DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM STATIC PART

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the Mughal administrative system:

Statement-I: The *Mir Bakshi* was required to certify the pay bills of all *Mansabdars*, including those of the high-ranking military commanders and the civil bureaucracy.

Statement-II: Under the *Dahsala* system, the state's share was fixed at one-third of the average produce of the previous ten years, calculated separately for each crop in every single *Pargana*.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?[123]

(a) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is the correct explanation for Statement-I[456]

(b) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is not the correct explanat7ion for Statement-I[89]

(c) Statement-I is correct but Statement-II is incorrect[1011]

(d) Statement-I is incorrect but Statem[12]ent-II is correc[13]t

Answer: (c)

Explanation: Statement-I is correct. The Mir Bakshi was the head of the military department but also functioned as the paymaster general. No Mansabdar could draw their pay without his certification. Statement-II is incorrect because while the Dahsala (introduced by Todar Mal) used a ten-year average, the prices and productivity were not calculated per Pargana for every crop; instead, they were grouped into "revenue circles" (Dasturs) comprising several Parganas with similar productivity and price indices.

Q2. Which of the following best describes the 'Allee Effect' in the context of conservation biology and population dynamics?

(a) The phenomenon where a population's per capita growth rate decreases as population density increases due to resource competition.

(b) A correlation between population size or density and the mean individual fitness of a population, where very low densities lead to a decline in reproduction or survival.

(c) The process by which an invasive species outcompetes a native species by occupying the same ecological niche in a fragmented habitat.

(d) The genetic drift occurring when a small group of individuals becomes isolated from a larger population, leading to a loss of genetic variation.

Answer: (b)

Explanation: The Allee Effect is a crucial concept in Ecology. Unlike standard density dependence (where growth slows as resources run out), the Allee Effect suggests that for some species, a minimum density is required to thrive. If the population falls below a certain threshold, they struggle to find mates or provide group defense, leading to a "spiral of extinction." This is a "twisted" question because it targets the nuance of positive density dependence at low levels.

Q3. Consider the following statements regarding the 'Trilemma' or 'Impossible Trinity' in an open economy:

1. It is theoretically impossible for a country to simultaneously maintain a fixed foreign exchange rate, free capital movement, and an independent monetary policy.

2. If a country chooses to have a sovereign monetary policy and a fixed exchange rate, it must restrict the capital account.

3. India currently follows a regime that perfectly achieves two of these three objectives while completely abandoning the third.

How many of the above statements are correct?

(a) Only one

(b) Only two

(c) All three

(d) None

Answer: (b)

Explanation: Statements 1 and 2 are correct. This is the Mundell-Fleming model. If you want to control your interest rates (monetary policy) and your currency value, you cannot let money flow freely in and out, or the market will break the peg. Statement 3 is incorrect. India does not "perfectly" follow two; it follows a "Managed Float." India maintains a partially open capital account, a flexible (but intervened) exchange rate, and a largely independent monetary policy—essentially a "middle-ground" approach rather than a binary choice.

Q4. Consider the following statements with reference to the Constitution of India:

1. The President can refer any matter of public importance to the Supreme Court for its opinion, and the Court is constitutionally bound to provide such an opinion.

2. A Constitutional Amendment Bill, once passed by both Houses of Parliament and ratified by States (where required), leaves the President with no discretion but to give assent.

3. The Governor of a State can reserve a Bill for the President's consideration even if the Bill does not seemingly derogate from the powers of the High Court.

4. The Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to the Parliament.

How many of the above statements are correct?

(a) Only one

(b) Only two

(c) Only three

(d) All four

Answer: (b)

Explanation: * Statement 1 is incorrect: Under Article 143, the Supreme Court "may" report its opinion; it is not bound (except on pre-constitutional treaties).

- Statement 2 is correct: Under the 24th Amendment Act of 1971, the President *shall* give assent to a Constitutional Amendment Bill.

