

CUET PG 2026 Ancient Indian History Question Paper with Solutions(Memory Based)

Time Allowed :1 Hours 30 min	Maximum Marks :300	Total Questions :75
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General Instructions

1. The exam lasts 90 minutes (1 hour 30 minutes).
2. There are 75 Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) to be answered.
3. +4 marks for every correct answer. -1 mark (negative marking) for every incorrect answer. 0 marks for unanswered or un-attempted questions.
4. For any discrepancy in questions, the English version is considered final (except for language-specific papers).
5. Click one of the four options to choose an answer.
6. You must click "Save & Next" to confirm your response. Only saved answers are considered for evaluation.
7. Use "Mark for Review & Next" to flag a question for later. You can unselect or change your answer using the "Clear Response" button.
8. All calculations must be done on the Rough Sheets provided at the centre. These must be returned to the invigilator after the exam.

1. Which Harappan site is famous for its sophisticated water management system and a stadium?

- (A) Harappa
- (B) Mohenjo-daro
- (C) Dholavira
- (D) Kalibangan

Correct Answer: (3) Dholavira

Solution:

Concept: The Harappan Civilization is known for its advanced urban planning, including drainage systems, water conservation, and public structures.

Step 1: Understanding Dholavira.

Dholavira, located in present-day Gujarat, is one of the most remarkable sites of the Indus Valley Civilization.

Step 2: Water management system.

It is especially famous for its highly advanced water conservation techniques, including:

- Large reservoirs
- Step wells
- Channels for rainwater harvesting

Step 3: Unique feature – Stadium.

Dholavira is also known for a large open ground structure interpreted as a stadium or ceremonial ground.

Step 4: Eliminating other options.

- Harappa: Major urban center but not known for a stadium
- Mohenjo-daro: Known for the Great Bath
- Kalibangan: Known for fire altars

Step 5: Conclusion.

Thus, Dholavira is the correct answer.

Quick Tip

Dholavira → Advanced water management + Stadium-like structure.

2. Who is the author of the famous Sanskrit grammar book "Ashtadhyayi"?

- (A) Kalidasa
- (B) Panini
- (C) Patanjali
- (D) Chanakya

Correct Answer: (2) Panini

Solution:

Concept: "Ashtadhyayi" is one of the most important works in Sanskrit grammar and linguistics. It systematizes the structure of the Sanskrit language.

Step 1: Understanding Ashtadhyayi.

The Ashtadhyayi is a comprehensive grammar consisting of around 4000 rules (sutras) that describe the structure of Sanskrit.

Step 2: Identifying the author.

It was written by **Panini**, an ancient Indian scholar and grammarian.

Step 3: Significance of the work.

- Foundation of classical Sanskrit grammar
- One of the earliest works on linguistics in the world
- Highly systematic and scientific approach

Step 4: Eliminating other options.

- Kalidasa: Famous poet and dramatist
- Patanjali: Commentator on Panini's work (Mahabhashya)

- Chanakya: Known for Arthashastra

Step 5: Conclusion.

Thus, Panini is the author of Ashtadhyayi.

Quick Tip

Ashtadhyayi → Written by Panini → Foundation of Sanskrit grammar.

3. The "Saptanga Theory" of state was propounded by which ancient scholar?

- (A) Manu
- (B) Kautilya
- (C) Megasthenes
- (D) Panini

Correct Answer: (2) Kautilya

Solution:

Concept: The Saptanga Theory is an ancient Indian political theory describing the essential elements of a state. It is a foundational concept in ancient Indian polity.

Step 1: Understanding Saptanga Theory.

"Saptanga" means "seven limbs," referring to the seven essential components of a state.

Step 2: The seven elements.

According to the theory, a state consists of:

- Swami (King)
- Amatya (Ministers)
- Janapada (Territory and population)
- Durga (Fort)
- Kosha (Treasury)
- Danda (Army)
- Mitra (Allies)

Step 3: Propounder of the theory.

Kautilya (also known as Chanakya or Vishnugupta), in his work *Arthashastra*, elaborated this theory.

Step 4: Eliminating other options.

- Manu: Known for Manusmriti
- Megasthenes: Greek ambassador and writer (Indica)
- Panini: Grammarian

Step 5: Conclusion.

Thus, Kautilya propounded the Saptanga Theory.

Quick Tip

Saptanga Theory → 7 elements of state → Given by Kautilya (Arthashastra).

4. Which Mauryan ruler is associated with the Bhabru Edict and the spread of Buddhism?

- (A) Chandragupta Maurya
- (B) Bindusara
- (C) Ashoka
- (D) Dasharatha

Correct Answer: (3) Ashoka

Solution:

Concept: The Mauryan Empire is well known for its inscriptions and edicts, which provide valuable historical information. Among these, certain edicts are directly linked to the promotion of Buddhism.

