Gupta Age — every PYQ point

36 PYQs 38 tested points 4 traps 0 missed

▶ Watch the full video (6:02) with this sheet:
https://youtube.com/watch?v=_rXdGpnW504

How to read: UPSC 2025 = asked by UPSC that year · UPPCS ×1 = asked that many times by UPPCS. Red = the word the examiner tests. ~~Struck~~ = a wrong option, the fix after the arrow.

1 · Founder — context

	Tested point	Asked
1	Chandragupta I (c. AD 319–335) · Gupta era begins AD 319–20 · capital Pataliputra	
2	Married the Lichchhavi princess Kumaradevi · the marriage appears on a Gupta gold coin	

2 · Samudragupta — 8 PYQs

	Tested point	Asked
3	Allahabad Pillar inscription — Samudragupta	UPSC 2006
4	Ashoka's pillar at Allahabad tells us about the reign of Samudragupta	UPPCS ×1
5	Prayag Prashasti — the military campaigns of Samudragupta	UPPCS ×1
6	Same pillar also carries an inscription of Jahangir	UPPCS ×1
7	~~Harisena — Harsha~~ → Harisena, court poet of Samudragupta (wrote the Prashasti)	UPPCS ×1
8	Napoleon of India — Samudragupta	UPPCS ×1 UPSC 1985
9	Title Prithivyah Pratham Veer — Samudragupta	UPPCS ×1
10	Title Parakramank — Samudragupta	UPPCS ×1

Trap: the pillar is Ashoka's; the Gupta and Mughal inscriptions were added later on the same stone.

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3 · Chandragupta II — 6 PYQs

	Tested point	Asked
11	Another name — Devagupta	UPPCS ×1
12	Ended the Shakas (Western Kshatrapas) of Malwa-Gujarat · Ujjain becomes a second capital	UPSC 1985
13	Title Shakari — 'Shaka-conqueror'	UPPCS ×1
14	Title Vikramaditya	UPPCS ×1
15	Fa-hien (Faxian) visited India in his reign	UPSC 2025
16	Iron pillar, Qutub complex (Mehrauli) — inscription of 'Chandra'	UPPCS ×1

4 · Kumaragupta I and Skandagupta — 7 PYQs

	Tested point	Asked
17	Nalanda Mahavihara — founded under Kumaragupta I	
18	Hunas invaded in the reign of Skandagupta	UPPCS ×1
19	Skandagupta defeated the Hunas	UPPCS ×2 UPSC 1985
20	Source: Bhitari Pillar inscription	UPPCS ×1
21	Title Kramaditya — Skandagupta	UPPCS ×1
22	~~Kumaragupta restored the Sudarshana lake embankment~~ → under Skandagupta (Junagadh inscription)	UPSC 1985

Kings and titles on one line

Emperor	Title	Remember
Ashoka	Priyadarsin	(Mauryan, in the same match question)
Samudragupta	Parakramank	Prayag Prashasti · Napoleon of India
Chandragupta II	Vikramaditya	Shakari · Fa-hien · iron pillar
Skandagupta	Kramaditya	Hunas · Bhitari pillar

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5 · Economy and land — 7 PYQs

	Tested point	Asked
23	Gold coin — Dinara	UPPCS ×2
24	Silver coin — Rupaka	UPPCS ×1
25	Kulyavapa · Dronavapa — measurement of land	UPSC 2020
26	Vishti (forced labour) — a source of income for the State, a kind of tax	UPSC 2019
27	Land grants → landowning middle class + dependent peasantry	UPPCS ×1
28	Feudalism traced to military campaigns · expanded in the Gupta period · both true, R does not explain A	UPSC 2000

6 · Ports — 3 PYQs

	Tested point	Asked
29	Tamralipti — port for north Indian trade	UPSC 1999 · UPPCS ×1
30	Ghantasala · Kadura · Chaul — ports handling foreign trade	UPSC 2020

7 · Art: the Golden Age — 6 PYQs

	Tested point	Asked
31	Golden Age — the Gupta period	UPPCS ×1
32	Art and architecture at their zenith — the Guptas	UPSC 1983
33	Idol worship started in the Gupta period	UPSC 1980 · UPSC 1979
34	~~Ellora — Gupta paintings~~ → Ajanta + Bagh caves	UPSC 2010

8 · Letters, learning, science — 4 PYQs

	Tested point	Asked
35	Mrichchhakatika (Shudraka) — love affair of a rich merchant with a courtesan's daughter	UPSC 2003
36	~~Nalanda known only through Chinese pilgrims~~ → also seals, inscriptions, excavations	UPSC 1983
37	Place-value: earliest epigraphic use Mankani plates, Gujarat (AD 595–596) · SE Asia by the 7th century · general in India by the 9th — all three correct	UPSC 2026
38	Chess (chaturanga) — originated in India	UPPCS ×1

Next in the series: Part 8 · Post-Gupta Age and Harsha (Vakatakas, Harsha, Hiuen Tsang).

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