

KINGS, FARMERS AND TOWNS

STUDY NOTES

- After the collapse of the great Harappan Civilisation, several important changes took place in the Indian subcontinent.
- From sixth century BCE, there is evidence that there were other trends also. The most visible was the emergence of early states, empires and kingdoms.
- In the 1830s significant developments took place in Indian epigraphy. During this period, James Prinsep, who was the mint officer in the East India Company deciphered the Brahmi and Kharosthi scripts which were used in the earliest inscriptions and coins.
- According to James Prinsep, most of the inscriptions and coins mention a king referred to as *Piyadassi* which means 'pleasant to behold'. Further, he found that some of inscriptions also refer to king as Ashoka, who was the most famous ruler known from the Buddhist texts.
- Consequently, historians focussed on the early Indian political history, investigating whether there were connections between political changes and social and economic developments.
- The sixth century BCE is considered as a major turning point in early Indian history. This era is associated with early states, cities, the growing use of iron and the development of coinage.
- The sixth century BCE also witnessed the growth of two religions namely, Buddhism and Jainism. The early Buddhist and Jaina texts mentions sixteen states known as *mahajanapadas*. Some important *mahajanapadas* which were frequently used in these texts are Vajji, Magadha, Koshala, Kuru, Panchala, Gandhara and Avanti.
- Many of the *mahajanapadas* were ruled by the kings but some of them known as *ganas* or *sanghas* were oligarchies, that is, the power was shared by a number of men collectively known as *rajas*. Each *mahajanapada* had a fortified capital city.
- Both spiritual leaders, that is, the Buddha and Mahavira belonged to such *ganas*.
- During sixth century BCE, Brahmanas started composing Sanskrit texts known as the *Dharmasutras* which mentions norms for rulers who were ideally Kshatriyas.
- In *Dharmasutras*, the rulers were advised to collect taxes and tribute from cultivators, traders and artisans. The rulers acquired wealth by raiding the neighbouring states and this was recognised as a legitimate means.
- Subsequently, some state maintained regular armies and bureaucracies while others depend on militia recruited from the peasantry.
- Magadha became the most powerful *mahajanapada* between the sixth and fourth centuries BCE. According to modern historians, Magadha was powerful because of its productive agriculture, iron mines, provided resources for tools and weapons and elephant which was an important component in the army was found in the forest of this region.
- Magadha strategic position in the Ganga enabled cheap and convenient means of communication.
- The important rulers of Magadha *mahajanapada* were Bimbisara and Ajatasattu. Later on, Magadha was usurped by Mahapadma Nanda, the founder of the Nanda dynasty.
- Initially, the capital of Magadha was Rajagaha (presently Rajgir) but in the fourth century BCE it was shifted to Pataliputra (present day Patna).

