Important Questions for Class 12 History Chapter 1 Bricks, Beads and Bones (The Harappan Civilisation)

**Important Questions for Class 12 History Chapter 1 – 2 Marks Questions**

Question 1.
Who was John Marshall? How did he mark a change in the Indian archaeology? (Delhi 2016)
Answer:
John Marshall was the Director-General of the Archaeological Survey of India. His contribution in the Indian Archeology can be understood by the following points:

* He announced the discovery of new civilization i.e. Indus valley civilization.
* He helped in the preservation or conservation of Sanchi Stupa.

Question 2.
Who was R.E.M Wheeler? Mention any one of his contributions in the field of archaeology? (Delhi 2016)
Answer:
R.E.M Wheeler was the Director-General of tire Archaeological Survey of India.
He was the first person who recognized that it was necessary’ to follow the stratigraphy of the mound rather than dig mechanically along uniform horizontal line which rectified the previous problems faced by the archaeologists.

Question 3.
Who was Cunningham? Mention any one account used by him to locate the early settlements of Harappan’ civilisation. (Delhi 2013)
Answer:
Cunningham was the first Director
General of the Archaeological Survey of India who began archaeological excavation in the mid-nineteenth century.
Cunningham used the accounts left by Chinese Buddhist pilgrims who visited the subcontinent between the 4th and 7th century CE to locate early settlements.

Question 4.
How were Harappa seals and sealings used to facilitate long distance communication? What did the sealings convey? (HOTS; All India 2013)
Answer:
Harappa seals and sealings were used to facilitate long distance communication. The mouth of the bag of goods was tied up with rope and on the knot was affixed some wet clay on which one or more seals were pressed, leaving an impression.
This sealing conveyed that if the bag reached with its sealing intact, then it had not been tampered with and also it conveyed the true identity of the sender of the goods.

Question 5.
Mention the two sections of the Harappan settlements and give one main feature of each.
or
Give two features of the Harappan settlements? (Delhi 2011)
The Harappan settlements were divided into two sections, i.e. the Citadel and the Lower Town.
There features are:

* The Citadel was smaller but higher than the Lower Town and was walled.
* In the Lower Town, several buildings were built on platforms and all building activity within the city was restricted to a fixed area on the platforms.

Question 6.
Give any two features of Harappan writing. (Delhi 2008)
Answer:
Harappan seals usually have a line of writing, which remains undeciphered still today. Its features are:

* It is not alphabetical and has too many signs, somewhere between 375 and 400.
* The script is written from right to left.

**Important Questions for Class 12 History Chapter 1 – 4 Marks Questions**

Question 7.
Describe the distinctive features of domestic architecture of Mohenjodaro. (All India 2017)
Answer:
The most unique feature of the Harappan Civilisation was the development of urban centres. Mohenjodaro is the most well-known site of Harappan Civilisation. The settlement was divided into following sections:

Citadel It was smaller but higher. It was walled and was physically separated from the lower town. Here the buildings were constructed with mud, bricks platform. Here, we find some structures that were probably used for special public purposes.

The Lower Town The lower town was also walled. Several buildings were built on platforms, which served as foundations. All building activity within the city was restricted to a fixed area on the platforms.

Drainage System Mohenjodaro had carefully planned drainage system. The roads and the streets were laid out along an approximate ‘grid’ pattern, intersecting at right angles. It seems that streets with drains were laid out first and then houses built along them. Every house had its own bathroom paved with bricks, with drains connected through the walls, to the street drains.

Question 8.
Mention any two changes that were observed after 1900 BCE in Harappan Civilisation. What could have brought these changes? Explain. (Delhi 2016)
Answer:
After 1900 BCE, very’ few Harappan sites were continued and significant changes appeared in the civilisation. These were:

* In this period, distinctive artefacts like weights, seals, special beads, writing, long-distance trade and craft specialisation disappeared.
* (House construction technique deteriorated and large public structures were no longer produced. Late Harappan Civilisation indicates a rural way of life. Long distance trade also disappeared.
* The reasons for these changes were:
	+ These changes were probably the result of climate change, deforestation and excessive flood.
	+ The shifting or drying up of rivers and overuse of the landscape might be the cause. There was also decline and abandonment of cities due to these reasons.

Question 9.
Why do archaeologists and historians find Harappan script enigmatic? Explain reasons. (HOTS; Delhi 2016)
Answer:
Archaeologists and historians found Harappan script enigmatic. The reasons behind it were:

* Harappan seals usually had a line of writing, containing the name and title of the owner, sometimes the motif conveyed a meaning to those who could not read.
* The script was non-alphabetical, it had many signs, somewhere between 375 and 400. It was written from right to left.
* Most inscriptions were short, the longest contained about 26 signs, each sign stood for a vowel or consonant. Sometimes it contained wider space, sometimes shorter, had no consistency. Till today, the script remains undeciphered.

Question 10.
‘Early Harappan archaeologists thought that certain objects which seem unusual and unfamiliar may have had a religious significance’. Substantiate. (All India 2016)
or
Describe briefly how seals of Harappan period help in reconstructing their religious beliefs. (Delhi 2010)
Answer:
Giving archaeologic interpretation to reconstruct religious practices of Harappan civilisation was not easy.
The important facts to reconstruct the religious belief of the Harappan period are as follows:

1. Archaeologists thought that certain objects which seemed unusual or unfamiliar may have had a religious significance. These included terracotta figurines of women, heavily jewelled with elaborate head dresses. These were regarded as mother Goddesses.

2. Rare stone statuary of men seated with one hand on the knee was regarded as ‘priest king’. Other structures found in Harappan Civilisation, like the great bath and fire altars found at Kalibangan and Lothal also were taken as significant for ritual practices.

3. Attempts were made to reconstruct religious beliefs and practices by examining different seals.

4. Mythical creatures like unicorn, figure seated cross-legged in yogic posture, sometimes surrounded by animals, regarded as ‘proto-shiva’ were all examples of Hindu religion. Conical stone objects were classified as Tingas’.
Many reconstructions of Harappan religion are made on the assumption that later traditions provide similarity with earlier ones. It follows from the rule that archaeologists try to know the facts by following the process of ‘known to the unknown.’ Thus, reconstructing religious practices was not easy for the archaeologists.

Question 11.
‘One of the most distinctive features of the Harappan cities was the carefully planned drainage system.’ Elaborate. (All India 2016)
Answer:
One of the most distinctive features of Harappan Civilisation was its carefully planned drainage system. If we look at the plan of the Lower Town, we can find that roads and streets were laid out along an approximate ‘grid’ pattern, intersecting at right angles. Every house had one wall alongside the street having drain connected to the street drain to flow out domestic waste water. It seems that streets with drains were laid out first and then houses built along them.

Mackay said about the drains, “It is certainly the most complete ancient system as yet discovered”. According to him, every house was connected to the street drains. The main channels were made of bricks set in Mortar and were covered with loose bricks that could be removed for cleaning. Sometimes limestone was used for the covers.
In Harappa, house drains first emptied into a sump or cesspit into which solid matter settled while waste water flowed out into the street drains. Very long drainage channels . were provided at intervals with sumps for cleaning.
Little heaps of material mostly sand were found lying alongside drainage channels, it meant that the debris was not always carted away when the drain was cleared.

