

IMPORTANT TOPICS FROM ANCIENT & MEDIEVAL HISTORY FOR PRELIMS 2023

1. Palaeolithic and Mesolithic Sites

Context

Dickinsonia fossil found in Bhimbetka turns out to be decayed beehive

The Palaeolithic Age in India is divided into three phases in accordance with the type of stone tools used by the people and also according to the nature of climatic change:

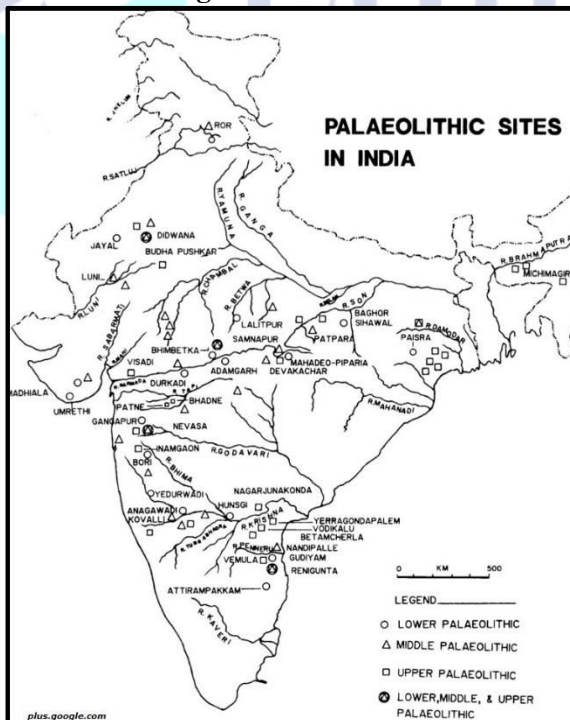
- First phase may be placed broadly between 600,000 and 150,000 BC
- Second between 150,000 and 35,000 BC
- Third between 35,000 and 10,000 BC.

Mesolithic, also called Middle Stone Age, is an ancient cultural stage that existed between the Palaeolithic (Old Stone Age), with its chipped stone tools, and the Neolithic (New Stone Age), with its polished stone tools.

Mesolithic material culture is characterized by greater innovation and diversity than is found in the Paleolithic.

In India, this age spanned from 9,000 B.C. to 4,000 B.C., and is characterized by the appearance of Microliths (small bladed stone tools).

Mesolithic period in human cultural history is defined as the earliest Holocene culture that occurs before agriculture was started.



Mesolithic Sites in India

Gouri Gundam

Andhra Pradesh

Langhnaj	Gujarat
Tilwara Bagor	Rajasthan
Patne Hatkhambe	Maharashtra
Damdama Chopani Mando	Uttar Pradesh
Panchmarhi Bhimbetaka	Madhya Pradesh
Sanganakallu	Karnataka

Bhimbetka Cave

- The term 'Bhim-betaka' refers to the '**sitting location of Bhima**', one of the Pandava brothers.
- Several layers of inhabitation can be seen in the rock shelters.
- At the Bhimbetka rock shelters in central India, the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods, as well as the historic period, are all represented.
- It **displays the earliest signs of human life in India**, as well as Stone Age evidence dating back to Acheulian times.
- It is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** with seven hills and over 750 rock shelters spread out over a 10-kilometer area. At least some of the shelters have been occupied for over 100,000 years.
- The **first period, which corresponds to the Upper Paleolithic epoch**, features enormous animals such as bosons, rhinos, and tigers.
- The **Mesolithic period**, or the second phase, is **marked by miniature, stylized human figurines**.
- Weapons such as barbed spears, pointed rods, and bows and arrows are displayed on these figurines.
- They also **depict social interactions** such as dancing, burials, drinking, eating, and so on.
- The **Chalcolithic phase is the third stage, characterised by agricultural activities** and exchange between nomads and agriculturists.
- **Prehistoric cave paintings may be seen in some of the Bhimbetka rock shelters**, the oldest of which date back to around 10,000 years ago (c. 8,000 BCE), dating to the Indian Mesolithic.
- They have a widened colour pattern with red, white, and yellow used in the paintings.
- These paintings also depict magical creatures, sky chariots, and tree gods.
- **The 'Zoo Rock,' which depicts elephants, bison, deer, and Sambar, is the most striking feature.**
- The **Archaeological Survey of India** has done an excellent job of preserving the site.

2. Indus Valley Civilization

Context

Srinagar to Dholavira to Puri: **G20 logo illuminates 100 monuments**

The illumination will be done for a **period of seven days, until December 7, with the colours of India's G20 logo** — saffron, green, white and blue.

Dholavira UNESCO World Heritage Site

India is a **land of world treasures with 40 world heritage sites**. It includes 7 natural sites, 32 cultural sites, and one mixed property, and **Dholavira is one among them**. It is the **5th largest metropolis of IVC out of the thousands of sites discovered**.

Dholavira, one of the major Harappan sites, has been on the **tentative list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites since 2014**. In January 2020, a nomination dossier was submitted by India for

Dholavira to the World Heritage Center. Later, **on July 27th, 2021, Dholavira was considered one of the World's Heritage Sites.**

This consideration helped **India enter the Super 40 club along with the other countries**, including France, China, Germany, Italy, and Spain. This has proved to be a milestone in Indian culture and heritage.

Is Dholavira a Harappan site?

- Harappan site of the Indus valley civilization is famous for its well-planned grid system that became a milestone in history. **Dholavira is considered one of the major sites among them. Here is why-**
- The Dholavira consists of a fortified Castle with attached Bailey and Ceremonial Ground, a fortified Middletown, and a Lower Town.
- A series of reservoirs are found east and south of the Citadel.

What is Dholavira famous for?

- Dholavira is one of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites, **discovered by Archaeologist Jagat Pati Joshi** and is famous for its architecture and archaeological findings. These include:
- Various artefacts have been found, and these include- gold and copper, fish hooks, seals, beads, terracotta pottery, urns, animal figurines, etc.
- The wood fossils were preserved in a fossil park near the ancient city.
- The Archaeologists have **found the 10 large stone inscriptions**. These are believed to be the **World's earliest sign boards, carved in the Indus Valley Script**.
- There were no mortal remains found.

Apart from these findings, Dholavira is famous for its features that include

- Outer fortifications.
- 9 uniquely designed gates.
- Cascading series of water reservoirs.
- Two multipurpose grounds.
- Multi-layered defense mechanism.
- Hemispherical structures.