- The growth of Magadha culminated in the emergence of the Mauryan Empire which was founded by Chandragupta Maurya.
- Scholars have used variety of sources to reconstruct the history of the Mauryan Empire, these include archaeological finds especially sculpture, accounts of Megasthenes and Sanskrit treatise *Arthashastra* parts of which were probably composed by Kautilya.
- Apart from these sources, the Mauryas are mentioned in later Buddhist, Jaina and Puranic literature and in Sanskrit literary works.
- However, the most valuable source of the Mauryan Empire is the inscriptions of Asoka on rocks and pillars. In fact, Asoka was the first ruler who inscribed his messages on natural rocks and polished pillars.
- In his inscriptions, Asoka reveals the principles of *dhamma* such as respect for elders, generosity towards Brahmanas and people who renounced worldly life, treating slaves and servants kindly, and respect for religions and traditions other than one's own.
- Asoka appointed special officers known as the *dhamma mahamatta* to spread his message of *dhamma*.
- The Asokan inscriptions also mentions about the five important political centres, that is, the capital Pataliputra and other important provincial centres were Taxila, Ujjayini, Tosali and Suvarnagiri.
- Megasthenes, a Greek ambassador to the court of Chandragupta Maurya mentions in his account, a committee with six subcommittees for coordinating military activity.
- Out of the six subcommittees, the first subcommittees looked after the navy, the second was responsible for transport and provision, the third for foot-soldiers, the fourth for horses, the fifth for chariots and finally, the sixth for elephants.
- The new kingdoms that emerged in the south included the chiefdoms of the Cholas, Cheras and Pandyas in Tamilakam.
- Another kingdom, that is, the Satavahanas ruled over western and central India. The Shakas had established their kingdom in the north-western and western part of the subcontinent.
- The Kushanas ruled over a vast kingdom extending from Central Asia to northwest India. The historians have reconstructed the history of Kushanas from inscriptions and textual traditions.
- Colossal statues of Kushana rulers have been found installed in a shrine at Mat near Mathura as well as in Afghanistan. This shows that the Kushanas regarded themselves godlike, for instance, many Kushana rulers adopted the title of *devaputra* or "son of god".
- The fourth century saw the emergence of the powerful Gupta Empire. The historians had reconstructed the histories of the Gupta Empire from literature, coins, inscriptions and *prashastis* which were composed in the praise of the king generally by the court poet.
- The most famous prashasti was the *Prayaga Prashasti* also known as the Allahabad Pillar Inscription which was composed in Sanskrit by the court poet of Samudragupta named Harishena.
- Apart from kings, there were few sources which informs about the life of ordinary people as well. The historians have examined stories contained in anthologies such as the *Jatakas* and the *Panchatantra*.
- These anthologies indicated that the relationship between the king and his subjects were strained due to high demand in taxes.
- Consequently, iron-tipped ploughshare was used to increase the agricultural productivity.
- Another strategy adopted for increasing agricultural productivity was the use of irrigation through wells and tanks and rarely through canals.
- However, the benefits of increased agricultural production was uneven as mentioned in the stories of the Buddhist tradition which refers to landless agricultural labourers, small peasants and large landholders.
- In Pali texts, the term *gahapati* is used for the person who was the owner, master or head of a household. He exercised control over the women, children, slaves and workers who shared a common residence.

- The early Tamil literature different categories of people residing in the village. These include large landowners or *vellalar*, ploughmen or *uzhavar* and slaves or *adimai*.
- During the early centuries of the Common Era, there are evidence of land grants. Many of the land grants were mainly inscribed in copper plate inscriptions and some in stone inscriptions.
- The land grant records that have survived are generally about grants to religious institutions or to Brahmanas. Most inscriptions were in Sanskrit but from the seventh century onwards, some parts of inscriptions were in Sanskrit while the rest was in the local language like Tamil or Telugu.
- Chandragupta II was the important ruler of the Mauryan Empire. His daughter named Prabhavati Gupta was married to one of the rulers of the Vakatakas who were powerful in the Deccan.
- According to Sanskrit legal texts, women do not have independent access to land resources. However, one of the inscriptions indicates that Prabhavati Gupta had access to land this exceptional case might be because she was a queen.
- The inscriptions were also provide information about the Brahmanas, peasants and king's representatives.
- However, the impact of land grants is a subject of heated debate among historians.
- Some most important cities that emerged during the sixth century BCE were Pataliputra, Ujjayini, Puhar and Mathura.
- In the second century BCE, in cities many short votive inscriptions have been found. In these inscriptions, the donor name and sometimes his/her occupation is also mentioned.
- Thus, these inscriptions provide information about the people residing in towns such as washing folk, weavers, scribes, carpenters, potters, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, officials, religious teachers, merchants and kings.
- Sometimes these inscriptions also informs about guilds or *shrenis*, organisations of craft producers and merchants. Most probably, craftpersons used a range of iron tools to meet the demands of urban elites.
- During the sixth century BCE, land and river routes criss-crossed the subcontinent. These routes were controlled by the rulers, probably by offering protection for a price.
- Basically, these routes were traversed by the peddlers who travel on foot and by the merchants who travelled with caravans of bullock carts and pack-animals.
- In Tamil, the merchants were designated as *masattuvan* and in Prakrit they were known as *setthis* and *sattavahas*.
- The goods that were carried from one place to another include salt, grain, cloth, metal ores and finished products, stone, timber and medicinal plants.
- In the Roman Empire, pepper, textiles and medicinal plants were high in demand and all these were transported across the Arabian sea to the Mediterranean.
- During the sixth century BCE, there is evidence of the system of coinage in the subcontinent. For instance, punch-marked coins made of silver and copper were the earliest to be minted and used.
- Numismatists have studied these coins to reconstruct the commercial networks.
- The first coin was issued by the Indo-Greeks with their names and images.
- The Kushanas issued the first gold coins and these were virtually identical in weight with that of the contemporary Roman emperors and the Parthian rulers of Iran.
- The hoards of Roman coins in the archaeological sites in south India indicates the international network of trade.
- Archaeological have excavated several thousand copper coins issued by the tribal republic such as Yaudheyas of Punjab and Haryana.
- The rulers of the Gupta Empire issued spectacular gold coins indicating transaction of long-distance trade.
- From the sixth century CE onwards, the production of coins declined. The historians have difference views on this issue.
- According to scholars, the earliest inscriptions were in Prakrit.
- In 1838, James Prinsep deciphered the Asokan Brahmi inscriptions.