Drainage systems were mostly found in smaller settlement, but were not unique to the larger cities. For example, at Lothal while houses were built of mud bricks, drains were made of burnt bricks. Therefore, we can say that Harappan cities have carefully planned drainage system.

Question 12.
How have historians provided new insight into the subsistence strategies of the Harappan culture? (Delhi 2015)
Answer:
According to historians mature Harappan culture developed in some of the areas occupied by the Early Harappan cultures. These cultures also shared certain common elements including subsistence strategies.
For example:

* The Harappans ate a wide range of plant and animal products, including fish and meat, wheat, maize, millets, pulses, rice and another eatables.
* Cattle, sheep, goat, buffalo and pig were domesticated by the Harappans for their sustenance.
* The evidence of wild species like boar, deer and gharial have also been traced from the remains of bones, but it is not sure whether the Harappans hunted these animals themselves or obtained meat from other hunting community.
* Archaeological evidences suggested that oxen were used for ploughing and two different crops were grown together. As most of the sites are located in semi-arid lands, it is evident that water from canals and wells was used for irrigation.

Question 13.
Explain the distinctive features of the residential buildings of Mohenjodaro. (Delhi 2015)
Answer:

The most unique feature of the Harappan Civilisation was the development of urban centres. Mohenjodaro is the most well-known site of Harappan Civilisation.

The following are the most unique architectural feature of Mohenjodaro: Citadel It was smaller but higher. It was walled and was physically separated from the lower town. Here the buildings w’ere constructed with mud, bricks platform. Here, we find some structures that were probably used for special public purposes.
These include the warehouse, a massive structure and the ‘Great Bath’. The uniqueness of the structure of ‘Great Bath’ suggested that it was meant for some kind of special ritual bath.

The Lower Town The lower town was also walled. Several buildings were built on platforms, which served as foundations. All building activity within the city was restricted to a fixed area on the platforms. Sun-dried or baked bricks were used at all Harappan settlements.

The courtyard of the houses was the centre of activities like cooking and weaving, particularly during hot and dry weather. There were no windows in the walls along the ground level. Besides, the main. entrance did not give a direct view of the interior or the courtyard.

Drainage System Mohenjodaro had carefully planned drainage system. The roads and the streets were laid out along an approximate ‘grid’ pattern, intersecting at right angles. It seems that streets with drains were laid out first and then houses built along them.

Every house had its own bathroom paved with bricks, with drains connected through the walls, to the street drains. Drainage systems were not only unique to the larger cities, but were found in smaller settlements also. All these features indicated that Mohenjodaro had a well planned architectural system.

Question 14.
Explain the strategies used by the archaeologists to understand socio-economic differences among the Harappans. (Delhi 2015)
Answer:
The archaeologists have tried to find out socio-economic differences among the Harappans through two types of evidences.

These were: Burials Burials have been significant evidence to establish social differences within the Harappan society’.
The dead were generally laid in pits. There were differences in the way the burial pit was made. In some cases, the hallowed out spaces were lined with bricks.

However, whether these variations were an indication of social differences or not, it is not yet established. Pottery ornaments, jewellery of both men and women have been found in some burials. But the Harappans did not believe in burying precious things with the dead.

Artefacts Two types of artefacts have been found, i.e. luxuries’ and ‘utilitarian’. Luxuries artefacts were made from costly and rare, non-local material with complicated technology e.g. little faience pots. Utilitarian objects included objects of daily use made of stone clay, e.g. querns, pottery, needles, flesh-rubbers (body scrubbers), etc. As far as distribution of such artefacts is concerned, we find that rare objects made of valuable materials were generally concentrated in large settlements like Mohenjodaro and Harappa and are rarely found in smaller settlements.
Thus, the findings of the above artefacts prove that there were social and economic differences in Harappan culture.

Question 15.
Explain the strategies for procuring materials by the Harappans for the craft production. (All India 2013)
Answer:
In Harappan Civilisation, a variety of materials was used for craft production. These were:

* Clay was locally available, but stone, timber and metal had to be procured from outside.
* They established settlements, such as Nageshwar and Balakot in areas where shell was available. Other such sites were Shortughai, the best source of lapis lazuli, a blue stone found here; from Lothal Carnelian, steatite were found.
* Raw materials were also collected from Khetri region of Rajasthan (for copper)
and South India (for gold). Recent archaeological finds suggest that copper was probably brought from Oman. The fact was also supported by Mesopotamian texts. Probably Harappan Civilisation was connected with Oman, Bahrain or Mesopotamia by sea.

Question 16.
Describe the opinions of the archaeologists over the central authority of the Harappan Civilisation. (All India 2015)
or
“The archaeological records provide no immediate answer to the Harappa central authority’. Analyse different views given on the same.
Answer:
Opinion of some of the archaeologists about the Harappan society are as follows:

* Some archaeologists opine that Harappan society had no rulers and that everybody enjoyed equal status.
* Other scholars have the opinion that there was no single ruler but several. Mohenjodaro had a separate ruler, Harappans had another. In the same way, other regions had different rulers.
* Some scholars also argued that there was a single state given the similarity in artefacts, the evidence for planned settlements, the standardised ratio of brick size and the establishments near source of raw material.
* Of all, the last theory seems to be the most plausible as it is unlikely that entire communities could have collectively made and implemented such complex decisions.

Question 17.
Explain the exclusive features of the craft production in Chanhudaro. (All India 2015)
Answer:
Chanhudaro was a tiny settlement as compared to Mohenjodaro. This area was exclusively devoted to craft production. Its features are:
1. The main craft productions included bead-making, shell-cutting, metal-working, seal-making and weight-making.

2. Here variety of materials were used to make beads. Stones like carnelian jasper, crystal, quartz, steatite; metals like copper, bronze and gold, moreover shell, faience and terracotta or burnt clay were used.

3. Some beads were made of two or more stones, these were cemented together and some were made of stones with beautiful gold caps. The shapes were of different types, e.g. dice cylindrical, spherical, barrel- shaped, etc. Some beads were decorated by incising or painting and some had designs etched (engraved) on to them.

4. Different techniques were applied in making beads. Steatite was a very soft stone and could be easily moulded. But how the steatite micro bead was made remains a surprise for the archaeologists. The red colour of carnelian
was obtained by firing the raw material. Grinding, polishing and drilling completed the full process. Specialised drills have been found at Chanhudaro, Lothal and Dholavira.

Question 18.
Mention any three features of Harappan cities. (All India 2011)
Answer:
Historians suggest that the most unique feature of the Harappan Civilisation was the development of urban centres, i.e., cities. The main features of Harappan cities were:

* The Harappan cities were well planned. The cities were divided into two sections which are one smaller and higher, i.e. the Citadel and other much larger but lower, i.e. the Lower Town. Both these sections were walled and physically separated from each other.
* One of the most distinctive features of Harappan cities was the carefully planned drainage system. If we look at the plan of the Lower Town, the roads and streets were laid out along an approximate ‘grid’
‘ pattern, intersecting at right angles.
* At burials in Harappan areas, the dead were generally laid in pits. Some graves contained pottery and ornament, which indicated the belief that these materials could be used in the afterlife. But the Harappan did not believe in burying precious things with the dead.

