

3. Ancient India and The World

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Question

Which country was called as the 'Golden Bird' in ancient time?

- A. China
- B. India
- C. Egypt
- D. Greece

Answer

India was the richest country in the world and Indian rulers had huge gold reserves. Gold was a very precious metal in European civilisations, consequently, India was referred to as the Golden Bird.

Other options are factually incorrect.

2. Question

What is Nishka?

- A. Gold Coin
- B. Silver coin
- C. Copper coin
- D. None of these

Answer

a) is correct. Nishka refers to an Indian from ancient period, which was made of gold.

b) is incorrect. Ancient silver coins were called 'Dharan'.

c) is incorrect. Copper coins minted in ancient India were called 'Mashak'.

3. Question

The great Epics namely, Kumara Sambhavam and Raghuvansham are written by-

- A. Kalidasa

- B. Kautilya
- C. Bhairvi
- D. Vishakha Datta

Answer

- a) is correct. Kalidasa was a famous poet of Ancient India. He wrote several epics, including Kumara Sambhavam and Raghuvansham.
- b) is incorrect. Kautilya wrote the famous book on war and politics, called Arthashastra.
- c) is incorrect. Bhairavi is credited with the composition of 'Kiratarjuniyam'.
- d) is incorrect. The most famous epic was Vishakha Datta is 'Mudrarakshasa'

4. Question

Where is the stone pillar situated which stands erect on the plain ground without being dug?

- A. in Sarnath
- B. in Delhi
- C. in Belur (Karnataka)
- D. in Manakuvar

Answer

The stone pillar in Belur, Karnataka is an example of the advanced knowledge of laws of science that the Indians possessed. It is a 40 feet high pillar, weighing over 20,000 kilograms, but it stands on the ground without any support structures or digging.

All other options are incorrect.

5. Question

Who has written books named 'Lilavati' and 'Sidhanta Shiromani'?

- A. Bhaskaracharya
- B. Bodhayan
- C. Aryabhatta
- D. Nagarjuna

Answer

a) is correct. Bhaskaracharya was a famous mathematician, who composed the two books.

b) is incorrect. Bodhayan is best known for having proposed the first version of Pythagoras theorem, called Chitti Theorem.

c) is incorrect. Aryabhatta is credited with the discovery of zero.

d) is incorrect. Nagarjuna was a prominent astronomer and astrologist.

Very Short Answer

1. Question

Where is the Angkor Vat temple situated?

Answer

Angkor Vat is a famous Vishnu temple, situated in CAMBODIA. It was built in the ancient days, by Surya Verma II.

2. Question

What is the ancient name of Vietnam?

Answer

During the days of Greater India, when Indian rulers ruled across the island nations of South Asia, Vietnam was called CHAMPA

3. Question

In which region of Greater India, were the names of cities similar to Indian cities?

Answer

The names of cities of Cambodia, like Vikrampur, Adhyapur and Tamrapur, are typically Indian names on a foreign land.

4. Question

What were the trade unions called?

Answer

During the ancient days, Indians were the first to have trade unions. They were called SHRENI or GANA, and were head by Mukhia.

5. Question

Which is the first university of the world?

Answer

NALANDA UNIVERSITY, situated in present-day Bihar, is believed to be the oldest university in the world. Scholars from all over Asia would come to study here.

6. Question

Where is the iron pillar situated?

Answer

The iron pillar is situated in MEHRAULI district of Delhi, and is best known for its corrosion resistant properties.

7. Question

Who found out the actual values of pie?

Answer

The ancient India was known for scholarly work in mathematics and science. Aryabhatta, the famous Indian mathematician, is credited with calculating an accurate value of 'pie' upto 4 decimal places.

8. Question

Which mathematician propounded the theory of 'Chitti Pramay'?

Answer

The ancient India was known for scholarly work in mathematics and science. Bodhayan, an Indian mathematician, is credited with giving an early version of Pythagoras Theorem, called Chitti Pramay.

9. Question

Who firstly explained the reason of solar and lunar eclipse?

Answer

The ancient India was known for scholarly work in mathematics, astronomy and astrology. Aryabhatta is credited with giving an explanation for solar and lunar eclipses.

10. Question

Write the names of two prominent Indian astrologers.

Answer

The ancient India was known for scholarly work in astrology. Two prominent astrologers were Nagarjuna and Vagbhata.

11. Question

Which is the most ancient medication system of the world?

Answer

The ancient India was known for scholarly work in science. Consequently, Ayurveda was developed as the first medication system in the world.

12. Question

Who invented the chemical medication system?

Answer

Nagarjuna invented the chemical medication system. This involved using metals and other elements in the preparation of medicines.