Step 1: Understanding the Bhabru Edict.

The Bhabru (Bairat) Edict is one of the minor rock edicts that reflects the ruler's deep devotion to Buddhism.

Step 2: Identifying the ruler.

This edict is attributed to Emperor Ashoka, who played a major role in spreading Buddhism after the Kalinga War.

Step 3: Contribution to Buddhism.

- Patronized Buddhist institutions
- Sent missionaries to different regions
- Promoted moral teachings (Dhamma)

Step 4: Eliminating other options.

- Chandragupta Maurya: Founder of Mauryan Empire, associated with Jainism later
- Bindusara: Followed Ajivika sect
- Dasharatha: Successor of Ashoka, less prominent in this context

Step 5: Conclusion.

Thus, Ashoka is associated with the Bhabru Edict and the spread of Buddhism.

Quick Tip

Bhabru Edict → Ashoka → Promotion of Buddhism after Kalinga War.

5. The "Prayag Prashasti" (Allahabad Pillar Inscription) describes the conquests of which ruler?

- (A) Chandragupta Maurya
- (B) Ashoka
- (C) Samudragupta
- (D) Harshavardhana

Correct Answer: (3) Samudragupta

Solution:

Concept: Inscriptions are important historical sources that provide details about rulers, their achievements, and administration. The Prayag Prashasti is one such significant inscription from ancient India.

Step 1: Understanding Prayag Prashasti.

The Prayag Prashasti, also known as the Allahabad Pillar Inscription, is a eulogy composed in Sanskrit.

Step 2: Author of the inscription.

It was written by Harisena, the court poet of the ruler.

Step 3: Ruler described.

The inscription details the military conquests, political achievements, and qualities of **Samudragupta**, a Gupta ruler.

Step 4: Significance.

- Provides detailed account of Samudragupta's campaigns
- Shows his policy of conquest and diplomacy
- Highlights him as a great warrior and administrator

Step 5: Eliminating other options.

- Chandragupta Maurya: Mauryan ruler
- Ashoka: Known for edicts, not this inscription
- Harshavardhana: Later ruler

Step 6: Conclusion.

Thus, the Prayag Prashasti describes the conquests of Samudragupta.

Quick Tip

Prayag Prashasti → Written by Harisena → Describes Samudragupta's conquests.

6. Which Chinese traveler visited India during the reign of Harshavardhana?

- (A) Fa-Hien
- (B) Hiuen Tsang
- (C) I-Tsing
- (D) Sung Yun

Correct Answer: (2) Hiuen Tsang

Solution:

Concept: Foreign travelers provide valuable accounts of ancient Indian history, culture, and administration. Chinese pilgrims visited India mainly to study Buddhism.

Step 1: Understanding Hiuen Tsang.

Hiuen Tsang (Xuanzang) was a Chinese Buddhist monk and traveler.

Step 2: Time period.

He visited India in the 7th century CE during the reign of Harshavardhana.

Step 3: Contributions.

- Provided detailed accounts of Indian society, religion, and education
- Described Nalanda University
- Recorded Harsha's administration and patronage of Buddhism

Step 4: Eliminating other options.

- Fa-Hien: Visited during Gupta period (Chandragupta II)
- I-Tsing: Visited later, mainly for Buddhist studies
- Sung Yun: Earlier traveler

Step 5: Conclusion.

Thus, Hiuen Tsang visited India during Harshavardhana's reign.

Quick Tip

Harsha's period → Visited by Hiuen Tsang → Detailed Buddhist accounts.

7. In the Vedic period, the term "Gavisthi" referred to what type of activity?

- (A) Agricultural activity
- (B) Religious ritual
- (C) Cattle raid or war
- (D) Trade activity

Correct Answer: (3) Cattle raid or war

Solution:

Concept: The Vedic society was largely pastoral, and cattle were considered the primary measure of wealth and prosperity.

Step 1: Understanding the term "Gavisthi".

The word "Gavisthi" is derived from "Go" (cow) and was used in the Rigvedic context.

Step 2: Meaning in Vedic society.

It referred to conflicts or raids carried out for acquiring cattle, which often took the form of wars between tribes.

Step 3: Significance.

- Reflects pastoral economy
- Indicates importance of cattle as wealth
- Shows frequent inter-tribal conflicts

Step 4: Eliminating other options.

- Agriculture and trade were less dominant in early Vedic period
- Religious rituals had separate terminology

Step 5: Conclusion.

Thus, "Gavisthi" referred to cattle raids or wars.

