CBSE Class 12 History 2026 — Set 2 — Answer Key

English Medium

Time Allowed: 3 Hours

General Instructions:

1. This is an answer key — each question is shown with its correct answer and a step-by-step explanation.
2. Questions appear in the original paper order.

Q.1

Who among the following rulers issued the first gold coins ?

(a) Vakataka rulers
(b) Mauryan rulers
(c) Gupta rulers
(d) Kushana rulers <<

Explanation:
The Kushana rulers are credited with issuing the first gold coins in India.
Kushana kings like Vima Kadphises introduced gold coinage in the Indian subcontinent.

Q.2

Which one of the following statements is correct regarding Raja Gotmi Puta Siri Satkani ?

(a) He was the best known Raja of Shaka dynasty.
(b) He ensured no intermarriage amongst members of the four varnas. <<
(c) He himself entered into marriage alliance of the kin of Gupta rulers.
(d) He rebuilt Sudershan and Sambhar lakes.

Explanation:
Gautamiputra Satakarni (Raja Gotmi Puta Siri Satkani) was a Satavahana ruler who claimed to have ensured that there was no intermarriage among the members of the four varnas, thus upholding the varna order.

Q.3

Given below are two statements as Assertion (A) and Reason (R). Read them carefully and answer the question by choosing correct options :
Assertion (A) : Like Buddhism, Jainism also spread to many parts of India.
Reason (R) : Jaina scholars produced literature in various languages like Tamil, Prakrit and Sanskrit etc.

(a) Both (A) and (R) are correct and (R) is the correct explanation of (A).
(b) Both (A) and (R) are correct, but (R) is not the correct explanation of (A).

<<

(c) (A) is correct but, (R) is not correct.

(d) (A) is not correct but, (R) is correct.

Explanation:

Both the Assertion and Reason are correct.

Jainism did spread to many parts of India, and Jaina scholars did produce literature in Tamil, Prakrit, and Sanskrit.

However, the production of literature in multiple languages is a result of Jainism's spread, not the cause of it.

Hence (R) is not the correct explanation of (A).

Q.4

Read the following statements regarding Buddhism teaching and choose the correct options :

I. The world is transient and constantly changing.

II. It is soulless and there is nothing eternal in it.

III. Sorrows and sufferings are intrinsic to human existence.

IV. Renouncing the world is essential for living.

(a) I, II, III are correct. <<

(b) II, III, IV are correct.

(c) I, III, IV are correct.

(d) I, II, IV are correct.

Explanation:

Buddhist teachings state that (I) the world is transient and constantly changing (anicca), (II) it is soulless and there is nothing eternal (anatta), and (III) sorrows and sufferings are intrinsic to human existence (dukkha).

Statement IV is incorrect — Buddhism does not say renouncing the world is essential; it advocates the Middle Path, not extreme renunciation.

Q.5

Match Column-I with Column-II and choose the correct option :

Column-I (Scholars): a. Kautilya, b. Harishena, c. Banabhatta, d. Bharat
Column-II (Work): i. Harshacharita, ii. Arthashastra, iii. Natyashastra, iv. Prayag Prashasti

(a) a-iii, b-ii, c-i, d-iv
(b) a-ii, b-iii, c-iv, d-i
(c) a-ii, b-iv, c-i, d-iii <<
(d) a-iii, b-ii, c-iv, d-i

Explanation:
Kautilya wrote Arthashastra (ii), Harishena wrote Prayag Prashasti (iv), Banabhatta wrote Harshacharita (i), and Bharat wrote Natyashastra (iii).
So the correct match is a-ii, b-iv, c-i, d-iii.

Q.6

Which of the following is a correct statement regarding Eklavya ?

(a) Eklavya was the favourite student of Drona.
(b) Eklavya belonged to Kuru lineage.
(c) Eklavya offered his right thumb to Drona as Guru Dakshina. <<
(d) Eklavya was a co-student and friend of Arjuna.

Explanation:
Eklavya, who had learned archery by making a clay image of Drona and practising before it, was asked by Drona for his right thumb as Guru Dakshina.
Eklavya complied and cut off his right thumb.
He was not a favourite student of Drona, did not belong to the Kuru lineage, and was not a co-student of Arjuna.

Q.7

Look at the given image and identify the ancient sculptural panel from the options :

(a) A sculpture in Brihideshwar
(b) A sculpture from Mahabalipuram <<
(c) A sculpture in Amravati

(d) A sculpture in Sanchi

Explanation:

The image on page 9 of the paper shows a very large open-air rock-cut bas-relief sculptural panel carved into a granite boulder/rock face, with massive figures of animals (elephants, horses) and humans carved in high relief at ground level, with the rocky hillside rising behind.

This is unmistakably the 'Descent of the Ganges / Arjuna's Penance' panel at Mahabalipuram (Tamil Nadu) — the largest open-air rock relief in the world, characteristic of the Pallava-era monuments at Mahabalipuram.

