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VIDHVATH IAS KAS ACADEMY & STUDY CENTRE

DAILY MCQ'S

FOR UPSC CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

DATE: 30/09/2026 (WEDNESDAY)

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



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DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM STATIC PART

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the relationship between Vāstu traditions, temple architecture and the conceptual organisation of sacred space in Indian art:

1. The architectural treatises associated with Vāstuvidyā treated the orientation and proportional organisation of a structure as matters connected with the ordering of space, rather than merely with structural stability.
2. The development of temple architecture in India followed a single uniform architectural grammar throughout the subcontinent, because the major architectural treatises prescribed identical plans irrespective of regional traditions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (a)

Explanation:
Statement 1 is correct. Indian architectural traditions associated with **Vāstuvidyā** dealt with orientation, proportion, spatial organisation and the functional arrangement of structures. Architecture was therefore understood as more than merely a technical exercise in construction.

Statement 2 is incorrect. Indian temple architecture did not follow a single uniform pan-Indian architectural grammar. Distinct regional traditions developed, particularly the **Nagara** tradition in northern India and the **Dravida** tradition in southern India, alongside numerous regional variations and hybrid forms. Architectural treatises provided conceptual and technical frameworks but did not eliminate regional diversity.

Q2. With reference to biodiversity conservation, consider the following:

The establishment of a viable population of an endangered species in a zoological facility, followed by a programme to increase its numbers and eventually reintroduce individuals into suitable natural habitats, represents:

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(a) In-situ conservation throughout the entire process

(b) Ex-situ conservation followed by an in-situ restoration intervention

(c) In-situ conservation followed by ex-situ conservation

(d) Ecosystem-level conservation without species-level intervention

Answer: (b)

Explanation:
The crucial distinction is the **location of conservation**.

When an endangered species is maintained and bred under controlled conditions in a **zoological facility**, it constitutes **ex-situ conservation**, since conservation is being undertaken outside the species' natural habitat.

When individuals are subsequently reintroduced into an appropriate natural ecosystem, that stage constitutes an **in-situ restoration intervention**.

Option (a) is incorrect because a zoo is not the species' natural habitat.
Option (c) reverses the sequence.
Option (d) is incorrect because the example explicitly concerns targeted management of a particular species.

Q3. Consider the following statements regarding the multiplier mechanism and equilibrium income:

1. A higher marginal propensity to consume, other things remaining unchanged, implies a larger value of the simple investment multiplier.
2. An increase in autonomous investment can raise equilibrium income by an amount greater than the initial increase in investment, even when there is no corresponding increase in the productive capacity of the economy in the short run.
3. If the marginal propensity to consume is zero, an increase in autonomous investment cannot alter equilibrium income in the simple Keynesian income-determination framework.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

(a) Only one

(b) Only two

(c) All three

(d) None

Answer: (b)

Explanation:
Statement 1 is correct. In the simple Keynesian model:

Therefore, an increase in the **marginal propensity to consume (MPC)** increases the value of the multiplier, other things remaining unchanged.

Statement 2 is correct. An initial increase in autonomous investment generates additional income, part of which is subsequently spent on consumption. This creates successive rounds of expenditure and income generation, allowing the ultimate increase in equilibrium income to exceed the initial investment.

Statement 3 is incorrect. If MPC = 0:

Thus, an increase in autonomous investment still increases equilibrium income, although the increase is equal to the initial investment rather than being a multiple greater than one.

Therefore, **two statements are correct**.

Q4. Consider the following statements regarding India's external relations and the principles that shaped its foreign-policy approach in the early decades after Independence:

1. The policy of non-alignment necessarily required India to remain neutral on every international dispute, irrespective of the merits of the issue involved.
2. India's advocacy of peaceful coexistence was compatible with maintaining an independent assessment of international issues rather than mechanically aligning with either Cold War bloc.

3. India's participation in Afro-Asian solidarity initiatives reflected an attempt to give newly independent countries a collective voice in international affairs.
4. Non-alignment meant that India could not enter into any bilateral defence or security arrangement with another country under any circumstances.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

(a) Only one

(b) Only two

(c) Only three

(d) All four

Answer: (b)

Explanation:
Statement 1 is incorrect. **Non-alignment was not equivalent to automatic neutrality** on every international issue. India could take independent positions on international questions while avoiding formal alignment with Cold War military blocs.