- The epigraphists and historians have examined the inscriptions which mentions words such as *devanampiya* and *piyadassi*. After examining the inscriptions and matching them in terms of content, style, language and palaeography, epigraphists have concluded that they were issued by the same ruler, that is, Asoka.
- However, there are few limitations also while revealing the text inscribed in the inscriptions, for instance, in the inscriptions letters are very faintly engraved and so reconstructions are uncertain. Besides this, historians are not always sure of the exact meaning of the word(s) inscribed in inscriptions.
- Many of the inscriptions are still not deciphered. Moreover, not everything what we consider politically or economically significant are necessarily recorded in inscriptions.
- Thus, the contents of inscriptions invariably projects the viewpoint of the person(s) who commissioned them.

QUESTION BANK

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. What does the term 'Piyadassi' means?

- (a) Pleasant to behold (b) Pleasant to hold (c) Pleasant to rule (d) Pleasant to attend

2. Who was the mint officer of the East India Company?

- (a) John Marshall (b) Alexander Cunningham (c) James Prinsep (d) R.D. Banerji

3. Name the British officer who deciphered the Brahmi and Kharosthi scripts?

- (a) James Prinsep (b) D.R. Sahni (c) R.D. Banerji (d) R.S. Bisht

4. What is epigraphy?

- (a) Study of monuments (b) Study of inscriptions (c) Study of manuscripts (d) Study of artefacts

5. Which text mentions Asoka as one of the most famous rulers?

- (a) Buddhist text (b) Jainas text (c) Dharmasutras (d) Arthashastra

6. The inscriptions usually recorded

- (a) the achievements, activities or ideas of those who commissioned them.
 (b) the exploits of kings, or donations made by women and men to religious institutions.
 (c) Both (a) and (b)
 (d) Neither (a) nor (b)

7. The sixth century BCE is associated with the

- (a) the growing use of iron and development of coinage.
 (b) the growing use of copper and development of early states.
 (c) the growing use of metals and development of kinship.
 (d) the growing use of iron and dependence on agriculture.

8. Consider the following statements in the context of *mahajanapadas*.

- I. Early Buddhist and Jaina texts mentions sixteen states known as mahajanapadas.
 II. Vajji, Magadha, Koshala, Kuru, Panchala, Gandhara and Avanti were amongst the most important mahajanapadas.
 III. Some mahajanapadas were oligarchies where power was shared only between two rulers.

Choose the correct option.

- (a) Both I and III (b) Both I and II (c) Only II (d) Only III

9. What do you understand by the word 'Janapada'?

- (a) the land where people live. (b) the agricultural land.
 (c) the pastoral land. (d) the land where a jana sets its foot or settles.

