913.
- ▶ **Educational philosophy (Universalization):** He believed that one of the purposes of education was to unite people with the universal soul. Therefore, in the field of Education, the curriculum should be similar so that the student become self-aware through self-realization
- ▶ Highly prolific, Tagore was also a composer – he wrote the national anthems for both India and Bangladesh – as well as an **educator, social reformer, philosopher and painter.**
- ▶ Although Tagore wrote successfully in all literary genres, he was first of all a poet.
 - Among his fifty and odd volumes of poetry are Manasi (1890), Sonar Tari (1894), Gitanjali (1910), Gitimalya (1914) and Balaka (1916).

- **English Poetry:** The English renderings of his poetry, which include *The Gardener* (1913), *Fruit-Gathering* (1916), and *The Fugitive* (1921), do not generally correspond to particular volumes in the original Bengali; and in spite of its title, *Gitanjali: Song Offerings* (1912), the most acclaimed of them, contains poems from other works besides its namesake.
- **Major Plays:** *Raja* (1910), *Dakghar* (1912), *Achalayatan* (1912), *Muktadhara* (1922) and *Raktakaravi* (1926).
- **Novels and Stories:** He is the author of several volumes of short stories and a number of novels, among them *Gora* (1910), *Ghare-Baire* (1916), and *Yogayog* (1929)

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION

Q. What was the difference between Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore in their approach towards education and nationalism? (2023)

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the multifaceted contributions of Rabindranath Tagore to Indian society and culture, with a focus on his role as a poet, philosopher, educator, and social reformer.

2. MIHIR BHOJA

CONTEXT: Tension erupted between Gujjar and Rajput communities in Haryana's Kaithal over the unveiling of a statue of ninth-century ruler Mihir Bhoj.

- ▶ **Mihir Bhoja (836 to 885 CE)** was a prominent and ambitious ruler of the Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty in ninth-century India. His reign marked a significant period of territorial expansion and political consolidation, making him one of the most successful rulers of his time.
- ▶ **Rise to Power:** Mihir Bhoja ascended the throne after his father, Ramabhadra. Under his leadership, the Gurjara-Pratihara Empire stretched from Kashmir to Gujarat. He expanded his influence by conquering regions in the Deccan and Malwa.

▣ Tripartite Struggle:

- ▶ The ninth century saw a major political struggle for control over Kannauj, a city believed to confer the title of emperor to whoever ruled it. This conflict, known as the Tripartite Struggle, involved three powerful dynasties: the Gurjara-Pratihara, the Rashtrakutas of Deccan, and the Palas of Bengal. Mihir Bhoja emerged as the most successful, securing territories in Gujarat and Malwa from the Rashtrakutas and conquering areas of Gorakhpur from the Palas.

▣ Religious Devotion and Titles:

- ▶ A devout follower of Vishnu, Mihir Bhoja adopted the title "Adivaraha," meaning the primeval boar, an incarnation of Vishnu. This title was inscribed on his coins, which depicted the deity holding a solar wheel, a mace, a lotus flower, and a conch shell, with a two-headed serpent at his feet. These coins were made of silver and copper, with some copper coins coated with silver to mimic silver currency. The 13th-century text 'Dravya-Pariksha' by Thakkar Pheru, who served under Alauddin Khilji, notes the presence of Adivaraha coins.
- ▶ **Capital and Territory:** Mihir Bhoja's rule spanned a vast territory from the foothills of the Himalayas to the Narmada River, including the present district of Etawah in Uttar Pradesh. Kannauj, his capital, was known as Panchala during his reign.
- ▶ **Military Strength:** Mihir Bhoja was known for his formidable army, especially its skilled cavalry. He was a staunch adversary of Arab invaders, maintaining a strong defense against their incursions.
- ▶ **Lineage and Social Context:** The Gurjaras, originally a nomadic tribe in Rajasthan and Gujarat, formed the backbone of the Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty. Mihir Bhoja, like many ancient Indian kings, asserted Kshatriya status to legitimize his rule. This practice reflects the socio-political dynamics of the time, where Kshatriya lineage was crucial for claiming kingship. Modern controversies regarding the caste of ancient rulers often stem from present-day political agendas rather than historical facts.

▫ The Legacy of King in the Indian History:

- ▶ Mihir Bhoja's reign significantly strengthened the Gurjara-Pratihara Empire. His son, Mahendrapala I, succeeded him, continuing the legacy. The Gurjara-Pratiharas ruled over western and northern India from the 8th to the 11th century CE. They were known for their patronage of art, sculpture, and temple construction, significantly contributing to India's cultural heritage.
- ▶ Mihir Bhoja stands out as a key figure in Indian history due to his military conquests, administrative acumen, and religious devotion. His reign not only expanded the Gurjara-Pratihara Empire but also left a lasting impact on India's political and cultural landscape.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Write a brief note on the importance of Gurjara-Pratihara Empire of early medieval India.

3. SRI AUROBINDO

CONTEXT: Release of a commemorative coin and postal stamp in honour of Sri Aurobindo. He was a great revolutionary and a great philosopher and a proponent of "integral" yoga.

▫ Early Life and Education:

- ▶ Born on August 15, 1872, in Calcutta to surgeon Krishna Dhan Ghose and Swarnalata Devi.
- ▶ Passed the Indian Civil Service Examination in 1890 but failed the horsemanship test, preventing entry into the service.
- ▶ In 1893, he accepted a position in the Baroda state service. Worked for 13 years, eventually becoming the principal of Baroda State College. Later, he left Baroda to join the Bengal National College.
- ▶ **Role in the Freedom Movement:** People's consciousness and help them discover their true selves.
- ▶ **Literary Contributions:** Sri Aurobindo's extensive literary work includes philosophical speculation, treatises on yoga and integral yoga, poetry, plays, and other writings.

▫ Major works include:

- ▶ Essays on the Gita (1922), The Life Divine (1939), Collected Poems and Plays (1942), The Synthesis of Yoga (1948), The Human Cycle (1949), The Ideal of Human Unity (1949), Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol (1950), On the Veda (1956)
- ▶ Sri Aurobindo's life journey from a nationalist leader to a spiritual guru left a profound impact on India's freedom movement and spiritual heritage. His integral yoga continues to inspire spiritual seekers around the world.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Revolutionary movements during the freedom struggle was the result of not only the frustration with moderates but with the high handed British colonial policies. Discuss.

