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DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS

BEST FOR UPSC | UP PCS EXAM

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DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM STATIC PART

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the Rig Vedic period:

1. The Sabha and the Samiti were two popular assemblies during the Rig Vedic period.
2. Women actively participated in the deliberations of both Sabha and Samiti.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (a) 1 only

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct.** The **Sabha** (Council of Elders) and **Samiti** (General Assembly) were important institutions in the Rig Vedic period. They played a role in administration and governance.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect.** While women were respected in society, **their participation in political assemblies was limited.** There is no strong evidence suggesting that they participated in Sabha or Samiti.

Q2. Consider the following statements about the Ramsar Convention:

1. It was adopted in 1971 at Ramsar, Iran, and came into force in 1975.
2. Once designated, a Ramsar site cannot be delisted under any condition.
3. India has more Ramsar sites than any other country in Asia.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 3 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) 1 and 3 only

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct.** The **Ramsar Convention on Wetlands** was adopted in **1971** and came into effect in **1975**.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect.** Ramsar sites can be **delisted** if they lose the ecological character that qualified them.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** As of 2024, **India has the highest number of Ramsar sites in Asia**, surpassing China and Iran.

Q3. Consider the following statements regarding the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act, 2003:

1. The Act aims to ensure inter-generational equity in fiscal management.
2. The FRBM Act mandates that states maintain revenue surplus at all times.
3. The Central Government is required to present a Medium-Term Fiscal Policy Statement under this Act.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1 and 3 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) 1 and 3 only

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct.** One of the objectives of FRBM is to maintain **inter-generational equity**, ensuring that future generations are not burdened by current fiscal profligacy.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect.** The FRBM Act applies mainly to the **Central Government**. While states are encouraged to maintain fiscal discipline, **there is no mandate** under FRBM for states to maintain revenue surplus at all times.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** The Act requires the presentation of **three policy statements**: Medium-Term Fiscal Policy, Fiscal Policy Strategy, and Macroeconomic Framework.

Q4. With reference to the powers and functions of the President of India, consider the following statements:

1. The President can dissolve the Lok Sabha even when a motion of no-confidence is pending.
2. The President can send back the advice of the Council of Ministers for reconsideration only once.
3. The President has the power to grant pardons in cases involving punishment by a military court.
4. The President can suspend the enforcement of Fundamental Rights during a financial emergency.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1, 3 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: (a) 1, 2 and 3 only

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct.** The President, as per Article 85, can dissolve the Lok Sabha, but in practice this is done on the advice of the Cabinet.

- **Statement 2 is correct.** As per the **41st Constitutional Amendment**, the President may **ask the Council of Ministers to reconsider advice only once**, after which the President must act according to the revised or original advice.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** Under **Article 72**, the President has the power to **grant pardons** in cases related to military court punishments.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect.** **Fundamental Rights are not suspended during a Financial Emergency** (Article 360); they can be suspended during a **National Emergency** (Article 352).

Q5. Assertion-Reason Based Question

Assertion (A): The Ajanta Caves are a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for their mural paintings.

Reason (R): The paintings at Ajanta are examples of Mughal miniature art that flourished during the medieval period.

- (a) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A
- (b) Both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A
- (c) A is true, but R is false
- (d) A is false, but R is true

Answer: (c) A is true, but R is false

Explanation:

- **Assertion is correct.** The **Ajanta Caves** (2nd century BCE to 6th century CE) are celebrated for their **Buddhist mural paintings**, depicting the **Jataka tales** and other religious themes.
- **Reason is incorrect.** The paintings in Ajanta are **not Mughal**; they belong to the **Gupta period and earlier** and represent **classical Indian art**, not the Persian-influenced miniature style of the Mughal period.

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DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM CURRENT AFFAIRS

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the *Ocean Coordination Mechanism (OCM)*:

1. The OCM aims to enhance maritime domain awareness among Indian Ocean littoral states under the leadership of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).
2. The OCM will function as a joint initiative between the Indian Navy and the Ministry of Earth Sciences to integrate oceanographic data for security and environmental monitoring.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (c) Both 1 and 2

Explanation:

The Ocean Coordination Mechanism (OCM) is a recent initiative designed to enhance *multi-domain awareness* in the Indian Ocean, promoting interoperability and information-sharing among littoral states. It is backed by IORA and coordinated by the *Indian Navy* and *Ministry of Earth Sciences*. It aims to synergize environmental, scientific, and maritime security data, such as oceanographic inputs, satellite surveillance, and naval operations, supporting both strategic and climate-resilience efforts.

