

convict. The stele, on which the Code of Hammurabi is written, is kept in the Louvre Museum in Paris.

Recap

1. Present-day Iraq and parts of Iran, Syria and Turkey constituted ancient Mesopotamia.
2. The Mesopotamian civilization represents four cultures—Sumerian, Akkadian, Babylonian and Assyrian.
3. Important Mesopotamian rulers included Ur-Nammu, Sargon and Hammurabi.
4. The Mesopotamian society was divided into three main classes—upper class, middle class and lower class.
5. Each Mesopotamian city had its own god or goddess. The temples were also the centres of economic activities. They had a pyramid-shaped tower called ziggurat.
6. The Code of Hammurabi enforced a culture of strict justice in Mesopotamia.

ECONOMIC LIFE

Agriculture

Agriculture was the prime occupation of the people of Mesopotamia. They built dams, canals and dykes to control the flooding by rivers and to irrigate crops. With the introduction of the plough, they simplified agriculture. They grew crops like wheat, barley, sesame, flax and various fruits and vegetables. People also raised livestock.

Trade

As stated earlier, temples were the centre of economic activities in Mesopotamia. Every economic activity including trade was controlled by temple priests. Farmers

also used to bring their produce to the temple.

Mesopotamia had extensive trade links with the rest of ancient Western Asia. Ur, a city-state in Sumer, was a major centre for commerce and trade. The Tigris and Euphrates rivers made it easy to transport goods by boats for trade. The invention of the wheel by the Sumerians also revolutionized transport over land. The Mesopotamians imported timber, stone, and metals. They exported food grains and cereals. The Mesopotamians used the barter system of trade.

ART AND CRAFT

Development of Writing

The Sumerians developed writing primarily for keeping the record of their trade. The excavated tablets of their writings have transactions of daily life like the count of cattle kept by herdsmen, production figures, lists of taxes, accounts, contracts, etc.

In Mesopotamia, not everyone learned to read and write. Only boys chosen by the priests became scribes (professional writers). These boys began to study at the age of 8 and finished their study when they turned 20.

Initially, the Sumerian language was in the form of word-pictures that were drawn on wet clay tablets using a reed stylus. These tablets were then dried in the sun. Gradually, the word-picture symbols of the Sumerian language developed into wedge-shaped signs. This type of script was called

stele: an upright stone slab or pillar bearing an inscription
stylus: a pen-like instrument of metal, bone, etc. used by the Mesopotamians for writing

cuneiform (in Latin, word *cuneus* means 'wedge'). Cuneiform was written from right to left, like we write Urdu today.



This inscription in Sumerian cuneiform belongs to 26th century BCE. It lists the gifts given to the High Priestess on her election to the temple.

Cylinder seals: The Mesopotamians also developed cylinder seals which were five inches in height. Different types of images were engraved on these stone seals. These images were reproduced by rolling the cylinder over wet clay.



A cylinder seal depicting the battle of gods

Architecture

The architectural excellence of the Mesopotamians reflects in their monumental buildings such as temples and ziggurats. The Mesopotamians were the first to introduce arches, domes, columns and vaults in their buildings. Most of the buildings in Mesopotamia were made of baked mud bricks. An architectural wonder of Mesopotamia is the **Hanging Gardens of Babylon**.