Statement 2 is correct. Non-alignment emphasised the preservation of **independent foreign-policy judgement**. It did not require India to mechanically support or oppose either the Western or Soviet bloc.

Statement 3 is correct. India's participation in **Afro-Asian solidarity** reflected the aspirations of newly independent countries to strengthen their collective voice and challenge colonialism, racial discrimination and forms of great-power domination.

Statement 4 is incorrect. Non-alignment did not constitute an absolute prohibition on every bilateral defence or security arrangement. Its central concern was the avoidance of permanent bloc alignment and the preservation of strategic autonomy.

Thus, **Statements 2 and 3 only are correct**.

Q5. Assertion (A): In a semi-arid region, the revival of traditional rainwater-harvesting structures can contribute to groundwater recharge even when the structures themselves do not directly store water for prolonged domestic consumption.

Reason I: Rainwater harvesting can reduce surface runoff and increase the opportunity for water to infiltrate into the ground, thereby contributing to replenishment of groundwater.

Reason II: Groundwater recharge through rainwater harvesting necessarily occurs only when the harvested water is stored in a completely impervious underground tank.

Which one of the following is correct?

(a) Both Assertion and Reason I are correct, and Reason I correctly explains the Assertion; Reason II is incorrect.
(b) Both Assertion and Reason I are correct, but Reason I does not correctly explain the Assertion; Reason II is incorrect.
(c) Assertion is correct, but both Reason I and Reason II are incorrect.
(d) Assertion is incorrect, but both Reason I and Reason II are correct.

Answer: (a)

Explanation:
The **Assertion is correct**. Traditional rainwater-harvesting structures can perform functions beyond direct water storage. By slowing runoff and retaining water temporarily, they can increase the amount of water available for infiltration and consequently contribute to groundwater recharge.

Reason I is correct and directly explains the Assertion. Reduced surface runoff and increased infiltration provide greater opportunity for water to enter permeable soil and geological formations.

Reason II is incorrect. Groundwater recharge does not require storage in a completely impervious underground tank. Such a tank primarily facilitates **water storage**, whereas groundwater recharge requires movement of water into the subsurface through suitable permeable formations.

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

DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM CURRENT AFFAIRS

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding Saratchandra Chattopadhyay and his literary significance:

1. Saratchandra Chattopadhyay's literary works are significant not merely as examples of Bengali literature but also as social documents reflecting aspects of rural Bengali society and the social conditions of his time.
2. His literary influence remained confined essentially to Bengali because the regional social setting of his works prevented their meaningful reception through translations into other Indian languages.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (a)

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Explanation:
Statement 1 is correct. Saratchandra Chattopadhyay's writings are widely regarded for their sensitive portrayal of social life, particularly the experiences and constraints affecting ordinary people and women in the society of his time. The Government of India, while commemorating his 150th birth anniversary in September 2026, highlighted his portrayal of nineteenth-century India, especially rural Bengali society. His works therefore have significance beyond purely literary classification.

Statement 2 is incorrect. His influence was **not confined to Bengali**. His works have been translated into Indian as well as several foreign languages, allowing his themes and characters to reach audiences well beyond Bengal.

The trap lies in equating the **regional setting of a literary work with the geographical limitation of its cultural influence**.

Q2. With reference to the Kishau Multipurpose Dam Project, which one of the following statements is correct?

(a) It is a multipurpose project on the Yamuna River itself, primarily intended to regulate the river before it enters the Himalayan foothills.

(b) It involves a large concrete gravity dam on the Tons River, a major tributary of the Yamuna, and is intended to combine water-storage, irrigation and hydropower functions.

(c) It is a joint project of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana, with Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand functioning only as downstream beneficiaries.

(d) It is exclusively a hydropower project and does not form part of the Upper Yamuna basin's water-storage strategy.

Answer: (b)

Explanation:
The Kishau Multipurpose Project is proposed on the **Tons River**, a major tributary of the Yamuna. It involves a **232.6-metre concrete gravity dam** and a proposed **422 MW hydropower component**, besides irrigation and regulated water supply functions.

The project has Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand as the **host states**, while Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan and Delhi are among the principal beneficiary regions. It is also linked with the broader Upper Yamuna basin storage strategy, alongside projects such as Lakhwar and Renukaji.

The question is designed to test the distinction between the **river on which the dam is located** and the **larger river basin to which the project belongs**.