Question 19.
Describe briefly how the centres of craft production are identified. (Delhi 2009)
Answer:
In order to identify centres of craft production, archaeologists usually look for the raw materials, like stone modules, whole shells, copper ore, unfinished objects, rejected and waste materials. Actually waste products indicate craft work. For example, if shell or stone is used to make any object, then pieces of shell or stone will be discarded as waste at the place of production.
These can be understood through following points:

* Both Nageshwar and Balakot are near coast and shell objects are found here. These areas were specialised centre for making shell objects, including bangles, ladles and inlay, which were taken to other settlement.
* Similarly, some finished products like different pots and beads are found in Lothal and Chanhudaro, which were taken to the large urban centres such as Mohenjodaro and Harappa.
* For making beads, stones like carnelian, jasper, crystal, quartz, steatite and metals like copper, bronze, gold, and other materials like shell, faience, terracotta were used. For making beads, grinding, polishing and drilling were dome. Specialised drills have found at Chanhudaro, Lothal and Dholavira.
* In order to identify the craft production centre, archaeologists look for raw materials and tools. Large- waste pieces of raw materials indicated the specialised craft production centres. But sometimes minuscule bits suggest that craft production was also undertaken in large cities like Harappa and Mohenjodaro.

**Important Questions for Class 12 History Chapter 1 – 8 Marks Questions**

Question 20.
How did architectural features of Mohenjodaro indicate planning? Support the statement with examples. Delhi 2014
Answer:
The most unique feature of the Harappan Civilisation was the development of urban centres. Mohenjodaro is the most well-known site of Harappan Civilisation.

The following are the most unique architectural feature of Mohenjodaro: Citadel It was smaller but higher. It was walled and was physically separated from the lower town. Here the buildings w’ere constructed with mud, bricks platform. Here, we find some structures that were probably used for special public purposes.
These include the warehouse, a massive structure and the ‘Great Bath’. The uniqueness of the structure of ‘Great Bath’ suggested that it was meant for some kind of special ritual bath.

The Lower Town The lower town was also w’alled. Several buildings were built on platforms, which served as foundations. All building activity within the city was restricted to a fixed area on the platforms. Sun-dried or baked bricks were used at all Harappan settlements.

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Every house had its own bathroom paved with bricks, with drains connected through the walls, to the street drains. Drainage systems were not only unique to the larger cities, but were found in smaller settlements also. All these features indicated that Mohenjodaro had a well planned architectural system.

Question 21.
“The archaeological records provide no immediate answer to the Harappa’s central authority”. Analyse different views given in the same. (HOTS; Delhi 2013)
Answer:
If we want to analyse the concept of central authority of Harappan civilisation, the archaeological findings provide no immediate answer.
In support of these, some reasons have given by some archaeologists:

* At the site of Mohenjodaro, a large building was found, but there were no such specific evidences which could have any association with it.
* A stone statue was found at the site of Mohenjodaro labelled as the ‘priest king’. It was so because archaeologists had prior information of such statue found at the site of Sind and which was labelled as the priest king. But till date, the ritual practices of Harappans have not been understood. So, there are no reasons of knowing whether those who performed ritual practices also held some political power.
* On the other hand, some archaeologists have also the view that there were no rulers in the Harappan society. According to them, all enjoyed equal status.
* Other archaeologists feel that there was no single ruler, but there were several rulers.
* Even some scholars argued that there was a single state which is evident from the similar artefacts, the planned settlements, the standardised bricks.

Question 22.
What are the aspects of Harappan economy that have been reconstructed from archaeological evidence? (All India 2013)
Answer:
The aspects of Harappan economy that have been reconstructed from the archaeological evidences are:
Agriculture From the evidences, it has been found that the agriculture was one of the most important source of food.

Evidences such as charred grains have been found in the Harappan Civilisation. The seeds like wheat, barley, lentil, chickpea and sesame were cultivated in the Harappa whereas millets were found in Gujarat. The evidence of rice cultivation was not there. Evidence of agriculture was easy to find out, but there is difficulty to find out agricultural practices. From the finds of terracotta sculpture, it has been assumed . that the oxen were used for ploughing the land. Moreover, terracotta models of plough also have been found at the sites in Ebolistan (Thar desert), Pakistan.

The field had two sets of furrows at right angles to each other. The irrigation was also known to the Harappans. Traces of canals, well also have been found at the Harappan site of Shortughai in Afghanistan. Besides these finds, several water reservoirs also have been traced which may have been used for the irrigation of agriculture.
Animal Domestication From the finds of bones of animals such as sheep, goat, cow, oxen, buffalo, etc, it has been assumed that the domestication of animals was also there.

Procurement of Crafts Prevalence of artefacts such as pottery sculptures, bead making, seal and sealings were also there. Besides these, weaving, building construction, jewellery-making were there. Trade The Harappans had long distance communication, it is evident from the finds of seals and sealings of Harappans in the distant sites of Mesopotamia.

From the finds of certain metals such as bronze, copper and gold in Harappa which was procured in different sites, these metals were traded with the other distant civilisations developed in Oman. Archaeologists think that there were communication between Oman, Bahrain or Mesopotamia with the Harappan Civilisation.

Question 23.
What are the evidences found by the archaeologists which show that the Harappans had contacts with distant lands? Does it show that the contact proved to have good trade relations with each other. (All India 2011)
or
To what extent had the Harappans established trade relations with the world? (Delhi 2013)
Answer:
The archaeologists found many evidences which show that the Harappans had contacts with distant lands. The important evidences are

1. Recent archaeological finds suggest that copper was probably brought from Oman, on the South-Eastern tip of the Arabian found Peninsula. Moreover chemical analysis proved traces of nickel both in Omani copper and Harappan artefacts. This suggests a common origin of both.

2. A large Harappan jar coated with a thick layer of black clay was found at Omani sites. It is possible that the Harappans exchanged the contents of these vessels for Omani copper.

3. Mesopotamian texts of third millennium BCE referred that copper came from a region called Magan. Historians thought that probably it was another name of Oman. Mesopotamian texts also mentioned contact with regions named Dilmun (probably the Island of Bahrain), Magan and Meluhha, possibly the Harappan region. Meluhha was a land of seafarers. Many products of Meluhha were mentioned. These were carnelian, lapis lazuli, copper, gold and varieties of wood.

4. Other archaeological finds suggest of long distance contacts which include Harappan seals, weights, dice and beads. All these evidences suggest that Harappan Civilisation was connected with Oman, Bahrain or Mesopotamia by sea.

5. Depictions of ships and boats on seals indicate the trade relations between different countries.

6.Cylinder seal found in Mesopotamia has humped bull motif which can be derived from the Indus region. The round ‘Persian Gulf seal found in Bahrain sometimes carries Harappan motifs. Local ‘Dilmun’ weights followed the Harappan standard.

All these evidences show that Harappan civilisation had good trade relations with other regions.

