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## PRELIMS SHORT NOTES

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**1979-2024 PYQ ANALYSIS**

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- 38.** Recently, the term “pumped-storage hydropower” is actually and appropriately discussed in the context of which one of the following ?
- Irrigation of terraced crop fields
  - Lift irrigation of cereal crops
  - Long duration energy storage
  - Rainwater harvesting system

### Source used by UPSC for this Question

Source: Article in **The Hindu**

Theme: Renewable Energy Sources

Current Linkage: [Stage set for laying foundation for two pumped storage hydropower projects in Andhra Pradesh](#)

### Explanation and Additional content from Source used by UPSC

Pumped-storage hydropower is a **type of energy storage system** that helps **store surplus electricity generated** during low-demand periods and supplies it during peak demand.

### Solve with Logic and Minimal prior Knowledge

Such Questions can become **Bonus Questions** if you can **keep calm** and identify the **Keyword**.

Here, the **Keyword** is “**Hydropower**”, which is **related to energy generation**. In the given options **only option (c)** is related to energy.

### To-the-Point Content from Sources used by UPSC (Direct Questions in UPSC Prelims’24 from this section)

- Source: Indian Express** - [Explained: Breakthrough in battery tech and Solid-state batteries](#)
  - Solid-state batteries** use a solid electrolyte instead of the liquid or gel electrolytes found in lithium-ion batteries. They enable lithium ions to move between the anode and cathode during charge and discharge cycles.
  - Main Characteristics:** **1.Solid Electrolyte:** Made from ceramics, polymers, or sulfides, offering improved safety and thermal stability. **2.High Energy Density:** Up to twice energy density of lithium-ion batteries. **3.Better Safety:** Eliminates the risk of fire due to non-flammable components. **4.Longer Life:** Minimal degradation over charge/discharge cycles.
  - How It Functions:** Lithium ions move through the solid electrolyte between the cathode and anode during charging and discharging.
  - Pros:** **Improved safety, higher energy density & long lifespan.** Compact design for applications requiring lightweight & dense storage.
  - Cons:** **1.High manufacturing costs and scalability challenges. 2.Temperature sensitivity of some materials. 3.Limited commercial availability, mostly in research stages.**
  - Uses:** **1.Electric Vehicles (EVs)** for longer range and improved safety. **2.Consumer electronics** like smartphones and laptops. **3.Medical devices** requiring reliable, compact batteries. **4.Aerospace applications** such as satellites and drones.
- Source: pv India** - [World’s largest Compressed Air Energy Storage facility commences full operation in China](#)
  - Compressed Air Energy Storage** stores energy by compressing air in **underground caverns or high-pressure containers** and releasing it to drive turbines for electricity generation.
  - Salient Points:** **1.Energy Storage:** Converts electrical energy into mechanical energy during compression. **2.Energy Recovery:** Releases stored air through turbines to generate electricity.
  - Types:** **1.Diabatic CAES:** Heat from compression is lost to the environment, requiring external fuel for reheating. **2.Adiabatic CAES:** Heat is stored and reused during expansion for higher efficiency.
  - Uses:** **1.Utility-Scale Storage:** Stores large amounts of energy for grid support. **2.Renewable Energy:** Stores energy from solar & wind.
  - Strengths:** **1.Large storage capacity** and long duration. **2.Low operational costs** compared to chemical batteries. **3.Long lifespan** (decades).
  - Weaknesses:** **1.Geographical dependence:** Requires suitable underground caverns or storage facilities. **2.Energy losses** due to compression and decompression processes. **3.Lower efficiency** (~40–70%) compared to other storage technologies.
- Source: The Hindu** - [Graphene Supercapacitors fuel next-gen wearables](#)
  - Supercapacitors** (ultracapacitors) - energy storage devices that store energy electrostatically between 2 electrodes separated by electrolyte.
  - Main Characteristics:** **1.High Power Density:** Delivers bursts of energy rapidly. **2.Short Charging Time:** **Charges in seconds to minutes.** **3.Long Lifespan:** Capable of **millions of charge/discharge cycles.** **4.Energy Storage Mechanism:** Stores energy through physical separation of charges, **not chemical reactions.**
  - Uses:** **1.Transportation:** Used in hybrid vehicles and regenerative braking. **2.Grid Systems:** Provides short-term energy for grid balancing. **3.Electronics:** Backup power for devices like smartphones and memory systems.
  - Merits:** **1.Extremely fast** charge/discharge cycles. **2.Very high cycle life** with no significant degradation. **3.Operates efficiently** over a wide **temperature range.**
  - Demerits:** **1.Low energy density** compared to batteries. **2.Not suitable for long-duration** energy storage. **3.High cost** for large-scale systems.

