

GS FOUNDATION PROGRAM 2024*to be filled by the student:***BATCH: D5**

NAME: _____

ForumIAS Roll No: 19100 _____

Date: __/__/_____

Email Id: _____

Mobile No. _____

*For Office Use Only***Feedbacks:**

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Average	Immediate Efforts/Improvement Required
Content					
Presentation					
Structure					
Consistency					
Revision/Recall					

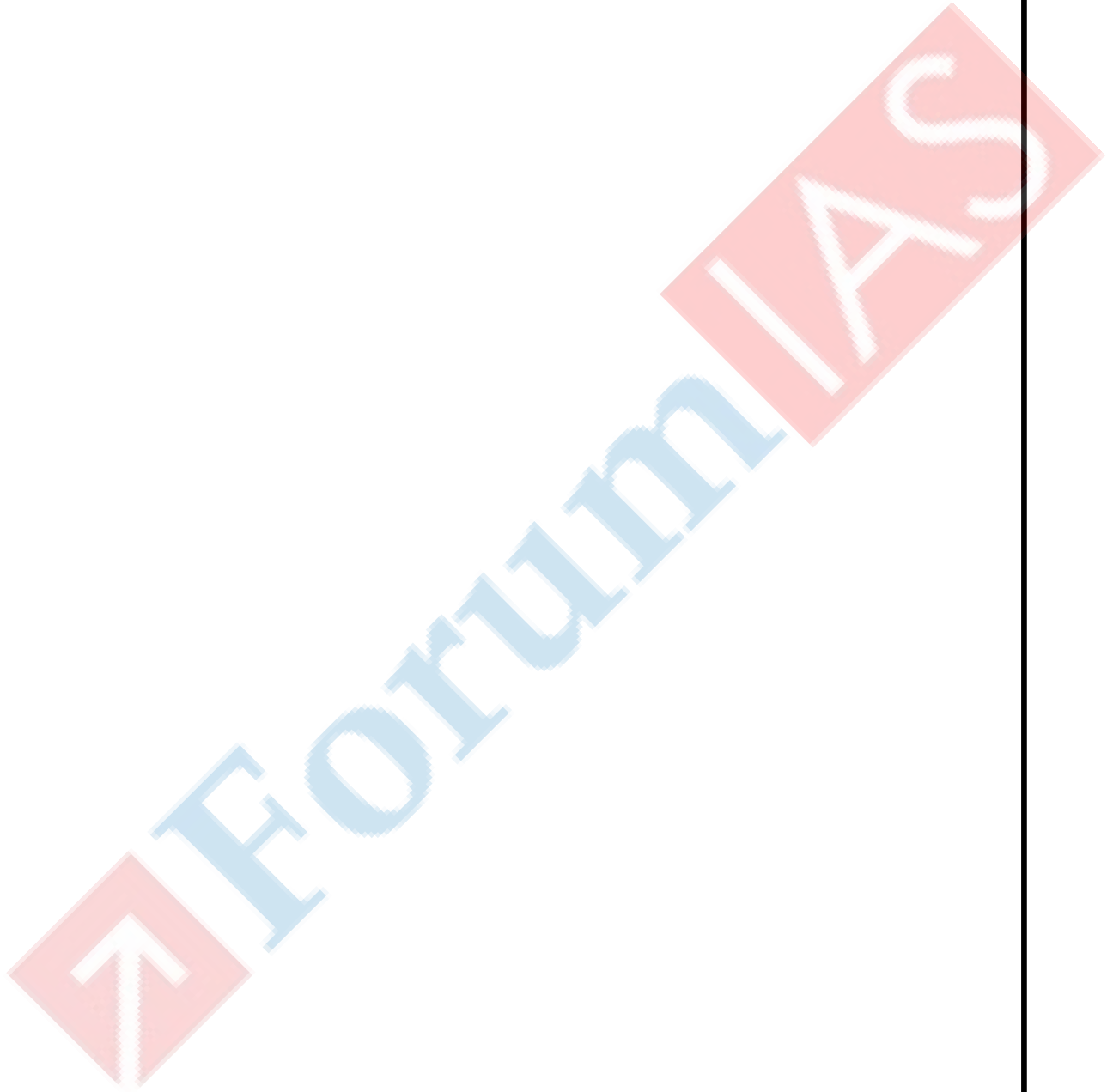
Marks:

Subjective	Objective	Total

Subjective Questions:

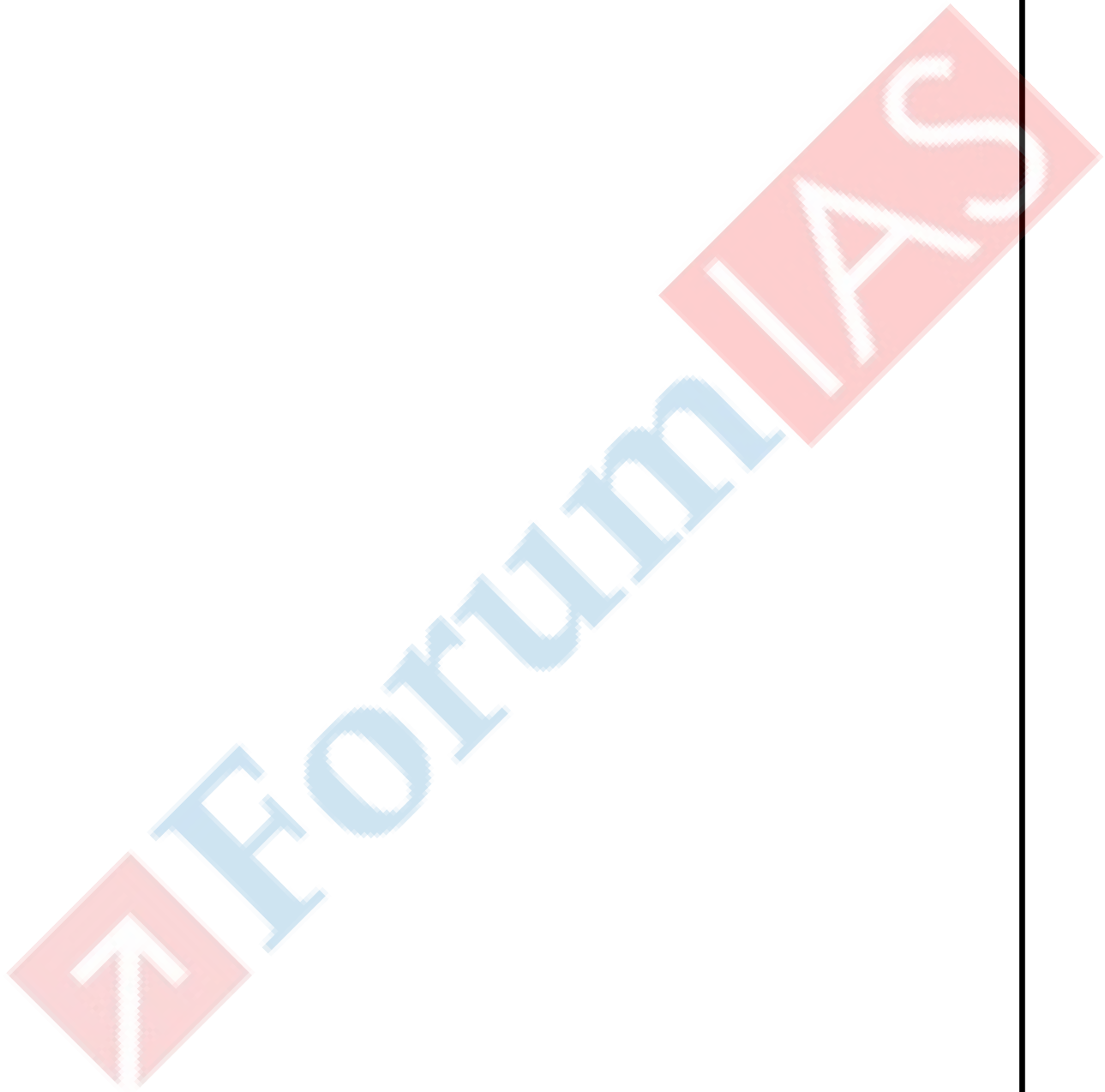
Q.1) Though land reforms since Independence have brought many positive changes in Indian agriculture and in the lives of farmers, yet the reform process is far from complete. Discuss. (10 marks, 150 words)