- Statement 3 is correct: While it is *mandatory* to reserve a bill that threatens the High Court's position, the Governor has the *discretion* to reserve any other bill.

- Statement 4 is incorrect: Article 75 clearly states the Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to the **Lok Sabha** (House of the People), not the Parliament as a whole.

Q5. Statement-I: The 'Great Boundary Fault' (GBF) of India serves as a distinct tectonic lineament that separates the Vindhyan sedimentary basin from the crystalline rocks of the Aravalli Range.

Statement-II: The Aravalli Range is a relict of one of the oldest fold mountain systems in the world, having undergone extensive denudation since the Proterozoic eon.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?[1415]

(a) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is the correct explanation for Statement-I[1617]

(b) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is not the correct explanation for Statement-I[1819]

(c) Statement-I is correct but Statement-II is incorre[20]ct[21]

(d) Statement-I is incorrect but Statement-II is correct[22]

Answer[23]: (b)

Explanation: This is a classic "twisted" UPSC-style question. Both statements are factually 100% correct. However, Statement-II (the age and erosion of the Aravallis) is not the reason why the Great Boundary Fault exists or separates those two specific geological units. The GBF is a result of specific tectonic thrusting during the assembly of the Indian craton, not a result of the general denudation process of the Aravallis. Therefore, they are independent geological facts.

DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM CURRENT AFFAIRS PART

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the '3I/ATLAS' Planetary Defense Exercise:

Statement-I: The exercise was specifically designed to simulate a 'near-miss' scenario involving a synthetic asteroid to test the coordination between the International Asteroid Warning Network (IAWN) and the Space Mission Planning Advisory Group (SMPAG).

Statement-II: Unlike previous simulations, the 3I (Impact, Information, Interaction) framework focuses exclusively on the kinetic deflection of celestial bodies rather than civil protection or disaster management protocols.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?[123]

(a) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is the correct explanation for Statement-I456

(b) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is not the correct explanat7ion for Statement-I89

(c) Statement-I is correct but Statement-II is incorrect1011

(d) Statement-I is incorrect but Statem12ent-II is correc13t

Answer: (c)

Explanation: Statement-I is correct; 3I/ATLAS is a collaborative exercise involving NASA and international partners to test global responses to potential asteroid impacts. Statement-II is incorrect because the "3I" framework (Information, Impact, Interaction) is designed to be holistic. It emphasizes communication, data sharing, and socio-economic impact mitigation, moving beyond just technical deflection to include emergency response and public information strategies.

Q2. In the context of global cybersecurity and emerging technologies, which of the following best describes the significance of 'Q-day'?

(a) The projected date when quantum computers will reach "Quantum Supremacy," performing calculations impossible for classical supercomputers.

(b) The hypothetical point in time when quantum computers become powerful enough to break current asymmetric encryption (RSA/ECC) protecting global digital infrastructure.

(c) The deadline set by the ITU for all nations to transition from IPv4 to a quantum-encrypted IPv6 protocol.

(d) The annual day observed by the UN to promote the ethical use of Quantum Artificial Intelligence in climate modeling.

Answer: (b)

Explanation: 'Q-day' refers to the day when a quantum computer (likely using Shor's Algorithm) can crack the cryptographic codes that currently secure bank accounts, state secrets, and personal data. This has prompted a global shift toward "Post-Quantum Cryptography" (PQC).

Q3. With reference to 'Deepavali' and its inclusion in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, consider the following statements:

1. Deepavali is the first Indian festival associated with a specific religious group to be included in the UNESCO list.

2. The inclusion recognizes the festival not just for its ritualistic value, but for its role in fostering social cohesion and the "victory of light over darkness" across diverse communities.

3. Once a practice is on the UNESCO list, it receives automatic financial assistance from the World Heritage Fund for its preservation.

How many of the above statements are correct?