### PYQs asked by UPSC since 1979 on this theme

- 88.** With reference to solar water pumps, consider the following statements :
- Solar power can be used for running surface pumps and not for submersible pumps.
  - Solar power can be used for running centrifugal pumps and not the ones with piston.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?
- 1 only
  - 2 only
  - Both 1 and 2
  - Neither 1 nor 2

- 36.** ‘Net metering’ is sometimes seen in the news in the context of promoting the
- production and use of solar energy by the households/consumers
  - use of piped natural gas in the kitchens of households
  - installation of CNG kits in motor-cars
  - installation of water meters in urban households



39. "Membrane Bioreactors" are often discussed in the context of :

2024

- Assisted reproductive technologies
- Drug delivery nanotechnologies
- Vaccine production technologies
- Wastewater treatment technologies



### Source used by UPSC for this Question

Source: Article in **Down To Earth**

Theme: Technology in Governance

Current linkage: [India is adopting advanced sewage wastewater treatment tech](#)



### Explanation and Additional content from Source used by UPSC

Membrane Bioreactors (MBRs) are **advanced systems used in wastewater treatment** that combine biological processes (e.g., activated sludge) with membrane filtration.



### Solve with Logic and Minimal prior Knowledge

Such Questions can become **Bonus Questions** if you can **keep calm and identify the Keyword**. Here, the **Keyword** is "Membrane", which is generally **related with filtration of water**. In the given options only option (d) is related to water filtration.



### To-the-Point Content from Sources used by UPSC (Direct Questions in UPSC Prelims'24 from this section)

1. Source: **phys.org** - [Researchers develop novel Reverse Osmosis membrane](#)

- Reverse Osmosis (RO)** is a **water purification process** that uses a semi-permeable membrane to remove **ions, molecules, and larger particles from water**. Works by applying pressure to **overcome osmotic pressure** and drive water through the membrane.
- Notable Features:** 1.**Membrane Pore Size:** ~0.0001 microns (removes salts, **microorganisms**, and most dissolved organic compounds). 2.**Efficiency:** Removes **95–99% of dissolved salts, bacteria, and viruses**.
- Uses:** 1.**Desalination:** Produces potable water from seawater or brackish water. 2.**Industrial Use:** Purifies water for pharmaceuticals, power plants, and electronics. 3.**Wastewater Reuse:** Removes impurities for water recycling.
- Merits:** 1.Produces high-quality, contaminant-free water. 2.Can treat a wide variety of water types, **including seawater**.
- Demerits:** 1.**High energy consumption** (due to pressure requirements). 2.**Requires pre-treatment** to prevent fouling and scaling of membranes. 3.**Wastes a significant amount of water** (30–50% in some systems).

2. Source: **MDPI** - [Advances in High-Performance Nanofiltration Membranes Facilitated by Two-Dimensional Materials](#)

- Nanofiltration** is a pressure-driven membrane filtration process that **removes divalent and larger monovalent ions**, organic molecules, and pathogens from water. **Falls between reverse osmosis (RO) and ultrafiltration (UF)** in terms of membrane pore size.
- Notable Features:** 1.**Membrane Pore Size:** ~0.001 microns (retains divalent salts, small organic molecules). 2.**Selective Permeability:** Allows passage of **monovalent ions** like **sodium** but **rejects divalent ions** like **calcium and sulfate**.
- Uses:** 1.**Hardness Removal:** Used in water softening by removing calcium and magnesium ions. 2.**Agriculture:** Produces water for irrigation by removing specific salts. 3.**Food and Beverage:** Concentrates or separates components in dairy and juice industries. 4.**Industrial Wastewater:** Removes heavy metals and organic contaminants.
- Merits:** 1.Operates at lower pressure than RO, saving energy. 2.Retains beneficial minerals in water while removing hardness.
- Demerits:** 1.**Less effective for desalination than RO** (cannot remove all monovalent salts like sodium). 2.**Membrane fouling** from organic and particulate matter requires pre-treatment.