The scale (spanning a huge granite outcrop), the rock-face setting, the style of the animal figures, and the overall composition are all hallmarks of Mahabalipuram, not Sanchi.

Sanchi sculptures are sandstone panels on a stupa's railing/torana — smaller, free-standing carved slabs, not a hillside rock-cut relief.

The current answer (D) 'A sculpture in Sanchi' is incorrect.

The correct answer is (B) 'A sculpture from Mahabalipuram' (option index 1).

Q.8

Who among the following was appointed Qazi or Judge of Delhi by Sultan Mohd. Bin Tughlaq ?

(a) Al-Biruni

(b) Mahmud Ali Balkhi

(c) Ibn Batuta <<

(d) Seydi Ali Reis

Explanation:

Ibn Batuta was appointed as the Qazi (Judge) of Delhi by Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq.

Ibn Batuta was a Moroccan traveller who visited India during the 14th century and served the Sultan in this judicial capacity.

Q.9

Identify the correct statements regarding the early Bhakti movement in South

India :

I. Alvars and Nayanars travelled from place to place singing hymns in Tamil.

II. One of the major anthologies of compositions by the Alvars, 'Amuktamalyada', described as Tamil Vedas.

III. Karaikkal Ammaiyar and Andal were the women devotees of Nayanara and Alvar Tradition.

IV. Both Nayanars and Alvar saints were revered by the Vellala Peasants.

(a) I, II and III are correct.

(b) II, III and IV are correct.

(c) I, II and IV are correct.

(d) I, III and IV are correct. <<

Explanation:

Statements I, III, and IV are correct.

Alvars and Nayanars did travel singing hymns in Tamil;

Karaikkal Ammaiyar (Nayanar) and Andal (Alvar) were women devotees;

and both traditions were revered by Vellala peasants.

Statement II is incorrect — 'Amuktamalyada' was written by the Vijayanagara king Krishnadeva Raya, not the Alvars.

The Alvar anthology is 'Nalayira Divya Prabandham', described as Tamil Vedas.

Q.10

Arrange the following dynasties in chronological order and choose the correct option :

I. Saluva dynasty

II. Sangama dynasty

III. Aravidu dynasty

IV. Tuluva dynasty

(a) I, II, IV, III

(b) II, I, III, IV

(c) IV, III, I, II

(d) II, I, IV, III <<

Explanation:

The dynasties of the Vijayanagara Empire in chronological order are: Sangama (1336–1485), Saluva (1485–1505), Tuluva (1505–1570), Aravidu (1570–1652).

So the order is II (Sangama), I (Saluva), IV (Tuluva), III (Aravidu).

Q.11

Identify the Sufi Saint with the help of following information and select the correct option :

- His Hospice was on the bank of river Yamuna in Delhi.
- His disciple was Amir Khusro.
- His disciples addressed him as Sultan-ul-Mashakh.

(a) Shaikh Muinuddin Chisti

(b) Shaikh Nasiruddin Chirag-i-Delhi

(c) Shaikh Qutubuddin Bhaktiyar Kaki

(d) Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya <<

Explanation:

Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya had his khanqah (hospice) on the banks of the Yamuna in Delhi.

Amir Khusro was his famous disciple, and he was addressed as Sultan-ul-Mashakh (king of the spirituals) by his disciples.

Q.12

Choose the correct option to fill the blank :

Tribal Communities during 16th and 17th centuries — Punjab: Lohani, Assam: ?, Mewar: Bhils

(a) Ahoms <<

(b) Gonds

(c) Meenas

(d) Khasis

Explanation:

The Ahoms were the dominant tribal community in Assam during the 16th and 17th

centuries.

They established a powerful kingdom in the Brahmaputra valley and successfully resisted Mughal attempts to conquer Assam.

Q.13

Which one of the following pairs is correctly matched ?

(Travellers of Medieval period — Native Region)

(a) Peter Mundi – Spain

(b) Antonio Monserrate – Portugal

(c) Abdal-Razzak – Morocco

(d) Marco Polo – Italy <<

Explanation:

Marco Polo was from Italy (Venice).

Peter Mundy was from England (Cornwall), Antonio Monserrate was from Spain, and Abd al-Razzaq was from Persia (modern Iran).

Only the pair Marco Polo – Italy is correctly matched.

Q.14

Which among the following was not the major factor for the development of agriculture during Mughal India ?

(a) Availability of land in abundance

(b) Availability of cheap labour

(c) Mobility among the peasants

(d) Availability of tube-wells for irrigation <<

Explanation:

Tube-wells were not available during Mughal India as they are a modern technology.

The major factors for agricultural development in Mughal India included abundance of land, cheap labour, and peasant mobility.

Irrigation was done through wells, canals, and tanks, not tube-wells.

