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DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS

BEST FOR UPSC | UP PCS EXAM

DATE : **JULY 24, 2026**



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CONTACT INFO:

+91 92896 33341 | +91 96679 33341



EMAIL ID:

info@sixsigmaias.com



WEB PAGE:

www.sixsigmaias.com



ADDRESS:

C-6, GROUND FLOOR, SECTOR 2,
NEAR SECTOR 15 METRO STATION, NOIDA – 201301, UTTAR PRADESH

DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM STATIC PART

Q1. With reference to the emergence of heterodox traditions in ancient India, consider the following statements:

1. The rise of Śramaṇa traditions was facilitated by the expansion of urban centres and increasing monetisation of the economy in the middle Gangetic plains.
2. The later Vedic sacrificial tradition was uniformly rejected across the subcontinent immediately after the emergence of Buddhism and Jainism.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Both
- (c) Neither
- (d) Cannot be determined from the given information

Answer: (a) Only one

Explanation:

Statement 1 is **correct**. The Sixth Century BCE witnessed the Second Urbanisation, the growth of trade, guilds, coinage, and new social groups. These developments created conditions favourable for the rise of heterodox traditions such as Buddhism and Jainism, which questioned ritual orthodoxy.

Statement 2 is **incorrect**. Vedic traditions continued to flourish alongside heterodox traditions for centuries. Rather than disappearing, Vedic practices evolved, and multiple religious traditions coexisted in different regions.

Q2. Which one of the following ecosystem characteristics most directly determines its long-term resilience against recurrent disturbances?

- (a) Maximum primary productivity alone
- (b) High species diversity coupled with functional redundancy
- (c) Presence of only apex predators
- (d) Maximum biomass accumulation irrespective of species composition

Answer: (b) High species diversity coupled with functional redundancy

Explanation:

Ecosystem resilience depends not merely on productivity or biomass but on biodiversity and the presence of multiple species performing similar ecological functions (functional redundancy). Such ecosystems recover more effectively after disturbances because ecological functions continue even if certain species decline.

- Option (a): Productivity alone does not ensure resilience.
- Option (c): Apex predators contribute to ecosystem stability but are not the sole determinant.
- Option (d): High biomass without diversity may still result in ecological fragility.

Q3. Consider the following statements regarding fiscal policy and macroeconomic stabilisation:

1. During a severe economic slowdown, an increase in capital expenditure generally has a higher long-term multiplier effect than an equivalent increase in revenue expenditure.
2. A rise in the fiscal deficit necessarily results in a proportionate increase in inflation, irrespective of prevailing demand conditions.
3. Well-targeted public investment can crowd in private investment by improving infrastructure and reducing production costs.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: (b) Only two

Explanation:

Statement 1 is **correct**. Capital expenditure creates productive assets, enhances infrastructure, and raises long-term growth potential, often generating a larger multiplier than routine revenue expenditure.

Statement 2 is **incorrect**. Fiscal deficits do not automatically cause inflation. Their inflationary impact depends on factors such as output gap, financing pattern, supply constraints, and monetary policy stance.

Statement 3 is **correct**. Infrastructure investment reduces transaction and logistics costs, thereby encouraging private sector investment through the crowding-in effect.

Q4. Consider the following statements regarding the constitutional framework governing the relationship between the Union and the States:

1. Parliament may legislate on a subject in the State List if the Rajya Sabha declares such legislation to be in the national interest by the prescribed constitutional majority.
2. During a National Emergency, the executive powers of the States automatically cease to exist.
3. Parliament can legislate for two or more States on a State List subject if those States pass resolutions requesting such legislation.
4. The Governor is constitutionally bound to grant assent to every Bill passed by the State Legislature.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: (b) Only two

Explanation:

Statement 1 is **correct**. Under Article 249, Rajya Sabha may empower Parliament to legislate on State List subjects in the national interest through a special majority.

Statement 2 is **incorrect**. During a National Emergency, State governments continue to function unless President's Rule is separately imposed.