4. ALLURI SITHARAMA RAJU

CONTEXT: The 125th ceremony of Alluri Sitarama Raju was a year-long celebration of the birth anniversary of the legendary freedom fighter. Alluri Sitarama Raju was an Indian revolutionary who fiercely opposed British colonial rule in India. He is revered as "Manyam Veerudu" or hero of the jungle by the local people for his courage and sacrifice.

▣ Background and Motivation:

- ▶ Raju joined Mahatma Gandhi's Non-cooperation movement, where he witnessed the exploitation of tribal people in the Eastern Ghats region of Andhra Pradesh.
- ▶ The British-imposed Madras Forest Act of 1882 restricted tribal people's traditional practices like podu cultivation and gathering minor forest produce, pushing them into labor under harsh conditions.

▣ Formation of Guerrilla Army:

- ▶ Frustrated by British policies, Raju organized a guerrilla army in the Eastern Ghats.
- ▶ Guerrilla warfare tactics included ambushes, sabotage, raids, and hit-and-run attacks on British police stations and outposts.
- ▶ His aim was to free the tribal people from British oppression and drive the colonial forces out of the region.

▣ The Rampa Rebellion (1922-1924):

- ▶ The rebellion, also known as the Manyam Rebellion, spanned from 1922 to 1924.
- ▶ Raju's guerrilla tactics disrupted British control in the Eastern Ghats, symbolizing a significant resistance movement against colonial rule.
- ▶ **Capture and Death:** On 7th May 1924, Alluri Sitarama Raju was captured and subsequently killed by British forces in Koyyuru village. His death marked the end of the Rampa Rebellion, but his legacy as a valiant leader and freedom fighter endured.

▣ Legacy:

- ▶ Alluri Sitarama Raju's life exemplified unity among people regardless of caste or class, inspiring generations with his bravery and dedication to the cause of Indian independence.
- ▶ In recognition of his contributions, the Government of India issued a postal stamp in his honor in 1986, commemorating his role in the freedom struggle.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the significance of the Rampa Rebellion (1922-1924) led by Alluri Sitarama Raju in the context of India's struggle for independence against British colonial rule, highlighting its impact on tribal rights and national movement.

5. SWAMI SAHAJANAND SARASWATI

CONTEXT: With the ongoing Farm protests and issues surrounding Indian Agriculture, Swami Sahajanand Saraswati role concerning agricultural/farmer movement during freedom struggle became a centre point of discussion.

▣ Life and Contributions

- ▶ Swami Sahajanand Saraswati (1889-1950) was a prominent leader of the peasant movement in colonial India and a significant figure in the country's fight for independence from British rule.
- ▶ He was also an intellectual well-versed in India's **Shastric traditions**, leaving behind a substantial body of written work.
- ▶ Born Naurang Rai into a simple peasant family in Deva near Ghazipur, Swami Sahajanand Saraswati became a sanyasi (Hindu monk) at the age of eighteen, adopting the name Sahajanand. Renouncing worldly needs, he lived on just one meal a day. His integrity and dedication to principles were unmatched, as he had no personal, religious, or political interests.

- ▶ **Swami Sahajanand's early education** showcased his brilliance. He completed six years of primary schooling in just three years and excelled in middle and high school, standing seventh in the pre-matriculation scholarship examination in the United Provinces. His formal education ended in 1907 when he took the vows of sanyas.
- ▶ **He began his social and political activities** with the **Bhumihar Brahmin Mahasabha** and the Indian National Congress, alongside other prominent leaders like Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya and Dr. Rajendra Prasad, who were also active in caste or sectarian organizations. During this period, he wrote "Brahmarshi vansha vistar," a history of Brahmins.
 - Swami Sahajanand is renowned for his efforts to uplift depressed peasant-farmers during British rule.
 - He followed Mahatma Gandhi's path after the successful **Champaran Satyagraha**, advocating for the economic rights of the masses.
 - He played a vital role in the **Non-Cooperation Movement** and united people in Bihar against British exploitation.
 - His work alongside Sardar Patel at kisan sabhas (peasant meetings) highlighted the importance of farmers' rights, including the waiving of farmers' loans and ensuring their income.
 - As a leader of the peasant movement, Swami Sahajanand established the Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha (BPKS) in 1929, which later grew to be the largest regional assembly in India.
 - In 1936, he founded the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) with Congress Socialists and became its first president.
 - He collaborated with Subhas Chandra Bose and the Communist Party of India during World War II, eventually forming an independent Kisan Sabha.
- ▶ Swami Sahajanand was a dynamic orator who communicated in the common dialect, gaining the admiration of villagers. His followers called him "Kisan Pran" (the life of Kisans), and his ashram in Neyamatpur, Gaya, became a focal point of Bihar's independence movement.
- ▶ One of his significant contributions was leading the Bakasht Movement in Bihar (1937-1938), which fought against the eviction of tenants from Bakasht lands by zamindars. This agitation resulted in the **Bihar Tenancy Act and the Bakasht Land Tax**. He also led a successful uprising at the Dalmia Sugar Mill in Bihta, emphasizing worker-peasant unity.
- ▶ Swami Sahajanand's legacy continues to inspire farmers and leaders advocating for an inclusive society with farmers at its core. Subhas Chandra Bose described him as a prominent figure in the Left movement and a friend, philosopher, and guide. His teachings and activism for the welfare of Indian farmers remain relevant, offering valuable lessons for contemporary agrarian issues.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the contributions of Swami Sahajanand Saraswati in the farmer's movement in India.

6. SREE NARAYANA GURU (1856-1928)

CONTEXT: The Prime Minister paid tributes to Sree Narayana Guru on his Jayanti. Sree Narayana Guru was born on 22nd August, 1856 to Madan Asan in a village near Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.

▣ Early Life and Ideas

- ▶ His family belonged to the Ezhava caste and was considered 'avarna' according to the social mores of the time.
- ▶ Right from his childhood he loved solitude and always indulged himself in deep contemplation.
- ▶ He was intensely drawn to worship at the local temples and composed hymns and several devotional songs.

- ▶ From an early age, he was drawn towards asceticism. He lived as a hermit in a forest for eight years.
- ▶ He learned Vedas, Upanishads, literature, logical rhetoric of Sanskrit, Hatha Yoga and other philosophies.
- ▶ In 1903, he established the Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDP), a charitable society as the founder and president.
- ▶ The organisation continues to mark its strong presence to this day.
- ▶ In 1924, the Sivagiri pilgrimage was established to promote the virtues of cleanliness, education, devotion, agriculture, handicrafts, and trade.
- ▶ Philosophy of Sree Narayana Guru: He became one of the greatest proponents and re-evaluators of Advaita Vedanta, the principle of non-duality put forward by Adi Shankara.
- ▶ He also has many contributions during freedom struggle of India.
- ▶ He died on 20th September, 1928 and the day is observed as Sree Narayana Guru Samadhi in Kerala.

