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VIDHVATH IAS KAS ACADEMY & STUDY CENTRE

DAILY MCQ'S

FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

DATE: 15/09/2026 (TUESDAY)

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



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DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM STATIC PART

Q1. With reference to the Vijayanagara Empire, consider the following statements:

1. The amara-nayaka system enabled the Vijayanagara rulers to integrate military commanders into the administrative and revenue structure while allowing them considerable autonomy in their assigned territories.
2. The amara-nayakas were hereditary feudatories whose territories were completely outside the direct fiscal and military control of the Vijayanagara ruler.

Which one of the following is correct?

- (a) Both Statement 1 and Statement 2 are correct, and Statement 2 is the correct explanation for Statement 1.
- (b) Both Statement 1 and Statement 2 are correct, but Statement 2 is not the correct explanation for Statement 1.
- (c) Statement 1 is correct, but Statement 2 is incorrect.
- (d) Statement 1 is incorrect, but Statement 2 is correct.

Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct. The **amara-nayaka system** was an important feature of Vijayanagara political and military organisation. Amara-nayakas were military commanders who were assigned territories from which they collected revenue. They were expected to maintain troops and provide military support to the Vijayanagara ruler when required.

The system combined **delegated authority with continuing obligations to the central authority**. The nayakas enjoyed considerable autonomy in administering their territories, collecting revenues and maintaining military forces, but this did not make their territories completely independent of the ruler.

Statement 2 is therefore incorrect. Calling the amara-nayakas “**completely outside direct fiscal and military control**” is an overstatement. The relationship involved obligations to the central authority, including tribute/revenue payments and military service.

The more subtle historical issue is that the system was neither one of complete centralisation nor one of complete feudal independence. It represented a **negotiated political structure**, in which the ruler depended upon powerful military elites while attempting to retain overarching sovereignty.

Thus, the correct answer is (c).

Q2. Which one of the following best explains the ecological significance of ecological succession?

- (a) It is the permanent replacement of all native species by a single climax species following a disturbance.
- (b) It describes the predictable changes in community composition and structure over time, often involving changes in environmental conditions created by earlier communities.
- (c) It occurs only in completely barren areas where no organisms or organic matter previously existed.
- (d) It necessarily results in an ecosystem with maximum species diversity irrespective of climatic and edaphic conditions.

Answer: (b)

**Explanation:**

Ecological succession refers to the **gradual and directional change in species composition and community structure over time**. It may occur on a newly exposed substrate (**primary succession**) or in an area where a previous community existed but was disturbed and some soil or biological legacy remains (**secondary succession**).

The crucial analytical feature is that succession is not merely a replacement of species. Organisms themselves can modify environmental conditions, thereby influencing which species can subsequently establish. For example, early colonisers can alter soil characteristics, nutrient availability and microclimatic conditions, making the environment more suitable for later communities.

Option (a) is incorrect because succession does not necessarily culminate in a single species. Option (c) is incorrect because succession can occur after disturbances in ecosystems where soil, seeds, microorganisms and other biological components remain. Option (d) is incorrect because there is no universal rule that succession must produce maximum species diversity; the resulting community depends upon environmental and climatic conditions.

The conceptual trap is to equate **succession with simple ecological replacement**. It is better understood as a dynamic interaction between organisms and their changing physical environment.

Hence, **(b)** is correct.

Q3. With reference to government budgeting and fiscal policy, consider the following statements:

1. A fiscal deficit can increase even when government expenditure remains unchanged, if government receipts other than borrowings decline sufficiently.
2. A revenue deficit implies that the government is borrowing only for the creation of capital assets.
3. A primary deficit is obtained by excluding interest payments from the fiscal deficit.

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 3 are correct, while Statement 2 is incorrect.

The **fiscal deficit** broadly represents the excess of total government expenditure over total receipts excluding borrowings. Therefore, even if expenditure remains unchanged, a substantial decline in non-borrowing receipts can increase the fiscal deficit.

Hence, **Statement 1 is correct**.

Statement 2 is incorrect. A **revenue deficit** occurs when revenue expenditure exceeds revenue receipts. It indicates that the government does not have sufficient revenue receipts to finance its revenue expenditure. It does not mean that borrowing is exclusively being used for capital-asset creation. Indeed, persistent revenue deficits can imply that borrowing is partly financing **current expenditure**, which raises concerns regarding fiscal sustainability.