Question 24.
What factors in your opinion are responsible for the collapse of a mature Harapp’an Civilisation by 1800 BCE? (HOTS; All India 2009)
Answer:
There is strong evidence1 that by 1800 BCE, most of the mature Harappan sites in regions like Cholistan had been . abandoned. Simultaneously, there was a growth of settlements in Gujarat, Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh. At that time, distinctive artefacts of civilisation like weights, seals, special beads, writing, long-distance trade and craft specialisation disappeared. House construction technique deteriorated and large public structures were not produced.
A variety of explanations were given by scholars to explain the decline of mature Harappan Civilisation.
These reasons are:

* Climatic change
* Deforestation
* Excessive floods
* Shifting and drying up of rivers
* Overuse of the landscape

Some of these reasons may be holding true for certain settlements, but they do not account for the collapse of the entire civilisation.
No single reason was responsible for the decline of this civilisation. The civilisation might be destroyed by invaders which was proved by the bulk of bones found. It indicated a slaughter.
But the skeletons found did not belong to the same period according to George Dales. Thus, it was not concluded in favour of a dramatic collapse, rather it was believed that the end of Harappan culture was a gradual process.

Question 25.
Describe the contribution of John Marshall, Director General of the ASI to Indian archaeology, (All India 2009)
Answer:
The two discoveries in seals in Harappa and Mohenjodaro by Daya Ram Sahni and Rakhal Das Banerji led to the conjecture that these two sites were part of a single archaeological culture. Based on these finds, in 1924, John Marshall, Director General of the ASI announced the discovery’ of a-new civilisation in the Indus valley to the world. Similar seals were also found in the excavation of archaeological sites of Mesopotamia. In this way, not only new civilisation came to limelight but we also came to know that this civilisation was contemporary to Mesopotamia.
Sir John Marshall’s term as the Director General of ASI was actually a term of major change in Indian archaeology. He was the first professional archaeologist who worked in India.

He brought with himself his experience of Greece and Crete. Like Cunningham, he was also interested in spectacular findings. But he was equally interested in looking for patterns of daily life. John Marshall tended to excavate along regular horizontal units, measured unit formly throughout the mound, ignoring the stratigraphy of the site and this was the biggest drawback in his excavation process. It means all the artefacts, found from the same unit, were grouped together, even if they were found at different stratigraphic layers. As a result, valuable information found about the civilisation was lost forever.

Question 26.
Explain briefly the distinctive features of Harappan drainage system. (Delhi 2008)
or
Describe briefly the drainage system of Harappan cities. (Delhi 2012)
or
Mention two features of drainage system of the Harappan cities. (All India 2015)
or
“The drainage system in Harappan Civilisation indicates town planning”. Support the statement with suitable examples.
Answer:
One of the most distinctive features of Harappan Civilisation was its carefully planned drainage system. If we look at the plan of the Lower Town, we can find that roads and streets were laid out along an approximate ‘grid’ pattern, intersecting at right angles. Every house had one wall alongside the street having drain connected to the street drain to flow out domestic waste water. It seems that streets with drains were laid out first and then houses built along them.

Mackay said about the drains, “It is certainly the most complete ancient system as yet discovered”. According to him, every house was connected to the street drains. The main channels were made of bricks set in Mortar and were covered with loose bricks that could be removed for cleaning. Sometimes limestone was used for the covers.
In Harappa, house drains first emptied into a sump or cesspit into which solid matter settled while waste water flowed out into the street drains. Very long drainage channels . were provided at intervals with sumps for cleaning.
Little heaps of material mostly sand were found lying alongside drainage channels, it meant that the debris was not always carted away when the drain was cleared.

Drainage systems were mostly found in smaller settlement, but were not unique to the larger cities. For example, at Lothal while houses were built of mud bricks, drains were made of burnt bricks. Therefore, we can say that Harappan cities have carefully planned drainage system.

**Important Questions for Class 12 History Chapter 1 Map Based Question**

Question 27.
On the given political outline map of India, locate and label the followings with appropriate symbols.

* Rakhigarhi. (Delhi 2016)
* Name of three mature Harappan sites. (All India 2016, Delhi 2015)
or
Five Harappan sites. Delhi 2008
* Dholavira. (All India 2015), (Delhi 2014, 2008)
* Lothal. (All India 2014, 2010), (Delhi 2012, 2008)
* Kalibangan, Nageshwar.
(All India 2013, 2012, Delhi 2012)
* (a) Dholavira
(b) Lumbini. (Delhi 2014)

Answer:


**Important Questions for Class 12 History Chapter 1 Value Based Questions**

Question 28.
Read the following passage and answer the question that follows.
In the few Harappan sites that continued to be occupied after 1900 BCE, there appears to have been a transformation of material culture, marked by the disappearance of the distinctive artefacts of the civilisation weights, seals, special beads. Writing, long distance trade, and craft specialisation also disappear. In general, far fewer materials were used to make far fewer things. House construction techniques were no longer produced. Overall, artefacts and settlements indicate a rural way of life in what are called “Late Harappan” or “Successor Cultures”.

How can we say that, transformation of material culture had been taking place in . few Harappan sites of this civilisation?
Answer:
There are various evidences available which prove that transformation of material culture had been taking place in few sites of Harappan Civilisation.
These evidences are:

* This transformation of material culture, marked by the disappearance of the distractive artefacts of the civilisation such as weights, seals, special beads, etc.
* Writing, long distance trade and craft specialisation also disappeared.
* In general, far fewer materials were used to make far fewer things.
* House construction techniques deteriorated and large public structures were no longer produced.
* There was a shift from a standardised weight system to the use of local weights.
* Overall, artefacts and settlements indicate a rural way of life in what are called “Late Harappan” or “Successor Cultures”.

Question 29.
Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.
The frontiers of the Harappan Civilisation have little or no connection with present-day national boundaries.
However, with the partition of the sub-continent and the creation of Pakistan, the major sites are now in Pakistan territory. This has spurred Indian archaeologists to try and locate sites in India. An extensive survey in Kutch has revealed a number of Harappan settlements and explorations in Punjab and Harappan settlements have added to the list of Harappan sites. While Kalibangan, Lothal, Rakhi Garhi and most recently Dholavira have been discovered, explored and excavated as part of these efforts, fresh explorations continue.

1. What problem has occurred in the frontiers of the Harappan Civilisation?
2. What has spurred Indian archaeologists to do? Which settements have been found recently?

Answer:
1.  The problem which has occurred in the Harappan Civilisation is that the frontiers of this civilisation have little or no connection with present day national boundaries due to partition of Indian sub-continent and Pakistan. However, with the partition of the sub-continent and the creation of Pakistan, the major sites of Harappan Civilisation are now in Pakistan territory.

1. The partition between the two nations i.e. India and Pakistan, created a problem of demarcation of Harappan sites. This has spurred Indian archaeologists to try and locate these sites in India.
After extensive survey of Kutch, Punjab and Haryana, a number of new sites have been discovered, e.g. Kalibangan, Lothal, Rakhi Garhi and most recently Dholavira

Important Questions for Class 12 History Chapter 2 Kings, Farmers and Towns (Early States and Economies)

**Important Questions for Class 12 History Chapter 2 – 2 Marks Questions**

Question 1.
Why was Mauryan empire regarded as a major landmark in the early Indian history? (Delhi 2015)
Answer:
The Mauryan empire was regarded as a major landmark in the early Indian history because for the first time Chandragupta Maurya founded a vast empire which extended to far North West to Afghanistan and Baluchistan. Moreover, historians think that the messages on Asoka inscription were very different from the other contemporary rulers.