Q.15

How did the arrival of Santhals in the Raj Mahal hills affect the Paharias ?

Choose the correct options :

(a) The Paharias were displaced and moved to the upper hills. <<

(b) The Santhals helped the Paharias in expanding agriculture.

(c) The Paharias spread into the Damin-i-Koh to avoid conflict with the Santhals.

(d) The Santhals and Paharias collaborated against the British.

Explanation:

When the Santhals arrived in the Rajmahal hills and settled there, the Paharias were gradually displaced and pushed to the upper hills.

The British encouraged Santhal settlement for agriculture, which squeezed the Paharia territory and way of life.

Q.16

Arrange the following historical events in chronological order and choose the correct option :

I. Champaran Satyagraha

II. Kheda Satyagraha

III. Jallianwala Bagh Incident

IV. Rowlatt Act

(a) I, II, III, IV

(b) I, II, IV, III <<

(c) II, III, I, IV

(d) II, IV, III, I

Explanation:

The chronological order is: Champaran Satyagraha (1917), Kheda Satyagraha (1918), Rowlatt Act (February 1919), Jallianwala Bagh Incident (April 1919).

So the correct order is I, II, IV, III.

Q.17

Find the odd one out from the following :

(British Officers — Policy)

(a) Dalhousie – Doctrine of Lapse
(b) Cornwallis – Permanent Settlement
(c) Wellesley – Western Education <<
(d) Hardinge – Enfield rifles for soldiers

Explanation:
Wellesley is incorrectly associated with Western Education.
Western Education policy is associated with Macaulay and was implemented under Lord William Bentinck.
Wellesley is known for the Subsidiary Alliance system.
Dalhousie–Doctrine of Lapse, Cornwallis–Permanent Settlement, and Hardinge–Enfield rifles are all correctly matched.

Q.18
Who amongst the following leaders struggled to free Vietnam from the imperialist control ?

(a) Nguyen Hue
(b) Ho-Chi-Minh <<
(c) Qin Shi Huang
(d) Mao-Ze-Dang

Explanation:
Ho Chi Minh led the struggle to free Vietnam from French and then American imperialist control.
He founded the Viet Minh independence movement and led North Vietnam.
Nguyen Hue was an 18th-century ruler;
Qin Shi Huang was the first Chinese emperor;
Mao Zedong was the Chinese Communist leader.

Q.19
Which of the following statements regarding Nana Saheb are correct ? Choose the correct option :
I. Nana Saheb was the successor of Peshwa Baji Rao-II.
II. Nana Saheb joined the revolt of 1857 from Kanpur.

III. His rebellion collapsed in the beginning of 1857.

IV. Nana Saheb went to Nepal in 1857.

(a) Only I and III are correct.

(b) Only II and IV are correct.

(c) Only III and IV are correct.

(d) Only I and II are correct. <<

Explanation:

Nana Saheb (Dhundu Pant) was the adopted son and successor of Peshwa Baji Rao II (Statement I is correct).

He led the revolt of 1857 from Kanpur (Statement II is correct).

Statement III is incorrect — the rebellion did not collapse at the beginning; it spread widely.

Statement IV is also contested as historical sources differ on his fate after the revolt.

Q.20

Who amongst the following was the head of the 'Advisory Committee' of the Constituent Assembly ?

(a) B.R. Ambedkar

(b) Jawaharlal Nehru

(c) Sardar Patel <<

(d) Rajendra Prasad

Explanation:

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was the head of the Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights and Minorities in the Constituent Assembly.

B.R. Ambedkar chaired the Drafting Committee, Jawaharlal Nehru chaired the Union Constitution Committee, and Rajendra Prasad was the President of the Constituent Assembly.

Q.21

Identify the British Officer with the help of following information :

- Was a Physician.
- Organised Zoo in Calcutta.
- Did survey of Bengal.
- He assumed family name as Hamilton.

(a) Col. Mackenzie
(b) Francis Buchanan <<
(c) Thomas Munroe
(d) Charles Mountbatten

Explanation:
Francis Buchanan was a physician who later assumed the family name Hamilton.
He conducted surveys of Bengal and Bihar, and is also noted for organising a zoo in Calcutta (now Kolkata).
He is known for his surveys that provided valuable information about the natural history and economic conditions of India.

Q.22

(a) How did Buddha attain enlightenment ? Explain.

Answer: Siddhartha Gautama attained enlightenment at Bodh Gaya (under the Bodhi tree). After leaving his princely life, he wandered for years seeking truth. He rejected extreme asceticism as well as indulgence, discovering the Middle Path. He meditated deeply under the peepal tree at Gaya for 49 days, resisting all temptations (Mara). He attained Bodhi (enlightenment/Nibbana) and became the Buddha — the Enlightened One. He then understood the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path, which became the foundation of Buddhist teaching.