Q3. Consider the following statements regarding the UPI Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) Framework, 2026:

1. The revised framework applies to specified Person-to-Merchant (P2M) UPI transactions above ₹2,000, while Person-to-Person transactions are outside the scope of the MDR.
2. MDR is structurally different from a tax because it represents a charge within the payment-processing ecosystem rather than a general government tax imposed on the value of the transaction.
3. Under the framework, the MDR is intended to be directly recovered from the customer by the merchant as a separate charge whenever the transaction crosses the prescribed threshold.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

(a) Only one

(b) Only two

(c) All three

(d) None

Answer: (b)

Explanation:
Statement 1 is correct. The 2026 framework concerns specified **P2M UPI transactions above ₹2,000**. Person-to-Person transactions do not fall within this MDR framework.

Statement 2 is correct. MDR is a fee within the merchant-payment ecosystem associated with processing a digital transaction. The Government has specifically distinguished it from a **tax or government levy**.

Statement 3 is incorrect. The MDR is intended to be borne within the merchant/payment ecosystem and **not directly charged to customers as an MDR fee**. The government's framework specifically provides that customers are not required to pay the MDR.

A particularly important UPSC trap here is the distinction between **who is legally/operationally charged the MDR and who may ultimately experience an indirect economic effect**. The latter should not be confused with a direct customer levy.

Q4. Consider the following statements regarding the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD):

1. The FRLD is intended to assist developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change in addressing economic as well as non-economic loss and damage.
2. The Fund was established independently of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, since its purpose is primarily humanitarian rather than climate-policy related.
3. The Fund is accountable to and functions under the guidance of the COP and the CMA.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

(a) Only one

(b) Only two

(c) All three

(d) None

Answer: (b)

Explanation:
Statement 1 is correct. The FRLD's mandate includes supporting particularly vulnerable developing countries in responding to **economic and non-economic loss and damage** associated with climate change, including both extreme weather events and slow-onset events.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The Fund is firmly embedded within the **UNFCCC–Paris Agreement institutional framework**. The COP and CMA established the relevant funding arrangements, and the Fund was subsequently operationalised at COP28/CMA5.

Statement 3 is correct. The UNFCCC states that the Fund is **accountable to and functions under the guidance of the COP and the CMA**.

Thus, **two statements are correct**.

Q5. Consider the following statements regarding Exercise Yudh Abhyas 2026:

1. It is a bilateral military exercise between India and the United States.
2. The 2026 edition is being conducted simultaneously at Auli in Uttarakhand and Mahajan Field Firing Range in Rajasthan.
3. The exercise is designed exclusively around naval interoperability because its principal objective is to improve joint operations in the Indian Ocean Region.

4. The 2026 edition places emphasis on operations in mountainous and semi-mountainous terrain, while also incorporating drones and autonomous systems for surveillance and reconnaissance.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

(a) Only one

(b) Only two

(c) Only three

(d) All four

Answer: (c)

Explanation:
Statement 1 is correct. **Yudh Abhyas** is a joint military exercise between the **Indian Army and the United States Army**. The 2026 edition is the 22nd edition of the exercise.

Statement 2 is correct. The 2026 exercise is being conducted simultaneously at **Auli Foreign Training Node in Uttarakhand** and **Mahajan Field Firing Range in Rajasthan**.

Statement 3 is incorrect. It is **not a naval exercise**. The participating forces are the Indian and US armies, with emphasis on infantry-dominated operations and integrated battle groups in mountainous and semi-mountainous terrain.

Statement 4 is correct. Technology infusion is an important feature of the 2026 edition, including the use of **drones and autonomous systems for surveillance and reconnaissance**, alongside contemporary weapon systems and discussions on multi-domain warfare.

Therefore, **three statements are correct**.

Q6. With reference to the map of the Atlantic Ocean, consider the following statements about the location of Cape Verde (Cabo Verde):

1. It is an archipelagic country located in the North Atlantic Ocean, off the western coast of Africa.
2. It lies to the west of Senegal and has no land boundary with any mainland African country.
3. Its islands are of predominantly volcanic origin and are broadly divided into the Barlavento and Sotavento groups.

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Which one of the following correctly identifies the location and geographical character of Cape Verde?