Statement 3 is correct. The **primary deficit** is:

Primary Deficit = Fiscal Deficit – Interest Payments

The rationale is analytical: interest payments largely reflect past borrowing commitments, whereas the primary deficit provides an indication of the government's current fiscal stance excluding the interest burden inherited from previous borrowing.

The question deliberately distinguishes three concepts that are frequently conflated:

- **Fiscal deficit** → overall borrowing requirement.
- **Revenue deficit** → excess of revenue expenditure over revenue receipts.
- **Primary deficit** → fiscal deficit excluding interest payments.

Therefore, **two statements are correct**, making **(b)** the correct answer.

Q4. With reference to the regional aspirations in India, consider the following statements:

1. Regional aspirations are not necessarily incompatible with national unity and may be accommodated through constitutional and democratic mechanisms.
2. The creation of linguistic States demonstrated that the Indian Union could respond institutionally to regional demands without necessarily treating every regional assertion as secessionist.
3. The constitutional framework permits Parliament to alter the boundaries or names of existing States without requiring the consent of the concerned State Legislature to be binding on Parliament.
4. Any demand for greater regional autonomy necessarily amounts to a demand for separation from the Indian Union.

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, whereas Statement 4 is incorrect.

Statement 1 is correct. Regional aspirations can coexist with national unity. India's federal structure provides constitutional and political mechanisms through which regional demands may be accommodated. Democratic negotiation, federal restructuring, special provisions and decentralisation can all serve as instruments of accommodation.

Statement 2 is correct. The linguistic reorganisation of States is a particularly important example. Instead of treating linguistic identity itself as inherently anti-national, the Indian political system eventually accommodated major linguistic aspirations through territorial reorganisation.

Statement 3 is correct. Under **Article 3**, Parliament can form new States and alter the areas, boundaries or names of existing States. The President refers such a Bill to the concerned State Legislature for expressing



its views, but those views are **not binding upon Parliament**. Therefore, the State Legislature's consent is not constitutionally required.

Statement 4 is incorrect. This is the principal conceptual trap. Regionalism exists on a spectrum. A demand may concern greater administrative autonomy, recognition of linguistic or cultural identity, equitable distribution of resources, special constitutional arrangements or greater political representation. Such demands do not automatically imply secession.

Indian federalism has therefore evolved partly through the **accommodation and institutionalisation of regional diversity**.

Hence, **three statements are correct — (c).**

Q5. Consider the following Assertion and the two Reasons given below:

Assertion:

The expansion of international trade does not necessarily produce identical economic outcomes across all regions of a country.

Reason I:

The benefits of international trade may become concentrated in regions that possess better infrastructure, market connectivity, specialised production capabilities and access to major transport corridors.

Reason II:

International trade is influenced only by the absolute geographical distance between the producing region and the foreign market, irrespective of transport infrastructure, technology and institutional conditions.

Which one of the following is correct?

- (a) Both Reason I and Reason II are correct, and both of them explain the Assertion.
- (b) Both Reason I and Reason II are correct, but only Reason I explains the Assertion.
- (c) Reason I is correct, but Reason II is incorrect.
- (d) Reason I is incorrect, but Reason II is correct.

Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The **Assertion is correct**. International trade can generate highly uneven spatial outcomes within the same country. The gains from expanding trade depend upon the ability of different regions to connect with domestic and international markets.

Reason I is correct. Regions with efficient roads, railways, ports, airports, logistics networks, telecommunications, industrial clusters and established production capabilities are generally better positioned to participate in international trade. Such advantages can attract investment and reinforce regional specialisation.

For example, a coastal industrial region with direct access to a major port may face substantially lower logistics costs than an otherwise comparable inland region. Similarly, regions with established industrial clusters can benefit from economies of scale, skilled labour pools and supplier networks.

Reason II is incorrect. Geographical distance alone does not determine the intensity or profitability of international trade. Modern trade is shaped by **transport technology, logistics infrastructure, trade**



agreements, tariffs, digital connectivity, supply chains, institutional quality and production capabilities.

This is precisely why the geography of international trade must be understood through the interaction between **location and connectivity**. A geographically distant region can become highly competitive if it possesses efficient logistics and specialised production, while a geographically closer region may remain poorly integrated into global markets because of inadequate infrastructure.

The deeper geographical insight is that globalisation does not simply erase the importance of geography. Instead, it **reorganises geographical advantages** by making connectivity, infrastructure and accessibility increasingly important.

Therefore, **(c)** is the correct answer.

DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM CURRENT AFFAIRS

Q1. With reference to the Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope, consider the following statements:

1. The telescope is designed to undertake wide-field surveys in the near-infrared regime, thereby enabling observations over a substantially larger area of sky than the Hubble Space Telescope in comparable observing time.
2. Its scientific objectives include investigating dark energy and dark matter, while its gravitational microlensing observations can also reveal exoplanets that may be difficult to detect through conventional transit-based surveys.

Which one of the following is correct?

- (a) Both Statement 1 and Statement 2 are correct, and Statement 2 is the correct explanation for Statement 1.
- (b) Both Statement 1 and Statement 2 are correct, but Statement 2 is not the correct explanation for Statement 1.
- (c) Statement 1 is correct, but Statement 2 is incorrect.
- (d) Statement 1 is incorrect, but Statement 2 is correct.

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

Both statements are correct, but Statement 2 does not explain Statement 1.

The **Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope**, formerly known as WFIRST, is NASA's next-generation space observatory. It is designed primarily for wide-field astronomical surveys in visible and near-infrared wavelengths. Its field of view is approximately **100 times larger than that of Hubble**, while retaining a comparable primary-mirror diameter of about 2.4 metres.

Its scientific programme includes investigation of **dark energy, dark matter, large-scale cosmic structure and exoplanets**. One important exoplanet technique is **gravitational microlensing**. When a foreground object passes sufficiently close to the line of sight to a distant star, its gravity can magnify the background star's light. Temporary changes in brightness can reveal planets associated with the foreground system, including planets that may not conveniently transit their host stars.



The conceptual trap is to assume that all space telescopes primarily differ in the *wavelength* they observe. Roman's major distinguishing feature is also its **survey architecture**: it combines substantial sensitivity with a very wide field, making it particularly suited to large statistical surveys.

Thus, both statements are correct, but the second statement describes **scientific objectives and methodology**, rather than explaining the telescope's wide-field capability.

Q2. Maharani Avantibai Lodhi, associated with the Revolt of 1857, is most closely associated with which one of the following regions?

- (a) Ramgarh in the Mahakoshal region of present-day Madhya Pradesh
- (b) Ramgarh in the Chota Nagpur Plateau region of present-day Jharkhand
- (c) Ramgarh in the Awadh region of present-day Uttar Pradesh
- (d) Ramgarh in the Mewar region of present-day Rajasthan

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Maharani Avantibai Lodhi was the queen-regent of **Ramgarh**, a princely estate associated with the present-day **Dindori–Mandla region of Madhya Pradesh** in the Mahakoshal area. She became one of the important regional leaders of the Revolt of 1857.

Her opposition was closely connected with British intervention in the administration of Ramgarh. After the illness of her husband, Raja Vikramaditya Singh, and the succession of her minor sons, British authorities placed the estate under the **Court of Wards** and appointed administrators. Avantibai resisted this intervention and subsequently emerged as a major anti-British leader in the region.

She organised resistance, mobilised local support and subsequently operated from the forested and hilly terrain around **Devhargarh**. Her resistance eventually culminated in her martyrdom in March 1858.

The question deliberately exploits the repeated occurrence of the name **“Ramgarh”** in different parts of India. UPSC-style mapping requires identifying the *historical Ramgarh associated with Avantibai*, rather than relying on recognition of the place-name alone.

Hence, **(a)** is correct.

Q3. With reference to the Ramon Magsaysay Award, consider the following statements:

1. It was established in 1957 in honour of Ramon Magsaysay, the former President of the Philippines.
2. Since 2009, the Award Foundation has abolished the earlier fixed category-based structure, except for Emergent Leadership.
3. The award is restricted exclusively to citizens of the Philippines because it commemorates a Philippine President.

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, while Statement 3 is incorrect.

Statement 1 is correct. The Ramon Magsaysay Award was established in **1957** to honour Ramon Magsaysay, the seventh President of the Philippines, who died in an aircraft accident in March 1957. The award is intended to recognise exemplary public service and leadership in Asia.

Statement 2 is correct. The award originally had several defined categories, including Government Service, Public Service, Community Leadership, Journalism/Literature/Creative Communication Arts, Peace and International Understanding, and Emergent Leadership. From **2009**, the fixed category structure was largely abolished, allowing the Foundation greater flexibility in recognising contributions across different fields, while Emergent Leadership remained.

Statement 3 is incorrect. The award is not restricted to Philippine citizens. Its geographical and institutional identity is **Asian**, and it recognises individuals and organisations demonstrating exceptional leadership and service to Asian societies. The 2026 laureates themselves illustrate this: **Tommy Koh of Singapore, Runa Khan of Bangladesh and Bo Kyi of Myanmar** were recognised.