Explanation:
Marks: 3. Answer in 60–80 words.
Key points: renunciation of palace, Middle Path discovery, meditation at Bodh Gaya, attainment of Nibbana/Bodhi, understanding of Four Noble Truths.

OR

Q.22

(b) How has Buddhist literature helped in understanding the sculpture of Sanchi ? Explain.

Answer: Buddhist literature, particularly Jataka tales and texts like the Avadana and Mahavastu, has been invaluable in decoding the sculptural panels at Sanchi. The Jataka stories — which narrate the previous lives of the Buddha — correspond directly to scenes carved on the gateways (toranas) and railings of the Sanchi stupa. Scholars used these texts to identify figures, events, and symbols depicted in the carvings. The literature helps contextualise scenes of the Buddha's life, his previous births, and significant events like the Great Departure, without which the visual narratives would remain obscure.

Explanation:

Marks: 3. Answer in 60–80 words.

Key points: Jataka tales, Avadana texts, identification of sculptural scenes, Great Departure, narratives of Buddha's past lives.

Q.23

Analyse the causes of conflict between Kauravas and Pandavas that resulted in the battle of Mahabharat.

Answer: The conflict between Kauravas and Pandavas arose from multiple causes: (1) Rivalry over the Kuru kingdom — Duryodhana refused to give the Pandavas their rightful share of the kingdom. (2) The game of dice — Yudhishthira lost everything including Draupadi in a rigged game orchestrated by Shakuni. The humiliation of Draupadi in the royal court deepened enmity. (3) Jealousy — Duryodhana was envious of the Pandavas' prosperity at Indraprastha. (4) Failed peace negotiations — Krishna's mission as a peace envoy failed as Duryodhana refused to give even five villages. These grievances ultimately led to the Kurukshetra war.

Explanation:

Marks: 3. Answer in 60–80 words.

Key points: succession dispute, game of dice, humiliation of Draupadi, jealousy, failure

of peace negotiations.

Q.24

Why were regular hunting expeditions undertaken by the Mughal Emperors ? Explain.

Answer: Mughal emperors undertook regular hunting expeditions for several reasons: (1) Display of power — hunting was a demonstration of the emperor's bravery and physical prowess to the nobility and subjects. (2) Administrative purpose — these expeditions allowed the emperor to tour the empire, observe conditions, and dispense justice to people directly. (3) Military training — hunting in the forest served as training for soldiers in skills like tracking, coordination, and the use of weapons. (4) Intelligence gathering — the emperor could directly assess the loyalty of local zamindars and chieftains during these tours.

Explanation:

Marks: 3. Answer in 60–80 words.

Key points: demonstration of power, administrative tour, military training, intelligence gathering.

Q.25

Examine the role of Guru Gobind Singhji in the Sikhism.

Answer: Guru Gobind Singh (1666–1708), the tenth Sikh Guru, made transformative contributions to Sikhism: (1) Founding the Khalsa (1699) — he created the Khalsa Panth (community of the pure) at Anandpur Sahib on Baisakhi, initiating the Panj Pyare with amrit ceremony. (2) Five Ks (Panj Kakars) — he introduced the code of conduct with five external symbols. (3) Gurugranth Sahib — he declared the Adi Granth as the eternal Guru, ending the line of human Gurus. (4) Military reorganisation — he transformed Sikhs into a militant community to resist Mughal oppression and protect the weak.

Explanation:

Marks: 3. Answer in 60–80 words.

Key points: founding of Khalsa (1699), Panj Pyare, Panj Kakars, Guru Granth Sahib as eternal Guru, militarisation of the Sikh community.

Q.26

"Mahatma Gandhiji with the Charkha has become the most abiding image of Indian Nationalism." Substantiate this statement with examples.

Answer: The charkha (spinning wheel) became a powerful symbol of Indian nationalism under Gandhi's leadership: (1) Swadeshi movement — Gandhi urged Indians to spin their own cloth and boycott British mill-made goods, making the charkha an act of economic resistance against British imperialism. (2) Self-reliance — spinning represented swaraj (self-rule) at the individual level; Gandhi believed economic independence was the basis of political freedom. (3) Unity — the charkha transcended caste and class boundaries, as every Indian, rich or poor, could participate. (4) Symbol on the Congress flag — the charkha appeared on the Indian National Congress flag, cementing its nationalist identity.

Explanation:

Marks: 3. Answer in 60–80 words.

Key points: Swadeshi, boycott of British goods, economic self-reliance, charkha on the Congress flag, symbol of unity.

Q.27

(a) Explain the events that took place on the very first day (10th May) of the rebellion of 1857 at Meerut.

Answer: On 10th May 1857 at Meerut: The Indian sepoys of the 3rd Cavalry had already been imprisoned for refusing to use the greased cartridges. On this day, fellow soldiers broke open the jail and freed their comrades. The sepoys then attacked and killed British officers and their families. They set fire to British bungalows and the European quarters. After these acts, the rebelling soldiers left Meerut and marched towards Delhi, arriving the next morning. The Meerut uprising marked the beginning of the widespread revolt of 1857.

