

# BPSC

## 64th BPSC Common Combined Preliminary Competitive Exam

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*Revised Study Materials*

# GENERAL STUDIES

## PAPER - 1 (Part -1)



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# History of India and Indian National Movement

## Ancient Indian History

### Indian Prehistory

- The fossils of the early human being have not been found in India. A hint of the earliest human presence in India is indicated by stone tools of about 250,000 BC obtained from the deposits.
- However, recent reported artifacts from Bori in Maharashtra suggest the appearance of human beings in India around 1.4 million years ago.
- From their first appearance to around 3000 BC humans used only stone tools for different purposes.
- This period is, therefore, known as the Stone Age, which has been divided into Paleolithic (early or Old Stone) Age, Mesolithic (Middle Stone) Age, and Neolithic (New Stone) Age.

### The Paleolithic Age in India (500,000 BC – 8000 BC)

- In India it developed in the Pleistocene period or the Ice Age.
- The earliest traces of human existence in India go back to 500,000 BC.
- The Paleolithic sites are spread in practically all parts of India except the alluvial plains of Indus and Ganga.
- The people of this age were food gathering people who lived on hunting and gathering wild fruits and vegetables.
- Man during this period used tools of unpolished, undressed rough stones and lived in cave and rock shelters. They had no knowledge of agriculture, fire or pottery of any material.
- They mainly used hand axes, cleavers, choppers, blades, scrapers and burin. Their tools were made of hard rock called 'quartzite'. Hence Paleolithic men are also called 'Quartzite Men'.
- Homo sapiens first appeared in the last of this phase.
- It has been pointed out that Paleolithic men belonged to the Negrito race.
- The Paleolithic Age in India has been divided into three phases according to the nature of stone tools used by the people and also according to the nature of change in the climate – Early or lower Paleolithic, Middle Paleolithic

and Upper Paleolithic.

- The Early Paleolithic Age covers the greater part of the Ice Age. Its characteristic tools are hand axes, cleavers and choppers. Such tools have been found in Soan and Sohan river valley (now in Pakistan) and in the Belan Valley in the Mirzapur district of UP. In this period climate became less humid.
- Middle Paleolithic Phase is characterized by the use of stone tools made of flakes mainly scrapers, borers and blade like tools. The sites are found in the valleys of Soan, Narmada and Tungabhadra rivers.
- In the Upper Paleolithic Phase, the climate became warm and less humid. This stage is marked by burins and scrapers. Such tools have been found in AP, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Bhopal and Chhota Nagpur plateau.

### The Mesolithic Era History (8000 BC – 6000 BC)

- In this age, climate became warm and dry. Climate changes brought about changes in fauna and flora and made it possible for human beings to move to new areas. Since then, there haven't been major changes in the climate.
- The characteristic tools of the Mesolithic Age are known as Microliths-pointed, crescentic blades, scrapers, etc, all made of stone.
- The people lived on hunting, fishing and food gathering; at a later stage they also domesticated animals.
- The last phase of this age saw the beginning of plane cultivation.
- Various Mesolithic sites are found in the Chhotanagpur region, Central India and also south of the Krishna River.
- In the Belan valley of Vindhya, all the three phases of the Paleolithic followed by the Mesolithic and then by the Neolithic have been found in sequence. Similar is the case with the middle part of the Narmada valley.

### The History of Neolithic Era (6000 BC – 1000 BC) :

- In India Neolithic Age is not earlier than 6000 BC and at some places in South and Eastern India; it is as late as 1000 BC.
- During this phase people were again depending on stone

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implements. But now they used stones other than quartzite for making tools, which were more lethal, more finished and more polished.

- Neolithic men cultivated land and grew fruits and corn like ragi and horse gram. They domesticated cattle, sheep and goat.
- They knew about making fire and making pottery, first by hand and then by potters wheel. They also painted and decorated their pottery.
- They lived in caves and decorated their walls with hunting and dancing scenes. They also knew the art of making boats. They could also weave cotton and wool to make cloth.
- In the later phase of Neolithic phase people led a more settled life and lived in circular and rectangular houses made of mud and reed.
- Important sites of this age are Burzahom and Gufkral in J&K (famous for pit dwelling, stone tools and graveyard in house), Maski, Brahmagiri, Tekkalakota in Karnataka, Paiyampatti in Tamil Nadu, Piklihal and Hallur in AP, Garo hills in Meghalaya, Chirand and Senuwar in Bihar (known for remarkable bone tools), Amri, Kotdiji, etc.
- Koldihawa in UP revealed a three fold cultural sequence: Neolithic, Chalcolithic and Iron Age.

#### Chalcolithic Period :

- The end of the Neolithic Period saw the use of metals of which copper was the first. A culture based on the use of stone and copper arrived. Such a culture is called Chalcolithic which means the stone-copper phase.
- Apart from stone tools, hand axes and other objects made of copperware also used.
- The Chalcolithic people used different types of pottery of which black and red pottery was most popular. It was wheel made and painted with white line design.
- These people were not acquainted with burnt bricks. They generally lived in thatched houses. It was a village economy.
- They venerated the mother goddess and worshiped the bull.
- Important sites of this phase are spread in Rajasthan, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Bihar, MP, etc.
- Indus Valley Civilization in India

#### Ancient Civilizations in India

- The Indus Valley Civilization was an ancient civilization thriving along the Indus River and the Ghaggar-Hakra River in what is now Pakistan and north-western India.

Among other names for this civilization is the Harappan Civilization, in reference to its first excavated city of Harappa.

- An alternative term for the culture is Saraswati-Sindhu Civilization, based on the fact that most of the Indus Valley sites have been found at the Halkra-Ghaggar River.
- R.B. Dayaram Sahni first discovered Harappa (on Ravi) in 1921. R.D. Banerjee discovered Mohenjodaro or 'Mound of the Dead' (on Indus) in 1922. Sir John Marshal played a crucial role in both these.
- Harappan Civilization forms part of the proto history of India and belongs to the Bronze Age.
- Mediterranean, Proto-Australoid, Mongoloids and Alpines formed the bulk of the population, though the first two were more numerous.
- More than 100 sites belonging to this civilization have been excavated.
- According to radio-carbon dating, it spread from the year 2500 – 1750 BC.
- Copper, bronze, silver, gold were known but not iron.

#### Geographical Extent

- Covered parts of Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, Gujarat, Rajasthan and some parts of Western UP. It extended from Manda in Jammu in the north to Daimabad in the south and from Alamgirpur in W. UP to Sutkagendor in Baluchistan in the west.
- Major sites in Pakistan are Harappa (on Ravi in W Punjab), Mohenjodaro (on Indus), Chanhudaro (Sindh), etc. In India, major sites are Lothal, Rangpur and Surkotda (Gujarat), Kalibangan (Rajasthan), Banwali (Hissar), and Alamgirpur (Western UP).
- Largest and the latest site in India is Dholavira in Gujarat. Dr. J.R Joshi and Dr. R.S. Bisht were involved in it.

#### Indus Valley Civilization Town Planning

- Elaborate town-planning. It followed the Grid System. Roads were well cut, dividing the town into large rectangular or square blocks. Lamp posts at intervals indicate the existence of street lighting. Flanking the streets, lanes and by-lanes were well-planned houses.
- Used burnt bricks of good quality as the building material. Elsewhere in the contemporary world, mud-bricks were used.
- Houses, often of two or more storey, varied in size, but were quite monotonous a square courtyard, around which were a number of rooms. No window faced the streets. The houses had tiled bathrooms.