Question 2.
Why is the 6th century BCE often regarded as a major turning point in the early Indian history. (Delhi 2015)
Answer:
The 6th century BCE is regarded as a major turning point in early Indian history for the following reasons:

* It is an era associated with early states, cities, the growing use of iron, the development of coinage, etc.
* This era witnessed the growth of diverse system of thoughts like Buddhism and Jainism.

Question 3.
Why is James Prinsep’s contribution considered as the historic development in the Indian epigraphy? (HOTS; Delhi 2015)
Answer:
James Prinsep was an officer in the mint of the East India Company. He contributed a lot in the Indian epigraphy by deciphering two scripts, viz, Brahmi and Kharosthi in the earliest inscriptions and coins.

Question 4.
How were the coins used in the 1st century CE? Give two examples. (All India 2015)
Answer:
The Kushana rulers issued the first gold coins in the 1st century. For example:

* The wide spread use of gold coins indicates that the enormous value of the transactions was taking place.
* Hoards of Roman coins were found in South India which indicates that trade was extended beyond political boundaries.

Question 5.
How did Kushana rulers exemplify themselves with the high status? (All India 2015)
Answer:
The Kushana rulers washed to project the notions of kingship in their coins and sculpture.
Colossal statues of Kushana rulers have been found installed in a shrine at Mat near Mathura and in Afghanistan. Many Kushana rulers adopted the title ‘Devaputra’ or ‘Son of God’.

Question 6.
How have the Prashastis drawn the factual information about the Gupta rulers? (All India 2015)
Answer:
Prashastis were important source for reconstructing the histories of Gupta rulers. Historians tried to draw factual information from such compositions. These were composed in praise of kings in particular and patrons in general by poets. Harisena, the court poet of Samudragupta, composed the Prayag Prashasti (also known as Allahabad pillar inscription) where he described Samudragupta as the most powerful king of Gupta Empire who was equally powerful like God and protector of his poor subjects.

Question 7.
Mention any two features of the administrative system of the Mauryan Empire. (Delhi 2014)
Answer:
Two main features of the administrative system of the Mauryan Empire were:

1. There were five major political centres in the empire viz, Pataliputra, Taxila, Ujjayini, Tosali and Suvamagiri.
2. The administrative control was strongest in areas around the capital and the provincial centres and these centres were carefully chosen by the kings.

Question 8.
How did Magadha become the most powerful mahajanapada between 6th and 4th century BCE? Give two reasons.
(All India 2014)
Answer:
Historians explained the reason behind the emergence of Magadha as the most powerful mahajanapada in the following ways:

* Agriculture was very productive in Magadha.
* Magadha was rich in iron mines which provided resources for tools and weapons. Further, elephants were found in large number in this region.

Question 9.
Explain why the communication along both land and riverine routes was vital for the existence of the empire during the period of Mauryan. (Compartment 2013)
Answer:
During the Mauryan period, communication along both land and riverine routes was vital for the existence of the empire because:

* The Mauryan empire was a very vast empire. Thus, for political control, military activity and people’s movement, both land and riverine routes were required.
* Communication through roadways and waterways were necessary for trade and commerce and also for the exchange of ideas and knowledge, etc.

Question 10.
Mention any two pieces of evidence which referred to Asoka as the most popular ruler of the 6th century BCE.
(Compartment 2012)
Answer:
Asoka was the most popular ruler of the 6th century BCE as:

* Historians found that the messages on Asokan inscriptions were very different from that of the most rulers and suggested that he was more powerful, industrious and humble than the other rulers.
* Asoka tried to hold his vast empire together by propagating Dhamma, the principles that were universally accepted by all.

Question 11.
Who deciphered the Brahmi and Kharosthi scripts? What important facts were revealed through these scripts? (Compartment 2011)
Answer:
James Prinsep deciphered the Brahmi and Kharosthi scripts in 1838.
With the deciphered script, we know about the political, economic history and specially, the contribution of the king of that period.

Question 12.
Mention any two ways in which the inscriptions of land grants help us to understand rural society in ancient times.
(All India 2008)
Answer:
In ancient times, many land grants were recorded as inscriptions. We know these from:

* Many land grants were given to religious institutions or Brahmanas. Some feel land grants were done to extend agriculture to new areas.
* There were regional variations in the sizes of land donated, ranging from small to vast stretches of uncultivated land and the rights were given to donees, i.e. the recipients of the grant.
BChapterwise CBSE Solved Papers : HISTORY

**Important Questions for Class 12 History Chapter 2 – 4 Marks Questions**

Question 13.
Critically examine the limitations of the inscriptional evidences in understanding political and economic history of India. (Delhi 2015)
Answer:
Inscriptions are important source to know history. But there are certain limitations of inscriptions. These were:
1.  Several thousands of inscriptions were discovered, but not all of them were deciphered or translated.

2.  Generally, inscriptions were composed in praise of kings and patrons, e.g. Prayaga Prashasti was composed in Sanskrit by Harisena, the court poet of Samudragupta. From this inscription, we know about the generosity, administrative capabilities of the king Samudragupta who was described as equal to different deities.

3. The context of the inscription invariably projected the perspective of the person who commissioned it. But it was not recorded what we consider politically and economically significant facts of that period. For example, routine agricultural practices, the joys and sorrows of common people were not mentioned in these inscriptions. History is not only the histories of kings, it includes different social groups and even marginalised sections of our society.

4. From mid-20th century historians’ become more interested in political and economic changes of society (e.g. the ways in which different social groups emerged). This lead to fresh investigations of old sources and in this respect, inscription had its own limitations to interpret political and economic history of India.

Question 14.
Historians have used a variety of sources to reconstruct the history of the Mauryan Empire. State any four such sources. (All India 2015, 2013)
Answer:
Historians have used a variety of sources to reconstruct the history of Mauryan Empire. These were:

* Things found in archaeological excavation, specially sculpture are regarded as an important source.
* Contemporary works like writings of Megasthenes, Arthashastra by Chanakya are important sources regarding that period.
* The Mauryas were also mentioned in later Buddhist, Jaina, Puranic and Sanskrit literature.
* Moreover the inscriptions of Asoka on rocks and pillars are regarded as the most valuable sources.

Question 15.
mat is the role played by the coins in the decipherment of Kharosthi script? (All India 2012)
Answer:
The role played by the coins in the decipherment of Kharosthi script was: Analysis of Indo-Greek Coins The coins of Indo-Greek kings who ruled over the north-western part of the sub-continent in c. second century BCE. were analysed by the epigraphists.

Comparison with Greek Script The Indo-Greek coins contain the names of kings written in Greek and Kharosthi scripts. The Kharosthi script was compared with the Greek one.

The European scholars who could read Greek, compared it with Kharosthi. There were few similarities e.g. letter ‘a’ was used in both scripts for writing names such as ‘Apollodotus’. James Prinsep identified the language of Kharosthi as Prakrit. After that, it became possible to read longer inscriptions easily

Question 16.
Explain briefly the notions of kingship during Kushana and Gupta empire. (Compartment 2011)
Answer:
In the 1st century BCE Kushanas ruled over a vast kingdom extended from Central Asia to North-West India. Their history has been reconstructed from inscriptions and textual traditions. The notions of kingship they wished to project are perhaps best evidenced in their coins and sculpture. The colossal statues of Kushana rulers were found in Mathura and Afghanistan.