Q2. The term *Financialisation* in the context of Indian economy refers to:

- (a) Increasing share of manufacturing in financial markets.
- (b) Growing involvement of households and firms in financial instruments and markets.
- (c) Mandatory digitization of financial transactions in MSMEs.
- (d) The process of banks converting physical assets into financial derivatives.

Answer: (b) Growing involvement of households and firms in financial instruments and markets.

Explanation:

Financialisation refers to the *expansion of financial motives, markets, actors, and institutions* into everyday economic life. In India, it is evidenced by increased household participation in mutual funds, SIPs, equity markets, and insurance products. This trend supports capital market deepening but also raises concerns about systemic risk and economic inequality.

Q3. With reference to the new *Non-Opioid Painkillers* developed globally, consider the following statements:

1. These drugs aim to block pain without acting on opioid receptors, thereby eliminating addiction risks.
2. Some of these compounds work by inhibiting the Nav1.7 sodium ion channel, associated with pain signal transmission.
3. As of 2025, India has approved the clinical use of at least two non-opioid analgesics through CDSCO.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only

Explanation:

Non-opioid painkillers are at the forefront of pharmaceutical innovation due to the global opioid crisis. Research is focused on targeting pain pathways *beyond the opioid system*, especially the *Nav1.7 ion channel*, crucial in pain signalling. However, in India, no non-opioid drug has yet received full regulatory clearance for public use as of early 2025; most are in clinical trial phases or being studied through partnerships with global pharma firms.

Q4. Consider the following statements regarding the recently launched *SwaRail Super App*:

1. The app integrates multiple passenger services including ticket booking, real-time train tracking, and coach cleanliness feedback.
2. It is developed by the Indian Railways in collaboration with the National Informatics Centre (NIC).
3. The app leverages Artificial Intelligence for personalized journey suggestions based on user history.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 1 and 3 only

(c) 2 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) 1 and 3 only

Explanation:

The *SwaRail Super App* aims to unify Indian Railways' fragmented services under one digital umbrella, including features like train tracking, PNR status, coach cleanliness, food ordering, and more. It is developed *in-house* by CRIS (Centre for Railway Information Systems), not NIC. The app uses *AI/ML algorithms* for recommending travel options, ticket classes, and frequently used routes, improving user engagement and satisfaction.

Q5. With reference to *Kolleru Lake*, consider the following statements:

1. It is a natural eutrophic freshwater lake situated between the deltas of the Krishna and Godavari rivers.
2. The lake is recognized as a Ramsar site and is a crucial wintering ground for migratory birds like the Grey Pelican.
3. Agricultural encroachments and fish tanks have altered the lake's hydrology and led to the shrinkage of its wetland area.
4. The lake lies entirely within the state of Telangana and is fed mainly by the Musi River.

Which of the above statements are correct?

(a) 1, 2 and 3 only

(b) 1 and 3 only

(c) 2, 3 and 4 only

(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: (a) 1, 2 and 3 only

Explanation:

Kolleru Lake is located in Andhra Pradesh, not Telangana, and lies between the *Godavari and Krishna deltas*. It is a *freshwater lake*, designated a Ramsar site in 2002. It is ecologically critical for migratory birds, especially the *Spot-billed Pelican* (Grey Pelican). However, due to widespread aquaculture and illegal bunds, its hydrology has been severely impacted. The *Musi River* is unrelated to Kolleru; it flows through Hyderabad.

Q6. The *Kara Sea*, recently in news due to Arctic shipping routes, is located adjacent to which of the following geographical features?