10. From sixth century BCE onwards, Brahmanas began composing Sanskrit texts known as the
 (a) Buddhist text (b) Dharmasutras (c) Jainas texts (d) All of the above
11. Oligarchy refers to a form of government where
 (a) power is exercised by a group of men. (b) power is exercised between two rulers only.
 (c) power is exercised only by one ruler. (d) power is exercised between by men and women.
12. Name the most powerful *mahajanapada* between 6th and 4th centuries BCE.
 (a) Vajji (b) Koshala (c) Magadha (d) Gandhara
13. Some of the most momentous developments in Indian epigraphy took place in the 1830s, when James Prinsep
 (a) deciphered the Brahmi script used in most of the Asokan inscriptions.
 (b) deciphered the Khorasthi script used in most of the Asokan inscriptions.
 (c) Both (a) and (b)
 (d) Neither (a) nor (b)
14. Consider the below statements and select the incorrect option.
 (a) Magadha was a region where agriculture was especially productive.
 (b) Iron mines were accessible and provided resources for tools and weapons.
 (c) Horse, an important component of the army, were found in forests in the region.
 (d) Ganga and its tributaries provided a means of cheap and convenient communication.
15. What is the Prakrit name for present day Rajgir in Bihar?
 (a) Rajagaha (b) Rajghar (c) Rajagira (d) Rajavihar
16. What was the capital of Magadha in the fourth century BCE?
 (a) Rajagaha (b) Pataliputra (c) Vajji (d) Koshala
17. Who founded the Mauryan Empire?
 (a) Bimbisara (b) Ajatasattu (c) Mahapadma Nanda (d) Chandragupta Maurya
18. Read the below statements in the pretext of languages and scripts.
 I. Most Asokan inscriptions were in the Prakrit language.
 II. Asokan inscriptions in the northwest of the subcontinent were in Aramaic and Greek.
 III. The Aramaic and Greek scripts were used for inscriptions in Baluchistan.
 Choose the incorrect option.
 (a) Both I and II (b) Both II and III (c) Only II (d) Only III
19. Which sources were used by the historians to reconstruct the history of the Mauryan Empire?
 (a) Accounts of Megasthenes and Arthashastra
 (b) Inscriptions of Ajatasattu and Bimbisara
 (c) Both (a) and (b)
 (d) Neither (a) nor (b)
20. Amongst other sources, the most valuable sources for the reconstruction of the Mauryan Empire are
 (a) the accounts of Megasthenes (b) inscription of Afghanistan
 (c) Sanskrit literary works (d) inscriptions of Ashoka on rocks and pillars
21. Name the first ruler who inscribed his messages on inscriptions.
 (a) Chandragupta Maurya (b) Asoka
 (c) Bimbisara (d) Mahapadma Nanda
22. Who composed *Arthashastra*?
 (a) Banabhatta (b) Ravikirti (c) Kautilya (d) Ashvaghosha
23. Who was the first ruler to propagate the principles of *dhamma*?
 (a) Asoka (b) Chandragupta Maurya (c) Ajatasattu (d) Bimbisara

24. What is/are the principle(s) of *dhamma*?
- (a) Respect towards elders (b) Generosity towards Kshatriyas
(c) Showing respect to one's own religion. (d) Both (b) and (c)
25. Name any two major political centres in the Mauryan Empire as mentioned in the Ashoka inscriptions.
- (a) Taxila and Ujjayini (b) Tosali and Koshala
(c) Suvarnagiri and Vajji (d) Ujjayini and Koshala
26. How many Mahajanapadas were there in the 6th century BCE?
- (a) 18 (b) 20 (c) 14 (d) 16
27. What was the responsibility of Megasthenes third subcommittee?
- (a) It was responsible for horses. (b) It was responsible for foot-soldiers.
(c) It was responsible for elephants. (d) It was responsible for chariots.
28. Who were *dhamma mahamatta*?
- (a) Special officers appointed to spread the message of dhamma.
(b) Special officers appointed for maintaining law and order in the empire.
(c) Special officers appointed to stop the message of dhamma.
(d) Special officers appointed for tax collection.
29. What details are mentioned in the Kautilya's Arthashastra?
- (a) Administrative and military organisation of the Mauryan Empire.
(b) Traditions of the Mauryan Empire.
(c) Asoka's dhamma
(d) Religions of the Mauryan Empire.
30. One means of claiming high status was to identify with a variety of deities. This strategy is best exemplified by the _____.
- (a) Satavahanas (b) Cholas (c) Kushanas (d) Cheras
31. Colossal statues of which rulers have been found installed in a shrine at Mat near Mathura?
- (a) Kushanas (b) Mauryas (c) Pandyas (d) Cholas
32. Who appointed *dhamma mahamatta*?
- (a) Asoka (b) Chandragupta Maurya (c) Bimbisara (d) Samudragupta
33. Silappadikaram, an epic was written in _____.
- (a) Sanskrit (b) Tamil (c) Prakrit (d) Brahmi script
34. Name the title which was adopted by several Kushana rulers?
- (a) Piyadassi (b) Devaputra (c) Maharaja (d) Suryavanshi
35. Name the rulers who called themselves sons of heaven.
- (a) Buddhist rulers (b) Chinese rulers (c) Indian rulers (d) Muslim rulers
36. Consider the following statements about the Mauryan Empire.
1. There were five political centres in the Mauryan Empire.
 2. Megasthenes wrote about the Mauryan Empire in his book Indica.
 3. Asoka founded the Mauryan Empire in 321 BC.
 4. Asoka used his resources to propagate Buddhism.

