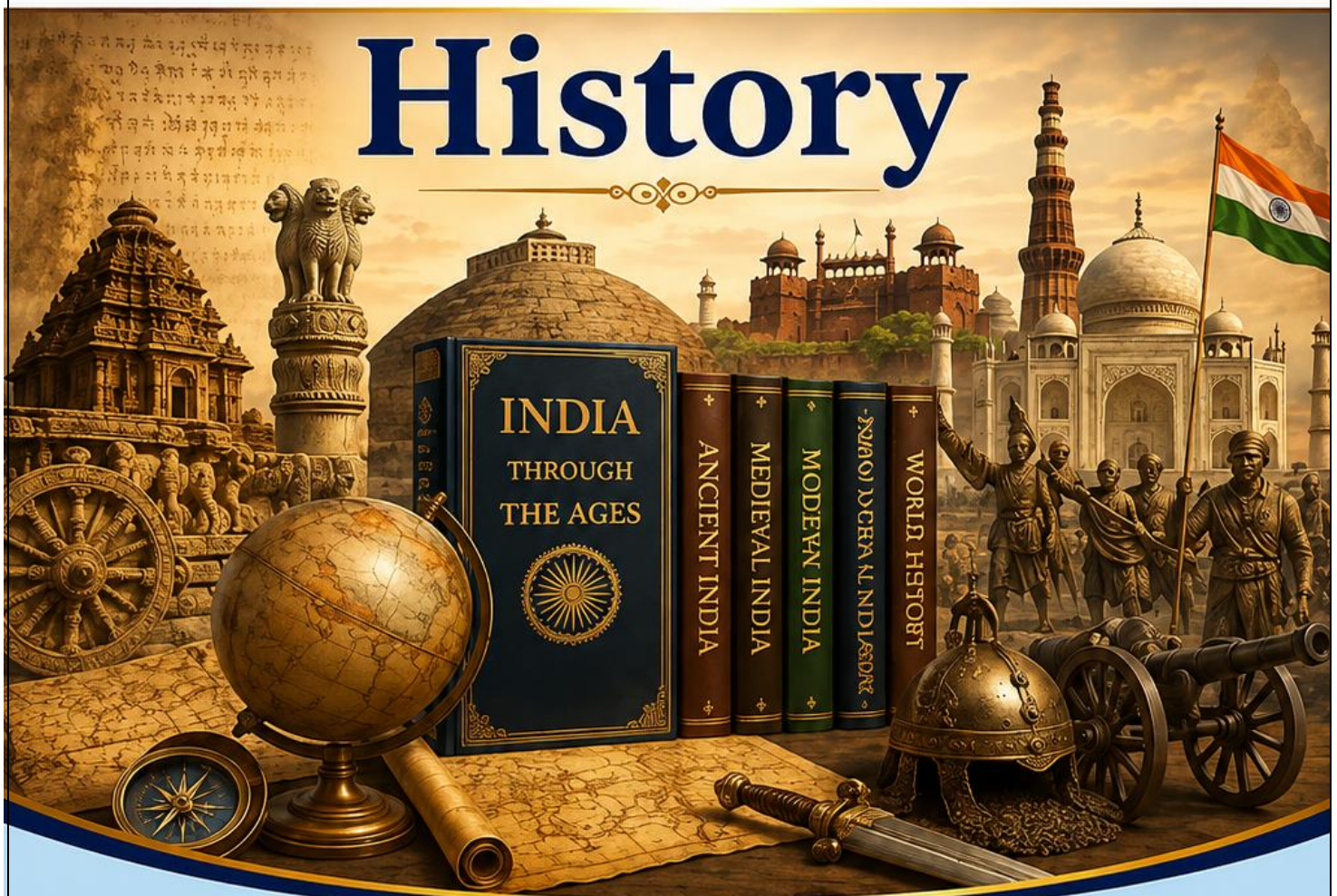




P.L. RAJ IAS & IPS ACADEMY

Civil Services Study Material

History



UPSC Prelims Current Affairs (June 2026)

MONTHLY COMPILATION



1447 / C, 3rd Floor, 15th Main Road,
H Block, Anna Nagar West, Chennai - 600040.

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1. Banda Singh Bahadur: Political and Agrarian Legacy

Prelims: Sikh History | Mughal Period | Historical Personalities

GS-I: Modern/Pre-Modern Transition | Regional Resistance | Agrarian Change

Why in News?

The historical legacy and martyrdom of **Banda Singh Bahadur** returned to

current-
attention
around the



commemoration of his execution in **1716**. Government historical references record the martyrdom of Banda Singh Bahadur and his son Ajai Singh in June 1716.

From Madho Das to Banda Singh Bahadur

1. Banda Singh Bahadur was born **Lachhman Dev** and was later known as **Madho Das Bairagi** before his association with **Guru Gobind Singh**.
2. After meeting the Guru, he emerged as a military leader associated with the Khalsa and was tasked with challenging Mughal authority in Punjab.
3. His historical importance lies not simply in military resistance but in the attempt to create an alternative political authority in parts of northern India.

Major Campaigns

1. His forces challenged Mughal officials and captured important centres including **Samana** and **Sirhind**.
2. The defeat of Sirhind acquired particular symbolic importance because the town was associated with the execution of the younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh.
3. Banda Singh Bahadur subsequently established control over portions of Punjab before sustained Mughal counter-offensives weakened his position.

