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ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL INDIA

For UPSC Civil Services Prelims Exam 2025

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CONTENTS

ANCIENT INDIA

1. PRE-HISTORY	3
2. INDUS VALLEY CIVILISATION	9
3. VEDIC PERIOD	16
4. BUDDHISM AND JAINISM	23
5. AGE OF MAHAJANPADAS	37
6. MAURYAN AND POST-MAURYAN PERIOD	40
7. GUPTA AND POST-GUPTA PERIOD	59
8. HARSHVARDHAN PERIOD	69
9. SOUTHERN DYNASTIES	73
10. SANGAM PERIOD	78

MEDIEVAL INDIA

1. EARLY MEDIEVAL DYNASTIES	91
2. DELHI SULTANATE.....	109
3. MUGHAL EMPIRE	124
4. VIJAYNAGAR EMPIRE AND BAHMANI KINGDOM.....	137
5. MARATHAS	149
6. BHAKTI AND SUFI MOVEMENT	154

OBJECTIVE QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

1. Consider the following pairs:

Stone Age Phases	Tools
1. Lower palaeolithic age	Bone tools like needles
2. Neolithic age	Sharper and polished tools
3. Mesolithic age	Microlith tools

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

- (a) Only one (b) Only two
(c) All three (d) None

Ans: (b)

The pre-historic period is human history between 200000 BC and 3500-2500 BC when the first civilizations appeared. It consists of 5 phases: Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic, Chalcolithic and Iron Age.

- ❑ **Lower Palaeolithic Age [2.5 million years BC–100,000 BC]:** The tools used during this period were for simple –chopping i.e., crude and rough tools prepared out of pebbles. Examples include Hand Axes and Cleavers. Bone tools like needles were mainly found in the upper Paleolithic period. **Hence, pair 1 is incorrectly matched.**
- ❑ **Mesolithic Age [10,000 BC–8000 BC]:** Microlith tools, tools made of micro-sized stones and were very refined (Transitional Period between Palaeolithic and Neolithic age)
 - eg. Bow and arrow and other microliths in various shapes like moon, triangular, square, rectangle, crescents and arrow-head. **Hence, pair 3 is correctly matched.**
- ❑ **Neolithic Age [8000 BC–4000 BC]:** Sharper, symmetrical and polished stone tools for not only hunting but agriculture.
 - Examples include, digging sticks, celts, grinding stones, sickle, saw, sling-stones etc. (continuous rubbing to smoothen). **Hence, pair 2 is correctly matched.**

2. In the context of stone age in India, consider the following statements:

1. The late stone age sites are found in Chotanagpur and central parts of India.

2. The people of the new stone age used polished stones.
3. The coarse gray pottery was known to the people in the stone age.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one (b) Only two
(c) All three (d) None

Ans: (c)

Point 1 is correct: Late Stone Age in India started about 8000 BC, and continued up to about 4000 BC. The Late Stone Age sites are found in good numbers in Chotanagpur, central India, and also south of the river Krishna.

Point 2 is correct: The new stone age began much earlier, in 7000 B.C., neolithic settlements in the Indian sub-continent are not older than 6000 B.C. Some settlements found in south India and eastern India are as late as 1000 B.C. The people of this age used tools and implements of polished stone.

Point 3 is correct: One area is to be found in the north in the valley of Kashmir at a place called Burzahom at a distance of about 20 km from Srinagar. The neolithic people lived there on a plateau in pits, and probably had a 'hunting and fishing economy. The people of Burzahom used coarse gray pottery.

3. Consider the following pairs :

Paleolithic Sites	Location in the State of
1. Bhimbetka	Uttar Pradesh
2. Hunsgi	Tamil Nadu
3. Kurnool	Andhra Pradesh