Statement 3 is **correct**. Article 252 permits Parliament to legislate on State List matters for two or more States upon their request.

Statement 4 is **incorrect**. The Governor may reserve certain Bills for the consideration of the President or, where constitutionally permissible, withhold assent or return a Bill (other than a Money Bill).

Q5. Consider the following statements:

Assertion (A): Regions lying on the leeward side of major mountain ranges frequently experience significantly lower annual rainfall than nearby windward regions.

Reason I: Moist air ascending the windward slope undergoes adiabatic cooling, leading to condensation and precipitation before crossing the mountain barrier.

Reason II: Descending air on the leeward slope becomes progressively warmer and relatively drier due to adiabatic compression, inhibiting cloud formation.

Which one of the following is correct?

- (a) Assertion is correct, and both Reason I and Reason II are correct, and both reasons correctly explain the Assertion.
- (b) Assertion is correct, but only Reason I is correct.
- (c) Assertion is correct, but only Reason II is correct.
- (d) Assertion is incorrect, though both Reason I and Reason II are correct.

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

The Assertion is **correct**. The rain-shadow effect is a classic example of orographic influence on climate.

Reason I is correct. Moist air forced to ascend a mountain cools adiabatically, resulting in condensation and rainfall on the windward slope.

Reason II is also correct. After losing much of its moisture, the descending air on the leeward side warms adiabatically, lowering relative humidity and suppressing precipitation.

Together, both reasons fully explain why rain-shadow regions receive substantially less rainfall than adjacent windward areas.

DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM CURRENT AFFAIRS

Q1. With reference to the **Underwater Fiber Optic Sensing System (UFOSS)**, consider the following statements:

- Existing submarine fibre-optic communication cables can be used as distributed sensors without significantly affecting their primary communication function.
- UFOSS can independently determine the chemical composition of seawater and quantify marine pollution without requiring any external sensing instruments.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- Only one
- Both
- Neither
- Cannot be determined from the information given

Answer: (a) Only one

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is correct.** UFOSS employs Distributed Acoustic Sensing (DAS) and related optical techniques to transform submarine optical fibres into continuous sensing arrays. These systems can monitor seismic activity, underwater movement, tsunamis, and vessel traffic while allowing the cables to continue their communication role.
- Statement 2 is incorrect.** UFOSS is primarily designed to detect mechanical disturbances such as vibrations, strain and acoustic signals. It cannot directly analyse seawater chemistry or measure pollutants without dedicated environmental sensors.
- The technology significantly enhances India's capability in marine surveillance, submarine earthquake monitoring and tsunami early warning.

Q2. Which one of the following is the **primary objective** of the **United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection (UNGCP)**?

- To establish legally binding international standards governing cross-border trade disputes.
- To provide a globally accepted policy framework for strengthening consumer welfare, product safety and fair market practices.
- To regulate tariff barriers imposed under the World Trade Organization framework.
- To prescribe mandatory international taxation standards for multinational digital platforms.

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- The **UNGCP** constitute a **non-binding international framework** adopted by the United Nations to assist governments in developing effective consumer protection laws and policies.
- The Guidelines promote:

- consumer safety,
- informed choice,
- sustainable consumption,
- dispute resolution,
- privacy protection,
- e-commerce safeguards,
- international cooperation.
- They are advisory rather than legally enforceable.

Q3. With reference to the **Pandavani Folk Tradition**, consider the following statements:

1. Pandavani narrates episodes primarily from the Mahabharata through a combination of storytelling, singing and dramatic performance.
2. The tradition originated in the Himalayan region before gradually spreading to Central India during the medieval period.
3. Both Kapalik and Vedamati represent recognised styles of Pandavani performance.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: (b) Only two

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct.** Pandavani is a narrative folk performance centred on the Mahabharata.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect.** The tradition is indigenous to the Chhattisgarh region and adjoining areas, not the Himalayas.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** The two principal performance traditions are:
 - **Vedamati** – relatively restrained narration while seated.
 - **Kapalik** – dramatic and expressive presentation with extensive gestures.
- Legendary exponent **Teejan Bai** popularised the Kapalik style internationally.