The trap is to confuse the **national origin of the award** with its **regional scope**.

Therefore, **two statements are correct — (b).**

Q4. With reference to Article 142 of the Constitution of India, consider the following statements:

1. Article 142 empowers the Supreme Court to pass orders necessary for doing complete justice in any cause or matter pending before it.
2. The power under Article 142 is available equally to every constitutional court in India.
3. The Supreme Court's power under Article 142 is constitutionally derived and is therefore conceptually distinct from powers that a court exercises merely because an ordinary statute confers them.
4. The existence of Article 142 permits the Supreme Court to disregard fundamental rights whenever it considers such departure necessary for achieving substantive justice.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

Statements 1 and 3 are correct, whereas Statements 2 and 4 are incorrect.

Statement 1 is correct. Article 142(1) empowers the Supreme Court to make such decree or order as is necessary for doing **“complete justice”** in any cause or matter pending before it. It is an extraordinary



constitutional power intended to enable the Court to fashion appropriate remedies in exceptional circumstances.

Statement 2 is incorrect. Article 142 is a power specifically vested in the **Supreme Court of India**. High Courts do not possess an identical constitutional power under Article 226.

Statement 3 is correct. Article 142 derives its authority directly from the Constitution. This makes it distinct from ordinary judicial powers that exist because Parliament or a State Legislature has enacted a statute conferring particular jurisdiction or remedial powers.

Statement 4 is incorrect. The expression “**complete justice**” **does not create an unlimited judicial power**. The exercise of Article 142 remains subject to constitutional limitations. The Supreme Court has recognised that the power cannot be used to destroy substantive statutory provisions or violate fundamental constitutional guarantees.

The important UPSC distinction is therefore between **extraordinary constitutional power and unlimited constitutional power**. Article 142 is extraordinarily broad, but it is not a licence for judicial legislation without constitutional boundaries.

Hence, **two statements are correct — (b).**

Q5. Consider the following statements regarding Semicon 2.0:

1. It seeks to strengthen India's semiconductor ecosystem beyond fabrication by supporting activities such as chip design, advanced packaging, materials, equipment and specialised R&D.
2. Its policy architecture includes differentiated fiscal support for different semiconductor manufacturing and packaging activities rather than applying an identical subsidy rate to every category.
3. The programme is confined to attracting foreign semiconductor manufacturers and does not provide policy support for Indian-owned intellectual property or domestic chip-design capabilities.

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, while Statement 3 is incorrect.

Statement 1 is correct. Semicon 2.0 represents a broader approach to semiconductor ecosystem development. Rather than treating semiconductor manufacturing as synonymous with a single fabrication facility, the framework covers areas including **fabless chip design, silicon and compound-wafer fabrication, ATMP/OSAT, equipment, materials, specialty chemicals, R&D and talent development**.

This is strategically important because semiconductor resilience depends upon an entire **value chain**. A country possessing a fabrication plant but remaining dependent upon foreign sources for equipment, specialised chemicals, packaging or design IP can still face significant supply-chain vulnerabilities.



Statement 2 is correct. Semicon 2.0 uses differentiated support mechanisms. The framework provides, for example, different levels of fiscal support for large silicon fabs, compound-semiconductor and other fabs, advanced packaging and legacy ATMP/OSAT facilities. This indicates a **calibrated incentive architecture**, rather than a uniform subsidy.

Statement 3 is incorrect. The programme explicitly seeks to promote **Indian-owned intellectual property, fabless chip design and domestic semiconductor capabilities**. It also provides mechanisms such as EDA access, multi-project wafer services and milestone-linked support for startups and MSMEs.

The deeper policy distinction is between **attracting semiconductor capacity** and **building semiconductor sovereignty**. Semicon 2.0 attempts to address the latter by expanding support beyond fabs into design, IP, materials, equipment, packaging, R&D and skilled manpower.

Therefore, **two statements are correct — (b).**

Q6. Larak Island, recently in the news for its strategic significance, is located in which one of the following geographical settings?

- (a) In the Strait of Hormuz, near the Iranian coast and in proximity to Qeshm and Hormuz Islands
- (b) In the Bab-el-Mandeb, between Yemen and Djibouti
- (c) In the Strait of Malacca, between Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula
- (d) In the Bosphorus, between the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmara

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Larak Island is a small Iranian island located in the **Strait of Hormuz**, close to the Iranian mainland and in proximity to **Qeshm Island and Hormuz Island**.