(a) An archipelago in the North Atlantic, west of Senegal, consisting predominantly of volcanic islands
(b) An archipelago in the eastern Mediterranean, south of Greece, consisting predominantly of coral islands
(c) A group of islands in the western Indian Ocean, east of Mozambique, consisting predominantly of continental islands
(d) An archipelago in the South Atlantic, west of Namibia, consisting predominantly of coral atolls

Answer: (a)

Explanation:
Cape Verde, officially **Cabo Verde**, is an island country in the **North Atlantic Ocean, west of Senegal on the West African coast**. It is a volcanic archipelago with ten major islands, traditionally divided into the **Barlavento (Windward)** group in the north and **Sotavento (Leeward)** group in the south.

Its geographical position is particularly important for mapping questions because it lies **off the West African coast rather than in the Caribbean or Indian Ocean**. The archipelago has no land boundary with a mainland country.

Map cue: Locate **Senegal on the western bulge of Africa → move westward into the Atlantic → Cape Verde Islands**.

DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAINS ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Q1. "Human settlements are not merely spatial concentrations of population; they are the geographical expression of the interaction between physical environment, economic activity, technology and social organisation." Discuss with reference to the changing pattern of rural and urban settlements in India.

(GS–1 | NCERT Class 12 Geography – *India: People and Economy*, Chapter 4: Human Settlements) (15 Marks | 250+ words)

Sample Answer:

Human settlements represent the manner in which human communities organise themselves in space. Their form and distribution are influenced by **relief, climate, availability of water, transport, economic opportunities, technology and historical-social factors**. Thus, settlement geography is not simply about where people live but also about why particular spatial patterns emerge and transform.

1. Physical determinants

Historically, availability of water, fertile soil and relatively level terrain encouraged concentrated settlements in the **Indo-Gangetic plains**. In contrast, rugged terrain and ecological constraints have encouraged dispersed or linear settlements in parts of the Himalayas and other mountainous regions.

River valleys have traditionally supported dense settlement because of water availability, fertile agricultural land and transport possibilities.

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2. Economic transformation

The nature of economic activity increasingly determines settlement morphology.

- Agricultural regions tend to generate villages organised around cultivable land and water resources.
- Industrialisation has produced **industrial towns and urban clusters**.
- Ports have stimulated coastal urbanisation.
- Administrative, educational and service functions have encouraged the growth of specialised towns.

Thus, settlements increasingly reflect the transition from an agrarian to a diversified economy.

3. Rural–urban continuum

The traditional distinction between rural and urban settlements is becoming increasingly blurred. Expansion of cities into surrounding villages, commuting, peri-urban agriculture and conversion of agricultural land into residential or industrial uses have produced a **rural–urban continuum**.

This is particularly visible around major metropolitan regions where villages become economically integrated with nearby cities without immediately acquiring all urban characteristics.

4. Transport and technology

Modern transport networks have altered the locational logic of settlements. Highways, railways, airports and digital connectivity can stimulate settlements even where traditional geographical advantages are relatively weak.

However, infrastructure-led urbanisation can also produce fragmented growth, congestion and environmental stress.

5. Emerging challenges

Rapid urbanisation has created:

- pressure on housing and land;
- informal settlements;
- inadequate water and sanitation;
- traffic congestion;
- urban heat-island effects;
- loss of agricultural and ecological land.

Therefore, the future of settlement planning requires **compact but inclusive urbanisation, planned peri-urban development, rural infrastructure and regionally balanced growth**.

Conclusion:
Indian settlements are dynamic geographical systems. Their evolution increasingly reflects the interaction of environmental constraints with economic restructuring and technological change. Sustainable settlement planning must therefore integrate **ecology, livelihood, infrastructure and social equity**, rather than treating rural and urban spaces as isolated categories.

Q2. "Social justice in rural India cannot be achieved merely through redistribution of land or income; it requires transformation of the social relations that structure access to resources and opportunities." Examine.

(GS–2 | NCERT Class 12 Sociology – *Social Change and Development in India*, Chapter 4: Change and Development in Rural Society)
(15 Marks | 250+ words)

Sample Answer:

Social justice implies more than economic redistribution. It requires equitable access to **resources, opportunities, dignity, representation and institutional protection**. Rural India illustrates this

multidimensional nature of social justice because economic inequalities frequently intersect with caste, gender, land ownership, occupational hierarchy and social power.