Q4. Consider the following statements regarding the **Sub-Orbital Launch Vehicle for Experiments (SOLVE)**:

1. SOLVE has been developed primarily to provide low-cost sub-orbital flight opportunities for validating emerging space technologies.
2. Payloads flown through SOLVE are intended to achieve stable orbital insertion around the Earth.

3. The platform enables academia, start-ups and research institutions to test scientific payloads before committing them to expensive orbital missions.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: (b) Only two

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct.** SOLVE aims to provide economical experimental launch opportunities.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect.** A sub-orbital launch does **not** attain orbital velocity; therefore, the payload returns to Earth after completing its trajectory.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** Such missions reduce technological risks by validating components under near-space conditions before orbital deployment.
- Sub-orbital platforms are increasingly used worldwide for reusable technology demonstrations and scientific experiments.

Q5. With reference to **Asteroid Torifune**, consider the following statements:

- 1. Asteroid Torifune belongs to the population of minor planets orbiting the Sun.
- 2. Observations of asteroids such as Torifune contribute to understanding the early evolution of the Solar System.
- 3. All asteroids are remnants of destroyed planets that once existed between Mars and Jupiter.
- 4. Planetary defence programmes worldwide continuously monitor near-Earth objects as well as many other asteroids for long-term impact assessment.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: (c) Only three

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct.** Torifune is a recognised asteroid (minor planet).
- **Statement 2 is correct.** Asteroids preserve primitive material dating back to the formation of the Solar System.

- **Statement 3 is incorrect.** Modern planetary science rejects the hypothesis that the asteroid belt originated from a destroyed planet. It consists largely of primordial material that never formed into a planet because of Jupiter's gravitational influence.
- **Statement 4 is correct.** Space agencies maintain continuous observation programmes to identify potentially hazardous asteroids and refine orbital predictions.

Q6. On the outline map of the Indian Ocean region, **Folklad Island** is located nearest to which one of the following?

- (a) Greenland Sea
- (b) Southern Ocean, east of Tierra del Fuego
- (c) North Atlantic Ocean, east of southern Argentina
- (d) Norwegian Sea

Answer: (c)

Explanation:

- **Folklad Island** (more accurately **Falkland Islands**) is a British Overseas Territory situated in the **South Atlantic Ocean**, approximately **500 km east of the coast of southern Argentina**.
- The islands are strategically important because of:
 - their location along South Atlantic sea routes,
 - fisheries,
 - offshore hydrocarbon prospects,
 - Antarctic logistics.
- They remain the subject of a sovereignty dispute between the **United Kingdom and Argentina**.
- UPSC frequently tests the geographical location of strategically significant islands through map-based questions.

DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAINS ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

(GS-1 | 15 Marks | 250 Words)

Q.1 *"Mahatma Gandhi transformed the Indian National Movement from an elite political struggle into a mass movement through innovative methods of mobilisation rather than merely through political ideology."* Critically examine.

Sample Answer

The Indian National Movement underwent a fundamental transformation under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership after 1919. While nationalism had earlier remained largely confined to educated elites, lawyers and urban political associations, Gandhi broadened its social base by introducing new methods of political participation that connected the freedom struggle with the everyday lives of ordinary Indians. His contribution therefore lay not only in articulating an ideological vision of Swaraj but also in evolving innovative techniques that converted nationalism into a genuinely mass movement.

Gandhi's greatest innovation was the introduction of **Satyagraha**, which transformed resistance from violent confrontation into disciplined moral action. Instead of relying solely on constitutional agitation, he encouraged ordinary citizens to participate through non-cooperation, civil disobedience and peaceful defiance of unjust laws. Campaigns such as the Champaran Satyagraha, Kheda Movement and Ahmedabad Mill Strike demonstrated that peasants, workers and the middle classes could collectively challenge colonial authority without resorting to violence.