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

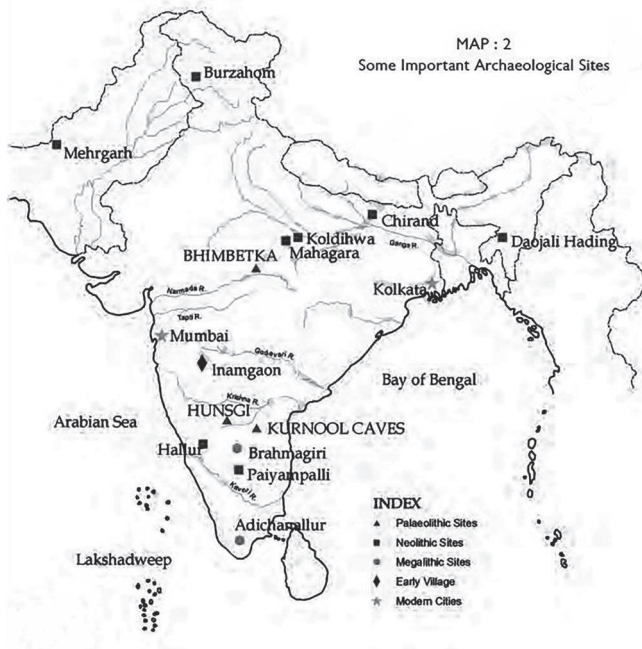
- (a) Only one (b) Only two
(c) All three (d) None

Ans: (a)

Pair 1 is incorrect: Bhimbetka is located in Madhya Pradesh. This is an old site with caves and rock shelters. People chose these natural caves because they provided shelter from the rain, heat and wind. These rock shelters are close to the Narmada valley.

Pair 2 is incorrect: Hunsgi is a significant Paleolithic archaeological site located in the state of Karnataka, India. This site has yielded valuable archaeological evidence, including stone tools and fossils, which have provided insights into early human history in the region.

Pair 3 is correct: Kurnool located in Andhra Pradesh. Traces of ash have been found here. This suggests that people were familiar with the use of fire. Fire could have been used for many things: as a source of light, to roast meat, and to scare away animals.



4. Consider the following statements:

Statement-I: The people in the Paleolithic age were predominantly hunters and food gatherers.

Statement-II: During the Paleolithic age, man had no knowledge of cultivation.

Which one of the following is correct with respect to the above statements?

- Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct, and Statement-II is the correct explanation for Statement-I.
- Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct, and Statement-II is not the correct explanation for Statement-I.
- Statement-I is correct, but Statement-II is incorrect.
- Statement-I is incorrect, but Statement-II is correct.

Ans: (a)

Statement-I is correct: The people of the Paleolithic age were primarily hunters and food gatherers. The people of Paleolithic culture hunted animals and gathered roots, nuts and fruits. They fed on the flesh and bones of animals killed by predators. They lived in open air, river valleys, caves and rock shelters, as seen from evidence in Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh and Gudiya near Chennai.

Statement-II is correct: During the Paleolithic age, man had no knowledge of cultivation. The Neolithic period marked the beginning of agriculture and animal

domestication. This shift from a nomadic, hunter-gatherer lifestyle to settled farming communities had profound implications for human society.

5. Consider the following sites:

- Lakhudiyar
- Bhimbetka
- Attirampakkam

How many of the above places belong to the Paleolithic period?

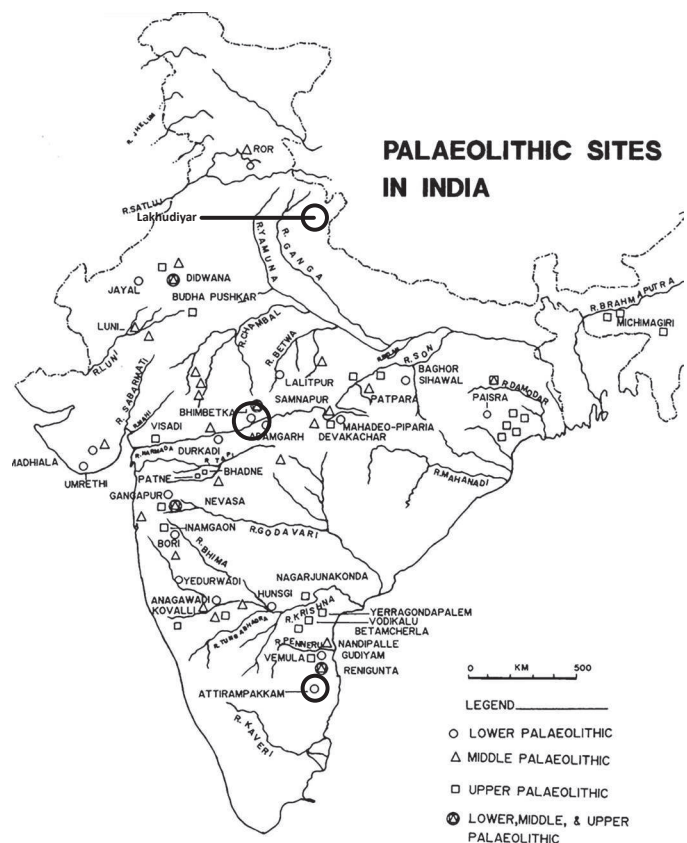
- Only one
- Only two
- All three
- None