3. Source: **Down To Earth** - [Reuse of treated wastewater, faecal coliform challenge in Delhi](#)

- Activated Sludge Process (ASP)** is a **biological wastewater treatment process** that uses microorganisms to break down organic matter & nutrients in aerated tanks.
- Uses:** 1.**Municipal Wastewater Treatment:** Removes organic matter, nitrogen, and phosphorus. 2.**Industrial Wastewater:** Treats effluents from food, paper, and chemical industries.
- Merits:** 1.Highly effective in removing **organic pollutants (BOD and COD)**. 2.Can be modified to remove nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus).
- Demerits:** 1.Requires large tanks and significant energy for aeration. 2.Sludge management (disposal or further treatment) is necessary. 3.Sensitive to shock loads and toxic compounds.

4. Source: **Down To Earth** - [India is adopting advanced sewage wastewater treatment tech](#)

- Moving Bed Biofilm Reactor (MBBR)** is a **biological wastewater treatment technology** that **uses plastic carriers** to support **biofilm** growth for the degradation of organic matter and nutrients.
- Main Features:** 1.**Carrier Media:** Made of **polyethylene or polypropylene**, providing high surface area for **microbial biofilm attachment**. 2.**Aeration:** Ensures mixing and oxygen supply in aerobic systems. 3.**Biofilm Efficiency:** Enhances the removal of BOD, COD, and ammonia. 4.**Modular Design:** Can be **retrofitted into existing treatment plants**.
- Parts:** 1.**Reactor Tank:** Contains plastic carriers and wastewater. 2.**Carrier Media:** Supports biofilm growth for pollutant breakdown. 3.**Aeration System:** Supplies oxygen and keeps carriers in motion. 4.**Screen System:** Prevents carriers from escaping the reactor. 5.**Settling Zone:** Separates treated water from residual sludge.
- Uses:** 1.**Municipal Wastewater:** Effective for urban sewage treatment. 2.**Industrial Effluent:** Treats waste from food, dairy, and chemical industries. 3.**Combined Systems:** Used with activated sludge or anaerobic processes.
- Merits:** 1.Compact system with high efficiency. 2.Handles hydraulic & organic load variations. 3.Minimal sludge production.
- Demerits:** 1.Requires periodic replacement of carrier media. 2.Aeration energy requirements can be high. 3.Sensitive to toxic shock loads.



### PYQs asked by UPSC since 1979 on this theme

26. In the context of which one of the following are the terms 'pyrolysis and plasma gasification' mentioned?

2019

- Extraction of rare earth elements
- Natural gas extraction technologies
- Hydrogen fuel-based automobiles
- Waste-to-energy technologies

55. With reference to the role of biofilters in Recirculating Aquaculture System, consider the following statements :

2023

- Biofilters provide waste treatment by removing uneaten fish feed.
- Biofilters convert ammonia present in fish waste to nitrate.
- Biofilters increase phosphorus as nutrient for fish in water.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- Only one
- Only two
- All three
- None

7. Which one of the following is **not** a Harappan site?
- Chanhudaro
  - Kot Diji
  - Sohgaura
  - Desalpur

2019

### PYQs asked by UPSC since 1979 on this theme

41. Which one of the following ancient Indian records is the earliest royal order to preserve foodgrains to be utilised during the crises in the country ?
- Sohagaura Copper plate
  - Rummindei pillar edict of Asoka
  - Prayaga Prasasti
  - Mehrauli Pillar inscription of Chandra

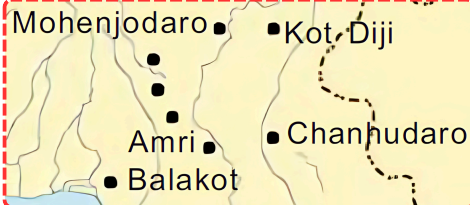
1998

2. The earliest evidence of silver in India is found in the:
- Harappan culture
  - Chalcolithic cultures of Western India
  - Vedic texts
  - Silver punch marked coins

