

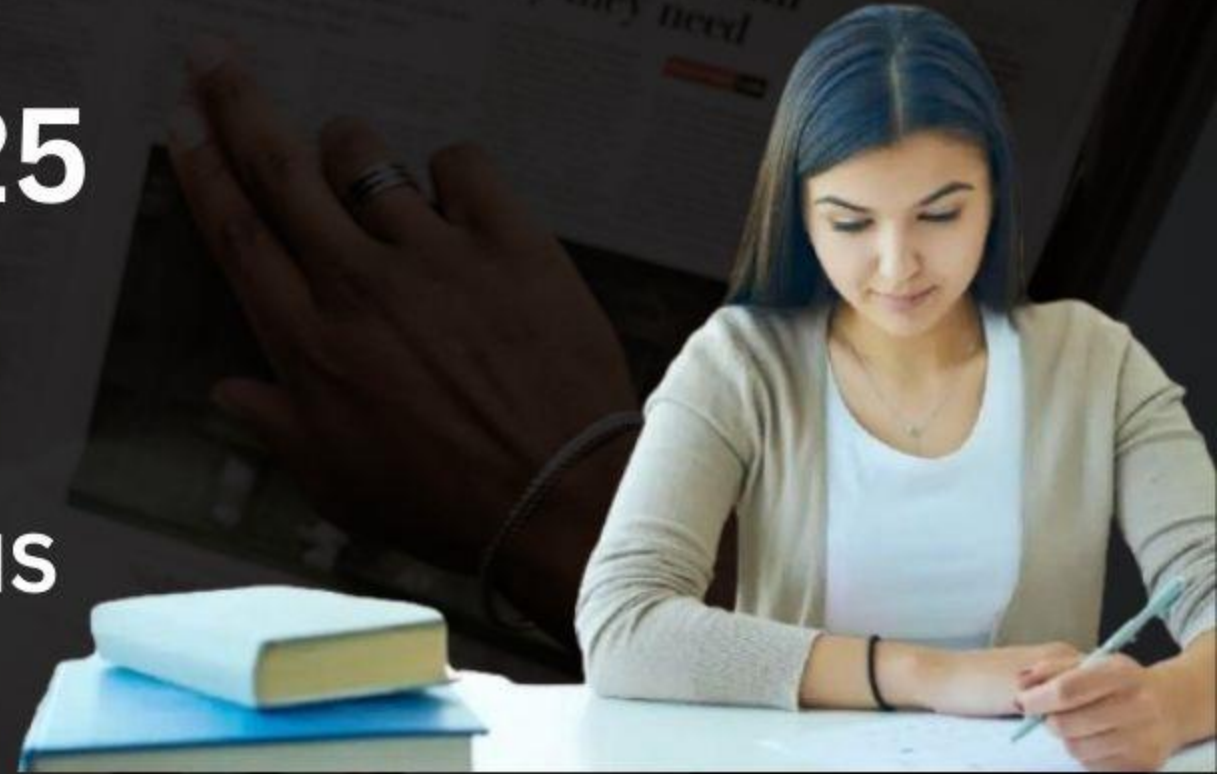


**BAJIRAO IAS ACADEMY**

# **UPSC MAINS 2025**

## **COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF UPSC MAINS EXAMINATION 2025 QUESTIONS**

**18 SEPTEMBER 2025**

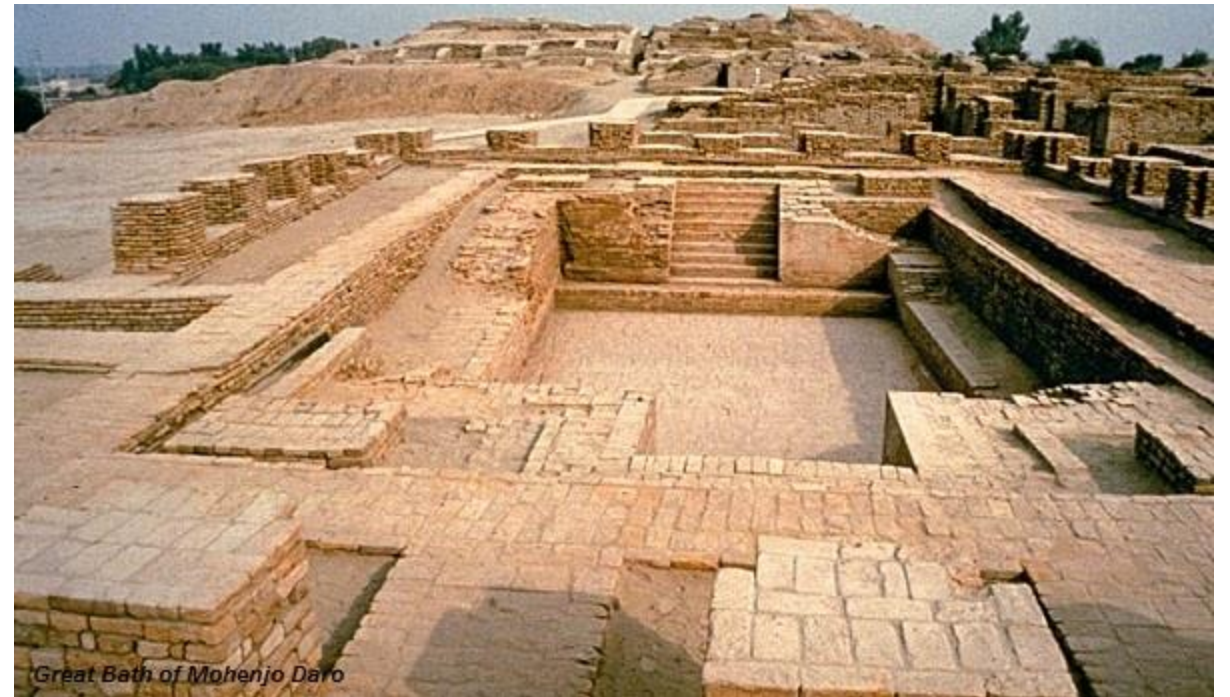


**FOR UPSC AND STATE  
PSC EXAMINATIONS**

# 1. Discuss the salient features of the Harappan architecture.

## Model Framework (Improved)

- **Intro:** One-liner on Harappa as earliest urbanism + timeframe + significance.
- **Body (with subheadings):** Urban Planning → Drainage → Public Architecture → Residential → Specialized Structures → Significance.
- **Analysis:** Link features with economy, society, technology.
- **Conclusion:** Continuity (ancient → medieval → modern smart cities) + contemporary relevance.



## INTRODUCTION

- ❑ The **Harappan Civilization (c. 2600 BCE – 1900 BCE)**, also known as the **Indus Valley Civilization (IVC)**, represents one of the earliest **urban cultures of the Bronze Age**.
- ❑ Spread across modern-day Pakistan, northwest India, and parts of Afghanistan, it contributed immensely to the development of **planned urbanism, architectural sophistication, and hydraulic engineering**.
- ❑ The architectural remains from sites such as **Harappa, Mohenjo-daro, Dholavira, Lothal, Kalibangan, and Rakhigarhi** highlight a unique blend of functionality, aesthetics, and civic consciousness, making Harappan architecture a benchmark in early human history.

## Body

### 1. Urban Planning & Grid System

1. Cities like **Mohenjo-daro and Harappa** followed a **grid pattern**, with streets intersecting at right angles.
2. Use of **burnt bricks** for uniform construction.
3. Separation into **citadel (administrative/religious hub)** and **lower town (residential area)** reflects social organization.

## 2 .Drainage & Sanitation Architecture

- Sophisticated **underground drainage system** with covered drains and soak pits at **Mohenjo-daro**.
- Individual houses had private wells and bathrooms connected to public drains.