(a) Only one

(b) Only two

(c) All three

(d) None

Answer: (a)

Explanation: Statement 1 is incorrect; many Indian festivals/practices like Kumbh Mela and Durga Puja (which have religious roots) were included earlier. Statement 2 is correct; UNESCO emphasizes the social functions and cultural meanings. Statement 3 is incorrect; inclusion on the Representative List does not guarantee automatic funding (that is usually reserved for the "List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding").

Q4. Consider the following statements regarding the 'Shilp Didi' Programme:

1. It is a sub-component of the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM).

2. The programme aims to empower women artisans by providing them with advanced technical training and direct market linkages through e-commerce platforms.

3. It focuses exclusively on the revival of 'Geographical Indication' (GI) tagged handicrafts from the North-Eastern states.

How many of the above statements are correct?

(a) Only one

(b) Only two

(c) All three

(d) None

Answer: (b)

Explanation: Statements 1 and 2 are correct. The Shilp Didi initiative is designed to turn women SHG members into entrepreneurs (Artisan-Leaders). Statement 3 is incorrect; while it promotes traditional crafts, it is a pan-India scheme and not restricted exclusively to the North-East or only to GI-tagged products.

Q5. Consider the following statements regarding the UNEP 'Champions of the Earth' Award 2025:

1. It is the United Nations' highest environmental honor, awarded annually to individuals and organizations from public and private sectors.

2. The 2025 cycle specifically prioritizes innovations related to "Restoration of Degraded Land" to align with the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

3. Past Indian recipients include individuals from both the political leadership and the grassroots activism categories.

4. The award carries a significant monetary prize of $1 million to be used for the recipient's environmental projects.

How many of the above statements are correct?

(a) Only one

(b) Only two

(c) Only three

(d) All four

Answer: (c)

Explanation: Statements 1, 2, and 3 are correct. The award recognizes transformative action. India has had winners like PM Narendra Modi (Policy Leadership) and Purnima Devi Barman (Inspiration & Action). Statement 4 is incorrect; while prestigious, the 'Champions of the Earth' is a recognition award and does not typically come with a $1 million cash prize (unlike the Earthshot Prize).

Q6. With reference to the geography of the Sea of Japan (East Sea), consider the following:

1. It is a marginal sea of the western Pacific Ocean, bounded by Japan, Russia, North Korea, and South Korea.

2. It is connected to the East China Sea via the Tsushima Strait and to the Sea of Okhotsk via the La Perouse (Soya) Strait.

3. The sea is characterized by a complete absence of deep-sea basins due to its volcanic origin.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (a)

Explanation: Statement 1 and 2 are geographically correct. Statement 3 is incorrect; the Sea of Japan is actually divided into three major deep basins: the Yamato Basin, the Japan Basin, and the Tsushima Basin. It is a very deep marginal sea.

SUBJECTIVE QUESTIONS FOR DAILY PRACTICE

GS Paper–I

Q1. "Urbanisation in India is altering traditional social structures, yet it has not dismantled deep-rooted social hierarchies." Examine the statement with suitable examples.

(15 marks, 250 words)

Sample Answer:

Urbanisation is one of the most transformative processes shaping Indian society. With over 35% of India's population residing in urban areas, cities have become spaces of social mobility, cultural interaction, and

economic opportunity. However, while urbanisation has weakened certain traditional social structures, it has not fully dismantled entrenched hierarchies such as caste, class, and gender.

On the transformative side, urbanisation has diluted rigid community control prevalent in rural settings. The anonymity of cities allows individuals to redefine identities beyond caste and kinship. Occupational mobility, particularly in services and the gig economy, has reduced the traditional linkage between caste and profession. Inter-caste interactions in workplaces, educational institutions, and residential complexes have increased. Nuclear families and delayed marriages reflect declining dominance of joint family systems. Urban spaces have also enabled the rise of women's workforce participation, contributing to changing gender roles.