Its importance derives primarily from its geographical position. The Strait of Hormuz is one of the world's most strategically significant maritime chokepoints because it connects the **Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and, consequently, the Arabian Sea and wider Indian Ocean system**.

Larak's location gives it significance for maritime surveillance and control. The island has also been associated with Iranian military infrastructure and naval activity. Its proximity to important shipping lanes makes it strategically relevant to the security of energy transportation through the Gulf.

The question is deliberately framed around **chokepoint geography**. The Bab-el-Mandeb is associated with the Red Sea–Gulf of Aden connection; the Strait of Malacca connects the Indian Ocean and Pacific maritime systems; and the Bosphorus connects the Black Sea with the Sea of Marmara.

Thus, **(a)** is the correct answer.



DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAINS ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Q1. GS-1

“The Industrial Revolution was not merely a technological transformation; it fundamentally altered the relationship between production, labour, markets and imperialism.” Discuss.

Sample Answer

The **Industrial Revolution**, which began in Britain in the eighteenth century and subsequently spread to other parts of Europe and the world, represented a structural transformation in the organisation of economic production. Its significance went far beyond the invention of machines. It altered patterns of labour, urbanisation, trade, consumption and ultimately contributed to the expansion and consolidation of European imperialism.

One of its most important consequences was the transition from **small-scale, decentralised production to mechanised factory production**. Innovations such as the spinning jenny, water frame, spinning mule and power loom transformed textile production. The steam engine subsequently provided an increasingly versatile source of mechanical power. Production became concentrated in factories, where capital, machinery and labour could be brought together under centralised supervision.

This transformation fundamentally changed the nature of labour. Artisans and craftsmen increasingly faced competition from mechanised production, while wage labour became the dominant form of industrial employment. Workers often experienced long working hours, low wages, unsafe working conditions and employment insecurity. The emergence of an industrial working class eventually contributed to the development of **trade unionism, labour movements and socialist thought**.

The Industrial Revolution also produced unprecedented **urbanisation**. Industrial towns expanded around coalfields, ports, rivers and manufacturing centres. However, rapid urban growth frequently preceded adequate sanitation, housing and public-health infrastructure, generating overcrowding and disease.

Its impact was equally significant at the international level. Mechanised European industries required **raw materials and expanding markets**. Cotton textiles, for example, created increasing demand for raw cotton, while industrial goods required overseas markets. This reinforced colonial economic structures. Colonies were increasingly integrated into imperial economies as suppliers of raw materials and consumers of manufactured products.

The relationship between industrialisation and imperialism was therefore mutually reinforcing. Industrial capabilities strengthened European military and economic power, while colonial possessions facilitated access to resources and markets.

However, industrialisation also generated new possibilities. Railways, steamships and telegraph networks dramatically reduced transportation and communication costs, contributing to the emergence of an increasingly interconnected world economy.

Thus, the Industrial Revolution should be understood as a **civilisational transformation** rather than merely a technological breakthrough. It reshaped social classes, transformed landscapes, reorganised global trade and strengthened European imperial power, while simultaneously generating new political ideologies and movements demanding social justice.



Q2. GS-2

“Environmental governance in India requires a transition from fragmented regulatory administration to integrated, participatory and ecosystem-based governance.” Examine.

Sample Answer

Environmental governance refers to the institutional arrangements through which society makes decisions concerning natural resources, pollution, conservation and ecological risks. In India, environmental governance has evolved through constitutional provisions, legislation, judicial interventions and specialised institutions. Yet the increasing complexity of environmental problems requires a shift from fragmented regulation towards **integrated and participatory governance**.

India possesses an extensive legal framework, including the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, Forest (Conservation) Act, Wildlife (Protection) Act, Water Act and Air Act.**

Institutions such as the Central Pollution Control Board, State Pollution Control Boards, National Green Tribunal and various ministries contribute to environmental governance.

However, environmental problems frequently cross administrative boundaries. A river basin may extend across several States; air pollution may originate in one jurisdiction and affect another; groundwater depletion can be linked to agricultural practices, energy subsidies and urbanisation simultaneously. Therefore, a purely departmental approach can produce policy fragmentation.