Explanation:

Marks: 3. Answer in 60–80 words.

Key points: freeing imprisoned sepoys, killing of British officers, burning of bungalows, march to Delhi on 10 May 1857.

OR

Q.27

(b) Explain the events that took place on 11th May of the rebellion of 1857 at Red Fort of Delhi.

Answer: On 11th May 1857, the sepoys from Meerut arrived at the Red Fort (Lal Qila) in Delhi. They met the ageing Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar and requested him to lead the rebellion. Initially reluctant, Bahadur Shah Zafar agreed to lend his name and moral authority to the uprising, accepting the role of symbolic leader of the revolt. The sepoys then spread across Delhi, killing British officers and civilians. The fall of Delhi to the rebels on 11–12 May was a major turning point, as it gave the revolt a central rallying point and pan-Indian significance.

Explanation:

Marks: 3. Answer in 60–80 words.

Key points: Meerut sepoys arrive at Delhi, meeting Bahadur Shah Zafar, request to lead revolt, Zafar's acceptance, Delhi falling to rebels.

Q.28

(a) Examine the characteristic features of architecture of urban centres of Mohenjodaro.

Answer: The urban planning of Mohenjodaro reveals sophisticated architectural features: (1) Citadel and Lower Town — the city was divided into two distinct sectors. The western mound (citadel) was elevated on a mud-brick platform and housed public buildings; the eastern section was the lower town with residential areas. (2) Grid pattern of streets — streets ran in straight lines crossing each other at right angles, dividing the city into rectangular blocks. (3) Great Bath — a

massive public bath (12m x 7m x 2.4m) made of baked bricks with a lime plaster, possibly used for ritual bathing. (4) Granary — a large structure (55m x 27m) for storing grain, indicating centralised control of resources. (5) Drainage system — an elaborate underground brick drainage system connected individual houses to the main drains along the streets. (6) Well-planned houses — two-storeyed houses with private wells, courtyards, and bathrooms connected to the drainage system. (7) Standardised bricks — all bricks followed a standard ratio of 1:2:4, showing meticulous planning.

Explanation:

Marks: 8. Answer in 300–350 words.

Key points: citadel/lower town division, grid-pattern streets, Great Bath, Granary, underground drainage, private wells in houses, standardised bricks.

OR

Q.28

(b) Examine the causes and the evidences of the collapse of the Harappan civilisation. (4+4=8)

Answer: CAUSES OF COLLAPSE (4 marks): Historians have proposed multiple theories: (1) Natural disasters — floods, earthquakes, or tectonic activity (the drying up of the Ghaggar-Hakra/Saraswati river) disrupted agriculture and trade. (2) Climate change — evidence suggests a shift to arid conditions reduced rainfall and agricultural productivity. (3) Ecological degradation — deforestation for fuel to fire millions of bricks led to soil erosion and desertification. (4) Disruption of trade — decline in long-distance trade with Mesopotamia weakened the urban economy. (5) Invasion theory — an older theory (Mortimer Wheeler) of Aryan invasion is now largely discredited.

EVIDENCES OF COLLAPSE (4 marks): (1) Decline of urban planning — later levels at sites like Mohenjodaro show inferior construction, unplanned streets, and use of old bricks from demolished structures. (2) Abandonment of cities — major urban centres were gradually abandoned, with population shifting to smaller rural

settlements in the east and south. (3) Decline in crafts and trade — the disappearance of Harappan-style artefacts (standardised weights, seals, fine pottery) from archaeological record. (4) Skeletal evidence — scattered human skeletons found at Mohenjodaro (the 'massacre' site), suggesting some violent disruption, though the scale is debated. (5) Absence of new construction — the granary and Great Bath ceased to be maintained, showing collapse of civic authority.

Explanation:

Marks: 8 (4+4).

Answer in 300–350 words.

Key points for causes: climate change, floods, ecological degradation, trade collapse.

Key points for evidence: inferior construction, city abandonment, disappearance of artefacts, skeletal evidence.

Q.29

(a) "Vijayanagara Kingdom flourished under conditions of unparalleled peace and prosperity during the rule of Krishandeva Raya but after his death Vijayanagara declined." Substantiate the statement with examples.

Answer: FLOURISHING UNDER KRISHNADEVA RAYA (c.1509–1529): (1) Military conquests — he defeated the Bidar Sultanate, Bijapur, Golconda, and the Gajapati ruler of Orissa, expanding the empire to its greatest extent. (2) Trade and commerce — the empire was a major hub of trade with merchants from Arabia, Persia, and Portugal visiting Vijayanagara's ports. The city was described by foreign visitors like Barbosa and Paes as one of the world's greatest cities. (3) Cultural patronage — Krishnadeva Raya himself was a scholar and poet; he patronised Telugu literature (Ashtadiggajas) and wrote Amuktamalyada. Monuments like the Vittala Temple and Hazara Rama Temple were built. (4) Agricultural prosperity — irrigation works and canals were constructed, ensuring food security. (5) Justice and administration — he was known for his just rule and effective administration.