Rakhigarhi

Context

The recent excavation of **Harappan site of Rakhigarhi by Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** has revealed the structure of some houses, lanes and drainage system.

- The ASI excavations also revealed pieces of copper and gold jewellery, terracotta toys, besides thousands of earthen pots and seals.
- The idea of this **excavation is to make the archaeological site of Rakhigarhi accessible to people by exposing the structural remains and conserving them for future viewing, along with providing amenities to the visitors.**

Also, DNA samples were collected from two unearthed human skeletons and sent for scientific examination, the outcome might tell about the ancestry and food habits of people who lived in the Rakhigarhi region thousands of years ago.

What is Rakhigarhi?

Rakhigarhi is the **largest Harappan site in the Indian subcontinent**. Other large sites of Indus valley Civilization (Harappan civilization) in Indian sub-continent are **Harappa, Mohenjodaro and Ganveriwala in Pakistan and Dholavira (Gujarat) in India.**

At Rakhigarhi, the excavations are being done to trace its beginnings and to study its gradual evolution from 6000 BCE (Pre-Harappan phase) to 2500 BCE. The site was **excavated by Amarendra Nath of ASI.**

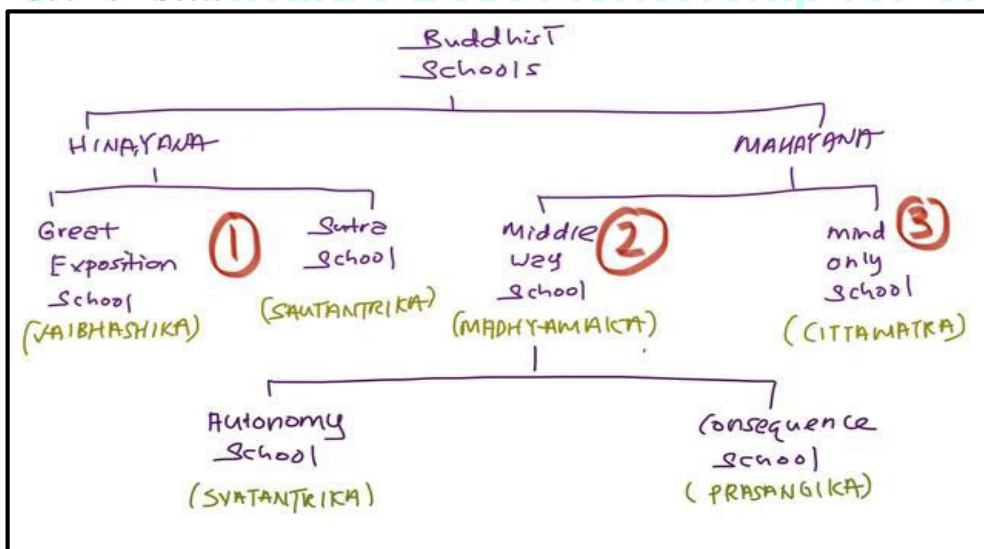
Rakhigarhi is among the five iconic sites announced by Union Finance Minister during Budget Speech in 2020.

The other such sites are **Hastinapur in Uttar Pradesh, Sivasagar in Assam, Dholavira in Gujarat and Adichanallur in Tamil Nadu.**

What are the Major Findings of the Site?

- **Settlements:** The archaeological excavations revealed the mature Harappan phase **represented by planned township having mud-brick as well as burnt-brick houses with a proper drainage system.**
- **Seals and Pottery:** A cylindrical seal with **five Harappan characters on one side and a symbol of an alligator on the other is an important find from this site.** The ceramic industry was represented by red ware, which included dish-on-stand, vase, perforated jar among others.
- **Rituals and Burials:** **Animal sacrificial pits lined with mud-brick and triangular and circular fire altars on the mud floor have also been excavated that signifies the ritual system of Harappans.** The excavations have yielded a few extended burials, which certainly belong to a very late stage, maybe the medieval times. Two female skeletons, who were buried with a plethora of pottery and adorned jewellery like jasper, agate beads and shell bangles, have been excavated.
- **Other Antiquities:** Blades; terracotta and shell bangles, beads of semi precious stones, and copper objects; animal figurines, toy cart frame and wheel of terracotta; bone points; inscribed steatite seals and sealings.
- **Study of DNA Samples:** Recently, a study of DNA from skeletal remains excavated from the Harappan cemetery at Rakhigarhi found that the people in the Harappan Civilization have an independent origin. This study negates the theory of the Harappans having Steppe pastoral or ancient Iranian farmer ancestry.

3. Buddhism Sects



4. Cholas

The Cholas (8th-12th century AD) are remembered as **one of the longest ruling dynasties in the southern regions of India.** The reign of the Cholas began in the 9th century when they **defeated**

the Pallavas to come into power. This rule stretched over for over five long centuries until the 13th century.

The **medieval period was the era of absolute power and development for the Cholas.** This is when kings like **Aditya I and Parantaka I.** From here **Rajaraj Chola and Rajendra Chola** further expanded the kingdom into the Tamil region. Later **Kulothunga Chola took over Kalinga to establish a strong rule.**

This magnificence lasted until the arrival of the Pandyas in the early 13th century.

Administration And Governance:

- During the governance by the Cholas, the entire southern region was brought under the umbrella of a single governing force. **The Cholas ruled in a sustained Monarchy.**
- The massive kingdom was divided into provinces which were known as **mandalams.**
- Separate governors were held in charge for each mandalam.
- These were further divided into districts called nadus which consisted of tehsils.
- The system of rule was such that **each village acted as a self-governing unit during the era of the Cholas.** The Cholas were ardent patrons of art, poetry, literature and drama, the administration was seen investing in the construction of several temples and complexes with sculptures and paintings.
- **The king remained the central authority** who would make the major decisions and carry out the governance.

Administrative Hierarchy

King -> Mandalam(Provinces or states) -> Valanadus(Districts, incharge - Periyannattar) -> Nadus (incharge - Nattar) -> Kurram (Tehsils) -> Gramam(Village)

Architecture:

Chola architecture (871-1173 AD) was the epitome of the Dravida style of temple architecture. They produced some of the most grandeur temples in medieval India.