## 3 .Public Architecture

- **Great Bath of Mohenjo-daro**: Earliest example of **waterproof brickwork and hydraulic engineering**, suggesting ritualistic and civic use.
- **Granaries at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro**: Indicate organized storage and state control of resources.
- **Assembly Hall at Mohenjo-daro**: Pointing towards community gatherings and administrative functions.

## 4 .Residential Architecture

- Houses of varied sizes, indicating **social stratification**.
- Presence of **courtyards, multiple rooms, wells, and staircases** (suggesting multi-storeyed structures).
- Use of standardized **brick ratio (1:2:4)** highlights technical uniformity.

## 5 .Fortifications and Defensive Structures

- **Dholavira** had massive stone fortifications.
- **Kalibangan** reveals mud-brick fortifications and fire altars, combining defense with ritual elements.

## 6 .Specialized Structures

- **Dockyard at Lothal**: A marvel of **maritime architecture and trade linkages**.
- **Water reservoirs at Dholavira**: Show advanced **water management and conservation techniques** in semi-arid zones.

## 7 .Material & Technique

- Predominant use of **baked bricks, stone (Dholavira), and timber**.
- Emphasis on **standardization** and **symmetry**, highlighting collective civic planning rather than individual expression.

## Conclusion

The Harappan architectural tradition reflects a unique synthesis of **utility, civic consciousness, and technological innovation**.

## 2.Examine the main aspects of Akbar's religious syncretism.

### Model Framework (Improved)

**Intro:** Akbar's reign emphasized **Sulh-i-Kul**.

**Body:** Policies included **abolition of jizya, Ibadat Khana debates**, creation of **Din-i-Ilahi, Rajput alliances**, and cultural translations.

**Conclusion:** Though Din-i-Ilahi faded, **Sulh-i-Kul shaped Mughal pluralism**, inspiring India's secular ethos.



## Introduction

- ❑ The Mughal emperor **Akbar (1556–1605)** is remembered for his **religious policy of tolerance and syncretism**, which went beyond orthodox Islam.
- ❑ By promoting **sulh-i kul (“peace with all”)**, he sought to **unify diverse faiths** under the Mughal Empire. His measures reflected both **political pragmatism** (for stability of a multi-religious empire) and a **personal philosophical quest** for truth.

## Main Aspects of Akbar’s Religious Syncretism

### 1. Policy of Toleration (Sulh-i Kul)

- Abolished **jizya tax (1564)** and **pilgrimage tax**, reducing discrimination against non-Muslims.
- Promoted **equal treatment of subjects** irrespective of religion.
- Example: Appointment of **Raja Todar Mal (Finance Minister)** and **Raja Man Singh (Military Commander)** in top offices.

## 2. Religious Debates and Ibadat Khana

- Established the **Ibadat Khana (1575, Fatehpur Sikri)** for interfaith dialogues.
- Invited **Muslim ulema, Hindu pandits, Jain monks, Zoroastrian priests, and Jesuit missionaries.**
- Example: **Jesuit missionaries** introduced him to Christian theology; **Jain influence** led to restrictions on animal slaughter.

## 3. Din-i Ilahi (1582)

- Launched as a syncretic faith blending elements of **Islam (oneness of God), Hinduism (karma & bhakti), Jainism (ahimsa), Christianity (piety), and Zoroastrianism (sun/fire worship).**
- Stressed **ethical conduct, loyalty, and devotion to the emperor** rather than ritual practices.
- Example: **Birbal**, his courtier, was among the few followers.
- Though limited in acceptance, it symbolized **Akbar's universalist vision.**

## 4. Socio-Cultural Integration

- ❑ **Rajput alliances** through matrimonial ties (e.g., marriage to Harkha Bai, mother of Jahangir) ensured **Hindu-Muslim cooperation**.
- ❑ Patronized **translation of Sanskrit texts** (e.g., *Mahabharata* into *Razmnama*).
- ❑ Encouraged a **composite Mughal culture** in art, architecture, and literature.