Which of the above statements are correct?

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 (b) 1, 2 and 4 (c) 2, 3 and 4 (d) 1, 3 and 4
37. Choose the correct option.

Assertion (A): Some historians feel that the Kushanas considered themselves godlike.

Reason (R): The Kushanas identify themselves with a variety of deities.

- (a) Both (A) and (R) are correct and (R) is the correct explanation of (A).
- (b) Both (A) and (R) are correct but (R) is not the correct explanation of (A).
- (c) (A) is incorrect but (R) is correct.
- (d) (R) is incorrect but (A) is correct.

38. Choose the correct pair.

- (a) Gahapati - slaves
- (b) Vellalar - head of household
- (c) Uzhavar - ploughman
- (d) Adimai - Mauryan officer

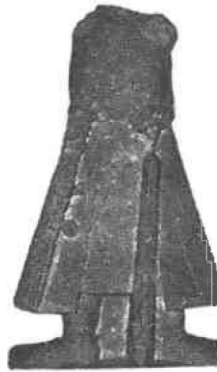
39. Read the clue given below and answer the question.

He was the owner, master or head of a household, who exercised control over the women, children, slaves and workers who shared a common residence.

Who is 'he' in the above lines?

- (a) Gahapati
- (b) Vellalar
- (c) Adimai
- (d) Uzhavar

40. Identify the image.



- (a) Sandstone sculpture of a Mauryan king.
- (b) Sandstone sculpture of a Kushana king.
- (c) Sandstone sculpture of a Kshatriya king.
- (d) Sandstone sculpture of a Chola king.

41. Choose the correct option.

Assertion (A): The records that have survived are generally about grants to religious institutions or to Brahmanas.

Reason (R): In some cases, and especially from the seventh century onwards, part of the inscription was in Sanskrit.

- (a) Both (A) and (R) are correct and (R) is the correct explanation of (A).
- (b) Both (A) and (R) are correct but (R) is not the correct explanation of (A).
- (c) (A) is incorrect but (R) is correct.
- (d) (R) is incorrect but (A) is correct.

42. Who was Banabhatta?

- (a) He was the court poet of the ruler of Kanauj
- (b) He was the court poet of the ruler of Mauryan Empire.
- (c) He was the court poet of the ruler of Chola dynasty.
- (d) He was the court poet of the ruler of Koshala.

43. The *Harshacharita* is a biography of

- (a) Asoka
- (b) Harshavardhana
- (c) Chandragupta
- (d) Samudragupta

44. The Sudarshana lake was repaired by a king named

- (a) Kanishka
- (b) Asoka
- (c) Chandragupta
- (d) Rudradaman-I

45. Consider the following statements with regard to votive inscriptions.

I. By the fifth century BCE, we find short votive inscriptions in a number of cities.

II. The votive inscriptions tell us about people who lived in towns such as washing folk, weavers, scribes, carpenters, potters, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, officials, religious teachers, merchants and kings.

III. Sometimes, farmers organisations and craft producers are also mentioned in the votive inscriptions.

Choose the incorrect option.