▣ Important Works:

- ▶ **Against Caste Injustice:** He gave the famous slogan “One Caste, One Religion, One God for All” (*Oru Jathi, Oru Matham, Oru Daivam, Manushyanu*).
- ▶ In 1888, he built a temple dedicated to Lord Shiva at Aruvippuram which was against the caste-based restrictions of the time.
- ▶ In one temple he consecrated at Kalavancode, he kept mirrors instead of idols. This symbolised his message that the divine was within each individual.
- ▶ **Against Conversions:** He taught equality but felt the inequalities should not be exploited to carry out conversions and therefore generate strife in society.
- ▶ He organized an All-Region Conference in 1923 at Alwaye Advaita Ashram, which was reported to be the first such event in India.
- ▶ This was an effort to counter the religious conversions Ezhava community was susceptible to.
- ▶ **Contribution to National Movement:** A remarkable social reformer, he was in the forefront of the movement for universal temple entry and against the societal ills like the social discrimination of untouchables.
- ▶ **Impetus for Vaikom Agitation:** He provided the impetus for Vaikom agitation which was aimed at temple entry in Travancore for the lower castes. It drew nationwide attention and appreciation from Mahatma Gandhi.
- ▶ **Unity through his Poems:** He captured the essence of Indianness in his poems which highlighted the unity that lies beneath the world’s apparent diversity.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the socio-political and cultural contributions of Sree Narayan Guru.

7. BHAGWAN BIRSA MUNDA

CONTEXT: The Pradhan Mantri PVTG Development Mission Was launched on November 15, the birthday anniversary of tribal icon Birsa Munda.

▣ Birsa Munda: A Tribal Hero and Freedom Fighter

- ▶ “Abua raj seter jana, maharani raj tundu jana” (Let the kingdom of the queen be ended and our kingdom be established). This slogan was coined by Birsa Munda, a revered tribal folk hero, also known as ‘Bhagwan’ by many Indian tribal communities.
- ▶ Born on November 15, 1875, in Ulihatu village of Khunti district, Birsa was an Indian freedom fighter, tribal leader, and religious reformer. He belonged to the Munda tribe of the Chotanagapur plateau region, now in Jharkhand.

- ▶ In 2021, the Indian government declared his birth anniversary, November 15, as 'Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas' (Tribal Pride Day). This day also marks the formation of Jharkhand, which became a state on November 15, 2000, after being separated from Bihar.
- ▶ **Early Life:** Birsa Munda's early life saw many changes. He started his education in Salga under Jaipal Nag's guidance and later converted to Christianity to attend the German Mission School. However, he soon realized that the British were using education to convert tribals to Christianity. He left the school and founded 'Birsa Faith,' attracting many followers from the Munda community. These followers, known as 'Birsaits,' openly opposed the British.
- ▶ **The Munda Rebellion:** The British introduced new land settlement systems, such as the zamindari system, replacing the tribal system 'Khuntkatti,' which allowed community land ownership. This change forced tribals to become landless laborers working for new landlords who imposed 'Bandhua Majdoori' (forced labor) and exploited them without fair pay.
 - The Munda Rebellion, also known as 'Ulgulan' or 'The Great Tumult Movement,' arose in response to these practices. Starting in 1894, Birsa mobilized the Munda tribals against the British and outsiders (Dikus), establishing an independent 'Munda Raj' in 1895. The rebels used guerrilla tactics to attack symbols of British authority.

▣ Birsa's Leadership and Legacy

- ▶ Birsa's leadership skills united various tribal communities against the British. He brought the Oraons and Kharias together on a common platform. However, in March 1900, the British arrested Birsa while he was sleeping in a forest. He was jailed and died a few months later from cholera.
- ▶ Although the rebellion was suppressed, it highlighted the tribals' capacity to resist oppression. The British implemented the Chotanagpur Tenancy (CNT) Act of 1908 in response, safeguarding tribal land rights and customary community rights.

▣ Cultural Impact

- ▶ The Munda Rebellion of 1895-1900 is a significant chapter in tribal resistance against British rule. It exposed the injustices faced by tribal communities and influenced later tribal rights movements. Birsa Munda also fought to preserve and revive the spiritual, economic, and cultural heritage of indigenous tribes. He encouraged tribal communities to reject external cultural practices, avoid alcoholism, preach cleanliness, and become self-reliant.

▣ Honoring Birsa Munda

- ▶ Birsa Munda's legacy is celebrated through a museum in Ranchi, inaugurated by the Prime Minister in 2021. Located at the Old Central Jail, where Birsa died, the museum honors various tribal freedom fighters.
- ▶ On Birsa's birth anniversary in 2021, the Prime Minister launched a Rs 24,000-crore project named 'PM Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN),' aimed at empowering Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). Additionally, the 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra,' a nationwide drive to raise awareness and ensure welfare scheme saturation, was launched.
- ▶ Birsa Munda's story embodies the spirit of resistance and resilience, contributing significantly to India's struggle for independence and the preservation of tribal heritage.

Santhal Hul

- The Santhal Hul (revolution) was a tribal revolt against the atrocities of the upper-caste landlords, moneylenders, traders, police, and administrative officials from the East India Company in the erstwhile Bengal presidency.
- **Led by:** Murmu brothers — **Sidho, Kanho, Chand, and Bhairav** — along with sisters **Phulo and Jhano**.
- The Santhals, originally settled in areas of present-day Jharkhand, faced severe exploitation following their displacement from various regions under British rule.
- Promised lands for settlement and agriculture, they instead experienced **land-grabbing and bonded labor practices known as begari**.