1994

### Source used by UPSC for this Question

Class 12th NCERT, Upinder Singh



level, e.g., Lothal, Desalpur, Chanhudaro, Mitathal, Alamgirpur, and Ropar. There are several early Harappan sites in the Potwar plateau which do not have mature Harappan levels. In Cholistan, only Indus plain. And at sites where there are both early Harappan and mature Harappan levels, the transition from one to the other is not always smooth. At Kot Diji and Gumla, a burnt deposit

### 108. Indus Valley Civilization was spread over:

- Baluchistan, Sind, Punjab and Rajasthan
- Sind, Punjab and Kashmir
- Afghanistan, Sind, Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Kashmir
- None of these

1984

### 15. Match List I (Ancient site) with List II (Archaeological finding) and select the correct answer using the codes given below the lists :

	List I	List II
(A)	Lothal	(1) Ploughed field
(B)	Kalibangan	(2) Dockyard
(C)	Dholavira	(3) Terracotta replica of a plough
(D)	Banawali	(4) An inscription comprising ten large sized signs of the Harappan script

A B C D

(a) 1 2 3 4

(b) 2 1 4 3

(c) 1 2 4 3

(d) 2 1 3 4

2002

### Explanation and Additional content from Source used by UPSC

- Chanhudaro (Sindh, Pakistan):** Known for **bead-making, seal production & metallurgy**. Significant for its **lack of fortifications**, suggesting specialization in craft production allowing resources and labor to focus on economic and craft activities.
- Kot Diji (Sindh, Pakistan):** **Early Harappan site** transitioning to mature. **Fortified settlement** indicative of urban organization.
- Desalpur (Gujarat, India):** **Fortified Harappan site** in the Kutch region. Features include **planned streets**, pottery & craft remains.
- Sohgaura:** **Not a Harappan Site** - Located in **modern Uttar Pradesh**, Sohgaura is a **post-Mauryan site**. Famous for the **Ashokan-era copper plate inscription**, detailing famine relief measures.

### Solve with Logic and Minimal prior Knowledge

It is generally difficult to solve such factual questions using logic alone. Please refer to the next section and learn about Important Paleolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Harappan sites to tackle such questions in exam hall.

### To-the-Point Content from Sources used by UPSC (Direct Questions in UPSC Prelims'24 from this section)

#### Paleolithic Sites (IGNOU Notes, NIOS, Upinder Singh, NCERTs)

- Bhimbetka (Madhya Pradesh):** Rock shelters, early art.
- Hunsgi (Karnataka):** Open-air site, Acheulian tools.
- Attirampakkam (Tamil Nadu):** Acheulian tools, 1.5 mn years.
- Kurnool Caves (Andhra Pradesh):** Bone tools, faunal remains.
- Didwana (Rajasthan):** Stone tools, desert habitation.
- Narmada Valley (Madhya Pradesh):** Fossil, Acheulian tools.
- Baghor II (Madhya Pradesh):** Ritual platform, cultural activity.
- Belan Valley (UP):** Paleolithic to Neolithic sequence.
- Sanghao (Pakistan):** Middle Paleolithic, human occupation.
- Riwat (Pakistan):** Lower Paleolithic artifacts.
- Adamgarh (MP):** Lower and Middle Paleolithic tools.
- Bori (Maharashtra):** Acheulian tools, early Middle Pleistocene.
- Isampur (Karnataka):** Tool factory, habitation site.
- Patne (Maharashtra):** Ostrich eggshell beads, tools.
- Pahalgam (J&K):** Quartzite tools, Lower Paleolithic.

#### Neolithic Sites (NIOS, Upinder Singh, NCERTs, K. Krishna Reddy)

- Mehrgarh (Pakistan):** Early farming, animal domestication.
- Burzahom (Kashmir):** Pit dwellings, dog burials.
- Gufkral (Kashmir):** Pit dwellings, pastoralism.
- Koldihwa (Uttar Pradesh):** Domesticated rice, corded ware.
- Chirand (Bihar):** Rice, lentils, animal domestication.
- Daojali Hading (Assam):** Ground tools, cord-impressed pottery.
- Kuchai (Odisha):** Polished axes, red pottery.
- Piklihal (Karnataka):** Cattle pens, ash mounds.
- Hallur (Karnataka):** Millet cultivation, red ware.
- Maski (Karnataka):** Cattle rearing, stone tools.
- Sanganakallu (Karnataka):** Cattle herding, ash mounds.
- Utnur (Telangana):** Ash mounds, cattle hoof prints.
- Golbai Sasan (Odisha):** Rice, red-grey pottery.
- Paiyyampalli (Tamil Nadu):** Stone tools, domesticated cattle.
- Brahmagiri (Karnataka):** Wattle-and-daub huts, grey ware.
- Tekkalkota (Karnataka):** Ash mounds, early farming evidence.