13. Question

Who is regarded as the first surgeon of the world?

Answer

Shushruta is regarded as the first surgeon in the world. He knew how to perform caesarean, cataract, stone removal etc. on his patients.

14. Question

What was the ancient name of Thailand?

Answer

SIAM was the ancient name of Thailand. Its name was changed to Thailand during the 13th century, due to the growing influence of Thai tribe.

15. Question

In which direction of India is Tibet situated?

Answer

Tibet is situated to the North of India. It forms a divide between India and China along the states of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. It is a typical plateau region.

Short Answer**1. Question**

Describe the foreign trade in Greater India.

Answer

a) STATUS: In ancient days, India was a developed country, whose traders would cross shores and kingdoms to sell the fine Indian goods in foreign markets. Indian villages were self-sufficient, and the country prided in being called the GOLDEN BIRD.

b) **TRADE ROUTES:** India traded through land and sea. China, Tibet, Arabia and Persia were prominent markets where goods travelled through land. Sri Lanka, Java and Sumatra were connected through the sea ports of Southern and Eastern India.

c) **IMPORTS:** Foreign traders also came to India with a variety of goods. This included gold, silver, ruby and diamond ornaments. Notably, we imported wine from western countries, silk from China, and wool from Nepal

d) **EXPORTS:** These goods were exchanged for Indian cotton, tobacco and spices. We sent clove and incensed good to Sri Lanka, and exported pearls to the larger market.

e) **ADMINISTRATION:** Trade relations were well-developed and overlooked by SARTHAWAH.

2. Question

What were the main industries in Greater India?

Answer

The main industries in Greater India were:

a) **Sculptors:** India sculptors were known for their exceptional skills. They are credited with Ashoka Pillars across the country and several major architectural wonders, which are reflective of Indian engineering skills of the period.

b) **Textile Industry:** Textile and handicrafts industry was robust, and their goods were worth of being exported to foreign markets. Cotton industry flourished in Benaras, Vatsa and Madurai, whereas Bengal was known for muslin clothes.

c) **Wood Industry:** Goods carved of wood, like furniture, ships, doors and boats, were also prominent sources of livelihood in the ancient days.

3. Question

Why are pillars the excellent examples of Indian architecture? Explain.

Answer

pillars are an excellent example of Indian architecture because:

a) *These pillars are very beautiful and extremely well-crafted.* For example, around thirty pillars were erected across India by Emperor Ashoka. These resembled the trunk of an elephant and were 40 to 50 feet tall. Their smoothness, polish and glitter has withstood the test of time.

b) *The pillars are indicative of advances in scientific knowledge.* For example, the iron pillar of Delhi and the stone pillar of Belur, Karnataka. The Iron Pillar is corrosion resistant and the stone pillar has stood without support on solid ground, even without digging.

4. Question

Describe the achievements of India in the field of astronomy and astrology.

Answer

The ancient India was known for scholarly work in mathematics, astronomy and astrology.

- a) Aryabhatta was a famous astronomer. He postulated several ideas, including the fact that earth revolved around the sun.
- b) He is also credited with explaining the reasons behind solar and lunar eclipse, discovery of planets, moon month of 30 days and twelve month year.
- c) He also explained the concept of simple and leap year, by adding the Purshottam month at the end of every third year.
- d) Other famous astrologers and astronomers were Varamihira, Nagarjuna and Vagbhatta.

5. Question

Which books were written in Sanskrit literature in ancient India?

Answer

The following books were written in Sanskrit in Ancient India:

S.No.	Name of the Book	Author	Subject
1.	Arthashastra	Kautilya	War and Politics
2.	Vakyadeep, Shinghar Shatak, Niti Shatak	Bhartari	Language (Vakyadeep), Politics
3	Kumara Sambhavam and Raghuvansham	Kalidasa	Religion and society
4	Tales of Panchtantra	Several tales authored by generations	Morality and family values

6. Question

Which were the centres of Indian civilization and culture in Greater India? Write their names.

Answer

The following were prominent centres of civilization and culture in Greater India:

- a) Luvpuri (Laos)
- b) Shrivijay (Sumatra)
- c) Kalshpur, Katta, Pahang (Malaysia)
- d) Angkor Vat (Kamboj)

e) Khotan, Kucha, Karashahar (Middle Asia)

7. Question

In which languages were Buddhist and Jain literature composed?

Answer

a) **Buddhist Literature**, which included books like Vinay Pitaka, Sutta Pitaka, Shatta Pitaka, etc. were composed in Sanskrit-the language of the priests and Pali- the language of the masses.

b) **Jaina Literature**, which was written across a number of years and throughout the sub-continent, is composed mainly in Prakrit, but is also found in Sanskrit, Apbrhansha and southern languages like Kannada, Tamil and Telugu.