Why redistribution alone is insufficient



Land reforms, poverty alleviation programmes and income transfers can improve material conditions, but their impact can remain limited when underlying social relations remain unequal.

For example, a landless household may receive a government benefit but continue to face:

- unequal bargaining power;
- social discrimination;
- limited access to credit;
- poor educational opportunities;
- occupational dependence;
- exclusion from local decision-making.

Thus, **economic capability and social power are mutually reinforcing**.

Caste and rural inequality

Caste historically influenced occupation, social status and access to common resources. Although constitutional safeguards and developmental programmes have weakened several traditional hierarchies, caste-based inequalities can continue through informal institutions and unequal access to productive assets.

Consequently, social justice requires both **formal equality before law and substantive equality in access to opportunities**.

Gender dimension

Rural women contribute significantly to agriculture, livestock, household production and informal work, yet ownership and control over productive assets can remain disproportionately concentrated among men.

Measures such as:

- joint land titles;
- women's self-help groups;
- access to institutional credit;
- political representation;
- education and skill development

can improve women's bargaining power.

Institutional dimension

Decentralisation through Panchayati Raj has created opportunities for greater participation of historically disadvantaged groups. However, representation must be accompanied by **effective decision-making authority**, transparency and capacity building.

Similarly, employment programmes and welfare schemes can contribute to social justice only when beneficiaries can access them without discrimination or excessive administrative barriers.

Way forward

A comprehensive rural social-justice strategy should combine:

1. **Asset redistribution** – land, housing and productive assets.
2. **Human-capital development** – education, healthcare and skills.
3. **Institutional inclusion** – effective Panchayati Raj and participatory governance.
4. **Gender empowerment** – property rights, credit and livelihood opportunities.
5. **Legal protection** – effective implementation of anti-discrimination and labour laws.
6. **Digital inclusion** – ensuring technology does not create a new layer of exclusion.

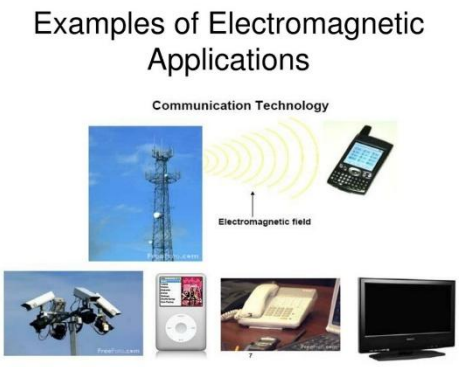
Conclusion:
Rural social justice requires moving from **welfare delivery to empowerment**. Redistribution can address the symptoms of inequality, but durable social justice requires changing the institutional and social conditions that determine who controls resources, whose voice matters and who can convert rights into actual opportunities.

Q3. "The technological significance of electromagnetism extends far beyond conventional electrical devices; it provides the physical foundation for several modern diagnostic, communication and industrial technologies." Explain with suitable examples.

(GS–3 | NCERT Class 12 Physics, Part I – Chapter 4: Moving Charges and Magnetism)
(15 Marks | 250+ words)

Sample Answer:

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The relationship between electricity and magnetism, formalised through electromagnetic principles, is one of the foundations of modern technology. The movement of charged particles produces magnetic fields, while changing magnetic fields can induce electric currents. These principles have been transformed into technologies ranging from **electric motors and generators to medical imaging and communication systems**.

1. Electric motors

A current-carrying conductor placed in a magnetic field experiences a force. This principle enables conversion of **electrical energy into mechanical energy**.

Electric motors consequently form the basis of:

- electric vehicles;
- industrial machinery;
- pumps;
- household appliances;
- robotics.

2. Generators

Electromagnetic induction enables mechanical energy to be converted into electrical energy. A changing magnetic flux through a conductor induces an electromotive force.

This principle underlies electricity generation in:

- hydroelectric power plants;
- thermal power stations;
- wind turbines;
- several other generator-based systems.

Thus, electromagnetic principles connect energy production with modern electrification.

3. Medical technology

Strong magnetic fields and electromagnetic principles are central to technologies such as **Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)**. MRI uses powerful magnetic fields and radio-frequency signals to obtain detailed information about tissues.

This demonstrates how fundamental physics can become a healthcare technology without requiring ionising radiation for the principal imaging mechanism.