Ans: (c)

Point 1 is correct: The rock shelters on the banks of the River Suyal at Lakhudiyar, about twenty kilometres on the Almora– Bareilly road, bear these prehistoric paintings. Lakhudiyar literally means one lakh caves. The paintings here can be divided into three categories: man, animal and geometric patterns in white, black and red ochre.

Point 2 is correct: The largest and most spectacular rock-shelter is in the Vindhya hills at Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh. Bhimbetka is located forty-five kilometres south of Bhopal, in an area of ten square kilometres, having about eight hundred rock shelters, five hundred of which bear paintings. Bhimbetka is located forty-five kilometres south of Bhopal, in an area of ten square kilometres, having about eight hundred rock shelters, five hundred of which bear painting.

Point 3 is correct: Attirampakkam is a small village lying about 60 km from the city of Chennai, which is believed to have preserved the remnants of the Middle Palaeolithic culture.



6. The Mesolithic period was followed by the Neolithic period. Which of the following are the chief characteristics of the Neolithic age of ancient history?

1. Initiation of the environment changes.
2. Domestication of animals.
3. Utilisation of iron tools specifically in agricultural practices.
4. Use of polished pottery and tools.

Select the correct answer from the code given below:

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

Ans: (a)

The Neolithic Age in India was around 7,000 B.C. to 1,000 B.C. It was the third and last part of the Stone Age.

Main features:

- The Neolithic Age is mainly characterised by the development of settled agriculture and the domestication of animals. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- They use tools and weapons made of polished stones, a major character of this age. **Hence, statement 4 is correct.**
- **Major Crops:** Ragi, horse gram, cotton, rice, wheat, and barley.
- **Tools Used:** The people used microlithic blades and tools made of polished stones and bones. They used axes, adzes, chisels, and celts.
- Pottery first appeared in this age and included grey ware, black burnished ware, and mat-impressed ware.
- The Neolithic Age is significant for its Megalithic architecture.
- **Significant Neolithic Settlements:** Mehrgarh (located in Balochistan, Pakistan), Burzahom (Kashmir), Gufkral (Kashmir), Chirand (Bihar), and Utnur (Andhra Pradesh).
- The oldest Neolithic settlement in the Indian Subcontinent was Mehrgarh which is located in Balochistan, a province of Pakistan.

Environmental changes initiated in the Mesolithic age and Iron tools in agriculture started in the later Vedic period.

7. Consider the following statements with reference to the Neolithic age:

1. The people of this age generally used tools made of polished stones and bones.
2. This age is notable for being the era of the earliest known farming communities.
3. They domesticated cattle, sheep and goats.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one (b) Only two
(c) All three (d) None

Ans: (c)

Statement 1 is correct: The people of the Neolithic age used tools and implements made of polished stone,

particularly stone axes. Along with this, the use of bone tools was a notable feature of the Neolithic people in Kashmir. The only other place that has yielded considerable bone implements in India is Chirand, located in Bihar.

Statement 2 is correct: The Neolithic settlers were the earliest farming communities. These Neolithic people led a settled life and produced ragi, horse gram (kulathi), and even rice. The Neolithic people of Mehrgarh were more advanced. They produced wheat and barley, too.

Statement 3 is correct: They domesticated cattle, sheep, and goats. For example, the Neolithic settlers in Piklihal were cattle herders. They set up seasonal camps surrounded by cowpens made with posts and stakes. In these enclosures, they accumulated dung. Then the entire camping ground was put on fire and cleared for camping the next session. But it is interesting that in Burzahom, domestic dogs were buried with their masters in their graves.