- (a) Both I and II (b) Both I and III (c) Only II (d) Only III

46. Whose ventures were risky but highly profitable?

- (a) Seafarers
(b) Merchants with with caravans of bullock carts and pack-animals.
(c) Peddlers
(d) Rulers

47. Name the spice which was in high demand in the Roman Empire.

- (a) Pepper (b) Clove (c) Cinnamon (d) Cardamom

48. The first coins to bear the names and images of rulers were issued by the

- (a) Indo-Greeks (b) Kushanas (c) Guptas (d) Mauryans

49. Who issued the largest hoards of gold coins?

- (a) Indo-Greeks (b) Kushanas (c) Guptas (d) Roman emperors

50. Observe the following statements and choose the incorrect option.

- (a) The widespread use of gold coins indicates the enormous value of the transactions.
(b) Hoards of Roman coins have been found from archaeological sites in south India.
(c) Coins were issued by tribal republics such as that of the Yadavas of Punjab and Rajasthan.
(d) Archaeologists have unearthed several thousand copper coins issued by the Yaudheyas.

51. Some of the most spectacular gold coins were issued by the _____ rulers.

- (a) Parthians (b) Kushanas (c) Guptas (d) Mauryas

52. Which of the following statement is not true regarding the tapering off of the gold coins in the sixth century CE?

- (a) According to some historians there was economic crisis.
(b) Some suggest that with the collapse of the Western Roman Empire long-distance trade declined.
(c) Other historians opine that though finds of coins of that time are fewer, coins continue to be mentioned in inscriptions and texts.
(d) Some historians argue that new towns and networks of trade started declining around this time.

53. Why are punch-marked coins so named?

- (a) because symbols were punched or stamped onto the metal surface.
(b) because symbols are punched on the soft surface.
(c) because symbols are punched on the copper surface only.
(d) None of these

54. Most scripts used to write modern Indian languages are derived from _____.

- (a) Kharosthi script (b) Brahmi script (c) Aramaic script (d) Greek script

55. In which year James Prinsep was able to decipher Asokan Brahmi script.

- (a) 1839 (b) 1838 (c) 1837 (d) 1840

56. From the following statements choose the best reason which justifies that King Asoka was regarded by his subjects as 'devanampiya' and 'piyadassi'.
- Asoka commissioned the edicts himself.
 - He adopted the title of 'Devaputra'.
 - Epigraphists have concluded him as 'devanam priya'.
 - He did well being of the society through his Dhamma.
57. Consider the below statements in the context of limitations of inscriptional evidence and select the incorrect option.
- In the inscriptions letters are very faintly engraved, and thus reconstructions are uncertain.
 - It is not always easy to be sure about the exact meaning of the words used in inscriptions.
 - Only some inscriptions have been discovered but not all have been deciphered.
 - Not everything that we may consider politically or economically significant was necessarily recorded in inscriptions.
58. Choose the correct option.
- Assertion (A):** Routine agricultural practices and the joys and sorrows of daily existence find no mention in inscriptions.
- Reason (R):** Inscriptions focus only unique and grand events.
- Both (A) and (R) are correct and (R) is the correct explanation of (A).
 - Both (A) and (R) are correct but (R) is not the correct explanation of (A).
 - (A) is incorrect but (R) is correct.
 - (R) is incorrect but (A) is correct.
59. The sixth century BCE witnessed the growth of diverse systems of thought, including
- Brahmanism
 - Jainism
 - Buddhism
 - Both (b) and (c)
60. *Janapada* is a word used in both
- Prakrit and Sanskrit
 - Pali and Sanskrit
 - Sanskrit and Hindi
 - Urdu and Sanskrit
61. From the sixth century BCE onwards, Brahmanas began composing Sanskrit texts known as
- Dharmashastras
 - Dharmasutras
 - Manusmriti
 - Bhagavat Gita
62. Name the most powerful mahajanapada.
- Magadha
 - Vajji
 - Kuru
 - Panchala
63. Consider the following statements in the context of Magadha mahajanapada.
- Initially, Pataliputra was the capital of Magadha.
 - Magadha was a region where agriculture was especially productive.
 - Bimbisara, Ajatasattu and Mahapadma Nanda are the best-known rulers.
- Choose the incorrect option.
- Only I
 - Only II
 - Only III
 - Both II and III
64. In which year the Mauryan Empire was founded?
- 321 BCE
 - 342 BCE
 - 312 BCE
 - 322 BCE propagate
65. The most important source of the Mauryan Empire the Arthashastra was composed by
- Megasthenes
 - Chandragupta Maurya
 - Chanakya
 - Asoka
66. Consider the following statements and choose the incorrect statement.
- The Mauryan Empire capital was Rajgira.
 - Its provincial centres were Taxila, Ujjayini, Tosali and Suvarnagiri.