According to some historians, this trend indicates that Kushanas thought themselves like God. Several Kushana rulers assumed the title ‘Devaputra’ or ‘Son of God’, perhaps they were influenced by the Chinese leaders who called themselves ‘Sons of Heaven’.

On the other hand, histories of the Gupta empire have been taken from literature, coins and inscriptions, including Prashastis. Prashastis were composed in praise of kings and patrons in general. The famous Prayaga Prashasti composed by Harisena, the court poet of Samudragupta, is a powerful document to know about the Gupta rulers.

Question 17.
Describe briefly any two strategies for increasing agricultural production from 6th century BCE to 6th century CE.(Delhi 2010)
Answer:
To increase the agricultural production, some strategies were adopted from 6th century BCE to 6th century CE. These strategies were:

* There was a shift to plough agriculture. The iron-tipped ploughshare was used to turn the alluvial soil in areas which had high rainfall.
* Irrigation through wells, tanks, canals were started to irrigate fields to increase agricultural production.

Question 18.
Describe briefly the sources used for reconstructing the history of the Gupta rulers. (All India 2010, Delhi 2009)
Answer:
The Gupta rulers established a vast empire in the 4th century which was reconstructed from various sources. These sources are explained in the following ways:
Inscriptions Inscriptions are writings engraved on hard surfaces like stones, metals, etc. These are generally composed in praise of kings in particular, and patrons in general by the poets. For example, Allahabad pillar inscription or Prayaga Prashasti were composed in Sanskrit by Harisena, the court poet of Samudragupta in praise of him.

Coins Coins are also an important source of reconstructing the history of Gupta rulers, as they include elements like scripts, images and the context in which they are found. Some of the most spectacular gold coins were issued by the Gupta rulers. These coins facilitated long distance transactions from which the expansion of trade and commerce was known.

Literature Historians attempted to draw factual information from the compositions of Prashastis. Those who composed these, often treated them as works of poetry, rather than an account that were literally true. These were written in praise of king and patron in general. Thus, historians have to constantly assess the statements made in inscriptions to judge whether they are true plausible or exaggerations.

Prashastis They contribute prominently in reconstructing the histories of the Gupta rulers, e.g. Prayaga Prashasti was composed in Sanskrit for Samudragupta.

**Important Questions for Class 12 History Chapter 2 – 8 Marks Questions**

Question 19.
Explain the main features of the Mauryan administration. (All India 2017)
or
Explain any four sources to reconstruct the history of Mauryas, Examine the system of Mauryan administration. (Delhi 2016)
What type of source have been used to reconstruct the history of Mauryan empire? Explain with suitable examples. (Delhi 2012)
Answer:
For sources to reconstruct the history of Mauryas, Historians have used a variety of sources to reconstruct the history of Mauryan Empire. These were:

* Things found in archaeological excavation, specially sculpture are regarded as an important source.
* Contemporary works like writings of Megasthenes, Arthashastra by Chanakya are important sources regarding that period.
* The Mauryas were also mentioned in later Buddhist, Jaina, Puranic and Sanskrit literature.
* Moreover the inscriptions of Asoka on rocks and pillars are regarded as the most valuable sources.

System of Mauryan Administration The growth of Magadha culminated in the emergence of the Mauryan empire. Chandragupta Maurya who founded the empire (321 BCE), extended control as far North-West as Afghanistan and Baluchistan, and his grandson Asoka, arguably the most famous ruler of early India, conquered Kalinga (present-day coastal Odisha).
There were five major political centres in the empire i.e. the capital Pataliputra and the provincial centres of Taxila, Ujjayini, Tosali and Suvarnagiri, that are all mentioned in Asokan inscriptions.
Due to Vastness of the empire administrative system of this empire was not uniform. It is likely that administrative control was strongest in areas around the capital and the provincial centres. These centres were carefully chosen, both Taxila and Ujjayini being situated on important long-distance trade routes, while Suvarnagiri (literally, the golden mountain) was possibly important for tapping the gold mines of Karnataka.
Communication along both land and riverine routes was vital for the existence of the empire. It is obvious that the army was an important means for ensuring the latter.

Megasthenes mentions a committee with six subcommittees for coordinating military activity. Of these, one looked after the navy the second managed transport and provisions, the third was responsible for foot-soldiers, the fourth for horses, the fifth for chariots and the sixth for elephants. The activities of the second subcommittee were rather varied-arranging for bullock carts to carry equipment, and recruiting servants and artisans to look after the soldiers.
Asoka also tried to hold his empire together by propagating Dhannna, the principles of which were simple and virtually universally applicable. This, according to him, would ensure the well-being of people in this world and the next. Special officers, known as the Dhamma Mahamatta, were appointed to spread the message of Dhamma.

Question 20.
Explain the agricultural practices followed by the cultivators to increase productivity from C 600 BCE to 600 CE. (All India 2017)
or
To what extent were agricultural practices transformed from 6th century BCE? Explain briefly. (Delhi 2011)
Answer:
Agricultural practices were transformed from 6th century BCE onwards because of increasing burden of taxes imposed by state. The kings demanded considerable taxes from the subjects, from 6th cent ury BCE onwards.
In order to fulfil this demand for more taxes, the farmers started finding new means to increase the production of their crops.

These new means were:
Shift Towards Plough Agriculture Agriculture practices were significantly transformed by the shift to plough agriculture which spread in fertile alluvial river valleys such as those of the Ganga and the Kaveri.

Use of Iron-Tipped Ploughshare In the areas of high rainfall, the use of iron-tipped ploughshare turned the alluvial soil into highly fertile ground.

Use of Paddy Transplantation Paddy transplantation technique was used in which seeds were first broadcast then the saplings were transplanted in water logged fields. This ensured a higher ratio of survival of saplings and higher yields and dramatically increased the production of paddy crop. Although, this process requires high degree of manual labour.

Use of Irrigation to Increase Productivity Irrigation was another strategy to increase agricultural production. The irrigation was done through wells and tanks and sometimes the canals were used.

Communities as well as individuals organised the construction of irrigation works. The process of construction of irrigation was often recorded in the inscriptions by the kings.

The use of such technologies led to an increase in agricultural production which ultimately led to a growing differentiation amongst people engaged in agriculture. The large landholders and village headmen emerged as powerful figures who exercised control over the cultivators or agricultural labourers. Thus, there was a remarkable change in the field of agriculture from 6th century BCE.

