

# INSIGHT GEN. STUDIES & CSAT

*Under the Personal Guidance of*

**S. BALIYAN**

## **TOPIC - I**

### **STONE AGE IN INDIA**

#### **PALAEOLITHIC AGE**

The earliest phase of human life in India is known as the Palaeolithic age. It was the period of the emergence of primitive man and the manufacturing of unpolished chipped stone tools. It commenced about 1.5 million to 2 million years ago and had continued until about 8000 BC. For the convenience of the study it has been divided into three sub phases i.e. the lower Palaeolithic age, middle Palaeolithic age and the upper Palaeolithic age.

#### **Lower Palaeolithic Age**

This age marks the beginning of human life in India. During this period the earliest human being came down of trees and started living on the ground. Its characteristic feature was the use of hand axes, cleavers and choppers. The tools were made of stone and the tools were used mainly for chopping, digging and skinning in this period.

The lower Palaeolithic sites are found in the valley of river Sohan in Punjab (now in Pakistan), Belan Valley in Mirzapur District in Uttar Pradesh. Some sites have also been found in the desert area of Didwana in Rajasthan, in the Valley of river Narmada and in the caves and rock Shelters of Bhimbetka near Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh. The lower Palaeolithic industries were mainly based upon the technique of Core tools.

#### **Middle Palaeolithic Age**

The Middle Palaeolithic industries were mainly based upon flakes. These Flakes have been found in different parts of India and show regional variations. The principal tools are varieties of blades, points, borers and scrapers.

The geographical horizon of the Middle Palaeolithic sites coincides roughly with that of the Lower Palaeolithic sites. The artefacts of this age are also found at several places in the south of Tungbhadra River.

#### **Upper Palaeolithic Age**

The Upper Palaeolithic phase coincided with the last phase of the great Ice Age when climate became comparatively warm. This marks the appearance of new flint industries and of men of the modern type (Homo sapiens). The use of blades and burins have also been found in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, central Madhya Pradesh, southern Uttar Pradesh, south Bihar plateau and the adjoining areas. An Upper Palaeolithic assemblage, characterised by comparatively larger flakes, blades, burins and scrapers has also been found in the upper levels of the Gujarat dunes. Palaeolithic sites are found in many hilly slopes and river valleys of the country. They are absent in the alluvial plains of the Indus and the Ganga.

The people of Palaeolithic ages practiced painting. Prehistoric art appears at several places but Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh is a striking site. The rock paintings extend from the Palaeolithic to the Mesolithic period. Many bird animals and human beings are painted. In the northern spurs of the Vindhya and in the Belan valley all the three phases of the Palaeolithic followed by the Mesolithic and then by the Neolithic have been found in sequence and so is the case with the middle part of the Narmada valley.

Since the Palaeolithic man used only Quartz stone for making the tools, hence the Palaeolithic man is also known as Quartzite man.

**North Delhi: B-18, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Satija House, Main Rd., Dr Mukherjee Nagar 1**

**Central Delhi: 102-103, Above UCO Bank, Old Rajinder Nagar**

**Ph. 011-45090051, 09818333201, 09871216382**

# INSIGHT GEN. STUDIES & CSAT

*Under the Personal Guidance of*

**S. BALIYAN**

The Palaeolithic man lived on hunting and food gathering. He had no knowledge of cultivation.

## MESOLITHIC AGE

In about 10000 B. C. began an intermediate stage in Stone Age culture, which is called the Mesolithic Age. It is considered as a transitional phase between the Palaeolithic and the Neolithic. The Mesolithic people lived on hunting, fishing and food gathering. At a later stage they also domesticated animals. The characteristic tools of the Mesolithic Age are microliths.

The Mesolithic sites are found in good numbers in Rajasthan, Southern Uttar Pradesh, Central and eastern India and also south of the river Krishna. Of them Bagor in Rajasthan is very well excavated. Adamgarh in Madhya Pradesh and Bagor in Rajasthan provide the earliest evidence of the domestication of animals.

## NEOLITHIC AGE

The early pastoral & agricultural communities emerged in different parts of India at periods. The earliest pastoral & agricultural communities emerged in Belan Valley region in UP. Koldihawa, Mahagara & Chopani-Mando are important sites in this region.

The Belan Valley culture shows an advanced sedentary life characterized by well-defined family units, standard pottery tradition and specialized tool types e.g. Celts, Adzes, and Chisels. Excavations have shown that the inhabitants of this region domesticated animals like cattle, sheep, goat and horse. The Belan Valley Agriculturists produced rice around 7000BC- 6000 BC. Chopani-Mando provides the earliest evidence of the use of pottery around 9000-8000 BC.

