

PHYSICS WALLAH

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GENERAL STUDIES

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CONTENTS

- 1. Early Stone Age 1–7**
 - Introduction 1
 - Pre-Historic Period: 30,00,000BC – 600BC..... 1
 - Historical Sources 1
 - Palaeolithic or Old Stone Age: 30,00,000BC – 10,000BC 3
 - Lower Palaeolithic Age in India:..... 3
 - Mesolithic Culture or Middle Stone Age: 9000 BC–4000 BC 6
- 2. Neolithic and Chalcolithic Culture.....8–14**
 - Neolithic Age or New Stone Age: 7000 BC - 1000 BC 8
 - Chalcolithic Age / Copper-Stone Age: 3500 BC - 1000 BC 12
 - Iron Age (1000 BC- 500 BC) 14
- 3. Harappan Civilization 15–29**
 - Introduction 15
 - Checklist for Qualifying a Site as a Harappan Civilisation Site 15
 - IVC: Geography, Famous Sites and Archaeological Findings..... 15
 - Relation Between Early, Mature and Late Harappan Phase 17
 - General Features of Mature Harappan Settlements..... 17
 - Harappan Crafts and Techniques 18
 - Relation Between Seals and Economy of Harappan Civilisation 20
 - Imports to Harappan Cities 21
 - Nature and Uses of Writing 21
 - Weighing and Measure During Harappan Civilisation 22
 - Religion and Belief System 22
 - Society 22
 - Agriculture 23
 - Fall of Harappan Civilisation 23
 - Later Phase of Harappan Civilisation 24
 - Difference with Contemporary Civilisation 24
 - Important Sites of Harappan Civilisation 26
- 4. Aryan Culture and Early Vedic Age30–34**
 - Debate Over Authors of Vedic Texts..... 30
 - Indo-Aryans 30
 - Vedic Literature..... 30
 - Rig Vedic Culture or Early Vedic Culture..... 31
 - Social Life of Rig Vedic Aryans and Status of Women..... 32
 - Varna in the Rig Veda: Das and Dasyus 32
 - Political Organisation During Rig Vedic Phase..... 32
 - Political Clashes 33
 - Economy 33
 - Religion and Rituals 34
- 5. Later Vedic Phase 35–38**
 - Expansion of the Aryans 35
 - Use of Iron..... 35
 - Settlements and Territories..... 35
 - The Varna Hierarchy..... 36
 - Social Organization and Status of Women 36
 - Political Organization 36
 - Economy 37
 - Religious Faith and Belief System..... 37
 - Philosophical Aspects of Later Vedic Phase 38
- 6. Age of Mahajanapadas 39–42**
 - Reasons for Development of Second Urbanization in Indo-Gangetic Plains 39
 - From Janapadas to Mahajanapadas 39
 - The 16 Maha Janapadas 39
 - Basic Features of Mahajanapadas 42
 - The Ganas or Sanghas 42
- 7. Buddhism and Jainism 43–58**
 - Causes of Awakening 43
 - Heterodox Sects 43
 - Ajivikas..... 43
 - Other Minor Heterodox Schools 44
 - Jainism..... 44
 - Buddhism 49