#### Mesolithic Sites (NIOS, Upinder Singh, NCERTs, K. Krishna Reddy)

- Bagor (Rajasthan):** Microliths, domesticated animals.
- Langhnaj (Gujarat):** Microliths, human burials.
- Adamgarh (MP):** Geometric microliths, animal bones.
- Bhimbetka (Madhya Pradesh):** Rock paintings, microliths.
- Sarai Nahar Rai (Uttar Pradesh):** Microliths, formal burials.
- Mahadaha (Uttar Pradesh):** Microliths, human burials.
- Damdama (Uttar Pradesh):** Microliths, grave goods.
- Baghor II (Madhya Pradesh):** Grinding stones, red ochre.
- Chopani Mando (UP):** Microliths, wattle-and-daub huts.
- Kuchai (Odisha):** Microliths, early habitation.
- Gauri Gundam (Telangana):** Microliths, fishing tools.
- Sanganakallu (Karnataka):** Microliths, early habitation.

#### Harappan Sites (IGNOU Notes, NIOS, Upinder Singh, NCERTs)

- Harappa (Pakistan):** Early urbanization, standardized weights.
- Mohenjodaro (Pakistan):** Great Bath, urban planning.
- Dholavira (Gujarat):** Unique three-part city layout.
- Rakhigarhi (Haryana):** Largest Indus site in India.
- Kalibangan (Rajasthan):** Fire altars, early ploughed fields.
- Lothal (Gujarat):** Dockyard, bead-making industry.
- Banawali (Haryana):** Pre-Harappan and Harappan phases.
- Surkotada (Gujarat):** Horse remains, fortifications.
- Alamgirpur (Uttar Pradesh):** Easternmost Harappan site.
- Rajdi (Gujarat):** Evidence of Harappan rural life.
- Ganweriwala (Pakistan):** Fifth-largest Harappan city.
- Sutkagen-dor (Pakistan):** Westernmost Harappan site.
- Shortughai (Afghanistan):** Lapis lazuli trade hub.
- Allahdino (Pakistan):** Small Harappan village settlement.
- Balu (Haryana):** Rich plant remains, rural settlement.
- Rangpur (Gujarat):** Late Harappan phase, rice cultivation.
- Ropar (Punjab, India):** Multi-cultural layers, burial practices.
- Manda (Jammu):** Northernmost Harappan site.
- Mitathal (Haryana):** Urban planning, fortifications.
- Amri (Pakistan):** Pre-Harappan to Harappan transition.



94. "Yogavāsistha" was translated into Persian by Nizamuddin Panipati during the reign of :

- (a) Akbar
- (b) Humayun
- (c) Shahjahan
- (d) Aurangzeb

2022



PYQs asked by UPSC since 1979 on this theme

17. Who amongst the following Englishmen, first translated Bhagavad-Gita into English ?

- (a) William Jones
- (b) Charles Wilkins
- (c) Alexander Cunningham
- (d) John Marshall

2001

6. Assertion (A) :

Babur wrote his memoirs in Turki.

Reason (R) :

Turki was the official language of the Mughal Court.

In the context of the above two statements which one of the following is correct ?

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- (b) Both A and R are true but R is not a correct explanation of A
- (c) A is true but R is false
- (d) A is false but R is true

1993

65. Who among the following ladies wrote a historical account during the Mughal period ?

- (a) Gulbadan Begum
- (b) Nurjahan Begum
- (c) Jahanara Begum
- (d) Zebunnissa Begum

1994

123. Which one of the following statements is NOT correct?

- (a) Ali Mardan Khan introduced the system of revenue farming in Bengal
- (b) Maharaja Ranjit Singh set up modern foundries to manufacture cannons at Lahore
- (c) Sawai Jai Singh of Amber had Euclid's 'Elements of Geometry' translated into Sanskrit
- (d) Sultan Tipu of Mysore gave money for the construction of the idol of Goddess Sarda in the Sringeri temple

2003



Source used by UPSC for this Question

IGNOU BA Notes

of Akbar on account of so-called inaccuracies in the Persian translation of the Mahabharata.