DECLINE AFTER HIS DEATH: (1) Succession disputes — weak successors led to political instability and factional conflicts among nobles (Aravidu and others). (2) Battle of Talikota (1565) — a confederacy of the Deccan Sultanates (Bijapur, Ahmadnagar, Bidar, Golconda) decisively defeated Vijayanagara at Talikota (Rakshasi-Tangadi). The capital was looted and destroyed. (3) Loss of territory — the empire fragmented into smaller successor states under Aravidu princes. (4) Economic decline — the destruction of the city meant the loss of its trade networks and revenues.

Explanation:

Marks: 8. Answer in 300–350 words.

Key points for flourishing: military victories, trade, cultural patronage, Amuktamalyada, temple construction.

Key points for decline: succession disputes, Battle of Talikota 1565, destruction of capital.

OR

Q.29

(b) "The fortification of Vijaynagara was impressive in the medieval India." Substantiate the statement with examples.

Answer: The fortifications of Vijayanagara were among the most impressive in medieval India, as noted by foreign travellers and confirmed by archaeological excavations: (1) Scale and extent — the outermost wall of Vijayanagara enclosed an area of about 650 sq. km, making it one of the largest fortified areas in the world. The walls extended over hills and through valleys. (2) Multiple rings of walls — the city had several concentric rings of fortification, protecting the agricultural hinterland (the sacred centre and royal centre were within inner walls). (3) Construction material — the walls were built using locally available granite, laid without mortar in some sections, yet extremely durable. (4) Strategic planning — the fortifications were built to take advantage of natural features — the Tungabhadra river to the north and rocky hills providing natural barriers. Gateways were designed so that an enemy entering would be fired upon from

three sides. (5) Bastions and watch-towers — the walls had regular bastions and watchtowers for defenders. (6) Protecting agriculture — the outermost ring included agricultural fields within the fortification, ensuring food supply during a siege — an innovative feature. (7) Royal enclosure — within the innermost wall was the royal enclosure with elaborate palaces, the Mahanavami Dibba (ceremonial platform), and the Lotus Mahal, showing the integration of defence and magnificence.

Explanation:

Marks: 8. Answer in 300–350 words.

Key points: multiple rings of fortification, 650 sq. km area, granite construction, natural defences (Tungabhadra, hills), agricultural fields enclosed, gateways designed for crossfire, royal enclosure.

Q.30

(a) Describe the events that shaped the vision of the Constitution of India.

Answer: The vision of the Indian Constitution was shaped by a series of historical events and movements: (1) The Independence movement — decades of struggle against British colonialism under the INC gave the founders a commitment to democracy, civil liberties, and self-governance. (2) Partition and its violence — the traumatic Partition of 1947 reinforced the need for a secular constitution that guaranteed equal rights to all religious communities. (3) The Cabinet Mission Plan (1946) — the elections to provincial assemblies and the Constituent Assembly itself were based on the Cabinet Mission framework. (4) Objectives Resolution (December 1946) — Nehru moved this resolution outlining key principles: sovereign, democratic, federal republic; fundamental rights; protection of minorities. This became the Preamble's foundation. (5) International influences — the French Revolution's ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity; the American Bill of Rights; Irish constitution (Directive Principles); and Weimar constitution influenced the framers. (6) The Karachi Resolution (1931) — the INC's 1931 resolution on Fundamental Rights served as an early blueprint. (7) Experiences of

discrimination under British rule — gave urgency to provisions for equality and abolition of untouchability (Article 17).

Explanation:

Marks: 8. Answer in 300–350 words.

Key points: independence movement, Partition, Objectives Resolution, Karachi Resolution 1931, international influences, Cabinet Mission Plan.

OR

Q.30

(b) Describe the arguments given in the Constituent Assembly against the creation of separate electorates.

Answer: In the Constituent Assembly, several powerful arguments were made against the creation of separate electorates (as had existed under the Communal Award of 1932): (1) National unity — leaders like Sardar Patel and G.B. Pant argued that separate electorates would perpetuate communal divisions and prevent Muslims from identifying with the broader national interest, thus weakening national unity. (2) Minority vulnerability — Pant pointed out that separate electorates would isolate minorities politically; a Muslim voter would elect only Muslim candidates and have no stake in the general political process, making communities more vulnerable. (3) Lessons of Partition — the traumatic experience of Partition was cited as proof that communal politics based on separate representation leads to the demand for separate nations. Separate electorates had strengthened the Muslim League's position. (4) Against democratic principles — Ambedkar (who had earlier demanded separate electorates for Dalits in the Poona Pact context) later argued they create a permanent divide; all citizens should vote for any candidate in a united electorate. (5) Progressive Muslim voices — moderate Muslim members like Begum Aizaz Rasul argued that separate electorates were a 'suicidal weapon' that would marginalise minorities from the political mainstream. (6) Universal adult franchise as the solution — the framers argued that universal franchise gave every citizen, including minorities, a voice without the need for communal reservation.