8. Which of the following statements with regard to the Neolithic culture found in Kashmir is correct?

1. It is known for pit dwellings.
2. People used tools made of bones.
3. This culture appears to have migrated from outside.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Ans: (d)

Statement 1 is correct: The pit dwelling is a unique feature of the Early Neolithic of Kashmir Valley. The domestic dogs were buried along with their masters in their graves. At Burzahom, two types have been recognised. One was of circular and oval shapes and the other of rectangular shapes. These pits were dug by the use of picks. Side walls were many times plastered by mud. For entering into the pit-huts, steps used to be dug at one corner of the hut, or wooden stairs were also used. On the living floors were found traces of small and large pits, which were the storage of edible items, like grain or also meat, roots etc.

Statement 2 is correct: People used tools made of polished stones as well as bones. It was characterized by the absence of microliths.

Statement 3 is correct: Neolithic in Kashmir Valley appears to be migration from outside. The presence of the Mesolithic stage was not established here. Perhaps one of the groups from West Asia had reached this Valley. The physical features of the skeletons from Burzahom bear similarities with the West Asian population.

9. Consider the following statements regarding Neolithic Culture:

1. This period saw the beginning of practice of agriculture and domestication of animals.
2. Evidence of early dentistry can be found in the Neolithic Mehrgarh.

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: (c)

Statement 1 is correct: A remarkable progress is noticed in human civilization in the Neolithic Age. Neolithic remains are found in various parts of India. These include the Kashmir valley, Chirand in Bihar, Belan valley in Uttar Pradesh. The chief characteristic features of the Neolithic culture are the practice of agriculture, domestication of animals, polishing of stone tools and the manufacture of pottery. In fact, the cultivation of plants and domestication of animals led to the emergence of village communities based on sedentary life.

Statement 2 is correct: The human ancestors had knowledge of medicinal herbs and were capable of taking care of health for survival from the pre-historic times. As their ways of life changed, new diseases appeared and they had to find remedies. From the Neolithic period, people began to eat ground grain and cooked food, which caused dental and other health problems. The earliest evidence for drilling human tooth (of a living person) has been found at Mehrgarh. It is seen as a prelude to dentistry.

10. Consider the following sites:

1. Hallur
2. Maski
3. Piklihal
4. Daimabad

How many of the above mentioned are neolithic sites?

- (a) Only one (b) Only two
(c) Only three (d) All four

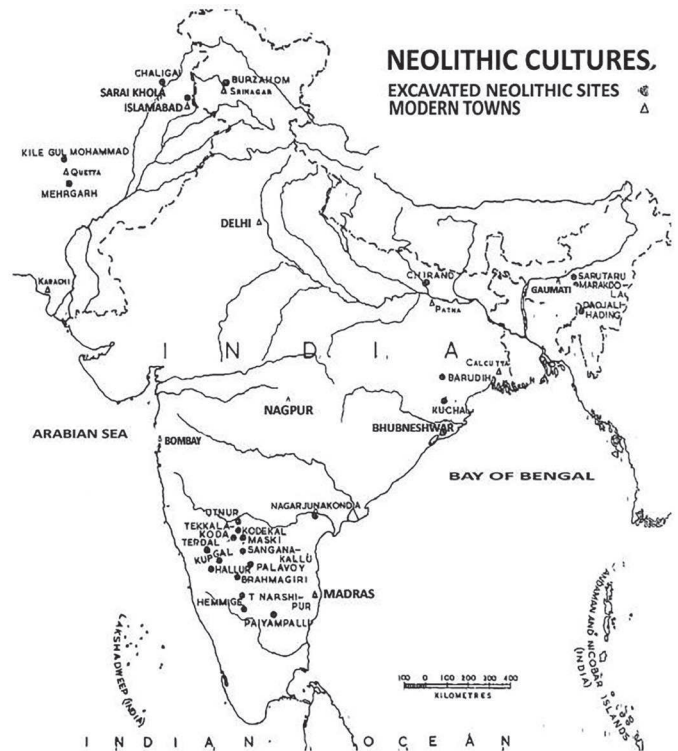
Ans: (c)

Point 1 is correct: Hallur, located on the banks of the Tungabhadra River in the Haveri district, is famous for its prehistoric ash-mound. Nagaraja Rao discovered Hallur's ash mound in 1962 and excavated it in 1965. The excavations showed two periods of human occupation: Neolithic-Chalcolithic and a Neolithic-Chalcolithic-early Iron Age overlapping phase. Several artefacts were discovered during the excavations, including iron arrowheads, daggers and knives, and ceramics. Black-and-red pottery with lines and patterns was discovered.