- **The Uprising**
 - ▶ In response to these injustices, around 60,000 Santhals rallied against the East India Company in 1855.
 - ▶ Their resistance was guided by their belief in Thakur Bonga, their spiritual deity.
 - ▶ Engaging in guerrilla warfare, they fought for nearly six months before the British finally suppressed the revolt in January 1856.
 - ▶ The brutal aftermath saw over 15,000 Santhals killed and thousands of villages destroyed.
- **Legacy and Impact:** Despite the suppression, the Santhal Hul left an enduring impact. The sacrifices of leaders like Sidho and Kanho Murmu catalyzed legislative changes aimed at protecting Adivasi rights.
- The Santhal Pargana Tenancy Act of 1876 (SPT Act) and the Chhotanagpur Tenancy Act of 1908 (CNT Act) were direct outcomes of these struggles.
 - ▶ **The Santhal Pargana Tenancy Act of 1876 (SPT Act):** Prohibits the transfer of Adivasi lands (urban or rural land) to non-Adivasis, was the result of the Hul. The land can only be inherited as per the Act, thus retaining the rights of Santhals to self-govern their land.
 - ▶ **The Chhotanagpur Tenancy Act, (CNT Act)** enacted by the British in 1908 a result of the **Birsa Movement**, allows land transfers within the same caste and certain geographical areas with the approval of the District Collector. This Act also restricts the sale of Adivasi and Dalit land, while allowing land transfers between Adivasi individuals from the same police station and Dalits in the same district.

Major Tribal Uprisings

Year	Tribal Uprising	Features
1776	Chuar Uprising	It was initiated by indigenous tribespeople of Midnapore, in response to land revenue demands and economic hardships.
1818-1831 and 1913	Bhil Uprising	The Uprising took place in the Western Ghats as a resistance against the rule of the Company. It resulted in the formation of Bhil Raj. In 1913, under the leadership of Govind Guru, the Bhil community reorganized and continued their fight for the establishment of Bhil Raj.
1820-37	Ho and Munda Uprisings	The Ho and Munda Uprisings were initiated by the Ho tribals under the leadership of Raja Parahat in the Singhbhum and Chottanagpur regions. These uprisings were in response to the implementation of a new farming revenue policy. Over time, the Ho uprising transformed into the Munda rebellion.
1822-29	Ramosi Uprising	It was led by the Ramosi tribals residing in the Western Ghats. Under the leadership of Chittur Singh, they revolted against the British occupation of the region.
1829	Koli Uprising	The Uprising witnessed multiple revolts by the tribal communities of Gujarat and Maharashtra. They rebelled against the control of the East India Company in the years 1829, 1839, and once more during the period of 1844-48.
1832	Kol Rebellion	It occurred when the tribal communities of Chottanagpur, led by Buddho Bagat, revolted against the British colonial rule and oppressive money lenders.

Year	Tribal Uprising	Features
1837-56	Khond Rebellion	The Rebellion saw the tribal communities residing in the hills from Tamil Nadu to Bengal, led by Chakra Bisoi, rise up against the interference in their tribal customs and the imposition of new taxes.
1899-1900	Munda Rebellion	It involved the tribal population of the Chotanagpur area who, under the leadership of Birsa Munda, revolted against the 'Dikus' (a term used to refer to outsiders or non-tribal people).
1879-80	Koya Uprising	The Uprising witnessed the tribal communities of the eastern Godavari region, led by Tomma Sora and Raja Annantyar, rebelling against the oppressive actions of the police and moneylenders.
1910	Bastar Revolt	The Revolt was staged by the tribal population of Jagdalpur as a protest against the imposition of new feudal and forest levies.
1921-22	Chenchus Uprising	The Uprising took place when the tribal community of Nallamalla Hills, led by K. Hanumanthu, revolted against the forest laws imposed by the British authorities.
1922-24	Rampa Rebellion	It was led by Alluri Sitaraman Raju, a member of the Koya tribe in Andhra Pradesh. The rebellion was launched in response to British interference in the region.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Examine the role of Birsa Munda in the tribal resistance movement against British colonial rule. How did his leadership and the Munda Rebellion impact the socio-political landscape of the Chotanagpur region? Discuss the significance of the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act of 1908 in this context.

6

HISTORICAL TRAVELLERS

1. AYODHYA'S HISTORICAL NARRATIVES

CONTEXT: The Supreme Court's 2019 Ayodhya title suit judgment references early European travellers' accounts to shed light on Ayodhya's historical narratives

▫ The historical narratives

- ▶ **William Finch (1608-1611):** During Jahangir's reign, William Finch visited Ayodhya, noting ruins of temples and Ranichand's castle, revered as the abode of the great god. He observed Brahmins recording visitors' names, suggesting an ancient pilgrimage tradition.
- ▶ **Joannes de Laet (1631):** Laet described Ayodhya's ruins, referencing Ramachand's fort and palace, revered as a divine site by Indians, indicative of Ram's significance in local beliefs.
- ▶ **Joseph Tieffenthaler (1740):** Tieffenthaler's account, post-Aurangzeb's era, mentions Ayodhya's repopulation and the construction of a mosque at the site of Ram's birthplace. He notes the destruction of Hindu temples under Aurangzeb's reign.
- ▶ **Robert Montgomery Martin (19th Century):** Martin mentions Ayodhya's repopulation myth by Vikramaditya but questions the historical validity. He cites the destruction of Hindu temples, attributing it to Aurangzeb's zealous actions.
- ▶ These accounts provide varying perspectives on Ayodhya's history, emphasizing its religious and cultural significance amidst the backdrop of political and religious transformations. They highlight debates surrounding historical narratives and the impact of rulers on religious monuments.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. What role did early European travellers play in documenting and interpreting the historical and cultural landscape of Ayodhya?

2. CHINESE PILGRIM TRAVELLERS TO INDIA

CONTEXT: The transmission of Buddhist doctrines from India to China in the first century CE facilitated significant cross-cultural exchanges, impacting Asian and world history. This process involved various individuals, including Buddhist monks, traders, and artisans, and resulted in profound interactions between Indian and Chinese societies, as well as those in Central and Southeast Asia.

