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VIDHVATH IAS KAS ACADEMY
&
STUDY CENTRE

DAILY MCQ'S

FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

DATE: 26/02/2026 (THURSDAY)

- **Static mcq's**
- **Current Affairs mcq's**
- **Mains Practice Questions**



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DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM STATIC PART

1. With reference to ecological succession in Indian forest ecosystems, consider the following statements:

1. In primary succession on bare rock in humid tropics, lichens are typically the first colonisers because they can fix atmospheric nitrogen and chemically weather rock.
2. In secondary succession after forest fire in moist deciduous forests of India, soil seed banks play a more significant role than long-distance dispersal in early species establishment.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Both
- (c) Neither
- (d) Cannot be determined

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is **incorrect**: Lichens are pioneer species mainly because they tolerate desiccation and secrete acids that weather rock. However, **most lichens do not fix nitrogen**; only some cyanobacterial lichens do. Thus nitrogen fixation is not the general reason for pioneer status.
- Statement 2 is **correct**: In secondary succession (post-fire), soil already exists with dormant seeds, roots, microbes and nutrients. Hence regeneration is dominated by **soil seed bank and resprouting**, not dispersal from outside.

2. Which one of the following best explains why tropical wetlands are often considered disproportionately important carbon sinks compared to many terrestrial forests?

- (a) Higher primary productivity combined with permanent waterlogging slows decomposition and enhances peat formation
- (b) Absence of herbivory pressure allows uninterrupted biomass accumulation
- (c) Dominance of C4 plants increases below-ground carbon sequestration efficiency
- (d) Frequent sediment deposition prevents carbon mineralisation

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Wetlands accumulate carbon mainly because **anaerobic waterlogged conditions inhibit decomposition**, allowing organic matter to accumulate as peat or soil carbon. Many tropical wetlands also have high productivity.

- (b) incorrect: Herbivory occurs in wetlands.
- (c) incorrect: Wetland plants are mostly C3; C4 dominance is typical of grasslands.
- (d) partial but not general: Sedimentation may add carbon but does not fundamentally explain wetland carbon sink dominance.



3. With reference to ecological pyramids and trophic dynamics in Indian ecosystems, consider the following statements:

1. An inverted pyramid of biomass is most likely to occur in open ocean ecosystems where phytoplankton turnover rate exceeds that of zooplankton.
2. Inverted pyramids of numbers can occur in forest ecosystems where a single large producer supports many herbivores and parasites.
3. Pyramid of energy can never be inverted in any natural ecosystem because of thermodynamic constraints.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Answer: (c)

Explanation:

- Statement 1: Correct — Marine planktonic systems have small standing biomass but rapid reproduction, producing **inverted biomass pyramids**.
- Statement 2: Correct — One tree supports many herbivores and parasites → **inverted numbers pyramid**.
- Statement 3: Correct — Energy decreases at each trophic level (Second Law of Thermodynamics), so **energy pyramid is always upright**.

4. With reference to biogeochemical cycling in terrestrial ecosystems, consider the following statements:

1. Nitrogen is often the limiting nutrient in temperate forests because biological nitrogen fixation rates are lower than nitrogen losses through leaching and denitrification.
2. Phosphorus limitation is more likely in highly weathered tropical soils because phosphate ions are strongly adsorbed onto iron and aluminium oxides.
3. Anthropogenic nitrogen deposition can initially increase net primary productivity but may later reduce biodiversity through competitive exclusion.
4. Elevated atmospheric CO₂ concentration always increases plant nitrogen-use efficiency and therefore reduces nitrogen limitation in ecosystems.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All four



Answer: (c)

Explanation:

- Statement 1: Correct — Temperate ecosystems often nitrogen-limited due to losses exceeding fixation.
- Statement 2: Correct — Tropical lateritic soils bind phosphate strongly → P limitation.
- Statement 3: Correct — N deposition → eutrophication → dominance by few fast-growing species → biodiversity decline.
- Statement 4: Incorrect — Elevated CO₂ may increase C:N ratio in plants and **can intensify nitrogen limitation**, not always reduce it.

5. **Assertion (A): Mangrove ecosystems are highly efficient at long-term carbon sequestration compared to most terrestrial forests.**

Reason (R1): Mangrove sediments are typically anaerobic and slow down organic matter decomposition.

Reason (R2): Mangroves export a large fraction of their primary production to adjacent coastal waters as detritus.