Chola temples like Brihadeshwara temple, Rajarajeshwara temple, Gangaikonda Cholapuram temple took Dravidian architecture to newer heights. Temple architecture continued to flourish even after Cholas.

Uthiramerrur Inscription:

Context

About the inscription:

- The famous inscription from **Parantaka I's** reign is found on the walls of the **Vaikunda Perumal Temple.**
- The inscription gives details of the functioning of the local Sabha, i.e., the village assembly.
- A Sabha was an assembly exclusively of brahmins had specialised committees tasked with different things.
- This gave details about how members were selected (**Kudovulai system**), the required qualifications, their roles and responsibilities, and even the circumstances in which they could be removed.

Required qualifications:

- It includes ownership of a certain amount of land, having a house, being between the **age of 35 and 70 and "knowing mantras and Brahmanas"** (from the Vedic corpus).
- An exception can be made on land ownership if the person has learnt at least "one Veda and four Bhashyas". One must also be "well-versed in business" and "virtuous".

What was the Selection procedure for the Sabha?

- It says there were **30 wards**. Everyone living in these 30 wards would assemble and select one representative for the village assembly.
- All those eligible and willing would write their names on palm leaf tickets following which, the representative would be chosen based on an elaborate draw of lots, conducted by priests in the inner hall of the building where the assembly meets.
- **Disqualification:** The inscription then lists several factors which disqualify someone and their family like: Not having submitted accounts while previously serving on a committee. **Committing any of the first four of the five ‘great sins’ (killing a Brahman, drinking alcohol, theft and adultery)** Being associated with **outcastes, and eating ‘forbidden’ dishes.**

5. Vijayanagara Empire

Context

- It was **founded in 1336 by Harihara and Bukka** (with the blessings of Guru Vidyanaya) of the Sangama dynasty who originally served under the Kakatiya rulers of Warangal.
- They **later proclaimed their independence and founded a new city on the south bank of the Tungabhadra River named it “Vijayanagar”** (City of Victory)
- Early Vijayanagar rulers were followers of Saivism. Virupaksha was their family God. Later they **came under the influence of Vaishnavism**. However, Siva continued to be worshipped.
- There was **constant conflict between Vijayanagar Empire and Bahamani kingdom over Raichur doab** (fertile region between Krishna and Tungabhadra), Tungabhadra doab (fertile areas of Krishna-Godavari delta) & Marathwada.
- In the south its main rivals were the Sultans of Madurai.
- During the reign of Rama Raya, the combined forces of Bijapur, Ahmednagar, Golkonda and Bidar defeated him at the Battle of Talaikotta in 1565 which marked an end of the Vijayanagar Empire.
- **The last ruler of Vijayanagar was Sri Ranga III**

Four Dynasties ruled Vijayanagar from A.D. 1336 TO 1672:

DYNASTY	DESCRIPTION
Sangama (1336-1485)	Sangama was the first dynasty to rule over the Vijayanagara empire. The founders of the empire, Harihara I and Bukka belonged to this dynasty. It ruled from 1336 AD to 1485 AD.
Saluva (1485-1505)	Saluva dynasty, founded by Narasimha, succeeded Sangama dynasty as the second dynasty of the empire. It ruled from 1485 to 1505 AD. They ruled over almost the whole South India.
Tuluva (1505-1570)	Tuluva, founded by Vir Narsimha , was the third dynasty , which ruled Vijayanagar Empire. It ruled from Tuluva dynasty. The most famous king of Vijayanagar Empire, Krishna Deva Raya belonged to this dynasty. It ruled from 1491 AD to 1570 AD.
Aravidu (1570-1650)	Aravidu, founded by Tirumala , was the fourth and last Hindu dynasty to rule Vijayanagar kingdom in South India.

Krishna Devaraya (1509-1529 AD)

- The **most famous king Vijayanagara Empire** (from Tuluva dynasty).
- He is also known as **Andhra Bhoja**
- Waged war against **Bahamani kingdom** & kept them under check.
- Liberated Mohammad Shah & **assumed the title “Yavanarjya Prathishtapanacharya”**.
- The **author of Manu Charitramu** was the greatest among Ashtadiggajas.
- His empire extended from the river Krishna in the north to River Cauvery in the south; the Arabian Sea in the west to Bay of Bengal in the east.
- He had a cordial relationship with Portuguese.
- He authored “**Amuktamalyada**” (Telgu work on polity) and “**Jambavati Kalyanam**” (Sanskrit drama).
- **Krishna Deva Raya was a great builder** as well. He built the **Hazara Rama temple and the Vittalaswami temple**.
- Patronized Telugu, Kannada, Sanskrit, and Tamil scholars & poets.
- He had **8 eminent scholars ‘Ashtadiggajas’** at his royal court.
- He built a new city called **Nagalapuram in memory of his queen Nagaladevi**.
- Other titles: **Andhra Bhoja and Andhra Pitamaha**

“ASHTADIGGAJAS” of Krishna Devaraya

A group of eight scholars adorned Krishnadevaraya’s court and they were:

1. Allasani Peddanna – the **author of Manucharitram**, he was also known as **Andhra Kavita Pitamaha**
2. Nandi Thimmana – the **author of Parijathapaharanam**
3. Madayagari Mallana
4. Dhurjati
5. Ayyalaraju Ramabhadru
6. Pingali Surana
7. Ramaraja Bhushana
8. Tenali Ramakrishna

ADMINISTRATION:

- The king enjoyed absolute authority in executive, judicial & legislative matters.
- The **succession to the throne was hereditary**.
- **Administrative units divided as: Mandalams, Nadus, Sthals and finally into Gramas.**
- Mandaleswar or Nayaka was the governor of Mandalam.
- He had considerable autonomy- had right to issue coins of small denominations & right to impose new tax or remit old one.
- **Sources of income:** land revenue, tributes, and gifts from vassals and feudal chiefs, customs at ports, & taxes on various professions.
- The army consisted of **cavalry, infantry, artillery and elephants**.
- **Nayankar System** – The top-grade officers of the army were known as Nayaks/Poligars.
- They were granted land in lieu of their services which were called Amaram.
- **Manyams were tax free lands.**
- A **body of 12 functionaries known as Ayangars**, conducted village affairs.
- The chief characteristics of the Vijayanagara architecture were the **construction of tall Raya Gopurams or gateways and the Kalyanamandapam** with carved pillars in the temple premises.
- The sculptures on the pillars were carved with distinctive features.
- **The horse was the most common animal found in these pillars.**

CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS

- The most important temples built: **Vittalaswamy and Hazara Ramaswamy temples, the Stone chariot at Hampi.**
- The Varadharaja and Ekamparanatha temples at Kanchipuram.
- **Different languages** such as Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada and Tamil flourished in the regions.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS:

- The Sangama rulers were chiefly **Saivaites and Virupaksha** was their family deity.
- The chief gold coin was the varaha or pagoda. The Perta was half a Varaha. Fanam was one tenth a pertha.
- **Tar was a silver coin. Jittal was a copper coin.**
- The chief items of export were cotton, silk, spices, rice, saltpeter and sugar.
- The imports consisted of horses, pearls, copper, coral etc.
- **The art of shipbuilding had developed.**

NAME OF TRAVELLERS	FROM	VIJAYANAGARA-RULER
Abu Abdullah/ Ibn Batuta (Book:Rihla)	Morocco	Harihara I
Nicolo de Conti	Italy	Devaraya-II
Abdur Razzaq	Persia	Devaraya-II
Athanasius Nikitin	Russia	Virupaksha Raya II
Ludvico de Vortheima	Italy	Krishna Deva Raya
Duarte Barbosa	Portugal	Krishna Deva Raya
Dominigo Paes	Portugal	Krishna Deva Raya
Fernao Nuniz	Portugal	Achyuta Deva Raya



6. Marathas

Shivaji's policy and Expansion of Marathas

Administrative Policies

- He **laid the foundations of a sound system of administration.** The king was the pivot of the government. He was assisted by a council of ministers called **Ashtapradhan.**
- **Peshwa** – Finance and general administration. Later he became the prime minister
- **Sar-i-Naubat or Senapati** – Military commander, a honorary post.
- **Amatya** – Accountant General.
- **Waqenavis** – Intelligence, posts and household affairs.
- **Sachiv** – Correspondence.
- **Sumanta** – Master of ceremonies
- **Nyayadish** – Justice.
- **Panditarao** – Charities and religious administration.

Revenue Policies

- Lands were measured by using the measuring rod called kathi. **Lands were also classified into three categories – paddy fields, garden lands and hilly tracks.**

- **Taxes : Chauth and Sardeshmukhi** were the taxes collected not in the Maratha kingdom but in the neighbouring territories of the Mughal empire or Deccan sultanates.
- **Chauth was one fourth of the land revenue** paid to the Marathas in order to avoid the Maratha raids.
- **Sardeshmukhi was an additional levy of ten percent on those lands which the Marathas claimed hereditary rights.**

Military Policies

Shivaji was a man of military genius and his army was well organized.

- The regular army consisted of about 30000 to 40000 cavalry supervised by havaildars. They were given fixed salaries.
- There **were two divisions in the Maratha cavalry** –
- Bargirs, equipped and paid by the state;
- Silahdars, maintained by the nobles.
- In the infantry, the Mavli foot soldiers played an important role.
- Shivaji also maintained a navy.
- The **forts played an important role in the military operations of the Marathas**. By the end of his reign, **Shivaji had about 240 forts**. Each fort was put under the charge of three officers of equal rank as a precaution against treachery.

The above conquests and policies of Shivaji was the major reason for Maratha stronghold in the region against Mughals. They became a formidable enemy of neighboring kings.

Marathas after Shivaji

The Maratha kingdom was, however, certainly weakened at the start of 18th century due to various internal and external factors.

- A full-scale civil war broke out between the **forces of Shahu (grandson of Shivaji) and those of Tarabai (Rajaram's widow)**. The loyalty of Maratha sardars and Deshmukhs kept on shifting from one block to another.
- Since the time of Balaji Viswanath, the office of the Peshwa became powerful. He died in 1720 and was succeeded by his son Baji Rao, who was in power till 1740.
- After the death of Baji Rao in 1740, Shahu appointed his son Balaji Bajirao (1740-1761) as Peshwa. This was indeed the peak period of Maratha glory.
- In 1761, after the **third battle of Panipat Madhav Rao became the Peshwa**. In 1772, Madhav Rao died of consumption.
- After the death of Madhav Rao, the struggle for power occurred between Raghunath Rao and Narayan Rao. In 1773 Narayan Rao was killed.
- **Madhav Rao Narayan succeeded his father Narayan Rao.**
- Raghunath Rao tried to capture power with the help of British. This led to the **1st Anglo- Maratha war**.
- Madhav Rao died in 1794. Baji Rao II, son of Raghunath Rao succeeded Madhav Rao.
- At the end of 3rd Anglo- Maratha war Peshwa was dethroned and pensioned off while other Maratha states remained as subsidiary states.

Shivaji and the seas

- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj put **great emphasis on sea-faring prowess, and laid the foundations of a modern naval force in the 17th century**.
- The Indian Navy has named a training establishment in **Lonavla as INS Shivaji** and a shore based logistics and administrative hub of Western Naval Command as **INS Angre after Kanhoji Angre, the acclaimed Maratha naval commander**.

- The use of the octagonal design of the seal of Shivaji on the new Naval Ensign is a formal stamp on the umbilical ties of the Indian Navy with the navy of the Maratha empire.

Extent of naval prowess

- Shivaji's strategic thought ensured that **a strong naval presence was established along the Konkan coast** to protect the sea trade of the Maratha empire.
- The navy under Shivaji was so strong that the Marathas could hold their against the British, Portuguese and Dutch.
- Shivaji built ships in towns such as **Kalyan, Bhivandi, and Goa**, both for trade and to establish a fighting navy.
- He also built a number of sea forts and bases for repair, storage and shelter. Shivaji fought many lengthy battles with Siddis of Janjira on coastline.
- He started trading with foreigners on his own after possession of eight or nine ports in the Deccan.

Kanhoji Angre

- **Kanhoji Angre was the commander of Maratha navy**, and is credited with laying a **strong naval foundation** which ensured that the Marathas were a sea-faring power to reckon with.
- **Kanhoji is credited with holding his own against the English, Portuguese and Dutch naval forces.**
- He ensured that the merchants plying their trade for the Maratha empire were protected on the seas.
- He set up a **base in Colaba with more bases at Suvarndurg and Vijaydurg near Ratnagiri.**

Siddis of Janjira

- **Janjira State was a princely state in India** during the British Raj.
- Its rulers were a Siddi dynasty of Habesha descent and the state was under the suzerainty of the Bombay Presidency.
- Janjira State was located on the Konkan coast in the present-day Raigad district of Maharashtra.