- ▶ **Role of Chinese Pilgrims:** Chinese pilgrims played a crucial role in facilitating exchanges between ancient India and China. They introduced new texts, rituals, and doctrines to China, providing detailed accounts of their spiritual journeys. These accounts contributed to shaping the Chinese perception of India, portraying it as a sacred and sophisticated land.
- ▶ **Significant Chinese Pilgrims**
 - **Faxian (337–422 CE):** Faxian, one of the earliest Chinese monks to travel to India, embarked on his journey at over sixty years old. His main purpose was to procure Buddhist texts related to monastic rules. Along his route, Faxian encountered multiethnic societies in Central Asia and witnessed Buddhist practices at pilgrimage sites in India. His detailed records provided valuable insights into Buddhist doctrines, rituals, and monastic institutions, shaping perceptions of India among the Chinese clergy.
 - **Xuanzang (602–664 CE):** Xuanzang, a prominent figure in ancient China, undertook a pilgrimage to India in 627. His narrative, *The Records of the Western Regions Visited During the Great Tang Dynasty*, served both as a religious account and a historical record for Tang China. Xuanzang's work highlighted the diplomatic exchanges between India and China and the spread of Buddhism across Asia.
 - **Yijing (635–713 CE):** Yijing, though less studied than Faxian and Xuanzang, made significant contributions to understanding Buddhist practices in India. His works provided detailed accounts of monastic rules and practices, aiming to rectify discrepancies in the application of Buddhist principles in China. Yijing's observations shed light on cultural differences between India and China, influencing the adaptation of Buddhist practices in the latter.
- ▶ The travels of Faxian, Xuanzang, and Yijing not only facilitated the transmission of Buddhist doctrines but also fostered cultural understanding between India and China. Their detailed accounts continue to serve as valuable historical resources, offering insights into religious practices, cross-cultural interactions, and the development of Buddhism in Asia.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Assess the importance of the accounts of the Chinese and Arab travellers in the reconstruction of the history of India.

3. ARAB TRAVELLERS AND CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS

CONTEXT: India, with its rich tapestry of culture, history, and diversity, has long captured the imagination of travellers from distant lands. Among them, the Arab explorers stand out for their pioneering journeys that left an indelible mark on India's historical narrative and global perception.

◻ Arab Trailblazers in India:

- ▶ **Al-Biruni (973–1048 CE):** Al-Biruni, an erudite scholar and polymath from Khwarezm, embarked on a transformative voyage to India during the 11th century CE. His insatiable curiosity and thirst for knowledge propelled him to delve into the intricacies of Indian society, science, and philosophy.

- ▶ Al-Biruni's magnum opus, "Kitab al-Hind" (Book of India), remains a seminal work that offers a comprehensive portrayal of India's geography, religion, customs, and scientific achievements. His meticulous observations continue to serve as a cornerstone of Indian historiography and cultural studies.
- ▶ **Ibn Battuta (1304–1377 CE):** Ibn Battuta, often hailed as one of history's greatest travellers, embarked on an epic odyssey to India during the 14th century CE. His unparalleled wanderlust led him to traverse the length and breadth of the Indian subcontinent, from the bustling markets of Delhi to the tranquil shores of Kerala.
 - Through his seminal work, "Rihla" (The Travels), Ibn Battuta immortalized his encounters with Indian monarchs, scholars, and common folk, offering vivid descriptions of India's vibrant cities, magnificent monuments, and diverse cultures. His narratives continue to captivate readers worldwide, offering a window into India's medieval splendor.
- ▶ **Cultural Mosaics:** The accounts of Arab travellers resonate with tales of India's cultural kaleidoscope, where myriad faiths, languages, and traditions coexist in harmonious symphony. From the majestic temples of Khajuraho to the serene mosques of Fatehpur Sikri, they witnessed the eclectic blend of Hindu, Buddhist, and Islamic influences that define India's cultural landscape.
- ▶ **Trade and Commerce:** India's strategic location at the crossroads of ancient trade routes drew Arab merchants and traders in droves.
- ▶ **Spiritual Quests:** Pilgrimage sites such as Varanasi, Ajmer, and Sarnath held a sacred allure, beckoning seekers of truth to embark on transformative journeys of self-discovery and transcendence.

7

MISCELLANEOUS

1. DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA THROUGH DIFFERENT HISTORICAL STAGES

CONTEXT: India's history is a tapestry woven with diverse influences and factors that have shaped its trajectory across various historical stages. From ancient times to the medieval period and into modern times, social, geographical, climatic, and other factors have played pivotal roles in India's development. Understanding these factors is crucial for comprehending India's rich and complex history.

- ▶ **Ancient India:** Ancient India witnessed the emergence of sophisticated civilizations and cultural achievements that laid the foundation for subsequent periods.
- **Geographical Factors:** The geographical features of the Indian subcontinent significantly influenced the development of ancient India.
 - ▶ **Riverine Civilizations:** The fertile plains of the Indus and Ganges rivers facilitated the rise of early civilizations such as the Indus Valley Civilization and the Vedic civilization. These river valleys provided fertile land for agriculture, fostering settlement and urbanization.
 - ▶ **Natural Defenses:** India's natural barriers, including the Himalayas in the north and the Indian Ocean in the south, provided protection from external invasions, allowing for the flourishing of indigenous cultures and civilizations.
- **Social Factors:** Social structures and cultural practices were integral to the fabric of ancient Indian society.
 - ▶ **Caste System:** The caste system, with its hierarchical social order, shaped ancient Indian society, determining individuals' roles and occupations based on birth.
 - ▶ **Religious Diversity:** Ancient India was home to diverse religious beliefs and practices, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and other indigenous faiths. These religions coexisted and influenced each other, contributing to India's rich religious heritage.