- (c) It is likely that administrative control was strongest in areas around the capital.
 (d) Suvarnagiri was possibly important for tapping the gold mines of Karnataka.
67. _____ along both land and riverine routes was vital for the existence of the Mauryan Empire.
 (a) Trade (b) Communication (c) Travel (d) Army
68. Name the officers appointed by Asoka to propagate his message of dhamma.
 (a) Mahamatta (b) Dhamma mahamatta (c) Dharma mahamatta (d) Ministers
69. Read the below statements.
 I. One means of claiming high status was to identify with the Brahman priest.
 II. Colossal statues of Kushana rulers have been found installed in a shrine at Mat near Mathura.
 III. Many Kushana rulers also adopted the title devaputra, or "son of god".
- Choose the correct statement.
 (a) Only I (b) Only III (c) Both II and III (d) Both I and III
70. What are *prashastis*?
 (a) Composed in praise of gods. (b) Composed in praise of kings.
 (c) Composed in praise of queens. (d) None of these
71. Which title was adopted by the Kushana rulers?
 (a) Devaputra (b) Deva (c) Piyadassi (d) Samanta
72. Who composed the Allahabad Pillar Inscription?
 (a) Harishena (b) Harichandra (c) Banabhatta (d) Samudragupta
73. The _____ were written in Pali around the middle of the first millennium CE.
 (a) Panchatantra (b) Jatakas (c) Both (a) and (b) (d) Neither (a) nor (b)
74. Name the term often used in Pali texts to designate the second and third categories.
 (a) Gahapati (b) Large landholder (c) Small peasants (d) Labourers
75. Name the term which was used for the slaves in the early period.
 (a) Uzhavar (b) Vellalar (c) Adimai (d) Gahapati
76. _____ was the daughter of one of the most important rulers in early Indian history.
 (a) Prabhavati Gupta (b) Andal (c) Vakataka princess (d) Devi Gupta
77. Consider the below statements and choose the correct option.
 (a) Polished Ware was probably used by poor people.
 (b) Sometimes, guilds or shrenis, organisations of craft producers and merchants, are mentioned as well.
 (c) Votive inscriptions record gifts made to religious institutions.
 (d) It is likely that craftspersons used a range of iron tools to meet the growing demands of urban elites.
78. Choose the correct option.
Assertion (A): In the early period, exchanges were facilitated by the introduction of coinage.
Reason (R): Punch-marked coins made of silver and copper were amongst the earliest to be minted and used
- (a) Both (A) and (R) are correct and (R) is the correct explanation of (A).
 (b) Both (A) and (R) are correct but (R) is not the correct explanation of (A).
 (c) (A) is incorrect but (R) is correct.
 (d) (R) is incorrect but (A) is correct.

Input Text Based MCQ's

Read the below source carefully and answer the following questions (79 to 81):

Here is an excerpt from the account of Megasthenes:

Of the great officers of state, some ... superintend the rivers, measure the land, as is done in Egypt, and inspect the sluices by which water is let out from the main canals into their branches, so that every one may have an equal supply of it. The same persons have charge also of the huntsmen, and are entrusted with the power of rewarding or punishing them according to their deserts. They collect the taxes, and superintend the occupations connected with land; as those of the woodcutters, the carpenters, the blacksmiths, and the miners.

79. Who was Megasthenes?

- (a) A Greek ambassador to the court of Chandragupta Maurya.
- (b) A Greek ambassador to the court of Asoka.
- (c) A Japanese ambassador to the court of Asoka.
- (d) A Chinese ambassador to the court of Chandragupta Maurya.