Question 21.
Explain the system of land grants and trade from 600 BCE to 600 CE. (Delhi 2016)
Answer:
From the early centuries, the grants of land were recorded in inscriptions. Some inscriptions were recorded in copper plates. The records that have survived, give us the following facts:

* The land grants were given to religious institutions or to Brahmanas. The Brahmanas were usually exempted from paying land revenue and other due to the king. The Brahmanas were . often given the right to collect these
dues from the local people.
* Women were not supposed to have independent access to resources like land. But aristocrat women like Prabhavati Gupta, daughter of Chandragupta II had access to lands.
* All the people in rural areas had to obey the new land of the village and pay him all the taxes.
* Some historians claim that land grants were indicative of weakening political power, as kings were loosing control over their samantas. Sometimes, kings tried to win allies by making grants of land.
* Land grants provide some insight into the relationship between cultivators and the state.
* The system of trade from 600 BCE to 600 CE can be explained in the following ways:
	+ Land and river routes criss-crossed the sub-continent and extended in different directions from the 6th century BCE. The ruler tried to control these routes by offering protection for a price.
	+ These different routes were transversed by the peddlers who travelled on foot. But the merchants travelled with caravans of bullock carts and pack-animals.
	+ There were seafearers. Their ventures
	were risky but highly profitable.
	+ Successful merchants, designated as Manattuvan in Tamil and Setthis and Satavahanas in Prakrit w’ere very rich.
	+ A wide range of goods were carried from one place to another. These were salt, grain, cloth, metal ores and finished products, stone, timber, medicinal plants, spices and pepper and textiles. All these were transported across the Arabian sea to the Mediterranean.

Question 22.
What does Asokan inscriptions tell about the Mauryas? Describe the limitations of the inscriptional evidences. (All India 2016)
or
To what extent the epigraphists face limitations of inscriptional evidence? Explain. (Delhi 2014, 2009)
Answer:
Asoka was the first ruler who inscribed his messages on stone surfaces i.e. natural rocks and polished pillars.
The major rock edicts explain the Mauryans administration specially about Asoka. Some of the important inscriptions are discussed below:

* The name of Asoka was not mentioned in the inscriptions. Instead, the titles viz, ‘Devanampiya’ (beloved of the God) and ‘Piyadassi’ (pleasant to behold) were mentioned.
* Asoka condemned the desire for fame and glory. He stressed on popularity of Dhamma.
* Dhamma included respect towards elders, generosity towards Brahmanas and those who renounced worldly life, treating slaves and servants kindly and respect for religions and traditions other than one’s own.

Limitations of inscriptional evidence are:

Technical Limitations: Sometimes letters are very faintly engraved and thus doubts arise for inscriptions may be damaged or letters missing.

Damaged or Missing Letters: Sometimes important letters are damaged or missing in the inscription. It makes the work for epigraphists more difficult.

Lack of Clarity: It is not always easy to be sure about the exact meaning of the words used in the inscriptions, some of which may be specific to a particular place or time. So, scholars are constantly debating on alternative ways to read inscriptions.

Undeciphered Inscriptions: Thousands of inscriptions have been discovered, but not all have been deciphered, published and translated. Many inscriptions were destroyed and what we have today’ probably a fraction of it.

Non-relevance of Inscriptions: Inscriptions were composed in praise of kings and patrons in general. Not everything that is economically or politically important was recorded in the inscriptions, e.g. routine agricultural practice, the joys and sorrow of common man were not mentioned in the inscriptions. Thus, it is difficult for the epigraphists to give the complete picture of a society by relying on inscriptions only.

Question 23.
What do you mean by’ Numismatics?
How has the study of coins helped the Numismatists to reconstruct possible commercial networks? (All India 2014, 2010)
Answer:
Numismatics is the study of coins, including visual elements such as scripts and images, metallurgical analysis and the contexts in which they have been found.
The study of coins has helped the numismatists to reconstruct the possible commercial networks in the following ways:

Introduction of Coinage for Trade Facilitation: To some extent, exchanges were facilitated by the introduction of coinage. A wide range of goods like salt, grain, cloth, metal ores and finished products, stone, timber, medicinal plants, etc were carried from one place to another. These certainly required some kind of currency for exchange.
Hence, these led to the development of coinage across the trading cultures.

Excavation of Punch-marked Coins across the Sub-continent: Punch-marked coins made of silver and copper (16th century BCE onwards) were amongst the earliest to be minted and used. These have been recovered from excavations at a number of sites throughout the sub-continent. Numismatics have studied these and other coins to reconstruct possible commercial networks.

Kings, Merchants and Bankers as Issuing Authority: Attempts made to identify the symbols on punch-marked coins with specific ruling dynasties, including the Mauryas, suggest that these were issued by kings. It is also likely that merchants, bankers and towns people issued some of these coins.

Similarity of Kushana Coins with those of Greeks and Parthians: The first gold coins were issued in 1st century CE by the Kushanas. These were virtually identical in weight with those issued by contemporary Roman emperors and the Parthian rulers of Iran have been found from several sites in North India and Central Asia.

Close Connections with Roman Empire: The widespread use of gold coins indicates the enormous value of the transactions that were taking place. Besides, hoards of Roman coins have been found from archaeological sites in South India. It is obvious that networks of trade were not confined within political boundaries. South India was not a part of the Roman empire, but there were dose connections through trade.

Question 24.
How do the modern historians explain the development and growth of Magadhan power? Explain briefly. (All India 2012)
Answer:
Between the 6th and 4th centuries BCE, Magadha (in present-day Bihar) became the most powerful mahajanapada. Modern historians explain this development in a variety of ways:

* Magadha was a region where agriculture was especially productive.
* Besides, iron mines (in present-day Jharkhand ) were accessible and provided resources for tools and weapons.
* Elephants, an important component of the army, were found in forests in the region.
* Also, the Ganga and its tributaries provided a means of cheap and convenient communication.

However, early Buddhist and Jaina writers who wrote about Magadha attributed its power to the policies of individuals, ruthlessly ambitious kings of whom Bimbisara, Ajatashatru and Mahapadma Nanda are the best known, and their minister, who helped implement their policies.

The two capitals, i.e. Rajagriha (Rajgir) and Pataliputra (Patna) of Magadha had their own advantages. Rajagaha was a fortified settlement, located amongst hill, thus, was not easily captured. Pataliputra was easily communicable through the Ganga and its tributaries.

**Important Questions for Class 12 History Chapter 2 Source Based Questions**

Question 25.
In praise of Samudragupta:
He was without an antagonist on Earth; he, hy the overflowing of the multitude of (his) many good qualities adorned by hundreds of good actions, he wiped off the fame of other kings with the soles of (his) feet (he is) Purusha (the Supreme Being), being the cause of the prosperity of the good and the destruction of the bad (he is) incomprehensible; (he is) one whose tender heart can be captured only by devotion and humility; (he is) possessed of compassion; (he is) the giver of many hundred thousands of cows; (his) mind has received ceremonial initiation for the uplift of the miserable, the poor, the forlorn and the suffering; (he is) resplendent and embodied kindness to mankind; (he is) equal to (the Gods) Kubera (the God of wealth), Varuna (the God of the ocean), Indra (the God of rains) and Yama (the God of death).

1. Who wrote the above Prashasti? State the importance of Prashasti?
2. Mention any three qualities of the ruler described in the excerpt.
3. How far are these values shown by the rulers, relevant in the contemporary society? Explain. (Delhi 2014)

Answer:
1. The Prayaga Prashasti also known as the Allahabad pillar inscription was composed in Sanskrit by Harisena. This Prashasti said that Samudragupta was without an antagonist on Earth and was adorned by hundreds of good actions.

2. The qualities of the ruler described in the excerpt are:

* The ruler should be powerful with plethora of good qualities.
* He should bring prosperity.
* The ruler should have compassion and should try for the upliftment of the miserable, the poor and the forlorn.