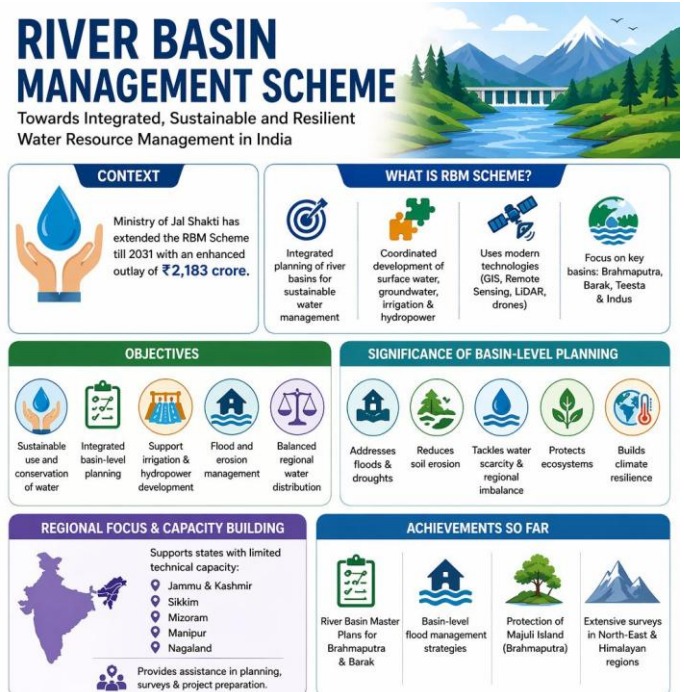
An **ecosystem-based approach** attempts to address this problem by considering ecological systems as interconnected units. River-basin management, landscape-level conservation and integrated coastal-zone management are examples of approaches that recognise ecological interdependence.

Participation is equally important. Local communities often possess detailed knowledge of forests, water resources and biodiversity. Institutions such as **Gram Sabhas, Joint Forest Management structures and community-based conservation mechanisms** can improve both legitimacy and implementation.

Environmental governance also requires greater transparency. Environmental impact assessments, pollution data, satellite monitoring and public disclosure can enable citizens to scrutinise environmental decisions. Digital technologies can further strengthen real-time monitoring of air and water quality.

The judiciary has also played a significant role through principles such as the **precautionary principle, polluter-pays principle and sustainable development**. However, judicial intervention cannot substitute for strong executive capacity and accountable regulatory institutions.

A major challenge is balancing environmental protection with developmental requirements. Infrastructure, industrialisation and urbanisation are necessary for socioeconomic development, but ecological costs must be incorporated into decision-making. Environmental governance should therefore move beyond an approach where environment is considered only after a development project has been designed.





The way forward involves strengthening regulatory capacity, improving inter-governmental coordination, decentralising decision-making, incorporating scientific evidence, empowering local communities and developing cumulative rather than project-specific environmental assessments.

Thus, effective environmental governance requires moving from **sectoral regulation to ecological integration, from administrative control to participatory governance, and from reactive damage control to preventive sustainability.**

Q3. GS-3

“Globalisation creates opportunities for economic growth, but its developmental outcomes depend substantially upon domestic capabilities and institutional preparedness.” Discuss.

Sample Answer

Globalisation refers to the increasing integration of national economies through trade, investment, technology, finance and production networks. India's economic reforms beginning in 1991 significantly increased its integration with the global economy. However, globalisation does not automatically produce uniform gains. Its outcomes depend upon the **productive capabilities, human capital, infrastructure and institutional quality** of participating economies.

One major benefit of globalisation is increased access to **international markets**. Indian firms can sell goods and services to a much larger consumer base. India's information-technology and business-process-management sectors demonstrate how skilled human capital can be integrated into global production networks.

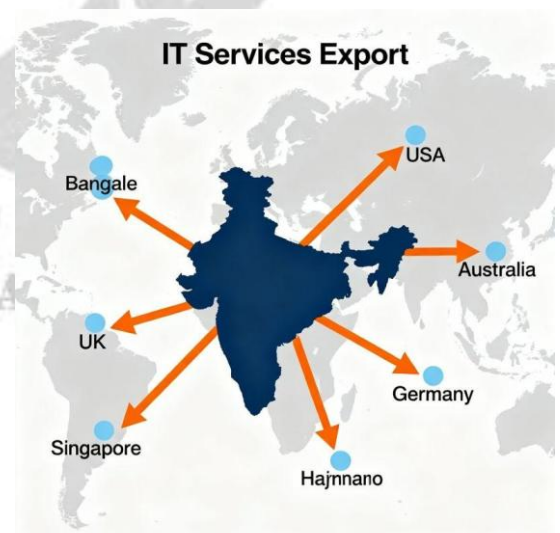
Globalisation has also facilitated the inflow of **foreign direct investment (FDI)**, technology and managerial practices. Multinational corporations can introduce advanced production techniques and integrate domestic firms into international value chains.