- (a) North of the Siberian coast, between the Barents Sea and the Laptev Sea
- (b) South of Greenland, between Labrador Sea and Norwegian Sea
- (c) West of Alaska, between Bering Strait and Chukchi Sea
- (d) South of Svalbard Archipelago, between Norwegian Sea and North Sea

Answer: (a) North of the Siberian coast, between the Barents Sea and the Laptev Sea

Explanation:

The *Kara Sea* is a marginal sea of the Arctic Ocean, *north of Russia's Siberian coast*, bordered by *Novaya Zemlya* in the west and the *Severnaya Zemlya* archipelago in the east. It lies between the *Barents Sea* (to the west) and the *Laptev Sea* (to the east). The region is significant for *Arctic navigation* and resource exploration, especially in the context of melting sea ice and the Northern Sea Route.

DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAINS ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

GS Paper 1

Q1. "Urbanisation in India is leading to the spatial segregation of socio-economic classes." Critically examine. (15 Marks)

Sample Answer:

Introduction:

Urbanisation in India has transformed physical landscapes and socio-economic interactions. However, it has also led to spatial segregation, where socio-economic classes live in physically separated and unequal urban spaces.

Causes of Spatial Segregation:

1. **Economic Inequality:** Rising income disparities push lower-income groups to city peripheries or slums.
2. **Real Estate Dynamics:** Gated communities and luxury housing isolate the affluent from the urban poor.
3. **Urban Planning Failures:** Master Plans often neglect affordable housing, pushing EWS and LIG groups to informal settlements.
4. **Social Preferences:** Class and caste prejudices discourage inclusive housing projects.

Consequences:

- **Exclusion from Urban Services:** Poorer communities often lack access to clean water, sanitation, and healthcare.
- **Reduced Mobility and Opportunity:** Segregation limits access to education, jobs, and social capital.
- **Rise in Social Tensions:** Increased mistrust and disconnect between economic classes can breed unrest.
- **Urban Sprawl and Environmental Stress:** Peripheral expansion increases commute times and strains natural resources.

Countermeasures:

- Inclusive zoning policies (e.g., Delhi's Master Plan 2041 proposes affordable rental housing).
- Implementation of schemes like **PMAY (Urban)** with in-situ slum redevelopment.
- Mixed-income housing policies and incentives to developers.
- Strengthening municipal planning to reduce ghettoisation.

Conclusion:

Spatial segregation in Indian cities reflects deeper socio-economic divides. While urbanisation is inevitable, without inclusive planning, it will reinforce inequality and hinder sustainable development.

GS Paper 2

Q2. *"The real challenge to cooperative federalism in India lies in fiscal asymmetry."* Discuss in the context of Centre-State financial relations. (15 Marks)

Sample Answer:**Introduction:**

India's federal structure is quasi-federal with a strong Centre. While cooperative federalism aims at collaborative governance, fiscal asymmetry has emerged as a major stress point.

Nature of Fiscal Asymmetry:

- **Vertical Imbalance:** Centre collects ~60% of revenue but States incur ~60% of expenditure.
- **Dependence on Transfers:** States rely heavily on Finance Commission grants and centrally sponsored schemes (CSS).
- **GST-related Concerns:** States have ceded taxation powers and face compensation delays.
- **Discretionary Transfers:** Growing use of schemes outside Finance Commission recommendations undermines autonomy.

Impact on Federalism:

- Erodes States' autonomy in priority setting.
- Limits innovation in public service delivery.
- Politically motivated fund allocation creates trust deficits.

- Weakens spirit of competitive federalism.

Steps to Strengthen Fiscal Federalism:

- Rationalise CSS and increase untied funds to States.
- Empower GST Council with more balanced voting mechanisms.
- Institutionalise Inter-State Council for coordinated financial planning.
- Implement Finance Commission recommendations with transparency.

Conclusion:

True cooperative federalism requires not just political goodwill but also fiscal empowerment. Bridging vertical imbalances will ensure equity, accountability, and a robust federal democracy.

GS Paper 3

Q3. “Blue Economy can be a game-changer for India’s economic and ecological security.” Examine in light of India’s oceanic potential. (15 Marks)

Sample Answer:

Introduction:

The **Blue Economy** refers to sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and ocean ecosystem health. With over 7,500 km of coastline, 2 million sq km of EEZ, India’s potential is immense.