However, persistence of social hierarchies is evident. Caste has not disappeared; it has merely adapted. Residential segregation in cities, reflected in caste-based or community-specific housing societies, continues exclusion. Informal labour markets such as construction, sanitation, and domestic work remain dominated by historically marginalised castes. Slums reproduce rural inequalities in an urban setting, often marked by lack of access to basic services.

Class inequalities have deepened under urbanisation. The contrast between gated communities and informal settlements highlights spatial inequality. Access to quality education, healthcare, and digital resources remains unequal, reinforcing inter-generational poverty. Gendered vulnerabilities persist, as urban women face safety concerns, wage gaps, and unpaid care burdens.

Thus, urbanisation in India represents a paradox. It weakens traditional authority structures but does not automatically ensure social justice. Structural inequalities embedded in economic systems and cultural norms continue to shape urban life.

Conclusion:

Urbanisation must be complemented by inclusive urban planning, affordable housing, social security for informal workers, and affirmative action to translate spatial change into genuine social transformation.

GS Paper–II (Polity & Governance)

Q2. "Judicial accountability is as important as judicial independence in a constitutional democracy." Critically examine this statement in the Indian context.

(15 marks, 250 words)

Sample Answer:

Judicial independence is a cornerstone of constitutional democracy, ensuring that courts function free from executive or legislative interference. In India, it is safeguarded through security of tenure, fixed service conditions, and the collegium system for appointments. However, independence without accountability risks undermining public trust, making judicial accountability equally essential.

Judicial accountability ensures transparency, ethical conduct, and institutional integrity. In India, accountability mechanisms remain limited. Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts can only be removed through impeachment under Articles 124 and 217, a process so cumbersome that it has rarely succeeded. This creates a perception of near-immunity rather than responsibility.

Concerns have emerged regarding delays in justice delivery, lack of transparency in judicial appointments, and allegations of misconduct. The collegium system, though judicially evolved to protect independence,

has been criticised for opacity and absence of formal criteria. The absence of a comprehensive code of conduct enforceable by an independent body further weakens accountability.

At the same time, excessive external control can threaten judicial independence. The National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) was struck down by the Supreme Court on grounds that it compromised independence. This highlights the delicate balance required between oversight and autonomy.

Recent initiatives like live-streaming of court proceedings, asset declarations by judges, and increased use of technology have improved transparency. Parliamentary oversight through debates and public scrutiny via media also contribute indirectly to accountability without formal interference.

Conclusion:
Judicial independence and accountability are not contradictory but complementary. Strengthening internal accountability mechanisms, enhancing transparency in appointments, and institutionalising ethical oversight—without executive dominance—are essential to preserve both public trust and constitutional values.

GS Paper–III

Q3. "Generative Artificial Intelligence is transforming economic productivity, but it also poses risks of job displacement and data concentration." Discuss the opportunities and challenges for India.

(15 marks, 250 words)

Sample Answer:

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), capable of creating text, images, code, and audio, represents a paradigm shift in economic productivity. For India, with its large digital workforce and growing startup ecosystem, generative AI offers significant opportunities but also complex challenges.

On the opportunity side, generative AI can enhance productivity across sectors such as IT services, education, healthcare, media, and governance. It can automate routine tasks, assist in coding and design, improve language translation, and support personalised learning. For MSMEs and startups, AI tools reduce entry barriers by lowering costs of content creation, marketing, and software development. In governance, AI-driven chatbots and analytics can improve service delivery and grievance redressal.

India's demographic dividend and strong IT talent pool position it well to become a global AI services hub. Initiatives like Digital India, IndiaAI Mission, and expanding data infrastructure support AI adoption.

However, challenges are substantial. Job displacement is a key concern, particularly for white-collar roles in content creation, customer support, and entry-level programming. Without reskilling, AI may exacerbate unemployment and inequality. Data concentration among a few global technology firms raises concerns of digital colonialism and loss of data sovereignty.