Point 2 is correct: Maski Takkalakota is a well-known Neolithic site in India, located south of the Godavari River on the crest of granite hills. Sheep, goats, and cattle were all domesticated. Archaeologists have discovered ash mounds.

Point 3 is correct: Humans lived in the Piklihal settlement from the stone age to the early medieval period. Pieces of handcrafted containers, clay dolls, broken terracotta bangles, and stone grinding machinery can all be discovered in Piklihal village. According to historians, the area, which is surrounded by nine rocky hills, was initially chosen by hunters and gatherers in 2700 BC, during the lower neolithic period. In the Lingasugur taluk, the village is 5 kilometers from Mudgal.

Point 4 is incorrect: The excavated site of the Daimabad is located in the state of Maharashtra in the Ahmednagar district. This site was found as a result of three excavations which was carried out by the Archaeological Survey of India. It is the largest Chalcolithic site which was found in the state of Maharashtra.



11. Consider the following statements with reference to Chalcolithic culture in India:

1. The Malwa culture is the most predominant chalcolithic culture in central India.
2. The Jorwe culture is the most important and characteristic chalcolithic culture of Maharashtra.
3. The Ahar culture is among the earliest Chalcolithic cultures of India.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one (b) Only two
(c) All three (d) None

Ans: (c)

Statement 1 is correct: The Malwa culture is the most predominant chalcolithic culture of central India, with a wide distribution of sites almost all over the Malwa region. It was first identified in the excavations at Maheshwar, on river Narmada. Maheshwar was identified with the ancient Mahishmati of the Puranas. Navdatoli on the opposite bank also revealed great potential and was subsequently excavated. Other excavated sites of this culture are Nagda, Kayatha, Eran etc. On the basis of calibrated dates, the Malwa culture is placed in the bracket of 1900-1400 BC.

Statement 2 is correct: The Jorwe culture is the most important and characteristic chalcolithic culture of Maharashtra, extending almost all over the present state, except the coastal strip on the west and Vidarbha in the northeast. The culture is named after the type site of Jorwe in Ahmednagar district, Gujrat. The culture was discovered in 1950.

Statement 3 is correct: The Ahar culture –also known as the Banas culture, the latter term derived from the name of the valley in which most of the sites of this culture are located— is among the earliest Chalcolithic cultures of India.



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CONTENTS

1. ADVENT OF THE EUROPEANS IN INDIA.....	1
2. INDIA ON THE EVE OF BRITISH CONQUEST	8
3. EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION OF BRITISH POWER IN INDIA.....	11
4. REVOLT OF 1857	26
5. SOCIO-RELIGIOUS REFORM MOVEMENTS.....	32
6. RISE OF INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.....	41
7. RISE OF MILITANT NATIONALISM (1905–1909).....	48
8. NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS AND WORLD WAR - I	53
9. EMERGENCE OF GANDHI AND NON COOPERATION.....	59
10. SWARAJISTS, SOCIALIST IDEAS AND REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES	67
11. SIMON COMISSION, CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT AND RTCs	72
12. QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT, AND POST WORLD WAR II SCENARIO	83
13. INDEPENDENCE AND PARTITION	97
14. PEOPLE’S RESISTANCE TOWARDS BRITISH.....	102
15. WORKING-CLASS AND PEASANT MOVEMENTS.....	112

16. BRITISH POLICIES AND ACTS	123
17. DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION AND PRESS	159
18. BRITISH GOVERNOR GENERALS	169
19. INC SESSIONS.....	174
20. FAMOUS PERSONALITIES OF INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT	177



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CONTENTS

1. INDIAN ARCHITECTURE	1
2. TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE	8
3. SCULPTURE	15
4. PAINTINGS	24
5. DANCES IN INDIA	36
6. MUSIC IN INDIA.....	43
7. INDIAN RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY	51
8. UNESCO'S LIST OF TANGIBLE/INTANGIBLE HERITAGE SITES IN INDIA.....	66
9. MISCELLANEOUS	70



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CONTENTS

1. ECOLOGY AND ECOLOGICAL CONCEPTS	1
2. TYPES OF ECOSYSTEM	15
3. BIODIVERSITY	30
4. POLLUTION	69
5. CLIMATE CHANGE	98
6. ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATIONS/ACTS AND POLICIES.....	119
7. PROTECTED AREA NETWORK OF INDIA.....	137
8. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	150