7. Tribal revolts

Four tribal revolts **President Murmu invoked in her inaugural speech**

a. Santhal revolution

- On June 30, 1855, over 10,000 Santhals were mobilised by their leaders — **Kanho Murmu, Chand Murmu, Bhairab Murmu and Sidho Murmu** – to revolt against **the East India Company over oppression by revenue officials, zamindars, and corrupt moneylenders.**
- The seeds of the protracted rebellion, however, were **sown in 1832 where the East India Company created Damin-i-koh region in the forested belt of Rajmahal hills**, and invited the Santhals to settle there.
- Over the years, Santhals found themselves at the receiving end of exploitative practices aided by the British.
- After the rebellion broke out in 1855, both sides continued clashing till the uprising was crushed in 1856.
- **The British defeated the Santhals using modern firearms and war elephants in decisive action in which both Sidho and Kanho died.**

b. Paika rebellion

- In several recent descriptions, the 1817 Paika Rebellion in **Odisha's Khurda is referred to as the "original" first war of Indian Independence.**

- That year, the **Paikas** – a class of military retainers traditionally recruited by the kings of **Odisha** – revolted against the **British colonial rulers** mainly over being dispossessed of their land holdings.
 - In the run-up to the revolt, the **British had dethroned and exiled the Khurda king in 1803**, and then started introducing new revenue settlements.
 - For Paikas, who were into rendering martial services in return for hereditary rent-free land (nish-kar jagirs) and titles, this disruption meant losing both their estates and social standing.
 - **The trigger for the revolt came as some 400 Kondhs descended from the Ghumusar area to rise against the British.**
 - **Bakshi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar Mohapatra Bharamarbar Rai, the highest-ranking military general** of the banished Khurda king, led an army of Paikas to join the uprising of the Kondhs.
- c. **Kol Mutiny**
- The Kols, alongwith other tribes, are **inhabitants of Chhotanagpur**. This covered Ranchi, Singhbhum, Hazaribagh, Palamau and the western parts of Manbhum.
 - The trouble in 1831 started with large-scale transfers of land from Kol headmen to outsiders like Hindu, Sikh and Muslim farmers and money-lenders who were oppressive and demanded heavy taxes. **The Kols resented this and in 1831, under the leadership of Buddho Bhagat**, the Kol rebels killed or burnt about a thousand outsiders.
 - Only after large-scale military operations order was restored.
- d. **Bhil uprising**
- After the British intruded into the **Bhil territory in Maharashtra's Khandesh region**, the tribals pushed back fearing exploitation under the new regime in 1818.
 - The revolt was led by their leader, **Sewaram and was brutally crushed using the British military might**. This uprising again erupted in 1825 as the Bhils sought to take advantage of reverses being suffered by the British in the first Anglo-Burmese war.

8. **Vaikom Satyagraha**

Why in News?

As the year 2024 marks the **centenary of the Vaikom Satyagraha**, Chief Minister of Kerala and Tamil Nadu jointly inaugurated the centenary celebrations.

What is Vaikom Satyagraha?

Background:

- The princely state of Travancore had a **feudal, militaristic, and ruthless system of custom-ridden government**, some of the most rigid, refined and ruthless social norms and customs were seen in Travancore.
- Lower castes like the **Ezhavas and Pulayas** were **considered polluting** and various rules were in place to distance them from upper castes.
- These **included a prohibition, not just on temple entry, but even on walking on the roads surrounding temples.**

Contribution of Leaders:

In 1923, **Madhavan presented the issue as a resolution at the Kakinada meet of All India Congress Committee**. Subsequently, it was taken up by the Congress Untouchability Committee formed by the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee in January 1924.

Madhavan, K.P. Kesava Menon who was the then secretary of Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee and Congress leader and educationist **K. Kelappan** (also known as Kerala Gandhi) are considered the pioneers of the Vaikom Satyagraha movement.

Factors Leading to Satyagraha:

- **Christian missionaries**, supported by the **East India Company**, had expanded their reach and many lower castes converted to Christianity to escape the clutches of an oppressive system that continued to bind them.
- **Maharaja Ayilyam Thirunal**, took many progressive reforms.
- Most important of these was the **introduction of a modern education system** with free primary education for all – even lower castes.
- **Forces of capitalism and these reforms created new social hierarchies** – which were not always congruent with traditional ones.

Beginning of Satyagraha:

- On **March 30, 1924**, the Satyagrahis walked in procession towards the forbidden public roads. They were stopped 50 yards away from the place where a board cautioning the oppressed communities against walking on the roads (**surrounding the Vaikom Mahadeva temple**), was placed.
- Dressed in **khadi** and wearing **khadi caps**, **Govinda Panikkar (Nair)**, **Bahuleyan (Ezhava)** and **Kunjappu (Pulaya)**, defied the prohibitory orders.
- The police stopped them. In protest, the three men sat on the road and were arrested.
- Then on, every day, three volunteers from three different communities were sent to walk on the prohibited roads.
- **Within a week, the leaders of the movement were all arrested.**

Role of Women:

Periyar's wife **Nagammai** and sister **Kannammal**, played an unprecedented role in the fight.

Arrival of Gandhi:

Gandhi arrived at **Vaikom in March 1925**, held a series of discussions with leaders of various caste groups and met **Maharani Regent** at her **Varkala camp**.

The Vaikom Satyagraha was officially **withdrawn on November 30, 1925** after consultations between **Gandhi and W.H. Pitt (police commissioner of Travancore)**.

A compromise was reached following the release of all prisoners and grant of access to roads.

Temple Entry Proclamation:

In **1936**, the historic **Temple Entry Proclamation** was signed by the **Maharaja of Travancore** which removed the age-old ban on the entry of temples.

Significance:

- Amidst rising nationalist sentiment and agitations across the country, it **foregrounded social reform**.
- For the first time, it **brought Gandhian methods of nonviolent protest to Travancore**.
- The movement **continued for over 600 days**, non-stop, through social pressure, police crackdowns and even natural disaster in 1924, is admirable.
- The Vaikom satyagraha saw previously unseen **unity across caste lines**.