4. Particle accelerators and scientific research

Charged particles can be accelerated and their trajectories manipulated using electric and magnetic fields. This principle is used in particle accelerators and contributes to research in nuclear and particle physics as well as certain medical applications.

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5. Communication and electronic systems

Electromagnetic waves provide the physical basis of wireless communication. Modern systems use electromagnetic radiation across different frequency ranges for:

- radio communication;
- satellite communication;
- radar;
- navigation;
- wireless data transmission.

Challenges

The increasing technological use of electromagnetic systems also raises concerns relating to:

- electromagnetic interference;
- spectrum management;
- energy efficiency;
- cybersecurity in networked systems;
- safe deployment of high-intensity electromagnetic equipment.

Conclusion:
The importance of electromagnetism lies not merely in its theoretical elegance but in its ability to convert fundamental physical relationships into practical technologies. From **power generation and electric mobility to medical imaging, radar and communication**, the principles covered under moving charges and magnetism form an important technological foundation of contemporary society.

Q4. A district administration discovers that a large welfare project has been delayed because the contractor is politically influential. The district officer is informally advised to overlook certain procedural violations because cancellation of the contract may delay an important public project further. At the same time, strict cancellation may deprive thousands of intended beneficiaries of an urgently needed service.

As the district officer, how would you resolve this ethical dilemma? Discuss the values involved and justify your course of action.
(GS–4 | Ethics, Integrity and Aptitude)
(20 Marks | 300+ words)

Sample Answer:

The case presents a conflict between **procedural integrity and immediate public welfare**, compounded by the possibility of political influence. The central ethical challenge is to ensure that concern for beneficiaries does not become a justification for compromising legality and accountability.

Values involved

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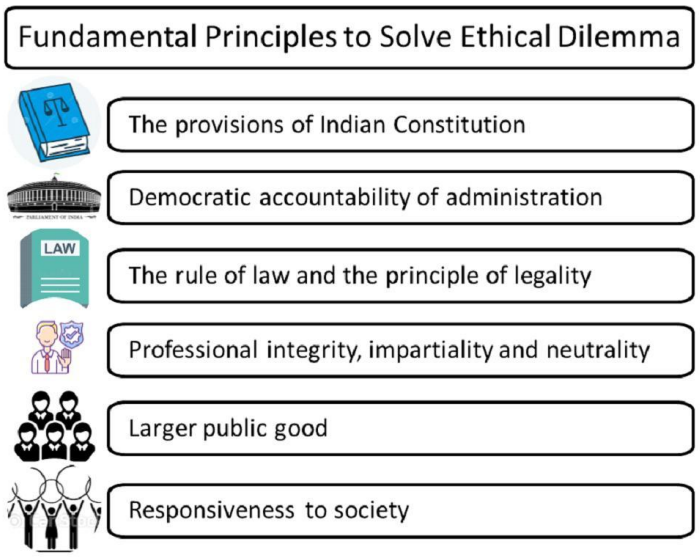
1. Integrity:
The officer must not allow personal, political or institutional pressures to influence the application of rules.

2. Rule of law:
Public procurement procedures exist to protect public resources and prevent arbitrary decision-making.

3. Public interest:
The ultimate objective of the project is to deliver services to citizens. A purely procedural response that unnecessarily delays essential services may also fail the public interest.

4. Accountability:
Any decision must be capable of being justified before auditors, courts, elected representatives and citizens.

5. Impartiality:
The political influence of the contractor cannot become a factor in administrative decision-making.



Possible courses of action

Option 1: Ignore the violations and continue the contract.
This could protect short-term project continuity but would undermine integrity and potentially institutionalise preferential treatment.

Option 2: Immediately terminate the contract without examination.
This would demonstrate procedural firmness but could cause avoidable disruption to essential public services.

Option 3: Conduct a documented, time-bound examination and take proportionate action.
This provides the strongest balance between legality and public interest.

Preferred course

I would initiate a **formal and time-bound compliance review** based on the contract, procurement rules and applicable law. The contractor would be given an opportunity to respond to identified violations, while the procurement and legal branches would independently assess their seriousness.

If the violations are material and legally require termination, the contract should be cancelled through due process. Simultaneously, an **alternative service-continuity mechanism** should be activated so that beneficiaries do not suffer unnecessarily.

If the violations are procedural and legally curable, corrective measures, penalties or rectification within the contractual framework could be considered rather than arbitrary cancellation.