Badauni also translated the Ramayana, a project that was completed in 1591.

Nizam Panipati translated Yogavasistha (a treatise on Vedantic philosophy) as an



Explanation and Additional content from Source used by UPSC

Translations During Akbar's Reign:

1. Atharva Veda: Translated by Haji Ibrahim Sirhindi with the help of Shaikh Bhawan (completed before 1583).
2. Ramayana: Translated by Badauni (completed in 1591).
3. Yogavasistha: Translated by Nizamuddin Panipati as an appendix to the Ramayana. Dedicated to Prince Salim (later Jahangir).
4. Mahabharata: Translated as Razmnama by Badauni, Naqib Khan, and others (completed in 1584). Preface by Abul Fazl.
5. Harivamsa: Translated by Mulla Shri.
6. Panchatantra: Translated as Anwar-i-Suhaili by Abu'l-Fazl.
7. Lilavati: A mathematical text by Bhaskaracharya, translated by Faizi.
8. Rajatarangini: Translated by Shah Muhammad Shahabadi.
9. Translation of Bhagavad Gita into Persian: by Dara Shikoh.



Solve with Logic and Minimal prior Knowledge

This question is easy if one remains calm and believe on his/her instincts:

Translation of an Indian text into Persian can take place under an emperor with an interest in culture and philosophy.

- Humayun's reign was short and he didn't have stability to patronize translations of philosophical texts. -> Eliminated.
- Aurangzeb was focused on orthodox policies and military campaigns. Translating hindu texts was not his priority. -> Eliminated.
- Shahjahan's reign emphasized architectural patronage (like the Taj Mahal). -> Eliminated.
- Akbar is well-known for his cultural integration, making it logical that Panipati translated the Yogavasistha during his reign.



To-the-Point Content from Sources used by UPSC (Direct Questions in UPSC Prelims'24 from this section)

Historical and Biographical Works (IGNOU Notes, Satish Chandra, Romila Thapar, Tamil Nadu Books)

1. Baburnama: Autobiography of Babur, originally in Chagatai Turkish, translated into Persian by Abdul Rahim Khan-i-Khanan.
2. Humayun Nama: Written by Gulbadan Begum, documenting the reign and personal life of Humayun.
3. Qanun-i-Humayun: treatise on statecraft, by Khwandamir during Humayun's reign, reflecting socio-political framework.
4. Akbarnama and Ain-i-Akbari: By Abul Fazl, providing exhaustive details of Akbar's reign, administration, and policies.
5. Tabaqat-i-Akbari: Authored by Nizamuddin Ahmad, chronicling Mughal history up to Akbar's reign in Tabaqat (layered) style.
6. Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri: Jahangir's autobiography blending administrative insights with personal reflections.
7. Tawarikh-i-Alfi: Commissioned by Akbar to commemorate 1,000 years of Islamic history. Compiled by Mulla Daud, covering key events up to Akbar's time.
8. Two Historical accounts of Shah Jahan's reign by Inayat Khan and Muhammad Salih by common name of Shah Jahan Namah.
9. Padshah Nama: Chronicles of Shah Jahan's rule by Abdul Hamid Lahori and Muhammad Waris.
10. Alamgir Nama: Written by Muhammad Kazim, documenting Aurangzeb's reign.
11. Futuhat-i-Alamgiri: By Ishwar Das Nagar, covering Aurangzeb's campaigns.
12. Iqbal Namah: A history of Jahangir's reign by Mutamad Khan.
13. Other notable Indian & Persian writers in Mughal Court were Faizi, Urfi, Naziri, Talib Amuli, Kalim, Ghani Kashmiri, Saib & Bedil.

Mystical and Philosophical Works (IGNOU Notes, Satish Chandra, A.L. Srivastava, NIOS)

1. Sirr-i-Akbar: Persian translation of the Upanishads by Dara Shikoh, emphasizing Hindu-Muslim philosophical synthesis.
2. Majma-ul-Bahrain: By Dara Shikoh, exploring the confluence of Islamic Sufi and Hindu mystical traditions.
3. Safinat-ul-Auliya: Biographies of Sufi saints by Dara Shikoh.
4. Sakinat-ul-Auliya: A biographical account of Sufi saint Miyan Mir and his disciples, authored by Dara Shikoh.
5. Hasanat-ul-Arifin: Explores Dara Shikoh's religious and philosophical ideas.