3. The values shown in the above mentioned passage are relevant in the contemporary society to a great extent. The rulers ought to have positive attitude for the welfare of his countrymen. He should try incessantly to bring prosperity and equality in all walks of life.

Question 26.
The Sudarshana (beautiful) Lake in Gujarat:
The Sudarshana lake was an artificial reservoir. We know about it from a rock inscription (2nd century CE) in Sanskrit, composed to record the achievements of the Shaka ruler Rudradaman.
The inscription mentions that the lake, with embankments and water channels, was built by a local governor during the rule of the Maury as. However, a terrible storm broke the embankments and water gushed out of the lake. Rudradaman, who was then ruling in the area, claimed to have got the lake repaired using his own resources, without imposing any tax on his subjects.
Another inscription on the same rock (c 5th century) mentions how one of the rulers of the Gupta dynasty got the lake repaired once again.

1. How do we get to know about the Sudarshana lake?
2. Why this lake required the repair?
3. Explain why did rulers make arrangements for irrigation? (All India 2014)

Answer:
1. We get to know about the Sudarshana lake from a rock inscription (2nd century CE) in Sanskrit, composed to record the achievements of the Shaka ruler Rudradaman.

2. The Sudarshana lake required repair because a terrible storm broke the embankments of the lake and water gushed out of the lake.

3. The rulers made arrangements for irrigation that included the repair of lakes, etc because the irrigation was crucial for the advancement of agriculture and eventual food security. The irrigation was adopted to increase the agriculture production through lakes, wells, tanks and canals.

Question 27.
The Importance of Boundaries:
The Manusmriti is one of the best-known legal texts of early India, written in Sanskrit and complied between 2nd century BCE and 2nd century CE. This is what the text advises the king to do.
Seeing that in the world controversies constantly arise due to the ignorance of boundaries, he should… have concealed boundary markers buried—stones, bones, cow’s hair, chaff, ashes, potsherds, dried cow dung, bricks, coal, pebbles and sand.
He should also have other similar substances that would not decay in the soil buried as hidden markers at the intersection of boundaries.

1. Why did the controversies of boundaries arise? Explain.
2. Suggest the ways to solve the boundary problems.
3. Explain with example any such problem being faced by India today. (Delhi 2011)

Answer:
1. The ignorance of king to conceal the boundaries led to the controversies.

2. By concealing the boundaries by markers such as stones, bones, cow’s hair, chaff, ashes, potsherds, dried cow dung, bricks, coal, pebbles and sand. These substances do not decay in the soil and will act as markers at the intersection of boundaries.

3. India faces such problems in the villages where the land records are poorly maintained and various stakeholders try to claim their ownership of the disputed land.

Question 28.
The Anguish of the King
When the King Devanampiya Piyadassi had been ruling for eight years, the (country of the) Kalingas (present-day coastal Odisha) was conquered by him. One hundred and fifty thousand men were deported, a hundred thousand were killed and many more died.

After that, now that (the country of) the Kalingas has been taken, Devanampiya (is devoted), to an intense study of Dhamma, to the love of Dhamma and to instructing (the people) in Dhamma. This is the repentance of Devanampiya on account of his conquest of the (country of the) Kalingas. For this considered very painful and deplorable by Devanampiya that, while one is conquering an unconquered (country) slaughter, death and deportation of people (take place) there.

1. Who was called ‘Devanampiya Piyadassi’? Give his brief description.
2. Mention the importance and limitations of inscriptions.
3. Explain the effects of war of Kalinga on Asoka.
4. Why did the king repent after the war of Kalinga? (All India 2011)

Answer:
1. Emperor Asoka was called ‘Devanampiya Piyadassi’. Asoka was the most important ruler of Mauryan dynasty. He captured Kalinga and later repented on it and established the notion of ‘Dhamma’.

2. Importance of Inscriptions Inscriptions provide valuable information about those who commission it. They tell us about social and political conditions of that time when they were inscribed.
Limitations Inscriptions are source of limited information. They do not project the opinion of common people.

3. After the war of Kalinga, Asoka devoted hirnself to intense study of Dhamma and started instructing the people about the message of Dhamma.

4. The king repented after the war of Kalinga because it was very painful for him as the war led to slaughter, death and deportation of thousands of people.

**Important Questions for Class 12 History Chapter 2 Map Based Questions**

Question 29.
On the given outline map of India, locate and label the following. (Delhi 2013)
1. Avanti
2. Magadha
Answer:


Question 30.
On the given political map of India, locate and label the following. (All India 2012 )
1. Topra – Pillar Inscription
2. Girnar – Major Rock Edicts
Answer:


Question 31.
On the same map, three places related to Mahajanapada and cities have been marked as 1, 2 and 3. Identify them and write their names on the lines drawn near them. (Delhi 2008)

Answer:


Question 32.
On the map of India, three Asokan Pillar inscriptions have been marked as 1, 2 and 3. Identify them and write the names on the lines drawn near them (All India 2008)

Answer:


**Important Questions for Class 12 History Chapter 2 Value Based Questions**

Question 33.
Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.
One story known as the Gandatindu Jataka describes the plight of the subjects of a wicked king. These included elderly women and men, cultivators herders, village boys and even animals. When the king went in disguise to find out what his subjects thought about him, each one of them cursed him for their miseries, complaining that they were attacked by robbers at night and by tax collectors during the day. To escape from this situation, people abandoned their village and went to live in the forest.

1. Who were not satisfied with the king mentioned in the story Gandatindu Jataka?
2. What were the possible reasons behind their plight?

Answer:
1. The people who were not satisfied with their king w-ere elderly women and men, cultivators, herders, village boys and even animals.
2. The reasons behind their plight are given below:

* The subjects of the king mentioned the story were not satisfied with the actions of their king, because they were living in abject conditions and in insecurity.
* There was no one to hear their complains and see their sufferings.
* The people of the area became more aggressive due to there miseries. They were oftenly attacked by robbers at night. And in the day time, tax collectors used to come to trouble them and collect more taxes imposed on them almost every week or month.

After this plight the people were forced to abandon their homes and live in the forest to protect themselves from the king.

Question 34.
Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.
While these technologies often led to an increase in production, the benefits were very uneven. What is evident is that there was a growing differentiation amongst people engaged in agriculture – stories, especially within the Buddhist tradition, refer to landless agricultural laborers, small peasants, as well as large landholders.
1. After having new technologies and an increase in agricultural production, why the benefits were very uneven among people engaged in agriculture? Discuss.
Answer:
1. The new’ technologies transformed the nature of agricultural production. In semi-arid areas irrigation was done by wells, tanks and less commonly canals. The iron-tipped ploughshare was also used to turn the alluvial soil in high rainy areas.

But after all these back-breaking efforts, the benefits share w7as very- uneven. It broke the society among landless agricultural laborers, small peasants, ploughman and large landholders.

Mostly large landholders had a large piece of land and due to their richness they w’ere able to use new technologies and hire landless agricultural labourers ploughmen and small peasants to work – on their fields to get more profits.

Due to having no land, the condition of landless laborers become very poor.
They searched for work everywhere. On the other hand, small farmers were not able to use new technologies in their fields due to lack of financial assistance. This created uneven situation, where large landholders become more powerful and enjoying more benefit, whereas small peasants and landless labourers enjoy less benefit.