Q.2) "Coalition politics has shifted the focus of political parties from ideological differences to power sharing agreements. "In the light of the statement, discuss the pros and cons of the coalition era politics. How does it contrast with the Majority party rule? Illustrate with examples from history of Independent India. (10 marks, 150 words)





Objective Questions:

Q.1) With reference to different pillar inscriptions of ancient India, consider the following statements:

1. The Mehrauli Inscription mentions Chandragupta's victory over enemies from Vanga.
2. The Allahabad Pillar Inscription mentions the achievements of Samudragupta.
3. In the Besnagar Pillar inscription, Kanishka describes himself as a worshipper of Vishnu.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 2 and 3 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Q.2) Which of the following statements given below is/are correct with reference to the difference between Ashokan Pillars and Achaemenian Pillars?

1. The shaft of the Ashokan pillars was monolithic, while that of Achaemenian pillars was made up of various pieces of stones.
2. Achaemenian pillars were independently erected whereas Ashokan pillars were attached to state buildings.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q.3) "A new school of sculpture developed during the Gupta period. It was characterized by the use of cream coloured sandstone and the use of metal. The sculptures of this school were immaculately dressed and lacked any form of nakedness."

Which one of the following schools of sculpture matches the description given above?

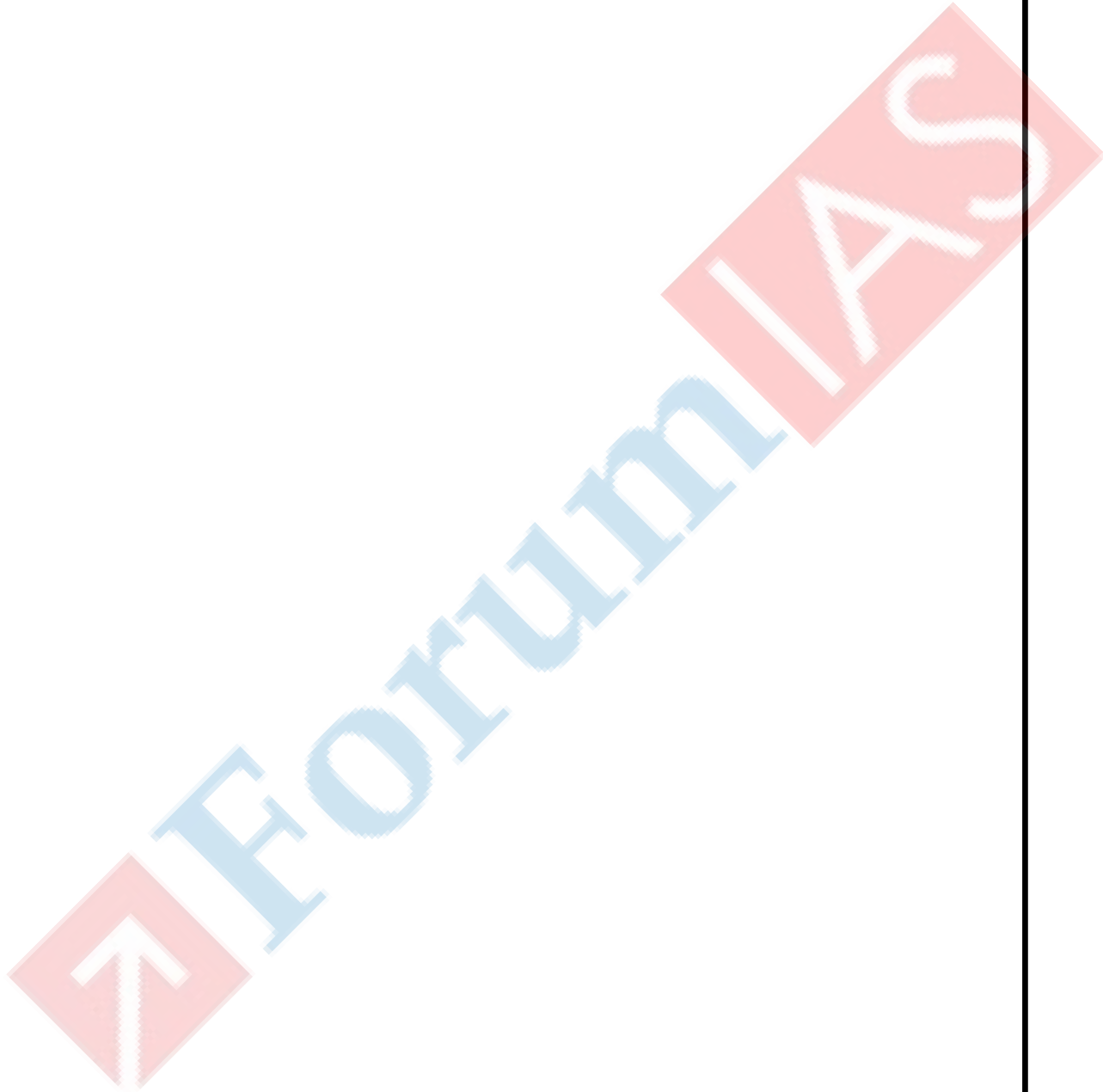
- a) Mathura
- b) Sarnath
- c) Gandhara
- d) Amravati