Persian Poetry and Letters (IGNOU Notes, Satish Chandra, Romila Thapar, Tamil Nadu Books, A.L. Srivastava, NIOS)

1. Faizi: A poet laureate under Akbar, contributing extensively to Persian poetry and translations like Nal Daman.
2. Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan: known for blending Persian and Hindi literary styles and composing devotional works.
3. Zeb-un-Nisa: Daughter of Aurangzeb, known for her Persian ghazals.
4. Ruqaat-i-Alamgiri: Collection of letters by Aurangzeb, offering insights into governance and personal thought.

Vernacular Contributions (IGNOU Notes, Satish Chandra, Romila Thapar, Tamil Nadu Books, NCERTs)

1. Brajhasha: Surdas (Sursagar), Keshavdas (Rasikpriya) & Rahim. Associated with Krishna Bhakti & received imperial patronage.
2. Awadhi: Flourished through works like Ramcharitmanas by Tulsidas.
3. Rekhta and Dakhini Urdu: Rekhta combined Persian with Hindawi, evolving into Urdu. Dakhini Urdu developed as a distinct literary language in the Deccan courts.

Translation Bureau: Akbar's Maktab Khana facilitated translations of major Indian epics and religious texts into Persian.

Sabk-e-Hindi: An Indianized style of Persian poetry that flourished during the Mughal period.

Answers of above UPSC Questions: Ques.94(2022)-a, Ques.17(2001)-b, Ques.6(1993)-c, Ques.65(1994)-a, Ques.123(2003)-a

93. Which one of the following statements about **Sangam literature** in ancient South India is correct ?

2022

- (a) Sangam poems are devoid of any reference to material culture.
- (b) The social classification of Varna was known to Sangam poets.
- (c) Sangam poems have no reference to warrior ethic.
- (d) Sangam literature refers to magical forces as irrational.

### PYQs asked by UPSC since 1979 on this theme

66. The Asokan major rock edicts which tell us about the Sangam Kingdom include rock edicts

1998

- (a) I and X
- (b) I and XI
- (c) II and XIII
- (d) II and XIV

85. Assertion (A) :

2000

The Aham and Puram poems of the Padinen Kilukanakku group formed a continuation of the Sangam composition.

Reason (R) :

They were included under the Post Sangam works as against the Sangam works proper.

- (a) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A
- (b) Both A and R are true, but R is not a correct explanation of A
- (c) A is true, but R is false
- (d) A is false, but R is true

### Source used by UPSC for this Question

**Upinder Singh (Ancient and Early Medieval India)**

with sulking. The poems use vivid imagery and often rely on understatement and suggestion to convey deep emotion.

Sangam poems contain several incidental references to material culture, often as part of the poem's setting or in similes and allusions. There are references to farming (rice and barley are mentioned) and to trade (the poems mention the exchange of goods and services).

Sangam literature reflects a belief in sacred or magical forces called *ananku* that were supposed to inhabit various objects. The job of carrying out rites and rituals to control the *ananku* was that of the *ananku* priests.

penetration and for a number of days after childbirth. Widows were considered extremely inauspicious and dangerous, and were supposed to lead a very austere life.

Sangam poems are pervaded with a warrior ethic. The goal of the hero of the *puram* poems was to achieve *virum* (glory, fame) and a heroic death was greatly valued. It was believed that the spirit of a warrior

disappeared like water vaporized by iron heated in a glowing fire by a black-handed smith. The social classification of *varna* was known to Sangam poets. There is mention of the *Arashar* (kings), *Vaishiyar* (traders), and *Vellalar* (farmers). The Brahmanas are also mentioned, some of

### Explanation and Additional content from Source used by UPSC

- Sangam literature contains extensive references to **farming, cattle rearing, fishing & iron tools**, reflecting a rich material culture.
- Sangam literature acknowledges the **concept of Varna**, though its practical application was **limited to kings, traders & farmers**.
- Warrior bravery & heroism** are central themes, especially in Puram poetry, which glorifies valor & memorializes fallen warriors.
- Sangam literature describes **supernatural forces (e.g., Ananku)** as part of cultural beliefs but does not dismiss them as irrational.