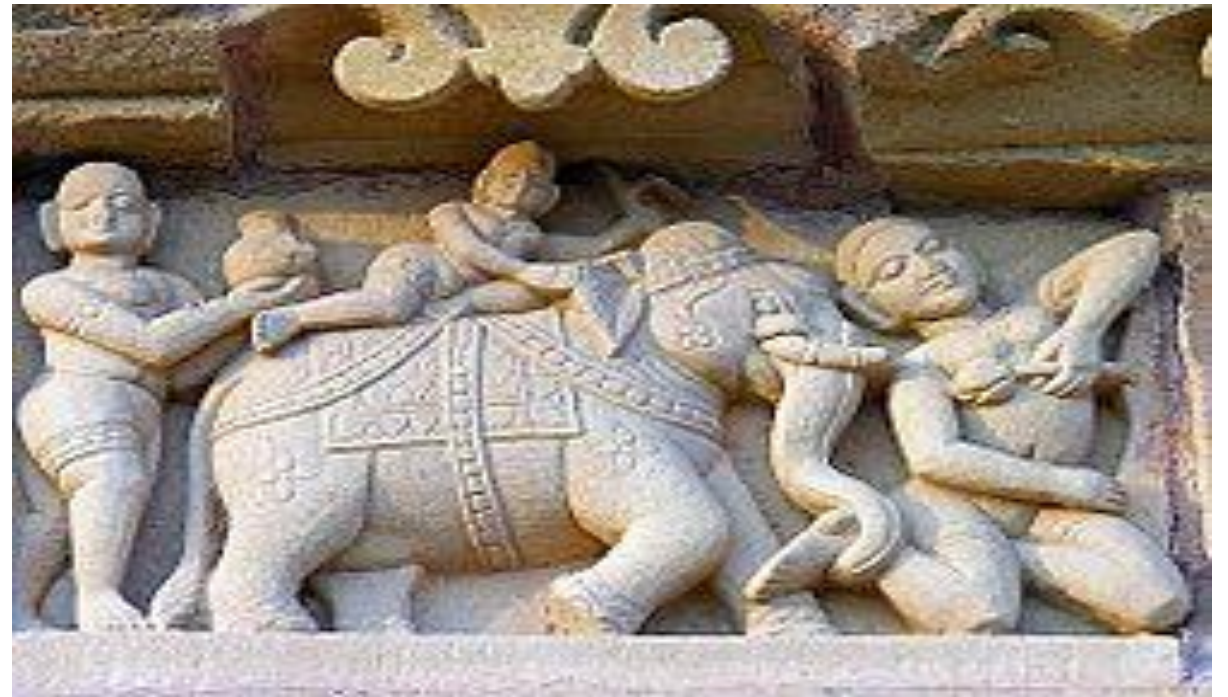
## Conclusion

- ❑ Akbar's **religious syncretism** went beyond mere tolerance—it attempted to create a **shared ethical foundation** for India's plural society.
- ❑ While **Din-i Ilahi** faded after his death, the principle of **sulh-i kul** influenced Mughal governance and echoes in India's **modern secular and pluralist framework**.
- ❑ His vision remains relevant today, offering lessons in **inclusive governance and cultural accommodation** in a diverse society.

### 3.The sculptors filled the Chandella artform with resilient vigor and breadth of life.' Elucidate.

#### Model Framework (Improved)

- **Introduction** – Give **Context + Identity + Significance**
- **Who/When** → Chandellas, their period (9th–13th century CE).
- **Body** – Break into **thematic headings** (so examiner scans easily)
- **Conclusion** – Always **Continuity + Contemporary Relevance**



## Introduction

- ❑ The **Chandellas (9th–13th century CE)**, a Rajput dynasty of central India, ruled Bundelkhand with their capital at **Khajuraho**.
- ❑ They were prolific patrons of **art and architecture**, especially temples, which are today recognized as **UNESCO World Heritage sites**.
- ❑ The Chandella artform, particularly the **Khajuraho temple sculptures**, represents a **fusion of spirituality and sensuality**, embodying not only religious devotion but also the **full vitality of human existence**.