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CONTENTS

1. BASIC CONCEPTS OF ECONOMICS	1
2. NATIONAL INCOME ACCOUNTING	14
3. MONEY AND BANKING.....	28
4. INFLATION AND BUSINESS CYCLE	40
5. INDIAN BANKING SECTOR	47
6. FINANCIAL MARKETS	78
7. GOVERNMENT BUDGET, POLICY AND TAXATION	95
8. EXTERNAL SECTOR	114
9. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND AGREEMENTS.....	130
10. INDIAN ECONOMY: PLANNING AND REFORMS	141
11. UNEMPLOYMENT, POVERTY AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH	161
12. INDIAN ECONOMIC SECTORS	179
13. ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	215



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CONTENTS

1. BIOTECHNOLOGY	1
2. SPACE AND SPACE TECHNOLOGY	13
3. DEFENCE TECHNOLOGY	29
4. NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY	43
5. COMPUTERS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	55
6. ELECTRONICS AND TELECOMMUNICATION	68
7. NANO TECHNOLOGY	74
8. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND ROBOTICS.....	80
9. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS	86
10. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN INDIA	93
11. GENERAL BIOLOGY	101
12. GENERAL PHYSICS	133
13. GENERAL CHEMISTRY	153



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CONTENTS

UNIT I: PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY 1-108

1. UNIVERSE AND SOLAR SYSTEM 3
2. GEOMORPHOLOGY 9
3. CLIMATOLOGY 49
4. OCEANOGRAPHY 77
5. SOILS 94
6. NATURAL VEGETATION 100
7. WORLD MAPPING 104

UNIT II: INDIAN GEOGRAPHY 109-186

1. INDIA: LOCATION 111
2. STRUCTURE AND PHYSIOGRAPHY 125
3. INDIAN CLIMATE 155
4. NATURAL VEGETATION OF INDIA 168
5. INDIAN SOIL 176
6. NATURAL HAZARDS AND DISASTERS 183

UNIT III: HUMAN AND ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY 187-246

1. RESOURCES AND LAND USE 189
2. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND POPULATION STUDIES 205
3. SETTLEMENTS AND URBAN GEOGRAPHY 217
4. AGRICULTURE AND CROPPING SYSTEM 220
5. INDUSTRIES AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT 231
6. TRADE, TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION 239



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CONTENTS

1.	HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	1
2.	MAKING OF THE CONSTITUTION	9
3.	SALIENT FEATURES OF THE CONSTITUTION	15
4.	PREAMBLE OF THE CONSTITUTION	21
5.	UNION AND ITS TERRITORY	26
6.	CITIZENSHIP	30
7.	FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS	35
8.	DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES OF STATE POLICY	51
9.	FUNDAMENTAL DUTIES	58
10.	AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION	61
11.	BASIC STRUCTURE OF THE CONSTITUTION.....	67
12.	SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT	70
13.	CENTRE - STATE RELATIONS.....	76
14.	EMERGENCY PROVISIONS	83
15.	UNION EXECUTIVE	87
16.	STATE EXECUTIVE	95

17.	PARLIAMENT	103
18.	STATE LEGISLATURE	133
19.	JUDICIARY.....	138
20.	CONSTITUTIONAL BODIES.....	156
21.	NON - CONSTITUTIONAL BODIES	169
22.	SCHEDULED AND TRIBAL AREAS	180
23.	SPECIAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO CERTAIN CLASSES	184
24.	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	187
25.	POLITICAL THEORY	198
26.	MISCELLANEOUS	203



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CONTENTS

UNIT-I: QUANT 1 to 96

1. NUMBER SYSTEM	3
2. HCF AND LCM	13
3. ALGEBRA	16
4. AVERAGE	19
5. PERCENTAGE.....	24
6. RATIO, MIXTURE, PROPORTION AND PARTNERSHIP	29
7. PROFIT AND LOSS	35
8. SIMPLE AND COMPOUND INTEREST	39
9. SPEED, TIME AND DISTANCE.....	42
10. TIME AND WORK	48
11. PERMUTATION AND COMBINATION	54
12. PROBABILITY	61
13. SEQUENCE AND SERIES	65
14. STATISTICS	69
15. PLANE GEOMETRY	72
16. AREA AND PERIMETER	75
17. VOLUME AND SURFACE AREA	78
18. DATA INTERPRETATION	81
19. DATA SUFFICIENCY	87

