

IAS Prelims Exam: Ancient History

NCERT Questions: THINKERS, BELIEFS AND BUILDINGS

Questions asked from Ancient Indian History section in IAS Prelims Exam are quite easy but the aspirants need to memorise well before appearing in the exam. The IAS Exam aspirants should have balanced preparation of overall three sections of the History and its chronology is one of the most important parts of the subject history which enable candidates to memorise well every important aspects of history.

Following Multiple Choice Questions of Ancient Indian History would help students in understanding the nature of questions asked in IAS Prelims Exam.

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the ancient site of the Great Stupa at Sanchi:

- I. The rulers of Bhopal, Shahjehan Begum and her successor Sultan Jehan Begum, provided money for the preservation of the ancient site of Sanchi.
- II. Shahjehan Begum funded the museum that was built there as well as the guesthouse where John Marshall lived and wrote the volumes on Sanchi.
- III. One of the most important Buddhist centres, the discovery of Sanchi has vastly transformed our understanding of early Buddhism.

Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct?

- A. Only I
- B. I and II
- C. I and III
- D. All of the above

Answer: D

Explanation: The rulers of Bhopal, Shahjehan Begum and her successor Sultan Jehan Begum, provided money for the preservation of the ancient site. No wonder then that John Marshall dedicated his important volumes on Sanchi to Sultan Jehan. She funded the museum that was built there as well as the guesthouse where he lived and wrote the volumes. She also funded the publication of the volumes. So if the stupa complex has survived, it is in no small measure due to wise decisions, and to good luck in escaping the eyes of railway contractors, builders, and those

looking for finds to carry away to the museums of Europe. One of the most important Buddhist centres, the discovery of Sanchi has vastly transformed our understanding of early Buddhism. Today it stands testimony to the successful restoration and preservation of a key archaeological site by the Archaeological Survey of India.

Q2. Consider the following statements regarding the turning point in world history during mid-first century BCE:

I.It saw the emergence of thinkers such as Zarathustra in Iran, Kong Zi in China, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle in Greece, and Mahavira and Gautama Buddha, among many others, in India.

II.This was also the time when new kingdoms and cities were developing and social and economic life was changing in a variety of ways in the Ganga valley.

III.The thinkers tried to understand the mysteries of existence and the relationship between human beings and the cosmic order.

Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct?

A.Only I

B.I and II

C.I and III

D.All of the above

Answer: D

Explanation: The mid-first millennium BCE is often regarded as a turning point in world history: it saw the emergence of thinkers such as Zarathustra in Iran, Kong Zi in China, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle in Greece, and Mahavira and Gautama Buddha, among many others, in India. They tried to understand the mysteries of existence and the relationship between human beings and the cosmic order. This was also the time when new kingdoms and cities were developing and social and economic life was changing in a variety of ways in the Ganga valley (Chapters 2 and 3). These thinkers attempted to understand these developments as well.

Q3. Consider the following statements regarding the vedic tradition:

I.The early Vedic tradition, compiled between c.1500 and 1000 BCE.

II.The Rigveda consists of hymns in praise of a variety of deities, especially Agni, Indra and Soma.

III.Many of the hymns were chanted when sacrifices were performed, where people prayed for cattle, sons, good health, long life, etc.

Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct?

- A. Only I
- B. I and II
- C. I and III
- D. All of the above

Answer: D

Explanation: There were several pre-existing traditions of thought, religious belief and practice, including the early Vedic tradition, known from the Rigveda, compiled between c.1500 and 1000 BCE. The Rigveda consists of hymns in praise of a variety of deities, especially Agni, Indra and Soma. Many of these hymns were chanted when sacrifices were performed, where people prayed for cattle, sons, good health, long life, etc.

Q4. During the birth period of Gautam Buddha, which of the following was growing most powerful?

- A. Kushana dynasty
- B. Mahajanapadas
- C. Mauryan Empire
- D. Gupta Empire

Answer. B

Explanation: About 2500 years ago, this was the time of rapid change in the lives of the people and during the same period Buddha was born too. Some kings of Mahajanapadas were engaged to become a most powerful and it was the period in which the Mahajanapadas were most powerful.

Q5. Consider the following sentences regarding the lively discussions and debates which is mentioned in the Buddhist text:

I. Rulers travelled from place to place, trying to convince one another as well as laypersons, about the validity of their philosophy or the way they understood the world.

II. Debates took place in the kutagarashala – literally, a hut with a pointed roof – or in groves where travelling mendicants halted.

III. If a philosopher succeeded in convincing one of his rivals, the followers of the latter also became his disciples. So support for any particular sect could grow and shrink over time.

Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct?

- A. Only I
- B. I and II

- C.II and III
- D.All of the above

Answer: C

Explanation: We get a glimpse of lively discussions and debates from Buddhist texts, which mention as many as 64 sects or schools of thought. Teachers travelled from place to place, trying to convince one another as well as laypersons, about the validity of their philosophy or the way they understood the world. Debates took place in the kutagarashala – literally, a hut with a pointed roof – or in groves where travelling mendicants halted. If a philosopher succeeded in convincing one of his rivals, the followers of the latter also became his disciples. So support for any particular sect could grow and shrink over time.

Q6. What was the name of gana to which Buddha belongs to?

- A. Sakya gana
- B. Koliya gana
- C. Malla gana
- D. Nirbhaya gana

Answer. A

Explanation: Gana was a group of people where each individual were treated equally at least among the ruling class. Sakya gana was a small group of people to which Gautam Buddha belongs to.

Q7. Why the ganas or sanghas rejected the vedic philosophy?

- A. it gives complex ideas
- B. it gives ideas only for ruling class
- C. It divides the society into four distinct classes
- D. it unites the society

Answer. C

Explanation: According to the vedic philosophy, the whole society was divided into four distinct class such as Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra.

Q8. In which language Gautam Buddha taught his teachings?

- A. Sanskrit
- B. Pali
- C. Hindi
- D. Prakrit

Answer. D

Explanation: Prakrit was the language of ordinary people. Buddha delivered his teachings in Prakrit language so that the ordinary people could understand his teachings easily.

Q9. Who among the following called Gautam Buddha as an outcast?

- A. Aggika of Kasi
- B. Vijayan
- C. Sondanda
- D. Devendra

Answer. A

Explanation: According to the various scholars at the time of Buddha there were different views regarding the cast of Buddha. Even some rulers treated Buddha as an outcast and it is also true that Buddha never get a grain of food in the village of Brahmanas.

Q10. Where the last or the sixth Buddhist Council was held?

- A. India
- B. Nepa
- C. Tibbet
- D. Burma

Answer. D

Explanation: In 1954, in Kaba Aye in Yangoon, Burma, the sixth Buddhist Council was held under the patronage of the government of Burma.