Consumers can benefit through greater product variety, competitive prices and improved quality. Competition may encourage domestic firms to become more productive and technologically sophisticated.

However, the benefits are uneven. Firms with technological capabilities, access to finance and skilled labour are generally better placed to compete internationally. Smaller enterprises may face intense competitive pressures. Similarly, workers possessing specialised skills can benefit from globalisation, whereas workers in vulnerable sectors may face employment displacement or wage pressure.

Agriculture illustrates this complexity. Integration with global markets can create export opportunities but may also expose farmers to volatile international prices and changing trade policies. Therefore, globalisation needs complementary domestic institutions such as crop insurance, market information, storage infrastructure and efficient supply chains.

Infrastructure is another decisive factor. A region with reliable electricity, roads, ports, logistics and digital connectivity can participate more effectively in global value chains than an otherwise comparable region lacking such infrastructure.





The quality of institutions also matters. Predictable taxation, contract enforcement, intellectual-property protection, efficient customs procedures and transparent regulation can reduce transaction costs and encourage investment.

Therefore, the appropriate policy response is neither complete protectionism nor unqualified openness. India needs **strategic integration** with global markets combined with domestic capability building.

Policies promoting skill development, research and development, logistics, MSME competitiveness, semiconductor manufacturing, digital infrastructure and export diversification can increase India's ability to capture a greater share of global value chains.

In conclusion, globalisation should be viewed as an **opportunity structure rather than an automatic development mechanism**. Countries with stronger productive and institutional capabilities are better positioned to convert global integration into broad-based economic gains. The policy challenge for India is therefore to combine openness with resilience, competitiveness with social protection, and global integration with domestic capacity creation.

GS-4

Q4. “Ethical public administration requires not merely adherence to rules, but the exercise of reasoned discretion guided by constitutional values.” Discuss with suitable examples.

Sample Answer

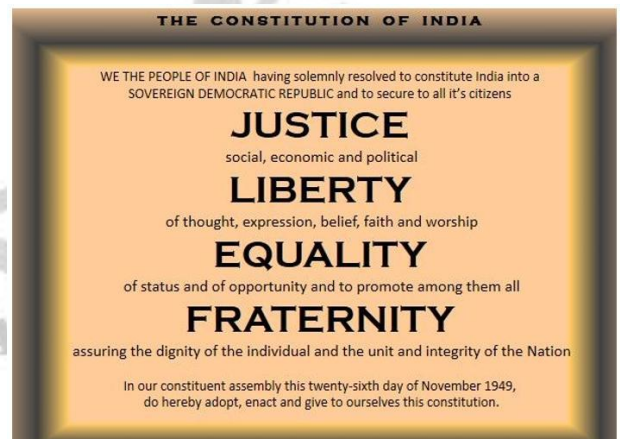
Public administration operates within a framework of laws, rules and procedures. **Rule-based administration** is essential for preventing arbitrariness, favouritism and corruption. However, governance cannot be reduced to mechanical compliance with rules. Public officials frequently encounter situations where rigid application of a rule may conflict with fairness, compassion or the broader public interest. Ethical administration therefore requires **reasoned discretion within the boundaries of law and constitutional morality**.

Rules provide predictability and equality. For example, eligibility criteria for a government welfare programme ensure that similarly situated citizens are treated according to common standards. Ignoring such rules merely on the basis of personal preferences can create discrimination.

At the same time, circumstances may arise where strict procedural compliance produces substantive injustice. Suppose a welfare beneficiary misses a deadline because a natural disaster has disrupted communication in the region. An ethically sensitive official should investigate whether the legal framework permits extension, review or an alternative mechanism rather than mechanically rejecting the application.

This illustrates the distinction between **procedural equality and substantive justice**.

Constitutional values provide an important ethical compass. The principles of justice, equality, dignity, liberty and fraternity should influence administrative decision-making. Public servants therefore require qualities such as **integrity, empathy, impartiality, objectivity and courage of conviction**.





Consider a district official confronting illegal encroachment on a public road. The official must enforce the law. However, if the encroachment involves vulnerable families who have no alternative shelter, immediate coercive eviction without rehabilitation may satisfy a narrow interpretation of enforcement while raising serious ethical concerns. The official must therefore balance legality with humane implementation, using lawful rehabilitation mechanisms wherever available.

