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Q5(a)

Palaeolithic culture.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2015 · Anthropology GS 1 · 10 marks · Paleolithic

(i) Paleolithic

Core demand of the question

- Write a note on Palaeolithic culture
- Keep the note to a 10-mark length of about 150 words

Revision summary

The Palaeolithic is the Old Stone Age of chipped tools and foraging.

Lower, Middle, and Upper mark handaxe, flake, and blade kits.

Attirampakkam and Hunsgi are Indian Lower Palaeolithic type areas.

Upper Palaeolithic blades and beads appear at sites such as **Patne**.

Read it as adaptation to monsoon landscapes, not as one people.

Introduction

Palaeolithic culture is the Old Stone Age of chipped tools, hunting, and gathering. It covers most of human time before farming.

Body**Divisions**

- **Lower Palaeolithic handaxes and cleavers: Acheulian** at **Attirampakkam**, **Hunsgi**, and **Isampur**.
- **Middle Palaeolithic** prepared cores and flakes, often on chert, as in central Indian river gravels.
- **Upper Palaeolithic** blades, bone tools, and art in Europe; Indian blades at **Renigunta** and **Patne**, with ostrich-eggshell beads.

Way of life

- **Foote, de Terra**, and later **Misra** and **Paddayya** mapped Indian sequences onto monsoon rivers, not Alpine ice alone.
- Fire, mobility, and small bands are inferred from hearths, kill sites, and tool workshops.
- It is a culture of adaptation, not a single tribe named 'Palaeolithic man'.

Flow diagram

Palaeolithic -> Lower Acheulian

Palaeolithic -> Middle flakes

Palaeolithic -> Upper blades

Conclusion

Palaeolithic culture is the long chipped-stone foraging world. Indian Acheulian and blade sites sit in that world without copying Europe's cave-art climax.

Facts & figures

Footnote

Pallavaram handaxe opened the Indian palaeolithic record.

Attirampakkam

Long Acheulian sequence in Tamil Nadu.

Patne

Maharashtra site with Upper Palaeolithic blades and ostrich-eggshell beads.

Paddayya

Hunsgi-Baichbal Acheulian as a landscape of limestone workshops.

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