Essay Type

1. Question

What is Greater India? Explain.

Answer

Greater India was the idea of India in the ancient times. *The close knit political, cultural and administrative ties with south and south-east Asia meant that India's geographical limits were poorly defined and the coalition of Indian cultures beyond the Indus were together called GREATER India.* There were several reasons for the spread and propagation of Greater India- geographical, political, economic and religious.

a) **GEOGRAPHICAL**: India's own geographical boundaries extended from Afghanistan in the north-west to Myanmar in the east. In addition to that, small island nations of Sri Lanka, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Bali, Indo-China, Champa etc. were all part of India.

b) **RELIGIOUS**: These areas were ruled by Hindu rulers, and the people were pre-dominantly Hindu, Buddhists or Jains. This was a consequence of the spread of religions- carried out by the Chola rulers, the traders, Buddhist missionaries and messengers and Indian artists- and marked an important phase in India history- from the days of Harshvardhan Verma of Chola dynasty to 10th Century A.D.

c) **ECONOMIC**: Fine quality goods were manufactured in India and exported to the Eastern nations. These included pearls, spices, tobacco, sandalwood etc. the economic ties and trade relations were exceptionally strong during the Chola years.

d) **POLITICAL**: South India rulers had huge navies, which helped Indian rulers to travel across waters and establish kingdoms and colonies across the island nations.

2. Question

Explain the nature of Greater India.

Answer

The Greater India was not a geographical entity, but a cultural and religious phenomenon, established through Hindu rulers and Buddhist messengers. It was exceptionally dominant in the island nations of south-east Asia and present-day nations of Indian sub-continent. For example,

a) SRI-LANKA: While the earliest mention of Sri-Lanka is made in Valmiki's Ramayana, it is well known that Emperor Ashoka sent his daughter, Sanghamitra and son Mahendra, to the Lanka kingdom for the spread of Buddhism. Consequently, Buddhism became a protected religion in the small island. There was also the spread of Pali language and Brahmi script. *This is an example of integration by spread of Buddhism.*

b) CAMBODIA (KAMBOJ): In 1st Century AD, an Indian named Kaudinya founded his kingdom in Kamboj. He helped to bring civilisation and culture to the people. Later, Chola rulers helped to spread Sanskrit, philosophy, literature and astronomy to the area. Mainly, Angkor Vat and Angkor Thom were built by descendants of Jai Verma. One can find idols of Shiva, Lakshmi, Ganesh and several Hindu Gods in Cambodia. *This is an example of integration by spread of Hinduism.*

c) BALI: Hindu kingdoms established here during the early centuries. Shiva and Vishnu were worshipped and both Hinduism and Buddhism were dominant.

d) INDONESIA: Earlier known as Sumatra, Vijay dynasty ruled here from 4th to 7th century AD. This was a Hindu dynasty, which had close links with Rajendra Chola I of South India. Shrivijaya, a city in Indonesia, remains a major centre of Indian culture and civilisation

e) THAILAND: During the ancient times, Thailand was known as Syam. Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism were widely prevalent in the area. Buddhist temples and viharas were built, Pali language was taught and the architecture and sculpture of region had an Indian taste.

3. Question

Describe the art of ancient India.

Answer

The skill of Indian artists is visible in the sculpture, pillars, stupas and temples of ancient India.

a) PILLARS: the thirty pillars built by emperor Ashoka are a good example of Indian architecture. These pillars were over 50 feet long, with shapes resembling the trunk of an elephant. They had been designed in a manner that they have retained their shine, polish and smoothness despite the years.

- b) **BUILDINGS:** Hemispherical monuments called Stupas were built in large numbers, for example the Sanchi Stupa in Bhopal. They were extraordinary monuments, and fairly advanced as per the knowledge of the time.
- c) **CAVE TEMPLES:** Cave temples provided a place for worship and residence. They were used as assembly halls and were made by cutting hard mountain rocks.
- d) **SCULPTURE:** Indian sculpture had a distinct spiritualism and beauty. Major sculptures include the birth of Krishna (Pathari), statue of Visnu on snake (Deogarh), stone statues of Buddha (Sarnath), four lions statue on Ashoka pillar etc.
- e) **PAINTINGS:** the cave paintings of Ajanta, Gwalior and Bangh are uniquely India. They are known for their wide-ranging subjects, which capture all forms of life and emotions. They depict everything from palaces and trees to the lives of the common people.
- f) **SEAL ART:** The seals used to stamp the export goods had a distinct beauty and nationalistic symbolism. They were made of gold or silver and differed across the kingdoms.