The **Non-Cooperation Movement (1920–22)** and the **Civil Disobedience Movement (1930–34)** expanded the social composition of the national movement. Women entered public life in unprecedented numbers, students left government institutions, lawyers boycotted colonial courts, traders supported indigenous goods, and peasants challenged oppressive taxation. The Salt March, though centred on a seemingly simple commodity, symbolised resistance to imperial economic exploitation and inspired nationwide participation.



Equally significant was Gandhi's emphasis on **constructive programmes**, including promotion of khadi, removal of untouchability, village sanitation, communal harmony and rural self-reliance. These initiatives ensured that nationalism extended beyond political protests into social transformation, thereby creating a stronger emotional connection between the masses and the freedom struggle.

However, Gandhi's approach was not without limitations. The suspension of the Non-Cooperation Movement after the Chauri Chaura incident disappointed many revolutionaries. Leaders such as Subhas Chandra Bose and Bhagat Singh questioned the effectiveness of complete non-violence. Moreover, despite his efforts, communal divisions continued to deepen during the 1940s, eventually culminating in Partition.

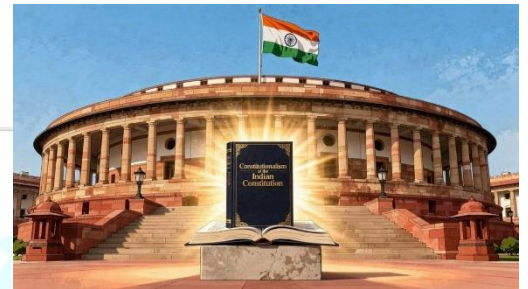
Nevertheless, Gandhi fundamentally altered the nature of Indian nationalism by democratising political participation. His methods enabled millions of ordinary Indians to perceive themselves as active participants in the struggle for freedom. Thus, while his ideological principles were important, it was his innovative techniques of mobilisation that transformed the freedom movement into one of the largest mass struggles in modern history.

Q.2 *"The success of Indian federalism lies not in eliminating regional aspirations but in accommodating them through democratic institutions."* Discuss with suitable examples.

Sample Answer

India's federal structure was designed to accommodate extraordinary social, linguistic, cultural and regional diversity while preserving national unity. Rather than suppressing regional identities, the Constitution provides democratic mechanisms through which regional aspirations can be expressed, negotiated and integrated into the broader constitutional framework. Consequently, Indian federalism has evolved as a dynamic and cooperative system rather than a rigid distribution of powers.

One of the most significant demonstrations of this accommodative approach was the **reorganisation of States on linguistic lines** through the States Reorganisation Act, 1956. Instead of weakening national unity, the creation of linguistic states strengthened the legitimacy of the Indian Union by recognising cultural identities within the constitutional framework. Similar processes later led to the formation of states such as Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand in response to long-standing regional demands.



The constitutional distribution of legislative, administrative and financial powers enables both the Union and the States to function within clearly defined spheres while allowing flexibility during national emergencies. Institutions such as the **Inter-State Council**, **Finance Commission** and **GST Council** promote dialogue, consultation and cooperative decision-making, reducing the likelihood of prolonged federal conflicts.

Political developments have also reinforced cooperative federalism. The rise of regional political parties since the late twentieth century has enabled diverse regional interests to be represented at the national level. Coalition governments frequently required consensus-building between national and regional parties, thereby deepening the federal character of Indian democracy.

Nevertheless, several challenges continue to test Indian federalism. Disputes relating to river-water sharing, demands for greater fiscal autonomy, concerns regarding the role of Governors, and allegations of excessive centralisation occasionally generate tensions between the Union and States. Regional movements based on identity, autonomy or resource distribution also continue to emerge.

Despite these challenges, the Indian experience demonstrates that constitutional accommodation is generally more effective than political suppression. Most regional aspirations have been addressed through dialogue, democratic elections, constitutional amendments and institutional reforms rather than coercion alone.

In conclusion, Indian federalism derives its resilience from its capacity to adapt to changing political realities. By recognising diversity while maintaining constitutional unity, it has enabled regional identities to coexist with national integration. The continued strengthening of cooperative and competitive federalism will remain essential for sustaining India's democratic and pluralistic character.