UNIT-II: LOGICAL REASONING97 to 164

1. SERIES.....	99
2. CODING DECODING	103
3. CLOCK.....	107
4. CALENDAR	110
5. DISTANCE AND DIRECTION.....	113
6. SITTING ARRANGEMENT.....	117
7. BLOOD RELATION.....	120
8. AGES	125
9. RANKING	129
10. PUZZLES.....	132
11. SYLLOGISM	139
12. CUBES AND DICE	145
13. NON VERBAL AND VISUAL REASONING	148
14. VERBAL AND ANALYTICAL REASONING.....	153
15. INEQUALITIES.....	159
16. VENN DIAGRAM	161

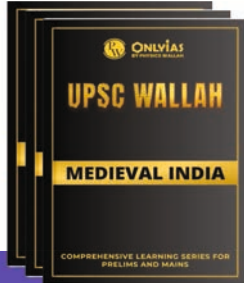
UNIT-III: READING COMPREHENSION165 to 198

1. ASSUMPTION BASED READING COMPREHENSIONS	167
2. INFERENCE BASED READING COMPREHENSIONS	173
3. MESSAGE OF THE PASSAGE BASED READING COMPREHENSIONS	179
4. CRUX OF THE PASSAGE BASED READING COMPREHENSIONS.....	183
5. IMPLICATION BASED READING COMPREHENSIONS.....	189
6. INFORMATION BASED READING COMPREHENSIONS	193



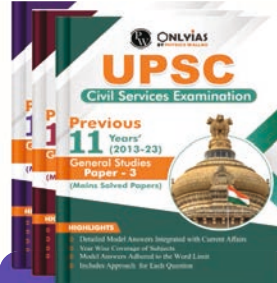
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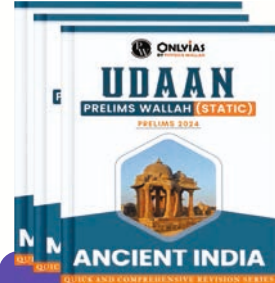
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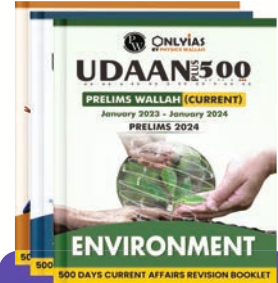
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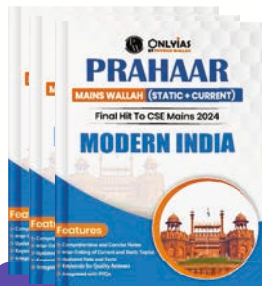
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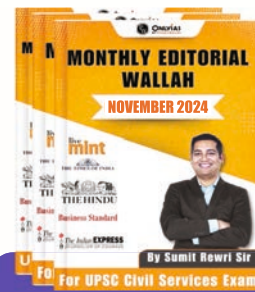
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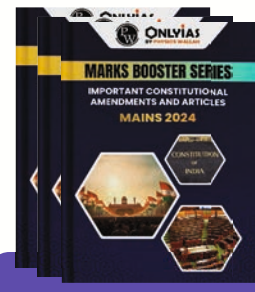
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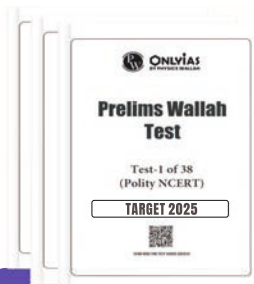
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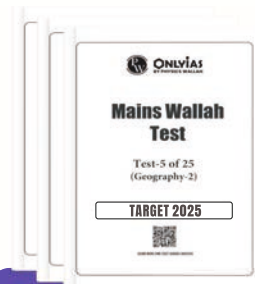
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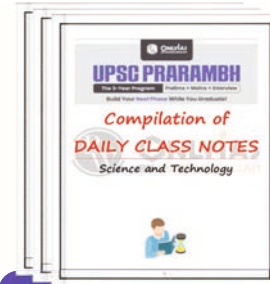
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