Explanation:

Marks: 8. Answer in 300–350 words.

Key points: threat to national unity, marginalisation of minorities, lessons from Partition, Begum Aizaz Rasul's arguments, Pant's arguments, universal adult franchise as alternative.

Q.0

Source Q31 — The Malabar Coast (excerpt from Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, First century CE, about trade at present-day Kerala): 31.1 Mention the role of rivers in the promotion of trade.

Answer: Rivers played a vital role in promoting trade as they served as natural highways connecting the interior of the country to coastal ports. Traders used rivers to transport goods from the hinterland — where raw materials and produce were available — to the coastal market-towns (such as those on the Malabar Coast). River valleys also facilitated the movement of merchants and caravans, making trade between inland producing regions and coastal trading centres efficient and economical.

Explanation:

Marks: 1. Key point: rivers as natural transport highways connecting interior to coast, facilitating movement of goods.

Q.0

Source Q31 — The Malabar Coast (excerpt from Periplus of the Erythraean Sea): 31.2 Why were large number of goods traded between India and other countries ?

Answer: A large number of goods were traded between India and other countries because India possessed valuable commodities that were in high demand abroad. The Malabar Coast produced pepper and malabathrum (cinnamon) in abundance, which were luxury spices greatly desired in the Roman/Greek world. India also exported fine pearls, ivory, silk cloth, precious stones (diamonds, sapphires), and tortoise shell. In return, India received gold coins, coral, copper, tin, lead, and

glass. This complementary demand — each side producing what the other valued — drove extensive trade.

Explanation:

Marks: 1. Key points: India's abundance of spices (pepper), precious stones, ivory; demand from foreign traders;
complementary exchange of goods.

Q.0

Source Q31 — The Malabar Coast (excerpt from Periplus of the Erythraean Sea; archaeological evidence from Kodumanal, Tamil Nadu): 31.3 Give reasons for the development of bead-making industry at Kodumanal.

Answer: The bead-making industry developed at Kodumanal (Tamil Nadu) for the following reasons: (1) Availability of raw materials — Kodumanal was located in a region with access to precious and semi-precious stones (topaz, coral, sapphires, diamonds and others mentioned in the Periplus), providing the essential raw material for bead-making. (2) Trade network access — local traders brought these stones from the interior to Kodumanal, which was well-connected to coastal ports on the Malabar Coast. (3) High demand — these beads were in great demand both locally and in international markets, as foreign traders arriving at coastal ports sought such luxury goods. (4) Skilled artisans — the presence of specialised craftsmen who had developed bead-making skills contributed to the industry's growth.

Explanation:

Marks: 2. Key points: availability of precious/semi-precious stones, location near trade routes, high demand from local and foreign markets, skilled craftsmen.

Q.0

Source Q32 — 'A warning for Europe' (Bernier's warning to European kings about following the Mughal model of kingship): 32.1 Why did Bernier warn their European kings against following Mughal model of kingship ?

Answer: Bernier warned European kings against following the Mughal model because in the Mughal system, the emperor owned all the land — there was no private ownership of property by nobles or subjects. Bernier believed this prevented subjects from investing in improving their lands since they had no hereditary ownership rights. He argued this led to neglect of cultivation, decay of cities, and general impoverishment. He felt European kingdoms flourished because private ownership incentivised investment and improvement, whereas Mughal lands would become 'deserts and solitudes of beggars and barbarians'.

Explanation:

Marks: 1. Key point: Mughal emperor owned all land →
no private property →
no incentive to invest →
decay and impoverishment, unlike Europe's private ownership model.

Q.0

Source Q32 — 'A warning for Europe' (Bernier on Mughal kingship): 32.2 Mention any one difference between Mughal & European land-ownership.

Answer: In the Mughal system, all land theoretically belonged to the emperor; nobles (mansabdars) held jagirs only as temporary assignments revocable by the emperor and had no hereditary right over land. In contrast, in Europe, land was privately owned by nobles and landlords, who could pass it on to their heirs. This hereditary private ownership in Europe created an incentive for landowners to invest in and improve their estates.

Explanation:

Marks: 1. Key point: Mughal — emperor owns all land, no hereditary private ownership;
Europe — private hereditary land ownership by nobles/landlords.

Q.0

Source Q32 — 'A warning for Europe' (Bernier on Mughal kingship): 32.3 How did Bernier's description influence the western theorists from 18th

century onwards ? Explain.