Q.4) In which one of the following sources the name of Mauryan Emperor Ashoka is mentioned as Ashoka instead of 'Devanampriya' or 'Piyadasi'?

- a) Kalinga Edicts.
- b) Minor rock edict near Maski.
- c) Kanganahalli Inscriptions.
- d) Arthashastra.

Q.5) Which one of the following inscriptions mentions about the defeat of Harshvardhana by Pulakesin II and the victory of Chalukyas over Pallavas?

- a) Hathigumpha Inscription
- b) Kalsi Inscription
- c) Mehrauli Inscription
- d) Aihole Inscription



GS Foundation Program 2024 | D5 | Benchmark Assignment #106

Subjective Questions:

Q.1) Though land reforms since Independence have brought many positive changes in Indian agriculture and in the lives of farmers, yet the reform process is far from complete. Discuss.

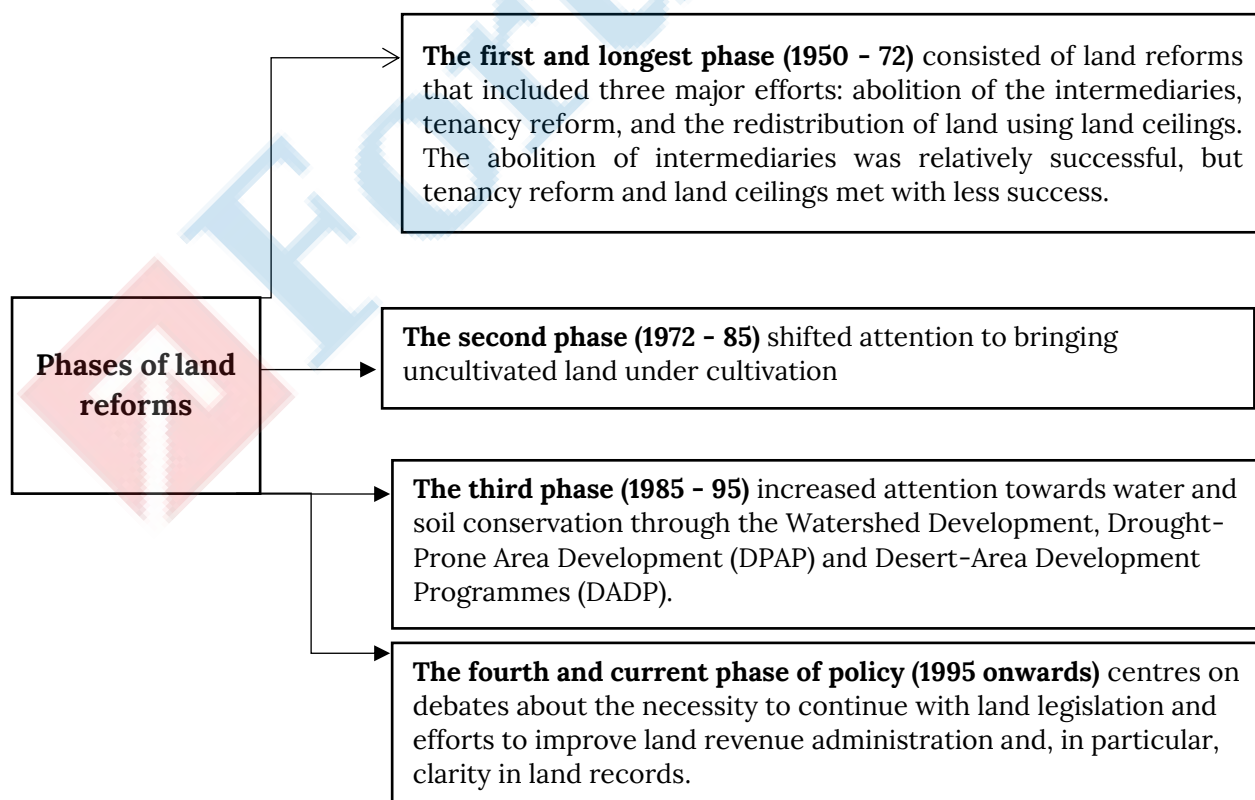
Guidelines:

1. In the introduction give brief introduction of land reforms.
2. Explain what positive changes have occurred in agriculture and farmers after land reforms.
3. Explain the need of further land reforms in agriculture and what reforms can be initiated.

Answer:

Indian agriculture under colonialism was marked by very high tax demand on farmers, prevalence of intermediaries like zamindars between state and cultivators, illegal dues being extracted from farmers, fragmentation and neglect of productivity. All these measures made land reforms an immediate requirement in independent India.

Land reform is a form of agrarian reform involving the changing of laws, regulations, or customs regarding land ownership. Land reform may consist of a government-initiated or government-backed property redistribution, generally of agricultural land. Land reform can, therefore, refer to transfer of ownership from the more powerful to the less powerful, such as from a relatively small number of wealthy or noble owners with extensive land holdings (e.g., plantations, large ranches, or agribusiness plots) to individual ownership by those who work the land.



These reforms have benefitted farmers in a number of ways:

1. The self-sufficiency achieved in agriculture due to **Green revolution** owes much to the base created by first generation land reforms. Eg emergence of Punjab and Haryana as wheat and rice belt of India, after green revolution.
2. Large, semi-feudal landlords **rack-renting** the peasantry as well as extracting illegal cesses in cash, kind or labour had by and large **become a thing of the past**.
3. **State demand from the peasant**, the other major burden on the agriculturist, also gradually virtually **disappeared**. Many states scrapped land revenue.
4. The **stranglehold of the money lender** over the peasantry was also considerably **weakened** with the growing availability of cooperative and institutional credit. The resources available to the peasantry, as a whole for agricultural improvement, thus increased significantly.
5. Similarly, the **tenants and sharecroppers** who got ownership rights could make far **greater investment** and improvements in the lands, which now they could call their own. Even **zamindars shunned absentee landlordism**, and took to personal cultivation via modern farming methods.
6. The **state**, which was earlier insensitive to agricultural productivity, now **made major efforts at agricultural improvement** through Community Development projects to inculcate improved farming methods, supply seeds and implements.

The results of these reforms speak for themselves, as during the first three Plans, Indian agriculture grew at an annual rate of over 3 per cent. This was a growth rate 7.5 times higher than that achieved during the last half century or so of the colonial period.

But this growth story has not been able to lift Indian farmer out of abject poverty. Farmers are still living on subsistence basis, with average landholdings in India accounting to **less than 2 hectares**. This highlight the fact that land reforms have not achieved the intended results and there are more changes needed in agricultural land management in India.