The political influence of the contractor should be recorded and insulated from the decision-making process. Important decisions should be documented to create an **audit trail**.

Broader lesson

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The dilemma demonstrates that ethics is not always a choice between being “strict” and being “compassionate”. Ethical administration seeks to reconcile **legality, fairness, efficiency and compassion through principled discretion**.

Conclusion:
The correct administrative approach would be neither to sacrifice procedure for convenience nor to use procedure mechanically. The officer should uphold the rule of law, ensure transparency and accountability, and simultaneously protect beneficiaries through alternative arrangements. This reflects **constitutional morality, integrity and public-service orientation**.

Q5. "The emerging weaponisation of outer space is transforming the strategic value of satellites from passive support infrastructure into potential targets and instruments of conflict." Critically analyse the implications of this trend for India and examine the adequacy of the existing international legal framework.

(GS–3 | Current Affairs – Weaponisation of Space: The Emerging Arms Race in Earth's Orbit)
(15 Marks | 250+ words)

Sample Answer:

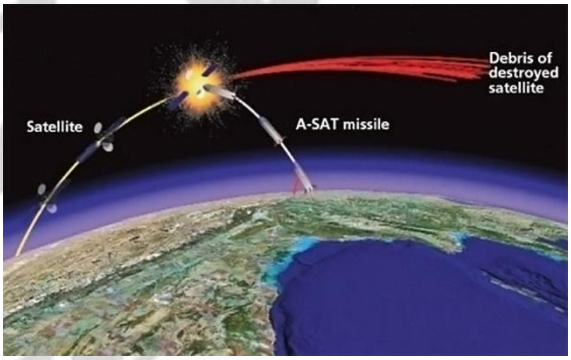
Outer space has historically been used for communication, navigation, meteorology, remote sensing and scientific exploration. However, the increasing development of **anti-satellite (ASAT), co-orbital, electronic-warfare and directed-energy capabilities** is transforming space into an increasingly contested strategic domain. Recent reporting has highlighted concerns over the deployment of offensive on-orbit capabilities and the resulting risk of an arms race.

Strategic implications for India

1. Vulnerability of critical infrastructure

India increasingly depends on satellites for:

- navigation;
- telecommunications;
- weather forecasting;
- disaster management;
- remote sensing;
- defence communications;
- strategic surveillance.



Consequently, disruption of space infrastructure can have consequences far beyond the military sphere.

2. Counter-space competition

The emergence of direct-ascent ASAT weapons, co-orbital systems, jamming, spoofing and directed-energy systems creates multiple layers of vulnerability. India demonstrated an ASAT capability through **Mission Shakti in 2019**, giving it a technological counter-space capability, but the broader challenge is maintaining space security without accelerating destabilising competition.

3. Orbital debris

Destructive ASAT tests can generate large quantities of high-speed debris. Such debris can threaten unrelated satellites and spacecraft, including civilian systems. NASA identifies orbital debris as a significant hazard to spacecraft and human spaceflight.

This creates a peculiar strategic paradox: **an attack intended to disable one adversary's satellite may damage the common orbital environment on which the attacker itself depends.**

Adequacy of existing law

The **Outer Space Treaty, 1967** prohibits placing nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in orbit and establishes principles for peaceful use of outer space. However, it does not comprehensively prohibit all forms of conventional counter-space capabilities.

Contemporary technologies such as:

- co-orbital systems;
- cyberattacks;
- electronic jamming;
- dazzling;
- conventional kinetic ASAT systems

therefore create regulatory challenges not fully anticipated by the original treaty architecture.

Way forward for India

India can pursue a four-track approach:

1. **Strengthen space situational awareness (SSA)** and debris tracking.
2. **Increase resilience** through distributed satellite architectures and redundancy.
3. **Develop international norms** against debris-generating ASAT testing.
4. **Promote legally binding international rules** covering responsible proximity operations, notification of risky manoeuvres and protection of civilian space infrastructure.

India can simultaneously strengthen indigenous space and defence capabilities while advocating **responsible behaviour and strategic restraint**.

Conclusion:
The central challenge is not simply preventing weapons from entering space but preventing the **destruction or disruption of a shared orbital environment**. A stable space order will require a combination of technological resilience, credible deterrence, transparency, international norms and stronger legal restraints. For India, strategic preparedness and diplomatic leadership need to progress together rather than being treated as competing objectives.