(GS-3 | 15 Marks | 250 Words)

Q.3 *"A higher fiscal deficit is not necessarily detrimental to an economy. Its impact depends more on the quality of public expenditure than on its magnitude."* Critically examine.

Sample Answer

Fiscal deficit refers to the excess of the government's total expenditure over its total non-borrowed receipts. While conventional economic thinking associates a high fiscal deficit with macroeconomic instability, contemporary fiscal management recognises that the consequences of fiscal expansion depend largely upon the nature of expenditure, prevailing economic conditions and the efficiency of resource utilisation. Therefore, a fiscal deficit cannot be judged solely by its numerical magnitude.

During periods of economic slowdown, a calibrated increase in fiscal deficit may stimulate aggregate demand through higher public expenditure. Government investment in infrastructure, logistics, renewable energy, irrigation and digital connectivity generates employment, enhances productivity and produces a multiplier effect that encourages private investment. Such productive capital expenditure creates long-term assets capable of increasing the economy's growth potential and future revenue generation.

The quality of expenditure assumes greater importance than the size of borrowing. Borrowing to finance highways, railways, ports, education, healthcare and research enhances productive capacity and contributes to inclusive development. Conversely, persistent borrowing to finance unproductive subsidies or recurring administrative expenditure may increase debt without creating corresponding economic assets. Hence, fiscal sustainability depends on the composition of expenditure rather than merely the level of deficit.

However, excessive fiscal deficits may create macroeconomic challenges. Large government borrowings can increase public debt, raise interest obligations and reduce fiscal space for future developmental spending. Under conditions of supply constraints, excessive demand generated through deficit financing may also contribute to inflationary pressures. Moreover, persistent deficits may weaken investor confidence and adversely affect sovereign credit perceptions.

India has attempted to balance fiscal prudence with developmental priorities through the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) framework while simultaneously increasing capital expenditure in recent Union Budgets. This approach reflects the recognition that fiscal policy should remain counter-cyclical during economic shocks while maintaining long-term debt sustainability.

In conclusion, the impact of fiscal deficit depends not merely upon "how much" the government borrows but "how" the borrowed resources are utilised. A well-managed fiscal deficit directed towards productive investment can accelerate economic growth, improve infrastructure and crowd in private investment. Therefore, fiscal quality, efficiency and transparency remain more significant than fiscal magnitude in achieving sustainable macroeconomic stability.



(GS-4 | Ethics, Integrity & Aptitude | 15 Marks | 250 Words)

Q.4 "Ethical governance requires public servants to balance legality with morality. Blind adherence to rules may sometimes defeat the very purpose of justice." Discuss with suitable examples.

Sample Answer

Ethical governance extends beyond mere compliance with laws and administrative procedures. While legality ensures uniformity, predictability and accountability in public administration, morality introduces the values of compassion, fairness, justice and human dignity. A truly ethical public servant must therefore harmonise legal obligations with constitutional morality and public welfare rather than treating rules as ends in themselves.

Rules are indispensable for maintaining administrative discipline and preventing arbitrariness. They establish transparent procedures, reduce discretion and uphold the rule of law. However, rigid adherence to regulations without considering exceptional circumstances may produce unjust outcomes. For instance, denying emergency medical assistance solely because of procedural deficiencies may satisfy legal requirements but violate the ethical principles of humanity and public service.

The Constitution itself embodies this balance by promoting justice, equality, liberty and dignity through the Directive Principles of State Policy and Fundamental Rights. Public servants are expected not only to implement statutory provisions but also to uphold constitutional values. Ethical decision-making therefore involves interpreting rules in a manner that advances public interest while remaining within the boundaries of law.

Numerous administrative situations illustrate this dilemma. During natural disasters, officers frequently relax procedural requirements to ensure timely distribution of relief. Similarly, compassionate interpretation of welfare schemes may enable deserving beneficiaries to receive assistance despite minor documentation gaps. Such decisions do not undermine legality; rather, they reinforce the spirit underlying the law.