Some steps which need imminent attention are:

1. States need to **legalize land leasing** to promote agricultural efficiency, equity and poverty reduction. The **new land leasing law** released by Niti Ayog should be implemented by states. **Establishing an independent regulator for resolution of disputes** arising out of leasing.
2. Strict implementation of **compensation and consent clauses of Land Acquisition Act 2013**, which are flouted by state governments.
3. Institutionalisation and promotion of **land pooling, contract farming, cooperativization** in agriculture.
4. **Modernization and digitization of land records**, using suitable technologies, so that each and every owner has proper titles of his land. This will also reduce litigation related to the land leasing. NLRMP (National Land Records Modernization Program) should be implemented in a time-bound manner.

5. Creating **awareness about women rights**, to counter patriarchal thinking, which **denies land and property rights to women** guaranteed under the Hindu Succession Amendment Act 2005.
6. **Time bound distribution of surplus land** available with the government to landless by streamlining bureaucratic hurdles and corruption.

Myriad schemes and projects launched for agriculture by the government can only be successful if they are accompanied by simultaneous land reforms. Land reforms alter the power structure, both economic and political, as land has always been a source of wealth, income, status and power. It empowers the actual tillers of the soil, and organises and enables them to seek development benefits from the state.

Q.2) "Coalition politics has shifted the focus of political parties from ideological differences to power sharing agreements. "In the light of the statement, discuss the pros and cons of the coalition era politics. How does it contrast with the Majority party rule? Illustrate with examples from history of Independent India.

A coalition government is a cabinet of a parliamentary government in which multiple political parties cooperate, reducing the dominance of any one party within that coalition. The usual reason for this arrangement is that no party on its own can achieve a majority in the parliament.

Pros and Cons of Coalition Politics:

Pros:

1. The coalition government addresses the regional disparity more than the single party rule.
2. Coalition government is more democratic, and hence fairer, because it represents a much broader spectrum of public opinion than government by one party alone. In almost all coalitions, a majority of citizens voted for the parties which form the government and so their views and interests are represented in political decision making.
3. Coalition government creates a more honest and dynamic political system, allowing voters a clearer choice at election time. It is also easier for parties to split, or new ones to be formed, as new political issues divide opinion, because new parties still have a chance of a share in political power.
4. Provide good government because their decisions are made in the interests of a majority of the people. A coalition government better reflects the popular opinion of the electorate within a country.
5. Coalition government provides more continuity in administration.
6. A more consensual style of politics also allows for a more gradual and constructive shift of policy between administrations.
7. Besides, states are given more powers, and the base of concept of federalisms strengthened.

8. **Government will be more consensus based:** resulting policies will be broadly approved of for the benefit of the nation. Better representation of the electorate's wishes
9. **Better quality of policy:** enhanced scrutiny and increased attention paid to each policy
10. **Increased continuity:** election does not lead to dramatic overhaul which can produce fragmented rule
11. Yet instability apart, coalition governments have been effective in enhancing democratic legitimacy, representativeness, and national unity.

Cons:

1. Coalition government is actually less democratic as the balance of power is inevitably held by the small parties who can barter their support for concessions from the main groups within the coalition.
2. Coalition government is less transparent, because a party has no real chance of forming a government alone, the manifestos they present to the public become irrelevant and often wildly unrealistic.
3. Governments are very unstable, often collapsing and reforming at frequent intervals. This greatly restricts the ability of governments to deal with major reforms and means that politicians seldom stay in any particular ministerial post for long enough to get to grips with its demands.
4. Coalition governments are definitely far less effective, not durable, and non-dependable as compared to the governments formed by any one party with a definite ideology and principles.
5. In coalition governments, MLAs and MPs from all the parties are given portfolios/ministries and appointed as Ministers. These ministers are appointed on the recommendations of the parent party, without taking the qualification, character and criminal /clean record of the MLAs and MPs.