Ethical risks such as algorithmic bias, misinformation, deepfakes, and privacy violations threaten social stability and democratic processes. India's regulatory framework for AI remains evolving, with gaps in data protection enforcement and AI-specific accountability.

Conclusion:
For India, generative AI is both an economic opportunity and a governance challenge. A balanced approach involving skilling, ethical regulation, indigenous AI development, and data protection is essential to ensure inclusive and sustainable AI-driven growth.

GS Paper–IV (Ethics, Integrity & Aptitude)

Q4. "Technological advancement without ethical grounding can undermine public trust." Discuss this statement with reference to emerging digital technologies.

(15 marks, 250 words)

Sample Answer:

Technological advancement has the potential to improve efficiency, accessibility, and quality of life. However, when innovation outpaces ethical frameworks, it can erode public trust, leading to resistance and misuse. Emerging digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data analytics, and surveillance systems exemplify this dilemma.

Ethics in technology involves principles of fairness, accountability, transparency, and respect for human dignity. When these are ignored, technology becomes a tool of exclusion or control. For instance, algorithmic decision-making in credit scoring or recruitment can perpetuate biases if training data reflects social inequalities. Lack of transparency in such systems violates the ethical principle of justice.

Surveillance technologies, though useful for security and governance, raise concerns of privacy and autonomy. Excessive or opaque data collection without informed consent undermines individual freedom and trust in institutions. Similarly, deepfakes and AI-generated misinformation threaten truth, public discourse, and democratic values.

From a public administration perspective, ethical governance of technology requires responsible innovation. Civil servants must ensure that digital solutions are citizen-centric, inclusive, and legally compliant. Ethical dilemmas arise when efficiency conflicts with rights, such as in predictive policing or automated welfare targeting.

Ethical frameworks like the principles of proportionality, accountability, and transparency help reconcile innovation with values. Institutional mechanisms such as data protection authorities, ethical AI guidelines, and impact assessments are crucial.

Conclusion:
Technological progress must be anchored in ethical reasoning. Trust is a social capital essential for governance and development. Without ethics, technology risks becoming a source of alienation rather than empowerment.

Current Affairs

Q5. "The proposal of 'One Nation, One License, One Payment' seeks to address copyright challenges in the age of Generative AI." Critically examine the rationale, benefits, and concerns associated with this approach.

(15 marks, 250 words)

Sample Answer:

The rapid expansion of generative AI has intensified debates around copyright, as AI models are trained on vast amounts of copyrighted text, images, music, and videos. The proposal of "One Nation, One License, One Payment" aims to create a unified licensing framework where AI developers pay a consolidated fee for lawful use of copyrighted content.

The rationale behind this proposal lies in balancing innovation with creators' rights. Current copyright regimes are ill-equipped to address large-scale data scraping and machine learning training. Individual licensing is impractical due to scale and transaction costs. A unified licensing mechanism could ensure legal certainty for AI firms while guaranteeing remuneration to creators.

Potential benefits include simplification of compliance, reduction of litigation, and predictable revenue streams for authors, publishers, and artists. It can also prevent monopolisation of data access by large corporations and support smaller AI developers through a standardised framework. From a national perspective, it strengthens data sovereignty and aligns with India's digital public infrastructure approach.

However, significant concerns remain. Determining fair valuation of content across diverse creators is complex. A centralised system risks bureaucratic inefficiency and may disadvantage independent or marginal creators if distribution mechanisms are opaque. There are also questions about international content, cross-border enforcement, and compatibility with existing copyright law, particularly the "fair dealing" doctrine under the Indian Copyright Act, 1957.

Additionally, excessive licensing costs may stifle innovation and restrict open research. Ethical concerns arise if AI-generated outputs replace human creativity while compensation remains inadequate.

Conclusion:
"One Nation, One License, One Payment" is a promising but challenging idea. Its success depends on transparent governance, fair distribution mechanisms, and harmonisation with global copyright norms to ensure that innovation and creativity coexist sustainably.