In north-western region of India sub-continent the earliest evidence of pastoral & agricultural communities comes from Mehargarh situated on the bank of river Bolan in the Kachhi Plain of Baluchistan. Neolithic people of Mehargarh were more advanced than their contemporaries in other parts of Indian sub-continent. Archaeological excavations carried out in this region indicate that the agriculture & domestication of animals began in this region around 5000BC. Excavations also reveal long period of cultural evolution beginning with pre-pottery Neolithic age. The production pattern was marked by mixed farming which rested on farming & herding. This was supplemented by hunting. Excavations reveal that the people of this region cultivated two varieties of barley & three varieties of wheat. Charred seeds of plum & date also have been found. Excavations have also yielded bones of animals like cattle, goat, sheep which indicate domestication of animals. The tools used by the people in this region included the stone axe, stone edges and microliths of typical blade industry.

In northern region of India the Carbon14 dating fixes up a time range of 2500 BC-1500BC for the emergence of the early pastoral & agricultural communities. The cultural life was marked by village settlements in Kashmir Valley. Burzahom & Gufkaral are the two representative sites. Excavations have yielded information about Neolithic phase. Neolithic phase has been categorized into two stages at Burzahom and three stages at Gufkaral. Excavations have also yielded great number of typical bone tools, grains of wheat, pea, barley and bones of animals such as goat, sheep, cattle etc.

Excavations provide an indication of predominantly hunting economy in beginning and later developing into agricultural economy. Pastoral & Agriculture communities were characterized by Pit Dwellings. Dog Burial is a characteristic feature of Gufkaral and Burzahom. The people of Burzahom used coarse grey pottery.

In Mid Ganga Valley Region the sedentary village settlements emerged much later around 2000-1600 BC. Excavations at Chirand, Chechar and Senuwar etc. throw light on sedentary life pattern of this region. Excavations indicate cultivation of rice, barley, pea and wheat. Chirand & Senuwar have yielded large

**North Delhi: B-18, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Satija House, Main Rd., Dr Mukherjee Nagar 2**

**Central Delhi: 102-103, Above UCO Bank, Old Rajinder Nagar**

**Ph. 011-45090051, 09818333201, 09871216382**

# INSIGHT GEN. STUDIES & CSAT

*Under the Personal Guidance of*

**S. BALIYAN**

number of remarkable bone tools. Excavations at Chirand have yielded structural remains of mud floors, microliths, pottery and semi-precious stones.

In eastern India the early farmers emerged in Assam region around 2000 BC. Early farming communal life of the region was characterized by celts, small axes and pottery.



**North Delhi: B-18, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Satija House, Main Rd., Dr Mukherjee Nagar 3**

**Central Delhi: 102-103, Above UCO Bank, Old Rajinder Nagar**

**Ph. 011-45090051, 09818333201, 09871216382**

# INSIGHT GEN. STUDIES & CSAT

*Under the Personal Guidance of*

**S. BALIYAN**

## **TOPIC - II**

### **CHALCOLITHIC CULTURES (2800 BC – 700 BC)**

By the beginning of third millennium B.C several regional cultures, characterized by the use of stone and copper tools, sprang up in different parts of the Indian subcontinent. These were non-urban and non-Harappans. Hence, these cultures are termed as Chalcolithic cultures.

The Chalcolithic cultures are identified on the basis of their geographical location. These cultures included the Banas Culture (located in the Banas basin) in Rajasthan, the Kayatha Culture (type site Kayatha on the bank of river Kalisindh) and represented by other sites in other sites in central India (in the Narmada, Tapi and Mahi valleys.), Malwa Culture (Malwa and extending into other parts of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra) and the Jorwe Culture (Maharashtra).

Daimabad and Inamgaon were the biggest settlements of Chalcolithic culture. Chalcolithic people were the first to use **Painted pottery**. The old name of Ahar is **Tambavati**.

#### **Economic Life**

Economic life of these cultures was associated with agriculture and cattle rearing. The archaeological evidences indicate that this was supplemented by wild game & fishery. Excavations at various sites reveal cultivation of a variety of crops. Barley was the main crop. Besides wheat, rice, gram, pea, Bajra, Jowar etc. too were cultivated.