4. Question

What is the contribution of India in the field of Mathematics? Mention it.

Answer

Ancient India was bestowed with several bright minds. Hence, India made several pertinent contributions to the field of mathematics.

- a) The Indian mathematician, Aryabhatta discovered the use of zero in 5th century AD. Consequently, he developed the decimal system of numbers, which was later popularised by Arabic translation of his books.
- b) By 6th century, Aryabhatta had also discovered the formulae for perimeter of triangle, circumference of circle, surface area of bodies, and lengths of mutually crossing diagonals.
- c) He had also discovered the methods of calculating square roots and cube roots of numbers.
- d) Aryabhatta also had the knowledge of the value of 'pie', accurate to upto 4 places of decimal.
- e) Bhaskaracharya disclosed that if a negative number were divided by zero, the result was infinity. He also wrote amazing books, 'Lilavati' and 'Sidhanta Shiromani'
- f) Bodhayan stated an early version of Pythagoras theorem, and registered it as 'Chitti Pamay'.

5. Question

Explain the achievements of India in the field of science and medication?

Answer

Ancient India was bestowed with several bright minds. Hence, India made several pertinent contributions to the field of science and medication.

- a) Advancement in mechanics and higher level ideas of gravitation were applied to the building of pillars. Most notably, the stone pillar in Belur, Karnataka, is known for being exceptionally heavy but still does not yield under its weight. It stands erect on plane surface without any support or digging.
- b) Metallurgical advancements are noticeable in the corrosion resistant design of the Iron Pillar in Mehrauli, Delhi.
- c) The greatness of Indian medical science is evidenced by advances in Ayurveda. Dhanvantari is regarded as the father of Ayurveda.
- d) We were also the first to evolve a chemical system of medication, which involved use of refined metals, which were converted to cinders and used in medicine. Nagarjuna pioneered this field.
- e) Shushruta is credited with being the first surgeon. He could perform caesarean, cataract, stone removal etc. on his patients. He is also known for discovering the medication for unconsciousness.

6. Question

Describe the trade and commerce in Greater India.

Answer

FOREIGN TRADE

- a) STATUS: In ancient days, India was a developed country, whose traders would cross shores and kingdoms to sell the fine Indian goods in foreign markets. Indian villages were self-sufficient, and the country prided in being called the GOLDEN BIRD.
- b) TRADE ROUTES: India traded through land and sea. China, Tibet, Arabia and Persia were prominent markets where goods travelled through land. Sri Lanka, Java and Sumatra were connected through the sea ports of Southern and Eastern India.
- c) IMPORTS: Foreign traders also came to India with a variety of goods. This included gold, silver, ruby and diamond ornaments. Notably, we imported wine from western countries, silk from China, and wool from Nepal
- d) EXPORTS: These goods were exchanged for Indian cotton, tobacco and spices. We sent clove and incense good to Sri Lanka, and exported pearls to the larger market.

e) ADMINISTRATION: Trade relations were well-developed and overlooked by SARTHAWAH.

INTERNAL TRADE

Internal trade was carried out through both land and waterways. Major rivers, such as Ganga, Brahmaputra, Krishna and Kaveri, were used to transfer goods laden on huge wooden boats.

COMMERCIAL SYSTEM

- a) In the earlier days, barter system was prevalent.
- b) However, soon coins came in to existence. Gold coins (Nishk), silver coins (Dharan) and copper coins (Mashak, Kakni) were used for business transactions. This was regulated by the ruling kingdom.
- c) Trade unions called Shrenis were established, who also performed the role of modern banks.

7. Question

Describe the spread of Indian culture in Cambodia (Kamboj).

Answer

Ancient India had great religious and cultural ties with Cambodia.

- a) In 1st century AD, an Indian named Kaudinya established a kingdom in Kamboj. He married a girl from a local tribe of Nagi. He taught the residents of Kamboj about clothes, and brought civilisation to the people.
- b) In the 9th century, successors of Jai Verma helped the spread of Indian languages, customs, astronomy and sciences in Cambodia. Surya Verma II built a Vishnu temple, called Angkor Vat here. Jai Verma II built another Vishnu temple called Angkor Thom.
- c) Through the inscriptions, we know that the cities of Kamboj had distinctively Indian names, for example, Tamrapur, Adhyapur and Vikrampur.
- d) There were deep cultural ties with India in the region. Yagnas were practiced and education was provided in Ashramas according to the rules of the Shastras.
- e) Idol worship of shiva, Vishnu, Lakshmi, Ganga, Chandi was practiced, and Indian literature- Ved Puranas, Mahabharata and Ramayana were also spread.