Agrarian Dimension

1. One of the most significant aspects of his rule was its association with a challenge to entrenched landed intermediaries.
2. Historical accounts credit his administration with measures that strengthened cultivators and weakened elements of the **zamindari order** in territories under his control.
3. For UPSC, this makes Banda Singh Bahadur relevant not merely to Sikh military history but also to the study of **agrarian power, peasant mobilisation and changing political authority** in early eighteenth-century north India.

Political Significance

1. **Khalsa Assertion:** His campaigns translated Sikh military mobilisation into territorial political authority.

2. **Challenge to Mughal Power:** His rise reflected the weakening ability of the later Mughal State to maintain uncontested regional control.
3. **Popular Mobilisation:** His support base included agrarian and socially marginal groups attracted by resistance to existing hierarchies.
4. **Symbolic Sovereignty:** Coinage and administrative practices associated with his rule represented an assertion of independent authority.

Capture and Martyrdom

1. After prolonged conflict, Banda Singh Bahadur was captured by Mughal forces and taken to Delhi, where he and many followers were executed in **1716**.
2. His career belongs to the broader early eighteenth-century transition in which Mughal central authority increasingly confronted **regional military, religious and political formations**.
3. For historical interpretation, Banda Singh Bahadur is best understood at the intersection of **Sikh political consolidation, anti-Mughal resistance and agrarian transformation**, rather than as a military figure alone.

2. Rakhigarhi – Harappan site

Prelims:

Ancient Indian History, Art & Culture, Archaeology

Mains:

GS Paper I-Indian Heritage & Culture, GS Paper III

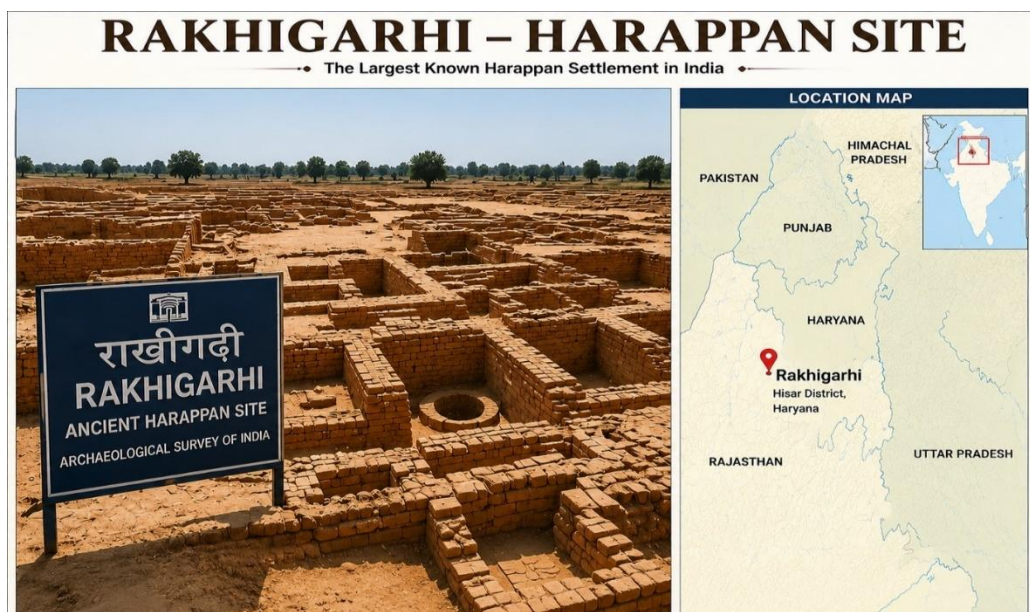
-Science & Technology

Current relevance:

The **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** has formally transferred human skeletal remains excavated from **Rakhigarhi (Haryana)** to the **Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI)** for detailed scientific investigation.

About rakhigarhi:

1. **Rakhigarhi**, spread over **about 550 hectares in Haryana**, is the **largest known Harappan settlement in India**.
2. Provides evidence of one of the world's **earliest urban societies**.
3. It demonstrates that major urban centers also flourished in **northwestern India**, highlighting the civilization's **wide geographic extent**.
4. **Archaeological Discoveries:**
 - (i) Planned residential areas.
 - (ii) Drainage systems and brick-lined streets.
 - (iii) Fire altars and industrial



- (iv) Terracotta toys and figurines.

- (v) Gold and copper ornaments.
- (vi) Bead-making workshops.
- (vii) Indus seals and inscriptions.
- (viii) Human burials.

Recent Scientific Research:

1. **Human skeletons** transferred to **AnSI's Ancient Human Skeletal Repository and Laboratory, Kolkata.**
2. The study will employ modern scientific techniques, including:
 - (i) **Ancient DNA (aDNA) analysis**
 - (ii) **Stable isotope analysis**
 - (iii) **Osteological studies**
 - (iv) **Palaeopathological investigations**
 - (v) **Environmental reconstruction**

Source: THE HINDU—<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/asi-transfers-rakhigarhi-skeletons-to-anthropological-survey-of-india-for-further-research/article71133224.ece>