- (a) A is correct and both R1 and R2 are correct and R1 explains A while R2 does not explain A
(b) A is correct and both R1 and R2 are correct and both explain A
(c) A is correct but only one of R1 or R2 is correct
(d) A is incorrect but R1 and R2 are correct

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- Assertion: Correct — Mangroves are major **blue carbon** ecosystems with high sequestration rates in sediments.
- R1: Correct — Waterlogged anaerobic soils slow decomposition → long-term burial of carbon → directly explains sequestration.
- R2: Correct — Mangroves export detritus to coastal food webs; however this **does not explain long-term sequestration** (exported carbon may decompose elsewhere).

Hence only R1 explains A → (a).



DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM CURRENT AFFAIRS

1. With reference to the recently released B-READY (Business Ready) Assessment of the World Bank, consider the following statements:

1. B-READY replaces the Ease of Doing Business index and evaluates both de jure regulatory framework and de facto implementation outcomes across the business lifecycle.
2. Unlike the Ease of Doing Business index, B-READY includes indicators on environmental sustainability and gender inclusion in business regulation.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Both
- (c) Neither
- (d) Cannot be determined

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- Statement 1: Correct — The World Bank discontinued EoDB and introduced **Business Ready (B-READY)**, which measures not only legal provisions (de jure) but also practical implementation and firm-level experiences across lifecycle stages (entry, operation, exit, etc.).
- Statement 2: Correct — B-READY explicitly broadens scope to include **environmental sustainability, digitalisation, gender and transparency**, unlike the narrower EoDB.

2. Which one of the following best describes the key implication of the India–UK Social Security Agreement (SSA) for temporary workers?

- (a) Mandatory dual contribution to both countries' social security systems with proportional pension portability
- (b) Exemption from host country social security contributions for a specified period with totalisation of contribution history
- (c) Permanent waiver of social security contributions in both countries for expatriate workers
- (d) Equalisation of retirement ages between the two countries

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

Social Security Agreements typically provide:

- **Detached worker rule** → temporary employees posted abroad remain under home country system and are exempt from host contributions for a defined period.
- **Totalisation** → combining contribution periods in both countries to qualify for benefits. Thus (b) captures the essence. Others are incorrect distortions.



3. With reference to constitutional provisions relating to the office of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the possibility of a no-confidence motion against the Speaker, consider the following statements:

1. The Constitution explicitly provides for a “no-confidence motion” against the Speaker of the Lok Sabha analogous to that against the Council of Ministers.
2. A resolution for removal of the Speaker requires prior notice and is passed by an effective majority of the Lok Sabha.
3. While a resolution for removal of the Speaker is under consideration, the Speaker is barred from presiding but retains the right to vote in the House.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- Statement 1: Incorrect — Constitution provides **resolution for removal** (Article 94), not a “no-confidence motion” like Article 75(3).
- Statement 2: Correct — Removal requires **14-day notice** and **effective majority** (majority of all then members).
- Statement 3: Correct — Speaker cannot preside during consideration (Art. 96) but **can speak and vote (first instance)** though not casting vote.

4. With reference to the song ‘Vande Mataram’ in the context of India’s constitutional and historical evolution, consider the following statements:

1. Only the first two stanzas of ‘Vande Mataram’ were accorded official status equal to the National Anthem by a resolution of the Constituent Assembly.
2. The text of ‘Vande Mataram’ originally appeared in Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay’s novel *Anandamath* and was composed in highly Sanskritised Bengali.
3. The Supreme Court has held that singing ‘Vande Mataram’ is a fundamental duty enforceable by law upon all citizens.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Answer: (b)



Explanation:

- Statement 1: Correct — Constituent Assembly (1950) adopted **first two stanzas** as National Song with status equal in honour (not function) to anthem.
- Statement 2: Correct — It appeared in *Anandamath* (1882), written in Sanskritised Bengali.
- Statement 3: Incorrect — SC (Bijoe Emmanuel case context) protects freedom not to sing; **no enforceable duty to sing**.

5. With reference to continental mantle earthquakes, consider the following statements:

1. Continental mantle earthquakes originate within the lithospheric mantle below the Moho and are therefore deeper than typical crustal earthquakes but shallower than subduction-zone intermediate earthquakes.
2. Their occurrence implies that parts of the continental mantle remain brittle and capable of failure under tectonic stress despite high confining pressure.
3. They are most commonly associated with active subduction margins rather than stable continental interiors.
4. Detection of such earthquakes often relies on seismic wave conversions and depth-phase analysis to distinguish them from lower-crustal events.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All four

Answer: (c)

Explanation:

- Statement 1: Correct — Occur in **uppermost mantle (~40–70+ km)** beneath continents.
- Statement 2: Correct — Demonstrates **brittle behaviour of cold lithospheric mantle**.
- Statement 3: Incorrect — Continental mantle quakes are notable in **stable cratons and intraplate regions**, not mainly subduction margins (which host Wadati-Benioff deeper quakes).
- Statement 4: Correct — Depth-phase (pP, sP) and waveform modelling distinguish mantle vs crustal depth.