Coalition Government Vs Majority Party Government:

Majority Government	Coalition Government
1. A majority government is a government formed by a governing part that has an absolute majority of seats in the legislature in a parliamentary system.	1. A coalition government is a cabinet of a parliamentary government in which multiple political parties cooperate, reducing the dominance of any one party within that coalition.
2. Majority Governments are stable governments	2. Unstable government; For example, the National Front government formed by support of the left front and the BJP lasted only a year
3. Political strength to take major decisions	3. Lack of strength to introduce major

<p>and reforms e.g. The current BJP government could introduce the Long delayed GST reform</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Tendency towards authoritarianism 5. Dominance of Ideology of Majority party in 6. Governance 7. Local issues might get ignored at central level. 8. More transparency and accountability as 9. Government performance can be monitored based on its manifesto 10. Example: Samyukta Vidhayak Dal (1967-1970) <p>National Front (1989-1990) United Front (1996-1998) National Democratic Alliance (NDA) (1999-2004, 2014-present) United Progressive Alliance (UPA) (2004-2014)</p>	<p>reforms e.g. The land boundary agreement with Bangladesh was delayed for several years during UPA government due to lack of support by the coalition partners such as West Bengal government.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Authoritarianism is checked 5. More representative in opinions and ideologies 6. States get more say in the central decisions and hence, federalism is strengthened. 7. Government becomes aware of local problems and issues. 8. Less accountable government due to different manifestos of different parties.
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Coalition politics in India offers inclusivity and checks on power, yet it grapples with challenges such as policy paralysis and instability. In contrast, majority party rule ensures stability and clear mandates but might lack the inclusivity inherent in coalitions. The selection between these models hinges on the particular political context and the preferences of the electorate, underscoring the intricate and diverse nature of India's democracy.

Objective Questions:

Q.1) With reference to different pillar inscriptions of ancient India, consider the following statements:

1. The Mehrauli Inscription mentions Chandragupta's victory over enemies from Vanga.
2. The Allahabad Pillar Inscription mentions the achievements of Samudragupta.
3. In the Besnagar Pillar inscription, Kanishka describes himself as a worshipper of Vishnu.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 2 and 3 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans) b

Exp) Option b is correct.

Statement 1 is correct. The **Mehrauli iron pillar** inscription mentions Chandragupta Vikramaditya's authority over north western India and a good portion of Bengal. It **mentions Chandragupta's victory over enemies from Vanga (Bengal)**. This pillar was established by Chandragupta as Vishnu pada in the honor of Lord Vishnu.

Statement 2 is correct. The **Allahabad Pillar** inscription enumerates the **achievements of Samudragupta**.

Statement 3 is incorrect. In the **Besnagar Pillar inscription**, **Heliodorus** (the Greek ambassador of the Indo-Greek king Antialkidas) describes himself as a Bhagavata i.e., worshipper of Vishnu. Similarly, some coins of Kanishka also show the figure of Siva on them. Thus, we see that many foreign rulers adopted Vaishnavism.

Q.2) Which of the following statements given below is/are correct with reference to the difference between Ashokan Pillars and Achaemenian Pillars?

1. The shaft of the Ashokan pillars was monolithic, while that of Achaemenian pillars was made up of various pieces of stones.
2. Achaemenian pillars were independently erected whereas Ashokan pillars were attached to state buildings.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans) a

Exp) Option a is correct.

Statement 1 is correct. The **shaft of the Ashokan pillars was monolithic**, i.e., it was inscribed from a single piece of stone (mainly chunar sandstones). **The shaft of Achaemenian pillars was made up of various pieces of sandstone cemented together.**

Statement 2 is incorrect. The **Ashokan pillars were independently erected.** The **Achaemenian pillars were generally attached to state buildings.**

Q.3) "A new school of sculpture developed during the Gupta period. It was characterized by the use of cream coloured sandstone and the use of metal. The sculptures of this school were immaculately dressed and lacked any form of nakedness."

Which one of the following schools of sculpture matches the description given above?

- a) Mathura
- b) Sarnath
- c) Gandhara
- d) Amravati

Ans) b

Exp) Option b is correct.

Option a is incorrect. The Mathura School flourished on the banks of the river Yamuna in the period between 1st and 3rd centuries AD. The sculptures of the Mathura School were influenced by the stories and imageries of all three religions of the time – Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism.