- ❑ **Climatic Factors:** The climate and environment of ancient India had significant implications for agriculture, economy, and daily life.
 - ▶ **Monsoon Patterns:** The seasonal monsoon rains played a crucial role in agriculture, ensuring bountiful harvests and sustaining livelihoods in agrarian societies.
 - ▶ **Varied Topography:** The diverse topography of India, ranging from mountains to plains to coastal regions, influenced settlement patterns, trade routes, and cultural interactions.
 - ▶ **Medieval India:** Medieval India was characterized by the rise and fall of powerful empires, cultural syncretism, and significant social and political changes.
- ❑ **Political Factors:** Medieval India saw the emergence of powerful kingdoms and empires that vied for supremacy over vast territories.
 - ▶ **Dynastic Conflicts:** Rivalry between dynasties such as the Mauryas, Guptas, Cholas, and Delhi Sultanate led to territorial expansion, conquests, and conflicts over resources and power.
 - ▶ **Islamic Invasions:** The arrival of Islamic rulers from Central Asia, beginning with the Ghaznavids and later the Mughals, reshaped the political landscape of medieval India, leading to the establishment of Muslim-majority states and the synthesis of Indian and Islamic cultures.
- ❑ **Economic Factors:** Economic prosperity and trade networks were vital to the medieval Indian economy.
 - ▶ **Trade Routes:** India's strategic location at the crossroads of major trade routes between East and West facilitated the exchange of goods, ideas, and cultures, contributing to economic growth and cultural diffusion.
 - ▶ **Agrarian Economy:** Agriculture remained the backbone of the medieval Indian economy, with the cultivation of crops such as rice, wheat, and cotton sustaining livelihoods and supporting urbanization.
- ❑ **Cultural Factors:** Medieval India witnessed the flourishing of art, architecture, literature, and religious movements that left a lasting impact on Indian culture.
 - ▶ **Architectural Marvels:** The construction of grand monuments, including temples, mosques, and forts, reflected the architectural brilliance and cultural diversity of medieval India.
 - ▶ **Literary Traditions:** Sanskrit, Persian, and regional languages produced literary masterpieces, epics, and poetry, enriching the cultural tapestry of medieval India.
 - ▶ **Modern India:** Modern India experienced colonialism, nationalist movements, and socio-economic transformations that shaped its modern identity.
- ❑ **Colonial Influence:** The colonial period saw the dominance of European powers, notably the British East India Company and later the British Raj, which had profound implications for India's political, economic, and social development.
 - ▶ **British Rule:** British colonial policies, including land revenue systems, administrative reforms, and industrialization efforts, transformed Indian society and economy, leading to both benefits and exploitation.
 - ▶ **Cultural Exchange:** Colonialism facilitated the exchange of ideas, languages, and technologies between India and the West, contributing to cultural syncretism and the emergence of modern Indian identity.
- ❑ **Socio-Economic Changes:** Modern India witnessed significant socio-economic changes, including industrialization, urbanization, and social reform movements.
 - ▶ **Industrial Revolution:** The advent of the Industrial Revolution in Europe sparked the growth of modern industries in India, leading to urbanization, migration, and changes in traditional livelihoods.

- ▶ **Social Reform Movements:** The 19th and early 20th centuries saw the rise of social reform movements, including those advocating for women's rights, caste equality, and religious reform, paving the way for social change and political awakening.
- **Independence and Nation-Building:** India's struggle for independence and subsequent nation-building efforts shaped its modern political landscape and democratic institutions.
 - ▶ **Independence Movement:** The non-violent resistance led by Mahatma Gandhi and other nationalist leaders against British colonial rule culminated in India's independence in 1947, marking the beginning of a new era of self-rule and nation-building.
 - ▶ **Constitutional Democracy:** The adoption of the Indian Constitution in 1950 established India as a democratic republic, laying the foundation for inclusive governance, secularism, and social justice.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Examine the role of geographical, social, political, economic, and cultural factors in shaping India's trajectory from ancient civilizations to modern nation-building efforts.

2. KEELADI EXCAVATIONS

CONTEXT: Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has submitted a detailed report on the findings during the first two phases of the digging at the Sangam-era site and their significance.

- ▶ **Keeladi is a small village in the Sivaganga district of southern Tamil Nadu**, situated about 12 km southeast of Madurai along the Vaigai river. Excavations since 2015 have uncovered evidence of an urban civilization from the Sangam age on the banks of the Vaigai river.
- **Archaeological Discoveries:**
 - ▶ **Pottery:** Large amounts of pottery suggest a thriving pottery industry using locally available materials. Over 120 potsherds with Tamil Brahmi inscriptions have been found, along with more than a thousand inscribed potsherds from Keeladi and other sites, indicating the long-term use of this script.
 - ▶ **Weaving Industry:** Finds include spindle whorls, copper needles, terracotta seals, yarn hanging stones, terracotta spheres, and earthen vessels for holding liquids, showing various stages of a weaving industry. Evidence of a dyeing industry and glass bead industry also exists.
 - ▶ **Luxury Items:** Gold ornaments, copper articles, semi-precious stones, shell bangles, ivory bangles, and ivory combs reflect the artistic and culturally rich lifestyle of the Keeladi people.
 - ▶ **Commercial Networks:** Agate and carnelian beads suggest trade imports, while terracotta and ivory dice, gamesmen, and hopscotch pieces reveal their recreational activities.
- **Significance of the Findings:**
 - ▶ **Link to Sangam Age:** The Sangam age, believed to span from the 3rd century BCE to the 3rd century CE, is now suggested to date back to 800 BCE based on these findings. Keeladi provides crucial evidence bridging the Iron Age (12th century BCE to 6th century BCE) and the Early Historic Period (6th century BCE to 4th century BCE).
 - ▶ **Connection to Indus Valley Civilization:** The artefacts from Keeladi have led scholars to describe it as part of the Vaigai Valley Civilization, drawing comparisons to the Indus Valley Civilization despite a 1,000-year gap filled with Iron Age material in South India. The Tamil Nadu State Archaeology Department (TNSDA) highlights Keeladi's urban features, including brick structures, luxury items, and evidence of internal and external trade.

Understanding the Sangam Age:

- ▶ Definition: The term 'Sangam' is derived from the Sanskrit word 'Sangha,' meaning an association or assembly. The Tamil Sangam was an academy of poets flourishing in three different periods under the patronage of the Pandyan kings.
- ▶ Literature: Sangam literature, consolidated primarily from the third Sangam, provides information on the life and activities of people around the beginning of the Christian era. It covers topics like government, war, charity, trade, worship, and agriculture.
- ▶ Sangam literature includes the Tolkappiyam, the Ten Poems (Pattupattu), the Eight Anthologies (Ettutogai), the Eighteen Minor Works (Padinenkilkanakku), and the three epics.

Tamil-Brahmi Script:

- ▶ The Tamil-Brahmi script was the earliest used by Tamils.
- ▶ Over time, it evolved into the angular Grantha script during the late ancient and early medieval periods, which eventually led to the modern Tamil script. The Keeladi excavations have provided invaluable insights into the Sangam age, demonstrating the existence of a sophisticated urban civilization in ancient Tamil Nadu. This site is crucial for understanding the cultural and historical continuity from the Iron Age to the Early Historic Period.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION

Q. Though not very useful from the point of view of a connected political history of South India, the Sangam literature portrays the social and economic conditions of its time with remarkable vividness. Comment. (2013)

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the literary significance of sangam Age. How the Sangam literature contributes towards understanding of the socio-economic, political and religious aspects of sangam period?

3. MENHIRS

CONTEXT: The Tamil Nadu Department of Archaeology has declared five 'menhir' (single stone) and megalithic burial sites at Kodumanal in Erode district as protected monuments.