Archaeological evidences from Inamgaon establish the knowledge of the inhabitants about crop rotation, harvesting and irrigation. Certain references of use of ploughshare are also present. Excavations have also shown that the people domesticated animals like cattle, goat, sheep, dog, horse etc. Besides certain references are there about wild animals like various types of deer, buffalo, rhino. Excavations at certain sites have also yielded bones of fish, turtle, etc. This shows that people consumed all these.

#### **Religious Beliefs**

Various findings in excavations throw light on religious outlook of people and their religious practices. Excavations rarely give any indication male gods. Three male figurines of clay discovered from Inamgaon provide some indication of male gods. Female figures of clay, both baked and unbaked, have been discovered; besides a headless female figure from Nevasa and terracotta female figurines from Inamgaon too have been discovered. This suggests that people worshipped mother goddess. A figure of the mother goddess, similar to that found in western Asia, has been found in Inamgaon.

Excavations also throw light on practices of disposal of dead. Burial was a common custom. Burying of dead in north-south orientation has been revealed by excavations. There are evidences of pit-burial also. A typical custom shown by excavations was burying the dead in the precincts of the house; besides cutting off the feet before the burial too show a peculiar outlook of the people (Jorwe Culture). The dead were buried with various objects like personal ornaments.

#### **Pottery Tradition**

Pottery was painted and was mostly black on red. The Jorwe Pottery is painted black-on-red and special forms are bowls, jars and globular vases. It is also remarkable for almost total absence of thali. Common types are bowls, dishes, basins, globular jars etc.

The Ahar Pottery shows seven varieties but the most important type being black on red ware painted in white. The Malwa Pottery possesses buff slip and various patterns are displayed in black or dark brown

**North Delhi: B-18, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Satija House, Main Rd., Dr Mukherjee Nagar** 4

**Central Delhi: 102-103, Above UCO Bank, Old Rajinder Nagar**

**Ph. 011-45090051, 09818333201, 09871216382**

# INSIGHT GEN. STUDIES & CSAT

*Under the Personal Guidance of*

**S. BALIYAN**

colour, small goblets being an important feature of the Malwa Pottery. The Kayatha Pottery is marked by three types – Red slipped ware painted in dark brown, Red painted buff ware and a combed ware. The Rangpur Pottery is known as lustrous red ware. It is derived from Harappan red and black ware, black colour was used for painting.

## **Social Structure**

These regional Chalcolithic cultures were characterised by emergence of hierarchical pattern in social organisation. This also gives indication that the concept of social stratification was prevalent. Distribution patterns of various sites suggest existence of some kind of administrative authority. Existence of structures such as rampart, granaries, and embankment too suggest existence of some kind of administrative authority.

The burial of a large number of children in western Maharashtra shows some weakness of Chalcolithic cultures.

## **Pattern of Settlement**

Excavations of various sites suggest that distribution pattern was characterised by regional centres and village settlements. This is suggestive of existence of some kind of hierarchical system. Excavations also reveal various structures like fortification, granaries, embankment etc. (at Eran of Malwa Culture and at Inamgaon of Jorwe Culture).

The distinctive house pattern in various sites was rectangular and circular. Walls made up of mud and thatched roof were the characteristic feature of the houses in most of the sites. So far as the size of the houses is concerned, it varied from place to place. The house pattern in Ahar Culture was marked by use of mud, use of timber, fairly large size, longer axis being north-south and shorter being east-west, simple furnishing and Chullahs etc. The Malwa Houses at Daimabad, Inamgaon, and Navdatoli are large in size having partition wall made up of mud. Chullahs are common. The Jorwe Settlement is characterised by presence of a large centre in each region.

House pattern shows social differentiation-houses of prosperous farmers being larger and in the central part and houses of the artisans situated in western outlying areas. Jorwe houses were large and rectangular in shape and were characterised by low mud walls.

**North Delhi: B-18, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Satija House, Main Rd., Dr Mukherjee Nagar 5**

**Central Delhi: 102-103, Above UCO Bank, Old Rajinder Nagar**

**Ph. 011-45090051, 09818333201, 09871216382**

# INSIGHT GEN. STUDIES & CSAT

*Under the Personal Guidance of*

**S. BALIYAN**



**North Delhi: B-18, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Satija House, Main Rd., Dr Mukherjee Nagar 6**

**Central Delhi: 102-103, Above UCO Bank, Old Rajinder Nagar**

**Ph. 011-45090051, 09818333201, 09871216382**