Quick Tip

Gavisthi → "Search for cows" → Cattle raid/war in Vedic period.

8. The Shore Temple at Mahabalipuram was built by which South Indian dynasty?

- (A) Cholas
- (B) Cheras
- (C) Pallavas
- (D) Pandyas

Correct Answer: (3) Pallavas

Solution:

Concept: South Indian temple architecture developed significantly under various dynasties, each contributing unique styles and monuments.

Step 1: Understanding the Shore Temple.

The Shore Temple is a structural temple located at Mahabalipuram (Mamallapuram) on the Coromandel Coast.

Step 2: Dynasty responsible.

It was built during the reign of the Pallava dynasty, particularly under King Narasimhavarman II (Rajasimha) in the 8th century CE.

Step 3: Architectural significance.

- One of the earliest structural (stone-built) temples in South India
- UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Example of Dravidian architecture

Step 4: Eliminating other options.

- Cholas: Known for Brihadeeswara Temple
- Cheras and Pandyas: Important dynasties but not associated with this monument

Step 5: Conclusion.

Thus, the Shore Temple was built by the Pallava dynasty.

Quick Tip

Shore Temple (Mahabalipuram) → Built by Pallavas → Early Dravidian architecture.

9. Which Buddhist Council was held during the reign of Kanishka in Kashmir?

- (A) First Buddhist Council
- (B) Second Buddhist Council
- (C) Third Buddhist Council
- (D) Fourth Buddhist Council

Correct Answer: (4) Fourth Buddhist Council

Solution:

Concept: Buddhist Councils were important assemblies held to preserve and propagate the teachings of the Buddha and to resolve doctrinal disputes.

Step 1: Understanding the Fourth Council.

The Fourth Buddhist Council is associated with the Kushan ruler Kanishka.

Step 2: Location and time.

It was held in Kashmir (Kundalvana) during the 1st–2nd century CE.

Step 3: Significance.

- Compilation and systematization of Buddhist texts
- Associated with the development of Mahayana Buddhism

Step 4: Eliminating other options.

- First Council: Held at Rajgriha under Ajatashatru
- Second Council: Held at Vaishali

- Third Council: Held at Pataliputra under Ashoka

Step 5: Conclusion.

Thus, the Fourth Buddhist Council was held during Kanishka's reign.

Quick Tip

Kanishka → Fourth Buddhist Council → Kashmir → Mahayana development.

10. The concept of "Dhamma" was popularized through inscriptions by which emperor?

- (A) Chandragupta Maurya
- (B) Bindusara
- (C) Ashoka
- (D) Samudragupta

Correct Answer: (3) Ashoka

Solution:

Concept: "Dhamma" was a set of moral and ethical principles aimed at promoting social harmony, non-violence, and righteous conduct.

Step 1: Understanding Dhamma.

Dhamma emphasized values such as:

- Non-violence (Ahimsa)
- Respect for elders
- Religious tolerance
- Welfare of people

Step 2: Role of the emperor.

Emperor Ashoka propagated Dhamma through a series of inscriptions on rocks and pillars across his empire.

Step 3: Purpose of inscriptions.

- To communicate moral guidelines to the public
- To promote unity and ethical governance

Step 4: Eliminating other options.

- Chandragupta Maurya: Founder of Mauryan Empire
- Bindusara: Followed Ajivika sect
- Samudragupta: Gupta ruler

Step 5: Conclusion.

Thus, Ashoka popularized the concept of Dhamma through inscriptions.

Quick Tip

Ashoka → Dhamma policy → Spread through rock pillar edicts.

11. Which ancient university was established by the Gupta ruler Kumara Gupta I?

- (A) Takshashila
- (B) Nalanda
- (C) Vikramashila
- (D) Vallabhi

Correct Answer: (2) Nalanda

Solution:

Concept: Ancient India had renowned centers of learning that attracted students from across the world. These institutions played a crucial role in the development of education and culture.

Step 1: Understanding Nalanda University.

Nalanda was one of the earliest residential universities in the world, located in present-day Bihar.

Step 2: Founder of Nalanda.

It was established during the Gupta period by Kumara Gupta I in the 5th century CE.

Step 3: Features of the university.

- International center of learning
- Subjects included Buddhism, philosophy, medicine, and mathematics
- Attracted scholars like Hiuen Tsang

Step 4: Eliminating other options.

- Takshashila: Older university, not founded by Gupta rulers
- Vikramashila: Established by Pala rulers
- Vallabhi: Another center of learning, not linked to Kumara Gupta I

Step 5: Conclusion.

Thus, Nalanda University was established by Kumara Gupta I.