Answer: Bernier's description of Mughal India profoundly influenced Western political and economic thought from the 18th century onwards: (1) Concept of 'Oriental Despotism' — Bernier's portrayal of the Mughal emperor as an absolute owner of all land contributed to Montesquieu's and later theorists' concept of 'Oriental Despotism', contrasting Asian tyranny with European liberty. (2) Karl Marx's 'Asiatic Mode of Production' — Marx drew on accounts like Bernier's to theorise about the 'Asiatic Mode of Production', where the state owned all land and there was no private property, preventing the development of capitalism in Asia as happened in Europe. (3) Justification for colonialism — Western theorists used such descriptions to argue that Asian societies were backward and incapable of progress, providing an intellectual justification for European colonialism and the 'civilising mission'. (4) Economic policy debates — ideas about property rights and their role in economic development (echoing Bernier) influenced debates about agricultural policy in British colonial India.

Explanation:

Marks: 2. Key points: concept of Oriental Despotism (Montesquieu), Marx's Asiatic Mode of Production, justification for colonialism, property rights debates.

Q.0

Source Q33 — 'On clearance and settled cultivation' (Buchanan's account passing through a village in the lower Rajmahal hills): 33.1 How was the landscape described regarding cultivation ?

Answer: Buchanan described the landscape as exceedingly fine. He noted the narrow valleys of rice winding in all directions, cleared lands with scattered trees, and rocky hills that together made the view beautiful. However, he observed that what the area lacked was visible signs of progress and a vastly extended and improved cultivation, though he felt the country was highly susceptible (capable) of such improvement.

Explanation:

Marks: 1. Key points: exceedingly fine view, rice in narrow valleys, cleared lands with trees, rocky hills, but lack of progress visible, potential for improvement.

Q.0

Source Q33 — 'On clearance and settled cultivation' (Buchanan on Rajmahal hills): 33.2 Which crops were recommended for expanding agriculture ?

Answer: Buchanan recommended planting Asan and Palas trees (for rearing Tassar silk worms and Lac production). He also suggested cultivating Palmyra (Plamira) and Mahua (Mowa) on land not fit for regular cultivation. For the suitable land, he recommended clearing it and bringing it under settled cultivation, primarily for rice and other crops.

Explanation:

Marks: 1. Key points: Asan and Palas (for Tassar silk/Lac), Palmyra (Plamira), Mahua (Mowa) on non-arable land;
rice for valleys.

Q.0

Source Q33 — 'On clearance and settled cultivation' (Buchanan on Rajmahal hills): 33.3 Explain the proposal given by Buchanan for utilizing the land for economic development.

Answer: Buchanan proposed a systematic plan for economic utilisation of the land in the Rajmahal hills: (1) Silk and Lac plantations — he recommended that plantations of Asan and Palas trees should be established to support Tassar (Tassar silk worm) cultivation and Lac production, replacing woods to the greatest extent that demand would permit. These were high-value commercial products. (2) Clearing and cultivation — the remaining land should be cleared of jungle and brought under settled cultivation for crops. (3) Utilising marginal land — land not fit for regular crop cultivation should be used for growing Palmyra (Plamira) and Mahua (Mowa) trees, which had economic uses (toddy, oil, food). (4) Overall

vision — Buchanan's proposal reflected the colonial administrative mindset of maximising economic productivity through settled agriculture and commercial crops, replacing the existing forest-based livelihoods of the hill communities.

Explanation:

Marks: 2. Key points: Asan/Palas plantations for silk and Lac, clearing land for cultivation, Palmyra/Mahua on marginal land, colonial vision of settled cultivation over forest economy.

Q.34

Section E — Map Based Question: 34.1 On the given political outline map of India, locate and label the following places with appropriate signs or symbols: (i) Banawali — a mature Harappan site; (ii) Kannauj — An important town from early states; (iii)(a) Ajmer — A city under Mughals OR (iii)(b) Bidar — A medieval town. 34.2 On the same political map of India, two places have been marked as A and B as the centres of Indian National Movement. Identify them and write their correct names on the lines drawn near them. (3+2=5 marks)

Answer: A = Champaran; B = Calcutta (Kolkata)

Explanation:

Map read from p031.jpg (page 31 of 32).

Dot A is in the northern Gangetic plain just below the Nepal border, east of centre — placing it in Bihar at ~26-27°N, ~84-85°E, which matches Champaran (site of Gandhi's 1917 Satyagraha, a key National Movement centre).

Dot B is south-east of A in the eastern coastal region near the Ganga delta at ~22-23°N, ~88°E, with a right-margin arrow pointing to it from the Bay of Bengal side — this matches Calcutta (Kolkata), the foremost centre of the Indian National Movement (Partition of Bengal 1905, multiple Congress sessions, Non-cooperation Movement).