observatory: a place or building used for observing the planets and stars

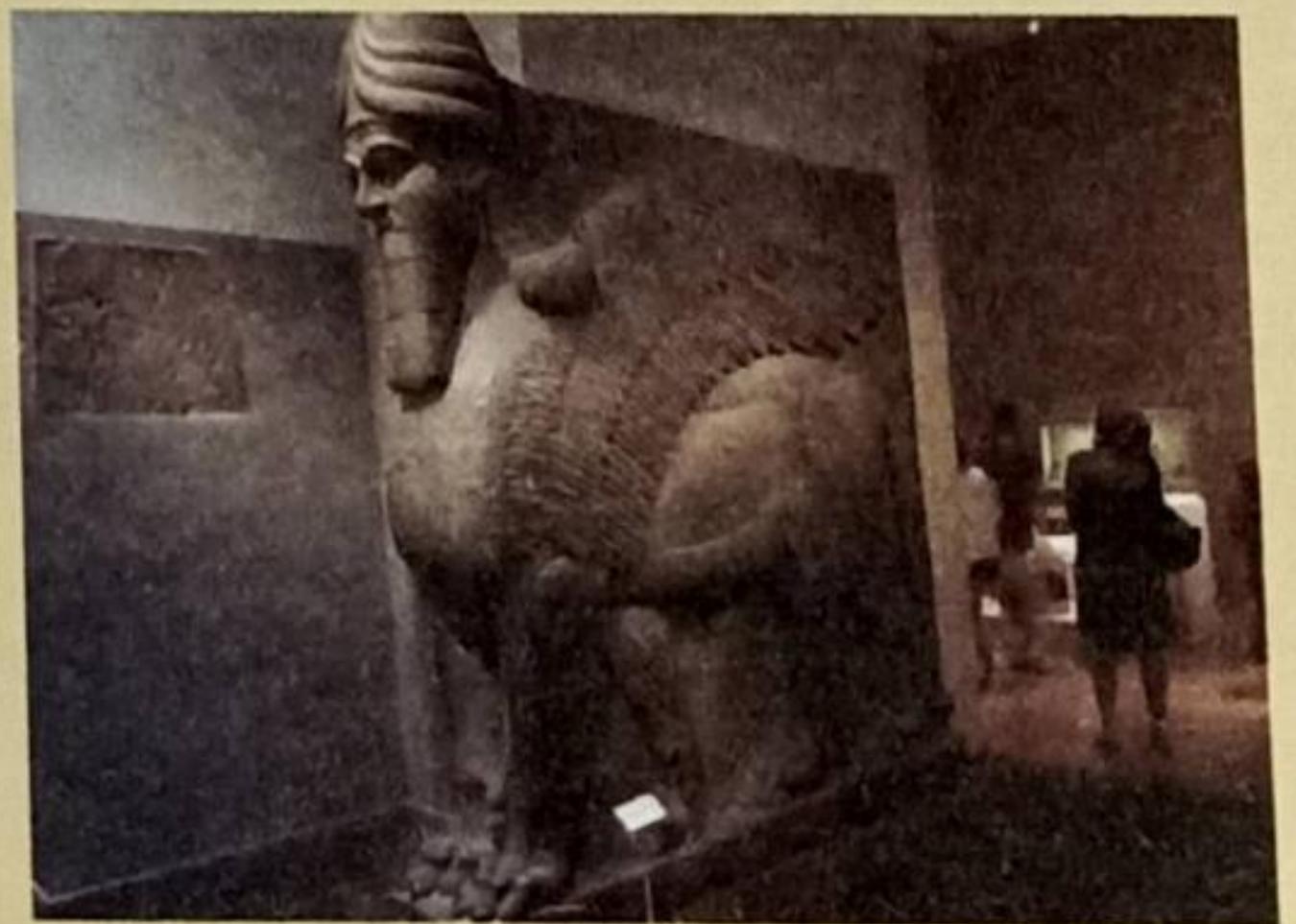
SCIENCE

Astronomy and Mathematics

The Mesopotamians were very much interested in mathematics and astronomy. They built observatories on ziggurats. Among notable observatories was the one on ziggurat Etemenanki in Babylon. The Mesopotamians worked out a 12-month calendar based on the cycle of the moon. In their calendar, a week had seven days. They divided the year into two seasons: summer and winter. They could also foretell eclipses.

The Mesopotamians used a numeral system that is the origin of our 60-minute hour and 24-hour day. They divided the circle into 360 degrees. They even knew multiplication and division.

Know This



This is a statue of **Lamassu** which has the head of a human, the body and ears of a bull and the wings of a bird. It belongs to the period 721 BCE–705 BCE and was found at the entrance to the throne room. Lamassu was believed to protect buildings against evil.

KRISHNAGAR ACADEMY

CLASS - VI, SUBJECT - HISTORY

CHAPTER : 4. THE MESOPOTAMIAN

30.06.2020 CIVILIZATION.

TOPIC : ECONOMIC LIFE,
ART AND CRAFT.

SHORT QUESTION ANSWER :

- Q 1. _____ was the prime occupation of the people of Mesopotamia.
2. Name the crops grown by the people of Mesopotamia.
3. Mesopotamian people also raised _____
4. _____ was a major centre for Commerce and Trade.
5. Name the items of import and export of the Mesopotamian people.
6. Write about the educational system in Mesopotamia.
7. What was Stylus?
8. Write a short note on Cuneiform script.
9. Name the architectural excellence reflected in the monumental buildings made by the Mesopotamian people.
10. An architectural wonder of Mesopotamia is _____.

Now let me share the answers to the questions published on 27.06.2020 (Saturday) based on the same chapter.

A1. Diggir

2. The four main deities of the Mesopotamian people were - An, the God of Sky.

Enil, the God of air.

Enki, the God of water.

Ninkursaga, the Mother Goddess of Earth.

3. The Ziggurat was a pyramid-shaped tower. It was considered a dwelling place for the gods. At the top of the Ziggurat was a shrine or temple, dedicated to the god or goddess who owned the city. Only priests were permitted on the Ziggurat or in the rooms at its base. A famous Ziggurat is the Great Ziggurat of Ur.

4. the Great Ziggurat of Ur.

5. Hammurabi was the ruler of Babylonia, in c-1780 BCE. Starting as a ruler of the small city of Babylon. Hammurabi built the empire of Babylonia.

6. The code of Hammurabi dealt with various facets of life, such as wages, interest rates, theft, marriage, divorce, adoption, and military duty. The code contained 282 laws. The code brought about a culture of strict justice in Mesopotamia. Severe penalties were awarded to criminals and negligent public officials.

7. The Louvre Museum in Paris.

Next day we shall discuss the science and the causes for the decline of the Mesopotamian civilization along with the answers to the questions published today.