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Q15

Fa-hien (Faxian), the Chinese pilgrim, travelled to India during the reign of (a) Samudragupta (b) Chandragupta II (c) Kumaragupta I (d) Skandagupta Official key: B.

UPSC Civil Services Prelims 2025 · General Studies · 2 marks · History (Ancient, Medieval, Modern)

Ancient, medieval and modern Indian history - Prelims GS Paper I.

Explanation

(a)

Samudragupta. Too early for Faxian's stay.

(b) Official key

Chandragupta II. Faxian (Fa-hien) travelled in India in this reign (c. 399-414 CE).

(c)

Kumaragupta I. The next generation; the usual swap trap.

(d)

Skandagupta. Still later, Huna wars.

Summary

Official Set A key is (b) Chandragupta II. The Chinese pilgrim Faxian reached India in the Gupta high period under Chandragupta II (Vikramaditya), described Magadha and Pataliputra, and wrote Fo-kuo-ki. Kumaragupta I is the neighbouring reign and the common wrong tick.

Related possible facts

These can be asked in a future Prelims paper.

Faxian (Fa-hien)

Chinese monk; Record of Buddhist Kingdoms. In India c. 399-414 CE in the usual chronology.

Chandragupta II

c. 375-415. Ujjain, iron pillar, Kalidasa neighbourhood. The textbook host for Faxian.

Xuanzang (Hiuen Tsang)

7th century, Harsha. Do not mix the two pilgrims.

Yijing

Later Chinese pilgrim (7th century). A third name in this set.

Kumaragupta I

Founded Nalanda in many accounts; issued kartikeya coins. Official host on this paper.

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