6. Consider the following pairs:

Sawalkot Hydroelectric Project — Chenab River

Which of the following is correct?

- (a) The pair is correctly matched and the project lies in Jammu & Kashmir (UT)
- (b) The pair is correctly matched but the project lies in Himachal Pradesh



- (c) The pair is incorrectly matched; the project is on the Jhelum River
(d) The pair is incorrectly matched; the project is on the Ravi River

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Sawalkot Hydroelectric Project is a major run-of-river scheme planned on the **Chenab River** in the **Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory** (Ramban–Udhampur region). It is part of the Chenab basin cascade (like Dul Hasti, Baglihar downstream/upstream systems). Hence pair correctly matched and location J&K → (a).

DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAINS ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Q1. (GS-1 – Geography)

Discuss the geomorphic and climatic factors responsible for the occurrence of continental mantle earthquakes. How do they challenge conventional understanding of intraplate tectonics? (250 words)

Answer:

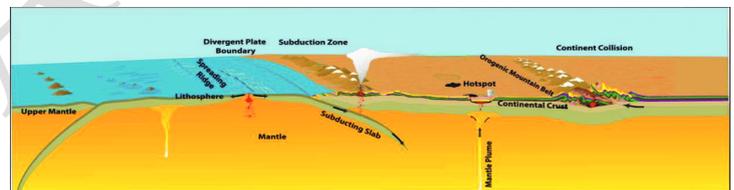
Continental mantle earthquakes are seismic events originating in the **lithospheric mantle beneath continents**, typically below the Moho (~35–70 km depth). They are distinct from shallow crustal earthquakes and deep subduction-zone events. Their occurrence reflects a complex interplay of geomorphic stability, lithospheric structure, and climatic-tectonic evolution.

Geomorphic and lithospheric factors:

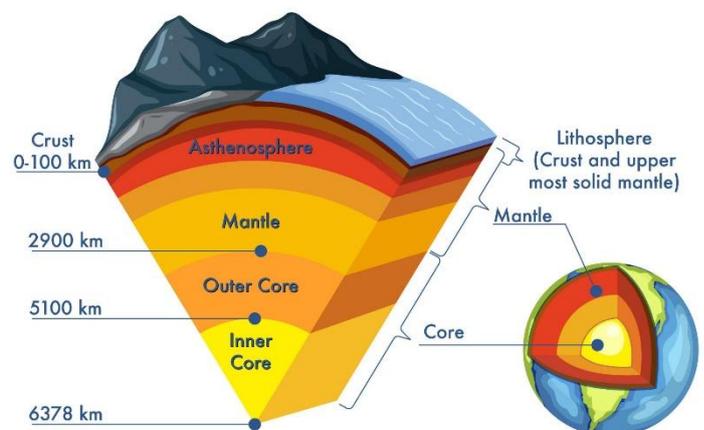
Ancient continental shields and cratons possess thick, cold, and mechanically strong lithospheric roots extending to depths of 150–250 km. Such cold mantle can retain **brittle behaviour despite high pressure**, allowing stress accumulation. Regions with long-term tectonic stability (e.g., peninsular India, Canadian Shield) may preserve fossil fault zones penetrating into the mantle. Reactivation of these inherited weaknesses under far-field stresses can produce mantle earthquakes.

Climatic–surface processes:

Climate indirectly influences lithospheric stress. Long-term erosion, sediment loading, and glacial-isostatic adjustments alter vertical stress distribution. For instance, removal of overburden through denudation



LITHOSPHERE





reduces confining pressure, promoting brittle failure at depth. Similarly, large river basins and sedimentary loads can flex the lithosphere, transmitting stresses into the mantle.

Challenge to conventional intraplate tectonics:

Traditional theory assumed intraplate interiors to be rigid and aseismic relative to plate boundaries. Continental mantle earthquakes challenge this by showing:

1. **Deep brittle failure in stable continents**
2. Persistence of tectonic stresses far from plate margins
3. Existence of lithospheric-scale faults
4. Mechanical heterogeneity within cratonic mantle

Thus, intraplate regions are not tectonically inert but dynamically evolving. Continental mantle earthquakes expand our understanding of lithosphere rheology and stress transmission, bridging plate-boundary and intraplate tectonics.