- ▶ Kodumanal is located on the northern banks of the Noyyal River. It became known in 1961 when the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) started digging there after finding ancient materials scattered across the village. During the excavation, many potsherds with names inscribed in Tamil-Brahmi script, Roman silver coins, precious stones, and quartz were discovered.
- ▶ Other items unearthed include semi-precious stone beads, bangles, copper, silver, iron, and terracotta. These were part of either burial sites or memorials. The burial sites contained actual remains, such as dolmenoid cists (box-shaped stone burial chambers), cairn circles (stone circles with defined peripheries), and capstones (distinctive mushroom-shaped burial chambers mainly found in Kerala). Non-burial memorials included menhirs.
- ▶ Most megaliths in India date back to the Iron Age (1500 BC to 500 BC). These are primarily found in Maharashtra (mainly Vidarbha), Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana.
- ▶ The Iron Age is a period in human history when iron tools and weapons were widely used. It is considered the last stage of the three-age system, which divides early human history into the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, and the Iron Age.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the historical and cultural significance of Megalith period in India.

4. PHANIGIRI ARTEFACTS

CONTEXT: The Phanigiri Buddhist artefacts are currently on display at the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art in an exhibition called “The Tree and Serpent.”

▢ Details

- ▶ The Phanigiri Buddhist artefacts were discovered in 1942.
- ▶ These artefacts date from 200 BCE to 400 CE.
- ▶ Exhibition: Currently showcased at the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art in an exhibition called “The Tree and Serpent.”
- ▶ Phanigiri is a small village approximately 150 km from Hyderabad. Phanigiri translates to “hillock of snake hood.”
- ▶ The village holds significant historical and spiritual importance in Buddhism.

▢ Significant Findings

- ▶ **Thoranas (Stone Gateways):**
 - A set of thoranas were discovered, with one displaying both Mahayana and Hinayana schools of Buddhist thought, suggesting coexistence despite philosophical differences.
 - Phanigiri provides evidence of the deification of Buddha and a transition towards canonization and ritual in Buddhist practices.

▢ Philosophy and Teachings of Buddhism

- ▶ **Four Noble Truths:**
 - **Dukkha:** Life involves suffering.
 - **Samudaya:** Suffering is caused by desire and attachment.
 - **Nirodha:** Ending desire can end suffering.
 - **Magga:** The path to ending suffering is the Eightfold Path.

▢ Eightfold Path:

- ▶ **Right Understanding:** Understanding the nature of reality and the path of transformation.
- ▶ **Right Intention:** Commitment to ethical and mental self-improvement.
- ▶ **Right Speech:** Speaking truthfully and avoiding harmful speech.
- ▶ **Right Action:** Behaving peacefully and harmoniously.
- ▶ **Right Livelihood:** Avoiding work that harms others.
- ▶ **Right Effort:** Cultivating positive states of mind.
- ▶ **Right Mindfulness:** Developing awareness of the body, feelings, and thoughts.
- ▶ **Right Concentration:** Developing the mental focus necessary for meditation.

▢ Key Teachings

- ▶ **Anatta (Non-self):** The concept that there is no permanent, unchanging self.
- ▶ **Anicca (Impermanence):** Everything in life is impermanent and constantly changing.
- ▶ **Dukkha (Suffering):** Recognizing suffering as an intrinsic part of existence.
- ▶ **Karma and Rebirth:** Actions have consequences that affect future lives.
- ▶ **Middle Way:** A balanced approach to life, avoiding extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification.
- ▶ The Phanigiri artefacts provide significant insights into the coexistence of different Buddhist traditions and the evolution of Buddhist practices. These findings, along with the core teachings of Buddhism, highlight the rich historical and philosophical heritage of Buddhism.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION

- Q. Gandhara sculpture owed as much to the Romans as to the Greeks. Explain. (2014)
- Q. Early Buddhist Stupa-art, while depicting folk motifs and narratives, successfully expounds Buddhist ideals. Elucidate. (2016)

PRACTICE QUESTION

- Q. Discuss the cultural elements through which teachings and philosophy of Buddhism has been promoted. Does it holds significance in contemporary world? What the world can learn from Buddhism?

5. KULI LANGUAGE

CONTEXT: Kuli language from Odisha Gets approval for inclusion in 8th Schedule.

▣ About

- ▶ Kui, also known as Kandh, Khondi, Khond, or Khondo, is a South-Eastern Dravidian language spoken by the Kandha community. This language is mainly spoken in the state of Odisha and is closely related to other Dravidian languages such as Gondi and Kuvi. Historically, Kui was referred to as the Kuinga language.
- ▶ According to the 1991 Indian census, there are 941,988 native speakers of Kui, making it the 29th most spoken language in India at that time. Kui is traditionally written using the Odia script, which is also used for the Odia language.
- ▶ The Kandha, also spelled Kondha or Khond, are an indigenous Adivasi tribal community and are the largest tribe in Odisha. They organize themselves into territorial clan groups, and each clan practices strict exogamy, meaning they marry outside their clan. The Kondh clans are divided into four functional groups: mondal, bismajhi, jani, and pujari.

▣ The 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution

- ▶ It lists the official languages of India. Despite the fact that hundreds of languages are spoken across the country, the 8th Schedule officially recognizes 22 languages.
- ▶ These languages include Manipuri, Maithili, Kashmiri, Hindi, Kannada, Gujarati, Konkani, Malayalam, Assamese, Marathi, Nepali, Bengali, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Telugu, Tamil, Odia, Urdu, Bodo, Dogri, and Santhali.
- ▶ Initially, the Constitution listed fourteen languages. Sindhi was added in 1967, Konkani, Manipuri, and Nepali were added in 1992, and Santali, Dogri, Maithili, and Bodo were included by the 92nd Amendment Act of 2003.

PRACTICE QUESTION

- Q. Discuss the linguistic diversity of India as a contributor to its cultural magnificence. How the inclusion under the 8th schedule will benefit any language?

6. SUNDARGARH NATURAL ARCH

CONTEXT: The Geological Survey of India (GSI) has declared “Natural Arch” near Hemgir in Odisha’s Sundargarh district as Geo Heritage Site.

▣ Discovery of India’s Biggest Natural Arch in Odisha

- ▶ The Geological Survey of India’s (GSI) state unit has discovered a magnificent “Natural Arch” located in the Kanika range of Sundargarh forest division.

- ▶ The Sundargarh natural arch, dating back approximately 184 million years to the lower to middle Jurassic age, was recently discovered by the Geological Survey of India (GSI). This geological marvel is believed to have originated during the Jurassic period.