Similarly, during a public-health emergency, an administrator may have to make rapid decisions involving competing values—individual liberty, public safety, economic activity and protection of vulnerable populations. Ethical decision-making requires proportionality, transparency and evidence-based reasoning.

However, discretion itself can become dangerous. Excessive discretion without accountability may lead to corruption or selective enforcement. Hence, ethical discretion should be accompanied by **recorded reasons, transparency, grievance redressal, audit and institutional oversight**.

The ideal civil servant is therefore neither a **rule-blind bureaucrat** nor an administrator who places personal morality above law. Instead, the official should exercise principled discretion within constitutional and statutory boundaries.

Ultimately, ethical governance requires three complementary elements: **law as the boundary, constitutional values as the compass, and public interest as the objective**. Such an approach transforms administration from mechanical rule enforcement into responsible and humane public service.

Q5. Current Affairs — V-Dem's Democracy Index

“The measurement of democracy requires moving beyond the mere existence of elections to examining the quality of institutions, rights, participation and constraints on political power.” Discuss in the context of V-Dem's approach to measuring democracy.

Sample Answer

Democracy is frequently evaluated through the presence of elections and representative institutions. However, elections alone cannot fully capture the quality of a political system. The **Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem)** project adopts a multidimensional approach, recognising that democracy encompasses electoral competition as well as civil liberties, institutional constraints, participation, deliberation and equality.

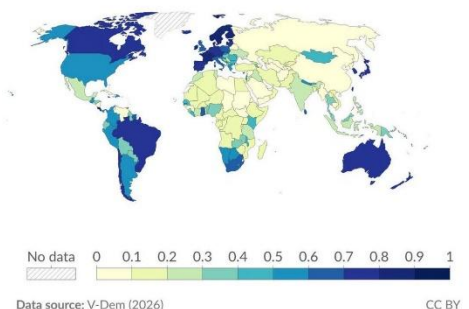
V-Dem identifies five principal dimensions: **electoral, liberal, participatory, deliberative and egalitarian democracy**. The electoral dimension examines whether elections are free and fair, whether political parties can compete, whether suffrage is broad and whether citizens have meaningful political choices.

The **liberal dimension** goes further by examining constraints on executive authority, rule of law, judicial and legislative independence, and protection of civil liberties. This is important because a government may win elections while simultaneously weakening institutions designed to constrain executive power.

The **participatory dimension** examines opportunities for citizens to participate politically beyond periodic elections. This draws attention to civil society, direct participation and other channels through which citizens influence public decision-making.

Liberal Democracy Index, 2025

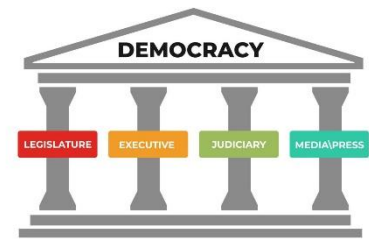
Data by V-Dem. Expert estimates of the extent of voting rights, the freedom and fairness of elections, freedoms of association and expression, civil liberties, and executive constraints. The index ranges from 0 to 1 (most democratic).





The **deliberative dimension** focuses on whether political decisions are justified through reasoned public discussion rather than merely through power or interests. The quality of political discourse therefore becomes part of democratic assessment.

The **egalitarian dimension** examines whether political rights and resources are distributed sufficiently equally for citizens to exercise meaningful political influence. Formal equality may coexist with substantial inequalities in political participation.



V-Dem's latest Democracy Report, based on its 2026 dataset, reports that the world had **92 autocracies and 87 democracies at the end of 2025**, while approximately 74% of the world's population lived in autocracies. It also identifies freedom of expression as one of the most severely attacked dimensions of democracy.

The significance of such measurement lies in identifying **democratic backsliding before complete democratic collapse**. A country may continue holding elections while experiencing declining media freedom, weakened checks and balances or erosion of civil liberties.

Nevertheless, democracy indices should not be treated as infallible rankings. V-Dem itself acknowledges uncertainty in its estimates, and many indicators rely on expert assessments. Its methodology attempts to address this through multiple experts and disaggregated indicators.

For India and other democracies, the larger lesson is that democratic quality depends not only upon **who wins elections**, but also upon whether institutions remain capable of checking power, protecting rights, enabling meaningful participation and sustaining pluralistic public debate.

Thus, V-Dem's approach encourages a shift from **“electoral democracy” as an endpoint to democracy as a multidimensional institutional process**.