Conclusion

Till 1917, the Indian National Congress refused to take up social reform. But **with the rise of Gandhi and increased activism within lower caste communities and untouchables, social reform soon found itself front and Centre of Congress's and Gandhi's politics.**

9. Bandhavgarh National Park

Why in News?

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) discovered Buddhist caves and stupas at **Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh.**

What are the Findings?

Buddhist Caves:

- **26 Buddhist Caves** were discovered dating back to the 2nd and 5th centuries, pertaining to the **Mahayana sect of Buddhism.**
- The caves and some of their remains had **'Chaitya' (rounded) doors** and stone beds typical of Mahayana Buddhism sites.

Inscriptions in Brahmi text:

- **24 inscriptions in Brahmi text** were, all dating back to the 2nd-5th centuries.
- The inscriptions mention sites such as **Mathura and Kaushambi, and Pavata, Vjabharada and Sapatanaairikaa.**
- The kings they mention include **Bhimsena, Pothasiri and Bhattadeva.**

Remains of Temples:

- The **remains of 26 temples** dating to the **Kalachuri period** between 9th-11th centuries and the possibly **world's largest Varaha sculpture** also dating to the same period were found.
- The **Kalachuri dynasty**, which spread over parts of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, is also associated with the earliest **Ellora and Elephanta cave monuments.**
- The Varaha sculpture is among the many monolithic sculptures of the 10 incarnations of Lord Vishnu.
- Two Saiva mutts have also been found.

Remains of the Gupta Period:

Some remains of the Gupta period, such as door jambs and carvings in caves, have been found.

What are the Key Points of Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve?

In 1968, it was notified as a national park and in **1993 was declared a tiger reserve- under the Project Tiger Network** at the neighbouring Panpatha Sanctuary.

Historical Significance:

- Its mention can be found in the ancient books of the **'Narad Pancharatra'** and the **'Shiv Purana'** that this place is being associated with Ramayana.
- The **Bandhavgarh Fort** is a **great masterpiece of "Treta Yuga"** (one of the ages of mankind in Hinduism).

- It was ruled by major dynasties including **Sengars, the Kalchuris, and the Baghels** (believed to rule the regions for the longer period).

Geographical Aspect: It resides on the extreme north eastern border of **Madhya Pradesh** and the northern edges of the **Satpura mountain ranges**.

Climate: Tropical monsoon climatic zone.

Streams: The whole park is filled with more than 20 streams out of which some of the most important streams are **Johilla, Janadh, Charanganga, Damnar, Banbei, Ambanala and Andhiyari Jhiria**. These streams then merge into the Son river (an important southern tributary to the river Ganga).

Biodiversity: There is a large number of tigers in the core zone. There are more than **22 species of mammals and 250 species of birds**.

Species Found: Asiatic Jackal, Bengal Fox, Sloth Bear, Striped Hyena, Leopard and Tiger, Wild Pigs, Nilgai, Chinkara and Gaur (a herbivore and the only coarse feeder).



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IMPORTANT QUESTIONS FOR PRELIMS 2023

Q.1) Consider the following statements regarding “Vijayanagar empire”?

1. The land revenue, also known as Sist, was the main source of income in Vijayanagar empire.
2. Amaranayakas enjoyed proprietary rights over the land
3. The income from Bhandarvada villages were used to maintain temples

Which of the following statements are correct?

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

Ans:- Option B

The amara-nayaka system was a **major political innovation of the Vijayanagara Empire**. It is likely that many features of this system were derived from the Iqta system of the Delhi Sultanate. **The amara-nayakas were military commanders who were given territories to govern by the raya**. They collected taxes and other dues from peasants, craftsmen and traders in the area. They retained a part of the revenue for personal use and for maintaining a stipulated contingent of horses and elephants. These contingents provided the Vijayanagara kings with an effective fighting force with which they brought the entire southern peninsula under their control. Some of the revenue was also used for the maintenance of temples and irrigation works. Amaranayakas did not enjoy proprietary rights over the land. They just had rights over its income. The income from manya was used for maintenance of brahmanas and temples. Bhandaravada were crown villages and a part of its income was used for building of forts. The land revenue, also known as Sist, was the main source of income in Vijayanagar empire

Q.2) Which of the following are properly matched

Traveller	King
1. Nicolo Conti	Devaraya I

2. Fernao Nuniz	Krishnadevaraya
3. Abdur Razzak	Devaraya II
4. Duarte Barbosa	Krishnadevaraya

Select the correct codes:

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

Ans:- Option D

Fernao Nuniz – Achutaraya

All others are correct

Q.3) Which of the following characterizes/characterize the Indus Civilization?

1. Dhokra art found in West Bengal owes its origin to Indus Valley Civilization
2. They worshipped both trees and animals
3. Seals made of gold, ivory, terracotta and silver found in Indus Valley Civilization

Select the correct statement/statements using the codes given below:

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

Ans:- Option A

Silver not found in Indus Valley Sites

Q.4) Consider the following statements regarding Indus script:

1. The script follows a boustrophedon method of writing.
2. The script characters are largely pictorial only.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1 and 2 only
- (d) None of these

Ans:- Option C

Q.5) Consider the following seals:

1. Rectangular seals
2. Pentagon seals
3. Circular seals
4. Cylindrical seals
5. Triangular seals
6. Semi circular seals

Which of the above type of seals is/are found in the Indus Valley Civilization base?

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

Ans:-Option A

- Small objects called seals were **carved out of stones and burned to make them more durable** in the ancient civilization of the Indus Valley.
- These seals were **used for commercial purposes** such as sealing the mouths of jars by pressing the seals against soft clays, creating clay tags for sacks that transported goods to various destinations, and trading activities.
- A large number of seals were discovered near the **Indus Valley Civilization's port city of Lothal.**
- Several Harappan seals have also been discovered in Mesopotamia, Central Asia, and along the Arabian Peninsula's coasts.** Similarly, **Mesopotamia seals were discovered in Lothal.** This confirms that seals were used in trading and that **trade took place between the two world's great ancient civilizations (Harappan and Mesopotamia civilizations).**
- The seals discovered at various sites of the Indus Valley Civilization are of various sizes and shapes. The seals come in **triangle, square, rectangle, and circle shapes.** However, square-shaped seals outnumbered other shapes in the Harappan civilization.
- The majority of these seals were **made of Steatite, a relatively soft stone found in river beds.** Aside from that, copper, terracotta, chert, faience, and agate were used to make those seals. **Archaeologists have also discovered gold and ivory seals from the Harappa sites in recent years.**

Q.6) Consider the following statements about the sites associated with the Indus Valley Civilization:

1. Chanhudaro was an important centre of craft activity and hosted a bead factory.

2. Lothal was famous for its dockyard which lies on the eastern edge of the site.
3. The city of Dholavirahad a unique water harvesting and management system.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans:- Option D

Earnest Mackaydubbed the site the "Sheffield of India" after discovering copper blades, spears, razors, tools, axes, pots, and plates. Copper fish hooks were also found at this location.