▣ Geo Heritage Tag Proposal

- ▶ GSI has proposed a Geo Heritage tag for the Sundargarh Natural Arch. If approved, it will become the largest natural arch in the country to receive this designation. The arch is oval-shaped, with a length of 30 meters at the base and a height of 12 meters. The alcove of the arch has a maximum height and width of 7 meters and 15 meters, respectively.
- ▶ **Geological Significance:** Apart from its impressive size, the Sundargarh natural arch and its surrounding area are rich in primary sedimentary structures, including planner and cross-bedding, and occasional current ripples. These features indicate a high-energy fluvial environment during the sedimentation process. The formation of this natural arch can be attributed to fault activities and the unique nature of the lithotype, which facilitated sub-aerial weathering over an extended period.

▣ Importance of Geo Heritage Sites

- ▶ Geo Heritage Sites (GHSs) are locations that possess rare and exceptional geological, geomorphological, mineralogical, petrological, and paleontological features. These sites often include natural rock formations, caves, and other geological formations of national and international significance.
- ▶ The GSI plays a crucial role in identifying, declaring, and protecting these sites. Once designated as national geological monuments, GSI collaborates with respective State governments to implement necessary measures for their protection and maintenance, ensuring their preservation for future generations.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the importance of geological heritage sites in India, with a particular focus on recent discoveries such as the Sundargarh Natural Arch in Odisha. How do such sites contribute to our understanding of India's geological, historical, and cultural significance?

7. MEWAR SCHOOL OF PAINTING

CONTEXT: Shining the light on the Mewar School of paintings in the years of buzz around miniature paintings.

▣ Mewar school of miniature painting

- ▶ The Mewar school of miniature painting, known for its vibrant colors and intricate narratives within a single frame, thrived from the 17th to the 18th century. Originating in south-central Rajasthan, and parts of Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, this art form is a distinctive branch of the broader Rajput miniature painting tradition.
- ▶ Rajasthan also hosts other notable miniature painting schools, such as Marwar-Jodhpur, Kishangarh, Deogarh, and sub-Himalayan kingdoms like Chamba and Kangra, each with its unique style.
- ▶ One of the earliest dated manuscripts associated with the Mewar school is the Chawand Ragamala series (1605), painted by the artist Nasiruddin. Another prominent Mewari painting, "A Royal Hunting Party" (1705-15), reflects the influence of Mughal imperial painting in its composition and scene depiction, while still showcasing distinct elements of Mewari painting, such as the proportions of

figures, vibrant colors, and stylized perspectives. These paintings provide valuable historical insights, including details like sword storage, turban styles, and the occasions celebrated during that era.

- ▶ **The Mewari miniature painting style** evolved to meet changing patron demands and artistic trends. For example, Sahibdin's work was highly creative and covered a wide range of subjects, including the Ragamala and Rasikpriya series, as well as epics like the Ramayana. In the 18th century, political changes led regional kingdoms to seek alliances, resulting in court scenes that depicted the king and his court.
- ▶ **Notable artists of the Mewar school** include Allah Baksh and Sahibdin.
 - **Allah Baksh**, active during Maharana Jai Singh's reign (1653-98), is renowned for his comprehensive depictions of the entire Mahabharata and the Gita. He distinguished between the Mahabharata and Gita paintings: the Mahabharata scenes are horizontal, portraying the narrative's progression, while the Gita depictions are vertical and convey a sense of upward thrust. His Gita paintings show that the epic is not just about war but also about what is lost in war, including gardens, fountains, trees, and birds.
 - **Sahibdin**, active in the latter half of the seventeenth century during the reigns of Raj Singh and Jai Singh, gained prominence for his portraiture. He created notable works like the Rasikpriya series (1630), Gita Govinda (1628), and Ramayana (1649-53). These portraits were characterized by a limited color palette, minimal backgrounds, and the use of stippled greys for highlighting and shading.
- ▶ A unique feature of Mewari miniature paintings is that the artists rarely signed their works, similar to European artists who didn't sign their work until the Renaissance. Only a few names, such as Nasiruddin, Manohar, Allah Baksh, and Mansur, have surfaced in this tradition.
- ▶ The Mewar school of miniature painting remains a significant part of India's rich cultural heritage, reflecting the artistic ingenuity and historical narratives of its time. The paintings not only serve as artistic masterpieces but also as historical documents that provide a glimpse into the social, cultural, and political life of the era.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the significance of the Mewar school of miniature painting within the broader context of Indian miniature art traditions.

8. SISUPALGARH

CONTEXT: The ancient city of Sisupalgarh's portion of a wall was damaged by land mafia's rasing the issue of conservation of historical sites.

▣ **Sisupalgarh**

- ▶ It is located near Bhubaneswar in Odisha, was once the capital of Kalinga, the ancient name for Odisha. It is considered one of the largest and best-preserved ancient fortifications in India, dating back over 2,000 years to the 3rd or 4th century BC.
- ▶ The remains of this impressive fortification were discovered in 1948 by the Indian archaeologist B.B. Lal.
- ▶ The fortification is designed in a perfect square shape, surrounded by defensive walls that stand over nine meters (30 feet) tall. Each side of the fortification extends for over half a mile, and the interior is filled with stone ruins and sculptures.

▫ Architectural magnificence

- ▶ The city had eight gateways, two on each side of the wall, which were connected by streets arranged in a grid-like pattern, with the palace located at the center. These gates were elaborate structures made of brick and stone.
- ▶ Sisupalgarh also featured stone-lined reservoirs likely used for harvesting rainwater. The ancient city showcased intelligent traffic management, pedestrian-friendly pathways, grand gateways with guard houses, wide roads, and vast open spaces.
- ▶ It is identified with Kalinganagara of Kharavela and Tosali of Ashoka. The construction of Sisupalgarh was based on JalaDurga(Water Fort) concept, which in Odia is known as the GadaKhai concept.
- ▶ Jala Durga is a type of Durga or fort, which must be situated within a water body. It is divided into two categories, viz., the Anterdvipa (Island fort) and the Sthala Durga (Land fort).
- ▶ Antardvipa-Durga (island fortress) is surrounded by natural (sea or river) water bodies. Sthala-Durga (plain fortress) is surrounded by artificial moats or irrigated by a river.
- ▶ It is believed that Sisupalgarh had a population of around 20,000 to 25,000 people, reflecting its significance and the advanced planning of its infrastructure.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. Discuss the historical and strategic importance of King Kharavela and kingdom of Kalinga.



Scan QR Code for detailed RESULT

TOP 100 ALL INDIA RANKING CSE 2023