○ Early Life of Buddha.....	49	○ Administration	82
○ The Buddha's Teachings.....	50	○ Revenue.....	82
○ Comparison of Jainism and Buddhism.....	57	○ Architecture.....	82
○ Major Differences Between Buddhism and Jainism.....	57	○ Economic Condition.....	82
8. India of the Pre-Mauryan Period.....	59–61	12. Early History of South India.....	83-87
○ Cause of Growth of Magadha Mahajanapada...	59	○ Political History	83
○ Haryanka Dynasty.....	59	○ Cheras	83
○ Shishunaga Dynasty.....	60	○ Chola.....	84
○ Nanda Dynasty (362 BCE).....	60	○ Pandyas	84
9. Mauryan Empire	62–73	○ Minor Chieftains.....	84
○ Persian Invasions	62	○ Sangam Literature.....	85
○ Impact of Persian Invasion on India.....	62	○ Administration of Sangam Period.....	86
○ Alexander's Invasion of India (327-325 B.C.)....	62	○ Society	86
○ Age of Mauryas	63	○ Economy	86
○ Political History of Mauryas	65	○ Ideology and Religion	87
○ Later Mauryas	67	○ Position of Women.....	87
○ Mauryan Administration.....	67	○ Arts	87
○ Revenue and Agriculture.....	69	13. Gupta Empire	88-102
○ Crafts and Goods	69	○ Sources of History Gupta period	88
○ Trade	69	○ Administration of Gupta empire.....	91
○ Coins and Currency	70	○ Ministers and other Officials.....	91
○ Army	70	○ Royal Land Grants.....	95
○ Census.....	70	○ Society.....	95
○ Provincial and Local Administration	70	○ Art and Architecture	97
○ Material Culture.....	70	○ Literature.....	98
○ Art and Architecture of Mauryas	70	○ Vakatakas.....	100
○ Decline of Mauryan Empire	73	○ Political History	101
10. Age of Invasion: Contact with Central Asia	74-79	○ Nandivardhana Branch/Line.....	101
○ Foreign Invaders.....	74	14. Rise of Harsha.....	103-106
○ The Indo-greeks.....	74	○ India after Fall of Gupta Empire.....	103
○ Impact of Indo-Greek Rule.....	74	○ The Maitrakas	103
○ Shakas or Scytho-Parthians.....	75	○ The Maukharis	103
○ The Kushanas.....	75	○ Pushyabhutis	104
○ The Impact and Contribution of Contacts with Central Asia	77	○ Rajyavardhana (605–606 CE)	104
○ Shaka Kshatrapas of Western India	79	○ Harshavardhana (606 – 647 CE)	104
○ Kshaharata Dynasty	79	○ Administration of Harsha	105
11. India After the Mauryas	80-82	○ Provincial Administration	105
○ Sungas	80	○ Taxation.....	105
○ The Satavahana Empire in the Deccan.....	81	○ Society.....	105
○ Political History of Satavahanas	81	○ Religious Policy.....	106
		○ Harsha as a Patron of Art and Literature	106

15. Empires in East107-109

- Bengal 107
- Assam 108
- Orissa 109

16. South Indian Empires110-115

- Pallavas 110
- Chalukyas 114
- Chalukya's of Badami 114
- The Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi 115
- The Kadambas of Banavasi 115
- The Western Gangas of Mysore 115

17. Legacy of Ancient History: Transition to Medieval Period..... 116–120

- Changes in Society 116
- Philosophy 117
- Influence on Culture of Neighboring Countries 118

- Legacy in Science and Civilization 119
- From Ancient to Medieval 119

18. Terminology Used During

Ancient Times121-126

- Vedic Period 121
- Types of Marriage in Vedic Age 122
- Rivers in Vedic Texts 122
- Jainism & Buddhism 122
- Bodhisattvas (Individual who attains nirvana by working for the welfare of the world) 123
- Magadh Empire 123
- Kushan Empire and Satavahanas 124
- Sangam Age 125
- Term Related to Irrigation in Sangam Age 125
- Gupta Period 125
- Post Gupta and Other Terms 126

19. Timeline: History of Ancient India 127-134

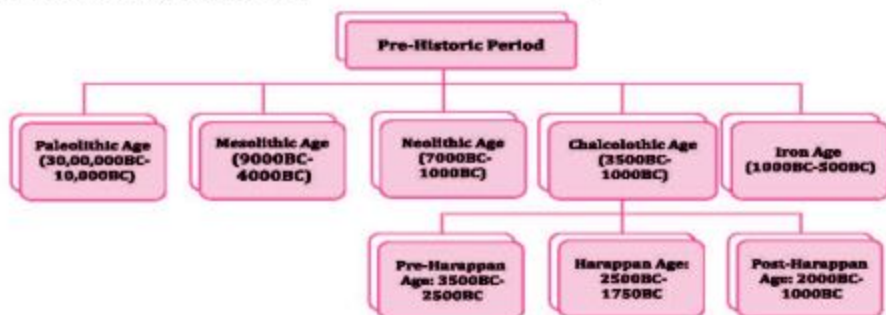
INTRODUCTION

- Numerous prehistoric sites have been discovered in the Indian subcontinent since the 19th century, and new approaches and viewpoints have improved our knowledge of the stone age—the period of human history that lasted the longest.
- The most plentiful and significant sources are three divisions of history:
 - Prehistory** is the study of events that took place prior to the development of writing, which is typically represented by the three stone eras.
 - Proto-history:** When a civilization has not yet acquired writing but is recorded in the written records of a contemporary literate civilisation, it alludes to a period between prehistory and history. For instance, no one has yet been able to read the script of the Harappan civilization.
 - History** is the study of the past after writing was invented and the study of literate societies using written and archaeological evidence.