80. Megasthenes mentions a committee with _____ subcommittees for coordinating military activity.

- (a) seven
- (b) six
- (c) five
- (d) eight

81. Megasthenes describe India in his book named

- (a) Indica
- (b) Indico
- (c) Indiana
- (d) Indicca

Read the below source carefully and answer the following questions (82 to 84):

This is an excerpt from the Prayaga Prashasti:

He was without an antagonist on earth; he, by the overflowing of the multitude of (his) many good qualities adorned by hundreds of good actions, has wiped off the fame of other kings with the soles of (his) feet; (he is) Purusha (the Supreme Being), being the cause of the prosperity of the good and the destruction of the bad (he is) incomprehensible; (he is) one whose tender heart can be captured only by devotion and humility; (he is) possessed of compassion; (he is) the giver of many hundred-thousands of cows; (his) mind has received ceremonial initiation for the uplift of the miserable, the poor, the forlorn and the suffering; (he is) resplendent and embodied kindness to mankind; (he is) equal to (the gods) Kubera (the god of wealth), Varuna (the god of the ocean), Indra (the god of rains) and Yama (the god of death)....

82. Who wrote the above Prashasti?

- (a) Harishena
- (b) Megasthenes
- (c) Harishchandra
- (d) Banabhatta

83. What is the other name of Prayaga Prashasti?

- (a) Gupta Pillar Inscription
- (b) Mauryan Pillar Inscription
- (c) Mathura Pillar Inscription
- (d) Allahabad Pillar Inscription

84. Name the ruler in whose praise Prayaga Prashasti was written?

- (a) Asoka
- (b) Chandragupta
- (c) Samudragupta
- (d) Kanishka

Read the below source carefully and answer the following questions (85 to 87):

This is what Prabhavati Gupta states in her inscription:

Prabhavati Gupta ... commands the gramakutumbinas, Brahmanas and others living in the village of Danguna...

"Be it known to you that on the twelfth (lunar day) of the bright (fortnight) of Karttika, we have, in order to increase our religious merit donated this village with the pouring out of water, to the Acharya (teacher) Chanalasvamin ... You should obey all (his) commands..."

We confer on (him) the following exemptions typical of an agra-hara ... (this village is) not to be entered by soldiers and policemen; (it is) exempt from (the obligation to provide) grass, (animal) hides as seats, and charcoal (to touring royal officers); exempt from (the royal prerogative of) purchasing fermenting liquors and digging (salt); exempt from (the right to) mines and khadira trees; exempt from (the obligation to supply) flowers and milk; (it is donated) together with (the right to) hidden treasures and deposits (and) together with major and minor taxes ...”

85. Who is Prabhavati Gupta?

- (a) Daughter of Samudragupta (b) Daughter of Chandragupta Maurya
(c) Daughter of Chandragupta-II (d) Daughter of Chandra

86. To which ruling family she was married?

- (a) Vakatakas (b) Mauryas (c) Cholas (d) Kushanas

87. What does the word ‘gramakutumbinas’ mean?

- (a) People residing in rural areas. (b) Landowner of the village
(c) Peasants living in the village. (d) Scribes of the village.

ANSWERS

Multiple Choice Questions

- | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. (a) | 2. (c) | 3. (a) | 4. (b) | 5. (a) | 6. (c) | 7. (a) | 8. (b) | 9. (d) | 10. (b) |
| 11. (a) | 12. (c) | 13. (a) | 14. (c) | 15. (a) | 16. (b) | 17. (d) | 18. (d) | 19. (a) | 20. (d) |
| 21. (b) | 22. (c) | 23. (a) | 24. (a) | 25. (a) | 26. (d) | 27. (b) | 28. (a) | 29. (a) | 30. (c) |
| 31. (a) | 32. (a) | 33. (b) | 34. (b) | 35. (b) | 36. (b) | 37. (a) | 38. (c) | 39. (a) | 40. (b) |
| 41. (b) | 42. (a) | 43. (b) | 44. (d) | 45. (b) | 46. (a) | 47. (a) | 48. (a) | 49. (b) | 50. (c) |
| 51. (a) | 52. (d) | 53. (a) | 54. (b) | 55. (b) | 56. (d) | 57. (c) | 58. (a) | 59. (d) | 60. (a) |
| 61. (b) | 62. (a) | 63. (a) | 64. (a) | 65. (c) | 66. (a) | 67. (b) | 68. (b) | 69. (c) | 70. (b) |
| 71. (a) | 72. (a) | 73. (b) | 74. (a) | 75. (c) | 76. (a) | 77. (a) | 78. (a) | | |

Input Text Based MCQ's

79. (a) 80. (b) 81. (a) 82. (a) 83. (d) 84. (c) 85. (c) 86. (a) 87. (c)