## Body

### 1. Resilient Vigor in Sculptural Expression

- **Dynamic Figures:** Sculptures depict gods, goddesses, warriors, dancers, and celestial beings in **fluid, energetic postures**.
- *Example:* Sculptures of **apsaras and surasundaris** in lively tribhanga poses.
- **Erotic Imagery (Mithuna sculptures):** Celebrated **kama as a legitimate pursuit (purushartha)**, showing vitality of human relationships.
- **Narrative Reliefs:** Scenes from **daily life, battles, hunting, festivals** showcase resilience of society beyond religion.

### 2. Artistic Techniques Enhancing Vitality

- **High-relief carving** gives depth and dynamism.
- Use of **proportionality and graceful curves** conveys movement.
- **Narrative sequencing** on temple walls creates a sense of continuity and rhythm.

### 3. Breadth of Life Captured

- **Religious Diversity:** Temples dedicated to **Shiva, Vishnu, Jain Tirthankaras**, reflecting inclusivity of faiths.
- **Secular Themes:** Sculptures of **musicians, dancers, artisans, common folk**, representing cultural vibrancy.
- **Nature & Animals:** Carvings of **elephants, horses, lions, mythical beings** highlight harmony of human and natural worlds.
- **Integration of Spiritual & Mundane:** Erotic and secular motifs coexist with **divine imagery**, suggesting life in its **totality**.