•Models of clay carts, a little terracotta bird that serves as a whistle when blown, and plates and bowls were discovered.

•**Indus Seal shave also been discovered in Chanhudaro, which is considered one of the seal manufacturing centres.**

•The volume of craft production at Chanhudaro appears to be far larger than at Mohenjodaro, maybe filling up half of the town.

•At Chanhudaro,an impressive factory known as the **Bead Making Factory was discovered,** complete with a furnace.

•Chanhudaro produced shell bangles, beads of various materials, steatite seals, and metalwork.

Q.7) Regarding the Indus Valley Civilization, consider the following statements:

1. Mohenjodaro is the largest Indus Valley site
2. Urn Burial, Coffin Burial and Fractional Burial were practised in Indus Valley
3. Indus Valley traded with the Persian Gulf, Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Iraq region

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans:- Option D

Q.8) Regarding the Global Geoparks, consider the following statements:

1. Out of the total 169 UNESCO Global geoparks, India has 5 sites listed
2. Siwalik Fossil Park and Limestone formation of Buxa are part of the UNESCO Global geopark list
3. Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is the parent body which is making efforts towards identification and protection of geo-heritage sites

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) None of the above

Ans:- Option D

What are UNESCO Global Geoparks?

These are **single, unified geographical areas where sites and landscapes of international geological significance** are managed with a holistic concept of protection, education and sustainable development.

While there are **169 UNESCO Global geoparks spread across 44 countries**, India is yet to have one of its own.

What is the Geological Survey of India?

It was **set up in 1851 primarily to find coal deposits for the Railways**. Presently, GSI is an attached office to the Ministry of Mines.

The main functions of the GSI relate to **creation and updation of national geo-scientific information and mineral resource assessment**.

It is headquartered in Kolkata

Q.9) Regarding the “Geo Heritage sites”, consider the following statements:

1. Geological Survey of India (GSI) is the parent body which is making efforts towards identification and protection of geo-heritage sites/national geological monuments
2. St Mary Island , Limestone of Buxa Formation and Barr Conglomerate are part of the Geoheritage sites

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans:- Option C

Q.10) Which of the following items can be carbon dated:

1. Tree Bark
2. Ancient Manuscript on Papyrus
3. Inscription on a copper plate
4. Animal Skeleton
5. Dinosaur Skeletons

Select the correct codes

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

Ans:- Option C

Dinosaur skeleton > 40,000 to 50,000 years old hence cannot be carbon dated

Copper plate – non organic matter hence cannot be dated

What is Carbon Dating?

Carbon dating is a **widely used method to establish the age of organic materials, things that were once living**.

Living things have carbon in them in various forms.

The dating method is based on the fact that Carbon-14 (C-14) is radioactive, and decays at a well-known rate.

C-14 is an isotope of carbon with an atomic mass of 14.

The most abundant isotope of carbon in the atmosphere is C-12.

A very small amount of C-14 is also present.

The ratio of C-12 to C-14 in the atmosphere is almost static and is known.

Half Life:

Plants get their carbon through photosynthesis; animals get it mainly through food. Because plants and animals get their carbon from the atmosphere, they too acquire C-12 and C-14 in roughly the same proportion as is available in the atmosphere.

When they die, their interactions with the atmosphere stop. **While C-12 is stable, the radioactive C-14 reduces to one half of itself in about 5,730 years — known as its ‘half-life’.**

The changing ratio of C-12 to C-14 in the remains of a plant or animal after it dies can be measured

and can be used to deduce the approximate time when the organism died.

Age Determination of Inanimate Things:

Carbon dating cannot be applied in all circumstances. **It cannot be used to determine the age of non-living things like rocks, for example.**

Also, the **age of things that are more than 40,000-50,000 years old cannot be arrived at through carbon dating.**

This is because after **8-10 cycles of half-lives, the amount of C-14 becomes almost very small and is almost undetectable.**

For determining the age of inanimate things, instead of carbon, decays of other radioactive elements that might be present in the material become the basis for the dating method.

These are **known as Radiometric Dating Methods.** Many of these involve elements with half-lives of billions of years, which enable scientists to reliably estimate the age of very old objects.

Q.11) Consider the following statements regarding "Kohinoor Diamond"

1. Ranjit Singh wished to donate the diamond to Jagannath Puri Temple.
2. Ahmed Shah Abdali took it from the Marathas after the 3rd Battle of Panipat

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans:- Option A

The Persian general Nadir Shah went to India in 1739. He wanted to conquer the throne, which had been weakened during the reign of Sultan Mahamad. The Sultan lost the decisive battle and had to surrender to Nadir. It was him the one that gave the diamond its current name, **Koh-i-noor meaning "Mountain of light"**

Q.12) Consider the following statements regarding "Carbon Dating Method"

1. It is a widely-used method to establish the age of all materials
2. This method can be used to determine the age of copper plate inscriptions, rocks etc

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans:- Option D

Q.13) Consider the following statements with regard to Keeladi:

1. It is about 12 km south-east to the temple city of Chennai and is located along the Vaigai river
2. It has all the characteristics of an urban civilization, with brick structures, luxury items and proof of internal and external trade.

Which of the following options are correct?

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

Ans:- Option B

What are the Keypoints about Keeladi?

- Keeladi is a tiny hamlet in the **Sivaganga district in south Tamil Nadu.** It is about **12 km south-east to the temple city of Madurai and is located along the Vaigai river.**
- The excavations here from 2015 prove that an urban civilization existed in Tamil Nadu in the Sangam age on the banks of the Vaigai river.

What are the Key Findings?