Nevertheless, morality cannot become a justification for arbitrary exercise of discretion. Personal beliefs must never override constitutional principles or statutory provisions. Ethical governance requires transparency, accountability and reasoned decision-making. Where rules are inadequate or outdated, officials should seek lawful alternatives instead of bypassing legal safeguards.

Modern civil services increasingly emphasise emotional intelligence, empathy, integrity and citizen-centric governance alongside technical competence. Ethical leadership inspires public trust because citizens judge governments not only by legal compliance but also by fairness and responsiveness.

In conclusion, legality and morality should function as complementary rather than competing principles. Laws provide the institutional framework within which morality guides humane implementation. A civil servant who combines integrity, constitutional values and administrative prudence is better equipped to deliver justice while preserving the rule of law. Such an approach ultimately strengthens democratic governance and enhances citizens' confidence in public institutions.



(Current Affairs | GS-3 | Science & Technology | 15 Marks | 250 Words)

Q.5 "India's semiconductor mission is not merely an industrial policy initiative but a strategic imperative for achieving technological sovereignty, economic resilience and national security." Critically examine.

Sample Answer

Semiconductors are the foundational components of the modern digital economy, powering smartphones, automobiles, artificial intelligence systems, defence equipment, telecommunications, medical devices and high-performance computing. The disruptions witnessed during the global semiconductor shortage and increasing geopolitical competition have highlighted the strategic importance of establishing resilient domestic semiconductor capabilities. Consequently, India's semiconductor mission represents not merely an industrial development programme but a comprehensive strategy aimed at strengthening technological sovereignty, economic resilience and national security.

From an economic perspective, the semiconductor industry has the potential to transform India's manufacturing landscape. The country is one of the world's fastest-growing electronics markets, yet it remains heavily dependent on imported semiconductor chips. Domestic fabrication, packaging and testing facilities can significantly reduce import dependence, improve the trade balance and strengthen India's position in global value chains. The sector is also expected to generate high-skilled employment, promote research and development, attract foreign direct investment and stimulate the growth of ancillary industries such as specialty chemicals, precision engineering, electronic components and advanced materials.

Strategically, semiconductors have emerged as critical national infrastructure. Defence electronics, secure communication networks, satellites, cyber-security systems and advanced weapon platforms rely extensively on sophisticated semiconductor technologies. Excessive dependence on external suppliers exposes countries to supply-chain disruptions, export restrictions and geopolitical vulnerabilities. Therefore, developing indigenous semiconductor capabilities enhances strategic autonomy and strengthens national security.

The Government has adopted a multi-dimensional approach through the **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)**, production-linked incentives, fiscal support for fabrication plants, semiconductor packaging and testing units, design-linked incentives and international technological partnerships. Simultaneously, initiatives promoting electronics manufacturing, digital infrastructure, artificial intelligence and indigenous innovation complement the broader semiconductor ecosystem.

However, substantial challenges remain. Semiconductor fabrication demands enormous capital investment, uninterrupted electricity and water supply, highly specialised human resources and sustained technological innovation. India currently faces constraints relating to advanced fabrication technology, raw material ecosystems, intellectual property, global competition and long project gestation periods. Moreover, success depends upon creating an integrated ecosystem rather than establishing isolated fabrication facilities.

Going forward, India must focus on strengthening semiconductor design capabilities, promoting research collaborations between academia and industry, developing skilled human capital, expanding compound semiconductor technologies and integrating with trusted global supply chains. Greater emphasis on research, innovation and next-generation chip technologies will also be essential.

In conclusion, India's semiconductor mission is far more than an economic diversification strategy. It is a long-term investment in technological self-reliance, strategic resilience and sustainable industrial



competitiveness. If supported by consistent policy, innovation-driven ecosystems and international cooperation, it can position India as a significant participant in the global semiconductor value chain while reinforcing its aspiration of becoming a leading technology-driven economy.