Q2. (GS-2 – Polity & Governance)

The office of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha is central to parliamentary democracy, yet controversies around neutrality persist. Examine the constitutional safeguards and structural limitations affecting the Speaker's impartiality. (250 words)

Answer:

The Speaker of the Lok Sabha occupies a pivotal constitutional position as the **guardian of parliamentary procedure, discipline, and neutrality**. However, increasing politicisation has raised concerns about impartiality.

Constitutional safeguards ensuring neutrality:

Articles 93–97 provide institutional protections. The Speaker is elected by the House and can be removed only by an **effective majority** with 14-day notice, ensuring stability. The Speaker's salary is charged on the Consolidated Fund of India, insulating the office from executive control. Upon election, convention expects the Speaker to sever active party ties and function above partisan politics. The Speaker also enjoys authority over House proceedings, recognition of parties, and certification of Money Bills.

Structural limitations affecting impartiality:

Despite safeguards, several factors undermine neutrality:

1. **Party-based election:** Speaker is chosen by ruling majority, creating perception of loyalty.
2. **Anti-defection adjudication:** Tenth Schedule vests quasi-judicial power in Speaker, often criticised for partisan delays or decisions.
3. **Money Bill certification:** Decisions (e.g., Aadhaar case controversy) may affect federal balance and legislative scrutiny.
4. **No independent removal mechanism:** Effective majority still controlled by ruling coalition.
5. **Post-tenure political roles:** Former Speakers often return to party politics, weakening neutrality norms.

**Way forward:**

Reforms suggested include independent tribunal for defection cases, consensus-based Speaker election, and convention of resignation from party membership. Comparative democracies (UK) ensure Speaker neutrality through strict non-partisanship and uncontested re-election.

Thus, while constitutional design envisages an impartial arbiter, structural political realities shape the Speaker's functioning. Strengthening conventions and institutional insulation is essential for parliamentary credibility.

Q3. (GS-3 – Economy / Environment)

Evaluate the significance of the B-READY (Business Ready) assessment in shaping regulatory reforms in India. How does it differ from the earlier Ease of Doing Business framework? (250 words)

Answer:

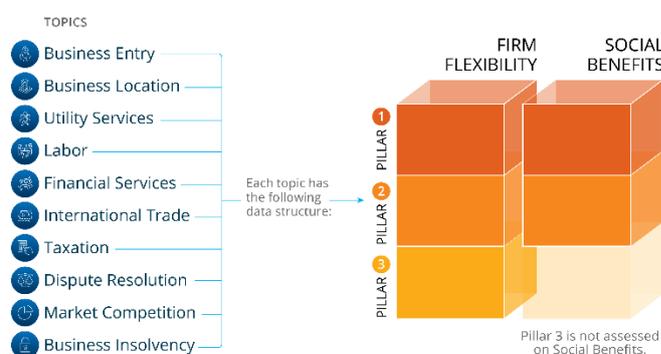
The World Bank's **Business Ready (B-READY)** assessment replaces the discontinued Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) index, marking a conceptual shift from narrow procedural efficiency toward comprehensive regulatory quality and implementation outcomes.

Significance for India:

India undertook major reforms during the EoDB era (insolvency code, GST, digital compliance). B-READY expands the reform horizon by evaluating the entire business lifecycle — entry, utilities, labour, finance, dispute resolution, and exit. For India, this aligns with goals of **investment facilitation, manufacturing growth, and supply-chain relocation**. The framework emphasises transparency, digitalisation, sustainability, and gender inclusion — areas central to India's inclusive development agenda.

Differences from Ease of Doing Business:

- Scope:**
EoDB focused on procedural metrics (time, cost). B-READY measures regulatory framework, public services, and real-world firm experiences.
- De jure vs De facto:**
EoDB emphasised legal provisions; B-READY integrates implementation quality and outcomes.
- Thematic breadth:**
B-READY includes environment, gender, and digital governance; EoDB largely ignored these.
- Lifecycle approach:**
B-READY covers business operation and closure comprehensively; EoDB concentrated on entry and compliance.
- Transparency and accountability:**
Greater focus on institutional quality rather than rank competition.