Option b is correct. During the **Gupta period**, a **new school of sculpture developed around Sarnath**. It was characterised by the **use of cream coloured sandstone and the use of metal**. The sculptures of this **school were immaculately dressed and lacked any form of nakedness**. The halo around the head of Buddha was intricately decorated. The image of the standing Buddha is an excellent example of Gupta art in its maturity from Sarnath.

Option c is incorrect. The **Gandhara School of Art** developed in the western frontiers of Punjab, near modern day Peshawar and Afghanistan. The Gandhara School flourished in two stages in the period from 50 BC to 500 AD.

Option d is incorrect. In the Southern parts of India, the **Amaravati School** developed on the banks of Krishna river, under the patronage of the Satvahana rulers. While the other two schools focused on single images, Amaravati School put more emphasis on the use of dynamic images or narrative art.

Q.4) In which one of the following sources the name of Mauryan Emperor Ashoka is mentioned as Ashoka instead of ‘Devanampriya’ or ‘Piyadassi’?

- a) Kalinga Edicts.
- b) Minor rock edict near Maski.
- c) Kanganahalli Inscriptions.
- d) Arthasastra.

Ans) b

Exp) Option b is correct.

Option a is incorrect. Two special edicts known as Separate Rock Edicts or **Kalinga Edicts** have been incorporated in Kalinga. They are peace-making in nature and meant for the pacification of the newly conquered people of Kalinga.

Option b is correct. The **site near Maski village in Raichur district of Karnataka** has a minor rock edict of Emperor Ashoka. It was the **first edict of Emperor Ashoka that contained the name Ashoka in it instead of ‘Devanampriya’ or ‘Piyadassi’**. The inscription remains a dharma shasana and tells people to follow the tenets of Buddhism.

Option c is incorrect. **Kanganahalli Inscriptions** is located in Gulbarga district of Karnataka. It contained the portrait slab of King Ashoka and his queen attended by two chauri bearers. To confirm that it is Ashoka, the sculptural slab also contains a single line label “Rayo Ashoka” in Brahmi script of the Satavahana period.

Option d is incorrect. **Arthasastra** was written before the time of Ashoka. It concentrates on the political, economic and social aspects of the Mauryan empire. Due focus was also given to the military strategy which should be employed by the State.

Q.5) Which one of the following inscriptions mentions about the defeat of Harshvardhana by Pulakesin II and the victory of Chalukyas over Pallavas?

- a) Hathigumpha Inscription
- b) Kalsi Inscription
- c) Mehrauli Inscription
- d) Aihole Inscription

Ans) d

Exp) Option d is correct.

Option a is incorrect.

The **Hathigumpha Inscription** also known as Elephant Cave Inscription from Udayagiri-Khandagiri Caves in Odisha, were inscribed by King Kharavela during 2nd century BC. Hathigumpha Inscription at Udayagiri Caves is the main source of information about Kalinga ruler Kharavela.

Option b is incorrect.

Kalsi inscription: Kalsi is a small town located in between Chakrata and Dehradun on the banks of Yamuna river. The site of Ashoka's inscriptions at Kalsi is singularly unique as it is the only place in North India where the great Mauryan emperor has inscribed the set of the 14 rock edicts. These rock edicts reflect Asoka's human approach in his internal administration when he converted himself to Buddhism.

Option c is incorrect.

Mehrauli Inscription: The Mehrauli Iron Pillar is located in Delhi in the Qutub Minar complex. This pillar was established by Chandragupta- II of Gupta dynasty as Vishnupada in the honour of Lord Vishnu. This pillar credits Chandragupta with conquest of the Vanga Countries by his battling alone against the confederacy of the enemies united against him.

Option d is correct.

Aihole Inscription: Aihole in Karnataka was the first capital of Chalukyas. Many inscriptions were found at Aihole, but the inscription found at Meguti Temple popularly known as Aihole inscription. The inscription is written in Sanskrit and it is in Kannada script.

It mentions about the defeat of Harshvardhana by Pulakesin II and the victory of Chalukyas over Pallavas. It also mentions shifting of the capital from Aihole to Badami. It was written by Ravikirti, the court poet of Pulakesin II who reigned from 610 to 642 AD.