In the eight rounds of excavations, including the first three by the ASI, over 18,000 artefacts have been unearthed from the site and the unique artefacts will be on display at the museum to be opened soon. Unearthing of heaps of pottery suggest the existence of a pottery making industry, mostly made of locally available raw materials. **Over 120 potsherds containing Tamil Brahmi inscriptions have been found.**

Over a thousand inscribed potsherds, found at Keeladi and other sites clearly suggest the long survival of the script. Spindle whorls, copper needles, terracotta seal, hanging stones of the yarn, terracotta spheres and earthen vessels to hold liquid suggest various stages of a weaving industry. **There also existed a dyeing industry and a glass bead industry.** Gold ornaments, copper

articles, semi-precious stones, shell bangles, ivory bangles and ivory combs reflect the artistic, culturally rich and prosperous lifestyle of the Keeladi people.

Agate and carnelian beads suggest import through commercial networks while terracotta and ivory dice, gamesmen and evidence of hopscotch have been unearthed revealing their pastime hobbies.

What is the Significance of the Findings?

Linkages with Sangam Age:

The Sangam age is a period of history in ancient Tamil Nadu which was believed to be from the 3rd century BCE to the 3rd century CE and **derives its name from the renowned Sangam assemblies of the poets of Madurai from that time.**

A recent ASI report has pushed the Sangam age to 800 BCE based on these archaeological findings.

Keeladi could also provide crucial evidence for understanding the missing links of the Iron Age (12th century BCE to sixth century BCE) to the Early Historic Period (sixth century BCE to fourth century BCE) and subsequent cultural developments.

Potential Linkages with Indus Valley:

The unearthed Keeladi artefacts have led academics to describe the site as part of the Vaigai Valley Civilization. The findings have also invited comparisons with the Indus Valley Civilization while acknowledging the cultural gap of 1,000 years between the two places.

The gap is filled with Iron Age material in south India, which serve as residual links.

According to Tamil Nadu State Archaeology Department (TNSDA) Keeladi has all the characteristics of an urban civilization, with brick structures, luxury items and proof of internal and external trade.

It comes across as **an industrious and advanced civilization** and has **given evidence of urban life** and settlements in Tamil Nadu during the Early Historic Period.

What was the Controversy Surrounding Keeladi?

After reports of possible links with the Indus Valley Civilization, there was “no significant finding” in the third round, which was seen as an attempt to play down the excavation findings.

On the intervention of the Madras High Court, the TNSDA has been carrying out excavations since 4th round instead of ASI to unearth more about the history of Tamil civilization.

Q.14) The 1st century CE Greco-Roman text Periplus of the Erythraean Sea refers to this port as Colchis. Multiple classical works of the Sangam literature like Akananuru (1st century BCE) and Kalithogai by the Tamil scholar Nachinarkiniyar speak of this port city's reputation. The glory of this port was such that the entire Gulf of Mannar was referred to as the Colchic Gulf.

Which of the following ports are referred to here?

- (a) Korkai
- (b) Muziris
- (c) Puhar
- (d) Arikamedu

Ans:- Option A

In the Thoothukudi district of Tamil Nadu lies the small village of Korkai. **Though largely off the radar today, this was one of the oldest port towns of the Tamil region**, going back more than 2000 years. It was also the **early capital of the Pandyas**. But what made Korkai really famous through history was the fact that it was one of the greatest centres of pearl fishing in the ancient world.

With a coastline of more than 7000 km, the ports like Korkai in peninsular India played an important role connecting the Subcontinent's hinterland with global market places and acting as a conduit in the trans-oceanic trade between the East and the West.

Q.15) Consider the following statements with regard to Keeladi:

1. The graffiti found in pot sherds is believed to be the link between the Indus script and the Tamil Brahmi.
2. Proof of Keeladi being a rural civilization has been found

Which of the following options are correct?

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

Ans:- Option A

Refer to solution of Q. 13

Q.16) Which one of the following statements about Damili script used in ancient South India is incorrect?

- (a) It was a variant of the Brahmi script in southern India.
- (b) It is also known as Tamizhi
- (c) It constitutes the earliest known writing system evidenced in many parts of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Sri Lanka.
- (d) It is considered to be the precursor to the Indus Valley Script

Ans:- Option D

About Tamil-Brahmi script:

- Tamil-Brahmi, was a **variant of the Brahmi script** in southern India.
- It was **used to write inscriptions** in the early form of old Tamil.
- The Tamil-Brahmi script has been **paleographically and stratigraphically dated between the third century BCE and the first century CE.**
- It **constitutes the earliest known writing system** evidenced in many parts of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Sri Lanka.
- It is also known as **Tamizhi or Damili.**

Q.17) Consider the following statements regarding the Pandyan kingdom

1. The mention of the Pandyas in the Hathigumpha inscription by Kharavela
2. Country of the Pandyas was described as Kaelobotros and Kerobottros by the Roman scholars

Which of the following options are correct?

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

Ans:- Option A

Pliny the Elder and Ptolemy refer refer to the **Cheras as Kaelobotros and Kerobottros respectively**. All these **Graeco-Roman names** are evidently **corruptions of "Kedala Puto/Kerala Putra"** probably received through relations with Northern India.

Kharavela sets up a school of masons (artisans and architects) and builds carved towers, gains wealth from the Pandyas. Kharavela set up streets, gates and temples, and "one hundred Vasukis (dragon chiefs) sent him precious stones, rare and wonderful elephants, horses and such animals". Pandya king sent him gifts of clothes and ornaments. – mentioned in the **Hathigumpha inscription**

Q.18) Which one of the following statements about Keeladi excavations in ancient South India is correct?

- (a) It provides a linkage between the Tamil Brahmi script and the Indus script
- (b) It is part of the Cauvery valley civilization which invited comparisons from Indus Valley Civilization
- (c) The Script was not that old and based on the findings on the pottery was very newly developed
- (d) Weaving industry was not that developed as not much has been found in the excavations

Ans:- Option A

Refer to solution of Q.13

Q.19) The Vaigai River Civilization is located on:

- (a) Mouth of the Krishna river
- (b) Banks of the Cauvery river near Chennai
- (c) Basin bounded by the Cardamom Hills and the Palani Hills on the West and by the Palk Strait and Palk Bay on the East.
- (d) On the Tungabhadra river basin

Ans:- Option C

Vaigai River- It is an **east-flowing river.**

The Vaigai river basin is **an important basin among the 12 basins** lying between the **Cauvery and Kanyakumari.**

This basin is bounded by the Cardamom Hills and the Palani Hills on the West and by the Palk Strait and Palk Bay on the East.