Quick Tip

Nalanda → Founded by Kumara Gupta I → Famous ancient university.

12. The Ajanta Caves are primarily associated with which religious tradition?

- (A) Hinduism
- (B) Jainism
- (C) Buddhism
- (D) Zoroastrianism

Correct Answer: (3) Buddhism

Solution:

Concept: Rock-cut cave architecture in India reflects religious and artistic developments of ancient times. The Ajanta Caves are among the most significant examples.

Step 1: Understanding Ajanta Caves.

The Ajanta Caves are a series of rock-cut caves located in Maharashtra, known for their paintings and sculptures.

Step 2: Religious association.

These caves are primarily associated with **Buddhism**, serving as monasteries (viharas) and prayer halls (chaityas).

Step 3: Artistic significance.

- Depict Jataka tales (stories of Buddha's previous lives)
- Showcase early Indian mural painting
- Reflect Mahayana Buddhist influence

Step 4: Eliminating other options.

- Hindu and Jain caves exist elsewhere (e.g., Ellora)
- Ajanta is predominantly Buddhist

Step 5: Conclusion.

Thus, the Ajanta Caves are associated with Buddhism.

Quick Tip

Ajanta Caves → Buddhist monasteries + paintings → Jataka tales.

13. What was the name of the gold coins issued during the Gupta Period?

- (A) Dinar
- (B) Tanka
- (C) Karshapana
- (D) Nishka

Correct Answer: (1) Dinar

Solution:

Concept: Coinage in ancient India reflects economic prosperity, trade, and political authority. The Gupta period is particularly known for its high-quality gold coins.

Step 1: Understanding Gupta coinage.

The Guptas issued a large number of gold coins, which indicate a flourishing economy and strong trade networks.

Step 2: Name of the coins.

These gold coins were known as **Dinars**, inspired by Roman coinage.

Step 3: Features of Gupta coins.

- Made of high-purity gold
- Featured images of kings performing various activities (archery, hunting, etc.)
- Contained inscriptions in Sanskrit

Step 4: Eliminating other options.

- Tanka: Used during Delhi Sultanate
- Karshapana: Punch-marked coins of earlier period
- Nishka: Vedic term for gold ornaments/coins

Step 5: Conclusion.

Thus, Gupta gold coins were called Dinars.

Quick Tip

Gupta gold coins → Dinar → Symbol of economic prosperity.

14. Which Sangam assembly text is known as the "Bible of the Tamil Land"?

- (A) Tolkappiyam
- (B) Silappadikaram
- (C) Manimekalai
- (D) Tirukkural

Correct Answer: (4) Tirukkural

Solution:

Concept: Sangam literature represents the earliest body of Tamil literature, reflecting social, ethical, and cultural life in ancient South India.

Step 1: Understanding Tirukkural.

The Tirukkural is a classical Tamil text consisting of 1330 couplets (kurals).

Step 2: Author.

It was written by the poet-saint Thiruvalluvar.

Step 3: Why called "Bible of Tamil Land".

- Contains universal moral and ethical teachings
- Covers topics like virtue (Aram), wealth (Porul), and love (Inbam)
- Highly respected across cultures and religions

Step 4: Eliminating other options.

- Tolkappiyam: Grammar text
- Silappadikaram: Epic
- Manimekalai: Buddhist epic

Step 5: Conclusion.

Thus, Tirukkural is known as the "Bible of the Tamil Land."

Quick Tip

Tirukkural → Written by Thiruvalluvar → Moral text = "Bible of Tamil Land".

15. The "Lothal" site of the Indus Valley Civilization served as what type of facility?

- (A) Religious center
- (B) Military fort
- (C) Dockyard/port
- (D) Agricultural settlement

Correct Answer: (3) Dockyard/port

Solution:

Concept: The Indus Valley Civilization is known for its advanced urban planning and trade networks, including both inland and maritime trade.

Step 1: Understanding Lothal.

Lothal, located in present-day Gujarat, was an important Harappan site.

Step 2: Key feature of the site.

It is famous for having one of the world's earliest known dockyards, indicating maritime activity.

Step 3: Function of the dockyard.

- Facilitated trade with distant regions like Mesopotamia
- Allowed ships to dock and load/unload goods
- Demonstrates advanced knowledge of tides and engineering

Step 4: Significance.

- Shows importance of sea trade in Harappan economy
- Reflects technological advancement

Step 5: Eliminating other options.

- Religious center: No major evidence
- Military fort: Not its primary function
- Agricultural settlement: Though present, not its defining feature

Step 6: Conclusion.

Thus, Lothal served as a dockyard or port facility.

Quick Tip

Lothal → Famous for dockyard → Evidence of maritime trade.