B-READY Data

**Implications:**

For India, B-READY shifts reform emphasis from ranking improvement to systemic regulatory effectiveness. It encourages strengthening contract enforcement, logistics, land administration, and sustainable business regulation — key bottlenecks in India's investment climate.

Thus, B-READY represents a second-generation reform framework supporting India's transition from procedural ease to high-quality governance and competitive industrial ecosystems.

Q4. (GS-4 – Ethics)

Public office holders are expected to uphold constitutional morality over partisan loyalty. In the context of parliamentary functioning, discuss ethical dilemmas faced by presiding officers and suggest ethical safeguards. (250 words)

Answer:

Presiding officers such as the Speaker embody the ethical ideal of **constitutional morality**, requiring fidelity to institutional norms over party allegiance. However, parliamentary politics generates complex ethical dilemmas.

**Nature of ethical dilemmas:**

1. **Party loyalty vs neutrality:** Speaker elected by majority party may face pressure to favour government agenda.
2. **Procedural fairness vs political stability:** Allowing disruptive opposition motions may impede governance.
3. **Anti-defection adjudication:** Balancing legal interpretation with political consequences.
4. **Money Bill certification:** Expediency of reform vs bicameral scrutiny.

These dilemmas reflect conflict between **virtue ethics (integrity)**, **duty ethics (constitutional obligation)**, and **consequentialism (governance outcomes)**.

Ethical principles applicable:

- **Impartiality:** Equal treatment of treasury and opposition.
- **Integrity:** Independence from party directives.
- **Accountability:** Transparent procedural decisions.
- **Fidelity to Constitution:** Upholding separation of powers.

Ethical safeguards:

1. **Resignation from party posts** upon election as Speaker.
2. **Reasoned written orders** in defection and procedural rulings.
3. **Time-bound adjudication** of Tenth Schedule cases.



4. **Consensus-based election** of presiding officers.
5. **Institutional ethics code** for parliamentary conduct.

Comparative practice in Westminster democracies shows Speakers renounce party affiliation and seek re-election unopposed, reinforcing neutrality.

Ultimately, ethical legitimacy of parliamentary institutions depends not only on constitutional provisions but on **virtue of office holders**. Presiding officers must internalise constitutional morality to preserve democratic trust.

Q5. **(Current Affairs)**

India being designated ‘Country of the Year’ at BIOFACH 2026 reflects structural shifts in its agri-food systems. Analyse the drivers and implications of India’s rise in the global organic food sector. (250 words)

Answer:

India’s designation as ‘Country of the Year’ at BIOFACH 2026, the world’s leading organic trade fair, signifies its emergence as a major player in sustainable agriculture and organic value chains.

Drivers of India’s rise:

1. **Agro-ecological diversity:**

India’s varied climates enable cultivation of diverse organic commodities — spices, tea, coffee, millets, oilseeds, and medicinal plants.

2. **Policy support:**

Schemes such as Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) and Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North East Region (MOVCDNER) promote certification, clusters, and market linkage.

3. **Traditional low-input farming:**

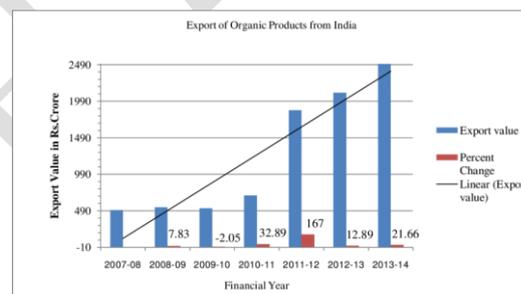
Many regions historically practiced chemical-minimal agriculture, easing transition to certified organic production.

4. **Global demand shift:**

Rising consumer preference for traceable, residue-free food boosts India’s export prospects.

5. **Farmer producer organisations (FPOs):**

Aggregation and certification reduce transaction costs and improve market access.



Implications:

- **Export competitiveness:** India becomes key supplier of organic spices, tea, and processed foods.
- **Income diversification:** Premium pricing enhances smallholder income.
- **Sustainability gains:** Reduced agrochemical use improves soil health and biodiversity.
- **Soft power:** Positioning India as leader in traditional and ecological agriculture.



- **Value-chain modernisation:** Need for traceability, certification infrastructure, and branding.

Challenges remain: certification costs, yield variability, and domestic market awareness. However, BIOFACH recognition enhances credibility and investment inflows.

Thus, India's organic sector reflects convergence of traditional knowledge, policy support, and global sustainability transitions, positioning the country as a pivotal actor in the future of ecological agriculture.

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