### Solve with Logic and Minimal prior Knowledge

Such questions are **based on General Observation**. These are **very scoring questions** if students keep calm in exam hall.

- We all have seen references made to material culture like **trade and port cities like Puhar** in Sangam Texts. -> Eliminated.
- Social classification **resembling Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra framework is easily visible in South Indian societies** and Sangam Literature -> Possible Answer.
- Sangam literature is **famous for glorifying warrior Chola kings** in Puram poems, who die in battle as heroes. -> Eliminated.
- Sangam texts **have references to prayers and rituals** to deities like Murugan. -> Eliminated.

### To-the-Point Content from Sources used by UPSC (Direct Questions in UPSC Prelims'24 from this section)

**Sangam Literature (Upinder Singh, Tamil Nadu Books, IGNOU, NIOS, K. Krishna Reddy)**

- Sangam literature (300 BCE–300 CE)** represents Tamilakam's cultural, political, and socio-economic life. It evolved through three Sangams, convened under **Pandyan** patronage.
  - First Sangam:** Held at **Thenmadurai**, presided over by **Agastya**; all works lost.
  - Second Sangam:** Conducted at **Kapatapuram**, chaired by **Agastya**; **Tolkappiyam**, authored by his disciple **Tolkappiyar**, survives.
  - Third Sangam:** Organized at **Madurai**, under **Pandyan** ruler patronage; it produced all extant Sangam literature.

#### Major Texts and Their Themes

- Core Works:** **Ettutokai** (Eight Anthologies) and **Pattuppattu** (Ten Idylls) are principal collections.
  - Texts classified into **Akam (love)** and **Puram (war and governance)** themes.
- Grammatical Treatise:** **Tolkappiyam** - Covers grammar, phonology, syntax, and literary conventions.
- Philosophical Work:** **Tirukkural**, authored by Tiruvalluvar, is a renowned ethical text on governance, ethics, and love.
- Epics:**
  - Silappadikaram (The Tale of an Anklet)** by **Ilango Adigal**, Chera prince and Jain ascetic. **Story of Kannagi**, who avenges her husband **Kovalan's wrongful execution** by cursing and burning Madurai. Celebrates Kannagi as a symbol of **justice & chastity**.
  - Manimekalai (Sequel to Silappadikaram)** by **Sattanar**, Tamil Buddhist poet. Story of Manimekalai, **Kannagi's daughter**, who renounces worldly life to **embrace Buddhism**. Promotes Buddhist principles of non-violence, compassion, and detachment.

#### Social Context

- Class System:** Society included **Arasar (kings)**, **Vanigar (traders)**, **Vellalar (farmers)**, and **Anthanar (priests)**.
  - Tribal groups like **Pulaiyar**, **Maravar**, and **Parathavar** coexisted.
- Role of Women:** Women participated as **poets (e.g., Avvaiyar)**, **warriors**, and in economic activities.

#### Polity and Governance

- Monarchies:** Pandya, Chola & Chera kings led Tamilakam with capitals - **Madurai**, **Uraiyur** and **Vanji/Karuvur/Karur** respectively.
- Assemblies:** Administrative bodies like **Manram** (village councils) and **Avai** (royal courts) managed governance.

#### Economy

- Agriculture:** Paddy cultivation dominated, supported by **advanced tank irrigation systems**.
- Trade:** Ports like **Puhar**, **Korkai**, and **Muziris** facilitated trade with Rome and Southeast Asia.

#### Cultural Context

- Religious Beliefs:** Worship of **Murugan**, later syncretized with Kartikeya; Jain and Buddhist influences evident.
- Tinai Classification:** Poems categorized into five landscapes:
  - Kurinji (mountains):** Hunting and gathering.
  - Mullai (forests):** Pastoral life.
  - Marudam (plains):** Farming.
  - Neythal (coasts):** Fishing and seafaring.
  - Palai (deserts):** Hardship and survival.

#### Significance

Sangam literature reflects Tamilakam's transition from **tribal societies to statehood**, with insights into trade, governance, and cultural diversity. It remains a cornerstone of Tamil history and identity.





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