PRE-HISTORIC PERIOD:

30,00,000BC – 600BC

- It consists of 5 periods – Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic, Chalcolithic & Iron Age.
- No written records are available.
- Archaeological remains:** stone tools, pottery, artefacts, and metal implements used by prehistoric people.
- Robert Bruce Foote:** discovered what was probably the first Palaeolithic tool discovered in India — the "Pallavaram handaxe". R. B Foote is known as the "father of Prehistoric Archaeology". Robert Bruce Foote deserves credit for conducting an early, thorough study of Indian prehistory.
- Sir Mortimer Wheeler:** contributed towards our knowledge of the prehistoric cultures of India and their sequence.



HISTORICAL SOURCES

Sources	Evidences	Information
Material Remains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Radio-Carbon Dating: Is a method for determining the age of an object. Dendro-Chronology: The scientific method of dating tree rings (also called growth rings) to the exact year they were formed. Structures: Grand Stone temples of Southern India; Brick Monasteries of the Eastern India; vertical & horizontal excavations of mounds; Megaliths (South India) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almost every aspect of lifestyle like, use of pottery type, house construction design, agriculture (grains produced), animals domesticated, type of tools, weapons etc. and burial practices of the time and geography. Vertical Excavations: provides chronological sequence of material culture. Horizontal Excavation: Gives complete idea of particular culture.

<p style="text-align: center;">Coins</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The study of coins is called Numismatics. • Coins excavated and collected from the surface and catalogued in various museums throughout the country and outside. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not many symbols used in earliest coins; Names of the Kings or issuer (gilds/merchants), Gods or dates are mentioned in the coins from later periods; help in construction of religious, cultural and economic history with chronology. • Local and cross-border transactions that used these coins tell us about various ruling dynasties and extent of their rule. • Metal and number of the coins indicates the level of trade, commerce and wealth in a Kingdom. • Only a few coins belonging to post-Gupta times indicate the decline of trade & commerce in that period.
<p style="text-align: center;">Inscriptions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epigraphy: The study of Inscriptions • Paleography: Study of old writings on inscriptions and other records. • Inscriptions carved on seals, stone pillars, rocks, copper plates, temple walls and bricks or images. • Earliest in Prakrit (300 BC), later in Sanskrit and further later in regional languages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pictographic Harappan Inscriptions are yet to be deciphered. • South India: Inscriptions on temple walls. • Inscriptions conveyed various information like royal orders and decisions regarding social, religious and administrative matters (e.g., Ashokan Inscriptions) to officials and people in general. • Ashokan Inscriptions: Scripts used - Brahmi, Kharosthi, Greek & Arabic. • Donations, land grants, and the achievements of Kings and Conquerors (Samudragupta and Pulkeshin 2nd etc.).
<p style="text-align: center;">Literary Sources:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The four Vedas, Ramayana and Mahabharata, Smritis and Dharmasutras, Epics, Jain & Buddhist texts, poetry, Sangam Literature, plays etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In India, the oldest manuscripts were written on birch bark & palm leaves. • Kautilya's 'Arthashastra' gives exhaustive coverage of affairs that concern a King and his economy, polity, administration and society at large. • "Purana" provides dynastic history upto Gupta rule. • These sources also indicate the usage of language, script and style of writing. • Rajatarangini: This is the famous book written by Kalhana and depicts the social and political life of 12th century CE Kashmir. • Sangam literature: This is the earliest south Indian literature, produced by poets who assembled together (Sangam), and provides valuable information about the social, economic and political life of the people living in deltaic Tamil Nadu. • Literary work of Kalidasa: The works of the great poet Kalidasa comprises kavyas and dramas, the most important being Abhijnanasakuntalam.