Economic Opportunities:

- **Fisheries and Aquaculture:** India is the second-largest fish producer globally.
- **Shipping and Ports:** Sagarmala project aims to boost port-led development.
- **Renewable Energy:** Offshore wind and tidal energy potential remains underexploited.
- **Tourism:** Coastal and marine tourism can drive local economies.
- **Deep-Sea Mining:** Polymetallic nodules in Central Indian Ocean can supply critical minerals.

Ecological Imperatives:

- **Marine Biodiversity:** Coral reefs, mangroves vital for climate resilience.
- **Pollution Control:** Marine pollution from plastic, oil spills and sewage is a major threat.
- **Climate Action:** Oceans act as carbon sinks and climate regulators.

Challenges:

- Weak coastal governance and fragmented institutional frameworks.
- Lack of R&D and marine spatial planning.
- Overfishing and coastal degradation.

Recent Measures:

- India’s *Deep Ocean Mission* and draft *Blue Economy Policy*.

- IMD's Ocean Services, INCOIS, and National Marine Spatial Planning Framework.
- Collaboration with IORA, ISA, and UN Decade of Ocean Science (2021–30).

Conclusion:

If balanced well, the Blue Economy can generate employment, protect biodiversity, and ensure long-term sustainability. Integrating economic aspirations with ecological stewardship is the need of the hour.

GS Paper 4

Q4. “Leadership in public service is not about authority, but about integrity and influence.” In the context of ethical governance, elaborate on the importance of ethical leadership. (15 Marks)

Sample Answer:

Introduction:

Public service leadership carries moral responsibility. Ethical leadership involves guiding others not by power but by example, trust, and adherence to ethical principles.

Key Components of Ethical Leadership:

- **Integrity:** Consistency in actions, values, methods, and principles.
- **Empathy and Compassion:** Sensitivity to citizens' needs, especially marginalized.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Decision-making that is open to scrutiny.
- **Vision and Moral Courage:** Taking a stand against unethical practices.

Why Ethical Leadership Matters in Public Service:

- Builds **citizen trust** in institutions.
- Prevents **abuse of power** and corruption.
- Promotes **rule of law** and inclusive governance.
- Encourages ethical behavior down the bureaucratic hierarchy.

Examples:

- **E. Sreedharan (Metro Man):** Known for integrity and project efficiency.
- **T.N. Seshan:** Reformed election processes through fearless leadership.
- Recent **COVID-19 frontline workers** showed ethical leadership through selfless service.

Challenges to Ethical Leadership:

- Political interference and pressure.
- Conflict of interest in policy implementation.
- Cultural tolerance of minor unethical practices.

Conclusion:

Ethical leadership is foundational to good governance. It is not merely about achieving objectives but doing so in a morally sound and inclusive manner.

Current Affairs

Q5. “Mental health is a critical yet overlooked factor in India’s workforce productivity and social welfare.” Examine, and suggest policy measures. (15 Marks)

Sample Answer:

Introduction:

India’s demographic dividend is heavily dependent on the well-being of its workforce. However, rising cases of stress, burnout, and depression among professionals highlight a silent mental health crisis.

Mental Health and Productivity Linkages:

- **Absenteeism and Presenteeism:** WHO estimates \$1 trillion global productivity loss annually due to poor mental health.
- **Job Insecurity and Gig Economy:** Leads to anxiety, especially among youth.
- **Workplace Stigma:** Fear of disclosure prevents timely intervention.
- **Poor Work-Life Balance:** Increased digital overload during remote work worsens the issue.

India-specific Concerns:

- 1 in 7 Indians suffers from some form of mental disorder (Lancet, 2020).
- Only 0.75 psychiatrists per 100,000 population.
- National Mental Health Programme underfunded and understaffed.

Policy Interventions Needed:

- **Workplace Mental Health Codes:** Enforceable guidelines for corporates (drafted by MoL&E).
- **Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs):** Mental health insurance and counselling.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Reduce stigma via mass media and social platforms.
- **Strengthen Infrastructure:** District Mental Health Programme expansion and tele-mental health helplines.
- **Integration into Labour Codes:** Ensure rest, fair wages, job security.

Conclusion:

Investing in mental well-being is not just a health issue but a productivity imperative. A mentally healthy workforce can fuel economic growth, innovation, and social harmony in the long run.