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Q31

With reference to the cultural history of India, which one of the following is the correct description of the term paramitas? (a) The earliest Dharmashastra texts written in aphoristic (sutra) style (b) Philosophical schools that did not accept the authority of Vedas (c) Perfections whose attainment led to the Bodhisattva path (d) Powerful merchant guilds of early Medieval South India
Official key: C.

UPSC Civil Services Prelims 2020 · General Studies · 2 marks · Art and Culture

Indian art, architecture, culture - Prelims GS Paper I.

Explanation

(a)

Earliest Dharmasutra. That is Kalpa/sutra literature, not paramita.

(b)

Nastika schools. Unrelated label.

(c) Official key

Perfections on the Bodhisattva path. Dana, sila, kshanti and the rest.

(d)

South-Indian merchant guilds. Those are nanadesi / manigramam.

Summary

Official key is (c). Paramitas are the Mahayana 'perfections' whose practice makes a Bodhisattva - generosity, morality, patience, energy, meditation, wisdom (and expansions to ten).

Related possible facts

These can be asked in a future Prelims paper.

Six paramitas

Dana, sila, kshanti, virya, dhyana, prajna.

Dasabhumi

Ten stages; ten paramitas in later lists.

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