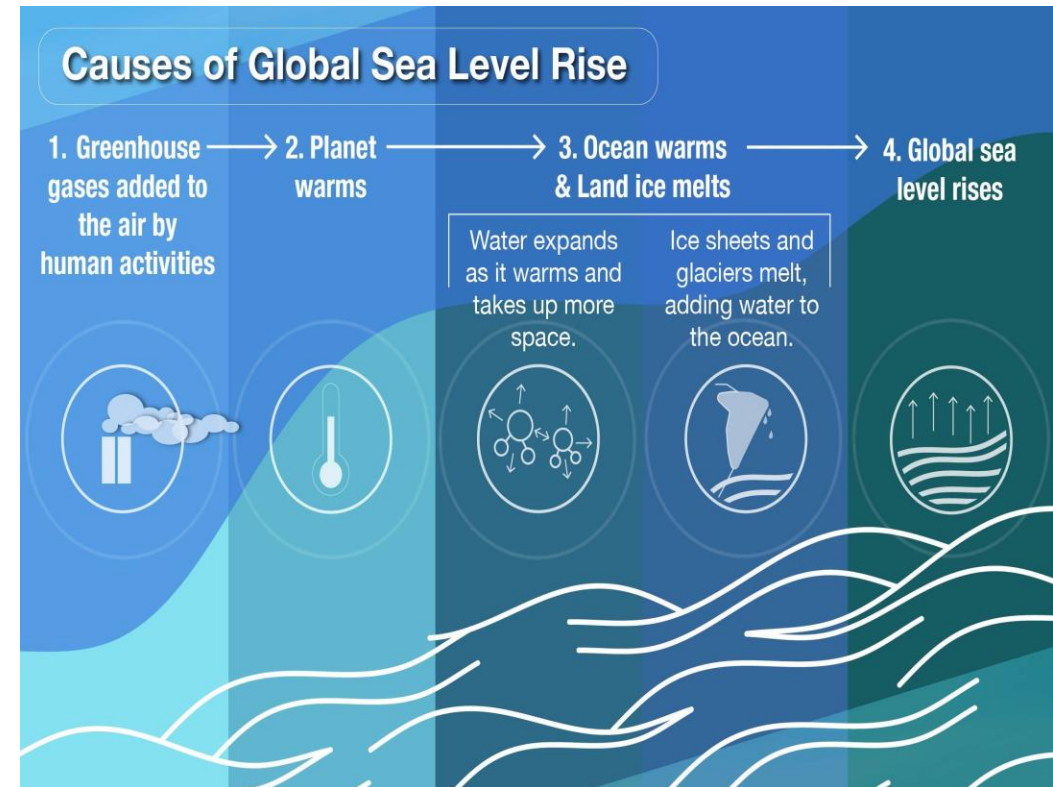
### Conclusion

- The Chandella sculptors transformed stone into a **living narrative of human spirit, society, and divinity**.
- The **Khajuraho temples** remain a **testament to India's aesthetic richness**, symbolizing the balance of **dharma, artha, kama, and moksha**—a vision still relevant to understanding Indian art and cultural philosophy today.

## 4. How are climate change and the sea level rise affecting the very existence of many island nations? Discuss with examples.

### Model Framework (Improved)

- **Intro (definition) →**
- **Thematic impacts (with examples & analysis) →**
- **Conclusion (solutions & continuity).**



## Introduction

- ❑ Climate change, driven by **global warming**, is leading to **thermal expansion of oceans and accelerated melting of glaciers**.
- ❑ As a result, the **global sea level is projected to rise between 0.26–0.77 meters by 2100 (IPCC Report, 2021)**.
- ❑ For **Small Island Developing States (SIDS)**, particularly in the Pacific, Indian, and Caribbean oceans, this poses an **existential threat**—from submergence of land to economic collapse and forced migration.

## Body

### 1. Loss of Territory and Submergence

- Rising seas are **eroding coastlines and threatening to submerge entire islands**.
- **Example:** The **Maldives** (80% of land <1 m above sea level) may become **uninhabitable by 2100**.
- **Kiribati** has already purchased land in **Fiji** as a potential refuge for its population.

## 2. Threats to Freshwater Resources

- **Saltwater intrusion** contaminates aquifers, reducing access to drinking water.
- **Example: Tuvalu** faces periodic droughts worsened by saltwater, forcing reliance on expensive desalination plants.
- **Marshall Islands** report rising cases of water-borne diseases linked to degraded water quality.

## 3. Impact on Livelihoods and Food Security

- **Fisheries and coral reefs** are disrupted by rising seas and warming oceans, reducing fish stocks.
- **Example: Solomon Islands** have lost arable land due to coastal erosion, damaging subsistence agriculture.
- Coral bleaching in the **Great Barrier Reef** threatens tourism-dependent economies of **Pacific island nations**.

## 4. Increased Frequency of Extreme Weather Events

- Rising seas amplify **storm surges, cyclones, and flooding**.
- **Example: Cyclone Pam (2015)** devastated **Vanuatu**, displacing thousands.
- **Fiji** faces repeated cyclones (e.g., Cyclone Winston, 2016) with damages equal to **20% of its GDP**.

## 5. Cultural and National Identity at Risk

- **Loss of ancestral land and heritage sites** undermines cultural identity.
- **Example:** Traditional burial grounds in **Kiribati** and **Tuvalu** are being washed away.
- Some nations (like **Maldives**) fear becoming “**nations without territory**”, raising questions under **international law**.

## 6. Climate-Induced Migration and Security Concerns

- Displacement leads to “**climate refugees**”, creating regional instability.
- **Example:** Kiribati’s “**Migration with Dignity**” policy prepares citizens for relocation.
- UN Security Council debates classify such crises as **security threats**.

## Conclusion

Climate change and sea level rise are not just **environmental challenges** but **existential threats** to many island nations.

They endanger **territory, livelihoods, culture, and sovereignty**. This underscores the urgency of **global climate action**, especially through frameworks like the **Paris Agreement**, and the need for **climate justice and adaptation finance** for vulnerable SIDS.

Protecting these nations is not just about saving islands, but about preserving **human dignity, cultural diversity, and global equity** in the face of climate change.



# Thank you

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