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DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS

BEST FOR UPSC | UP PCS EXAM

DATE : **JULY 30, 2026**



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DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM STATIC PART

Q1. With reference to the social and religious reform movements in nineteenth-century India, consider the following statements:

1. The leaders of reform movements who advocated monotheism uniformly rejected all forms of scriptural authority in order to promote rationalism.
2. The reform movements of the nineteenth century contributed not only to religious reinterpretation but also to the emergence of modern political consciousness through the spread of education and public debate.

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 **incorrect**. Reformers differed significantly in their approach. While some emphasized reason and rationality, many continued to derive legitimacy from ancient scriptures. For example, Swami Dayananda Saraswati strongly upheld the authority of the Vedas, whereas Raja Rammohan Roy selectively interpreted the Upanishads. Therefore, rejection of scriptural authority was not uniform.
- Statement 2 is **correct**. Reform movements stimulated intellectual awakening, promoted modern education, encouraged public discussion through newspapers and associations, questioned social inequalities, and indirectly nurtured early nationalism.
- UPSC often tests words such as "uniformly", "always", and "all", which generally make a statement incorrect.

Q2. Which one of the following best explains the ecological significance of a keystone species?

- (a) It is the species having the highest biomass in an ecosystem.
- (b) It is the species whose disappearance causes a disproportionately large change in ecosystem structure and functioning.
- (c) It is the species occupying the lowest trophic level in a food chain.
- (d) It is the species that survives only under climax vegetation conditions.

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- A keystone species performs an ecological role much greater than its numerical abundance.
- Its removal may trigger cascading ecological effects, leading to drastic changes in species composition and ecosystem stability.
- A keystone species need not be the most abundant or the largest organism.

- Examples include sea otters, wolves, and several pollinating organisms that maintain ecosystem balance.

Q3. With reference to India's fiscal policy and public finance, consider the following statements:

1. Capital expenditure necessarily results in the immediate creation of productive assets within the same financial year.
2. A revenue deficit can exist even when the fiscal deficit is lower than the budget estimate.
3. An increase in capital expenditure financed through higher market borrowing necessarily leads to inflation.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: (a) Only one

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is **incorrect**. Capital expenditure is intended for asset creation or reduction of liabilities, but the asset may not necessarily be completed or become productive within the same financial year.
- Statement 2 is **correct**. Revenue deficit and fiscal deficit measure different aspects of government finances. Fiscal deficit may decline because of higher non-debt receipts or lower expenditure, while revenue deficit may still continue.
- Statement 3 is **incorrect**. Borrowing for capital expenditure does not necessarily cause inflation. Its impact depends upon productive capacity, monetary policy, aggregate demand, and supply-side conditions.
- UPSC frequently tests the misuse of the word "necessarily", making Statements 1 and 3 incorrect.

Q4. With reference to the constitutional framework governing the Union and the States in India, consider the following statements:

1. Every constitutional amendment affecting the federal structure requires ratification by not less than one-half of the State Legislatures before being presented to the President.
2. Parliament may legislate on a matter in the State List if the Rajya Sabha declares by a special majority that it is necessary in the national interest.
3. During a National Emergency, the legislative competence of Parliament over the State List automatically becomes permanent unless specifically revoked by Parliament.
4. The residuary legislative powers under the Constitution are vested in Parliament.

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 **incorrect**. Only specified constitutional amendments under Article 368 affecting federal provisions require ratification by at least one-half of the States. Not every amendment relating to the federal structure requires such ratification.
- Statement 2 is **correct**. Under Article 249, Rajya Sabha may authorize Parliament to legislate on State List subjects in the national interest by a 2/3rd majority of members present and voting.
- Statement 3 is **incorrect**. Parliament's power over the State List during a National Emergency is temporary and ceases after the prescribed constitutional period following the end of the Emergency.
- Statement 4 is **correct**. Under Article 248 and Entry 97 of the Union List, residuary legislative powers belong to Parliament.

Q5. Consider the following statements:

Assertion (A):

The Coriolis force has no effect at the Equator.

Reason I:

The horizontal component of the Coriolis force becomes zero at zero latitude.

Reason II:

The angular velocity of Earth's rotation becomes zero at the Equator.

Which one of the following is correct?

- (a) Assertion is correct, Reason I is correct, but Reason II is not correct.
- (b) Assertion is correct, but both Reason I and Reason II are not correct.
- (c) Assertion is not correct, but both Reason I and Reason II are correct.
- (d) Assertion is correct, and both Reason I and Reason II are correct.

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- Assertion is **correct**. At the Equator, the Coriolis force acting on horizontal motion is effectively zero because the Coriolis parameter is given by $f=2\Omega\sin\phi$, and at latitude 0° , $\sin 0^\circ=0$.
- Reason I is **correct**. Since latitude is zero, the horizontal deflecting effect responsible for rightward or leftward deflection disappears.
- Reason II is **incorrect**. The Earth's angular velocity (Ω) remains constant everywhere on Earth. It does not become zero at the Equator. The absence of Coriolis deflection is due to the latitude term ($\sin\phi$), not because Earth's rotation ceases.
- UPSC frequently frames such questions by exploiting confusion between Earth's constant angular velocity and the latitude-dependent Coriolis parameter.

DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM CURRENT AFFAIRS

Q1. With reference to The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026, consider the following statements:

1. The Amendment Bill expands the definition of "public examination" to include recruitment examinations conducted by statutory authorities constituted under State Legislatures, provided they are notified by the Central Government.
2. The Amendment Bill empowers the designated authority to attach and confiscate proceeds derived from organised examination fraud, in addition to prescribing criminal penalties.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect.** The Amendment Bill primarily deals with examinations notified under the Central framework. State-level examinations are not automatically brought within its ambit merely because they are conducted by statutory authorities.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** One of the major objectives is to curb organised examination fraud by enabling stronger financial deterrence, including attachment of illegally acquired assets wherever provided under the amended framework.
- UPSC generally frames questions by introducing words like "**automatically**", "**all**", "**every**", "**only**", making statements deceptively incorrect.

Q2. Once-Weekly Basal Insulin Awiqli is primarily intended to:

- (a) Replace rapid-acting insulin administered before every meal.
- (b) Provide long-acting basal insulin coverage with a once-weekly dosing schedule for diabetes management.
- (c) Permanently regenerate damaged pancreatic β -cells in Type-1 Diabetes.
- (d) Eliminate the requirement for blood glucose monitoring in diabetic patients.

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- Awiqli is a **once-weekly basal insulin** developed to improve long-term glycaemic control and reduce injection frequency.

- It does **not** replace mealtime insulin where required.
- It **does not regenerate pancreatic cells**.
- Blood glucose monitoring continues to remain an essential component of diabetes management.

Q3. With reference to PaBV-4 (Parrot Bornavirus-4), consider the following statements:

1. PaBV-4 primarily infects psittacine birds and has been associated with Proventricular Dilatation Disease (PDD).
2. There is conclusive scientific evidence that PaBV-4 naturally causes sustained human-to-human transmission.
3. PaBV-4 belongs to the family Bornaviridae, members of which are neurotropic RNA viruses.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct.** PaBV-4 is strongly associated with **Proventricular Dilatation Disease (PDD)** in parrots and related birds.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect.** No evidence currently establishes sustained natural human-to-human transmission.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** Bornaviruses are neurotropic negative-sense RNA viruses belonging to the family **Bornaviridae**.
- UPSC frequently introduces statements based on **absence of scientific evidence**, making them highly analytical.

Q4. With reference to the CE20 Cryogenic Engine, consider the following statements:

1. CE20 is India's first indigenous cryogenic engine developed specifically for the upper stage of the LVM3 launch vehicle.
2. The engine employs Liquid Oxygen (LOX) and Liquid Hydrogen (LH2) as propellants.
3. Cryogenic engines generally provide higher specific impulse than earth-storable liquid propellant engines because of the high exhaust velocity of combustion products.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

(d) None

Answer: (c)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct.** CE20 powers the **Cryogenic Upper Stage (CUS)** of LVM3.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** It uses **LOX and LH2**, the standard cryogenic propellant combination.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** Cryogenic propulsion provides one of the **highest specific impulses**, making it ideal for upper-stage missions.
- UPSC often links propulsion technology with conceptual physics rather than factual recall.

Q5. With reference to the ULLAS (Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society) Initiative, consider the following statements:

1. It seeks to promote foundational literacy and numeracy among adults aged 15 years and above.
2. It adopts a volunteer-based learning model involving students, teachers and community participation.
3. It is implemented under the provisions of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 with emphasis on lifelong learning.
4. The programme is restricted exclusively to digital literacy and does not include vocational or life-skill components.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct.** ULLAS targets **adult learners (15 years and above)**.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** It promotes **Jan Bhagidari** through volunteers and educational institutions.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** It aligns with the vision of **NEP 2020** for lifelong learning.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect.** ULLAS covers literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, financial awareness, life skills and vocational components.
- UPSC frequently frames one misleading statement by narrowing the scope of a programme.

Q6. With reference to Cook Strait, consider the following:

Cook Strait separates:

- (a) North Island and South Island of New Zealand.
(b) Tasmania and mainland Australia.

(c) Greenland and Iceland.

(d) Honshu and Hokkaido of Japan.

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Cook Strait** is the narrow stretch of water separating **New Zealand's North Island and South Island**.
- It connects the **Tasman Sea** with the **South Pacific Ocean**.
- It is one of the world's most strategically important and meteorologically challenging straits due to strong tidal currents and winds.
- UPSC has increasingly asked map-based questions involving important straits, channels and passes, making location-based conceptual clarity essential.

DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAINS ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

(GS Paper-I | 15 Marks | 250 Words)

Q.1 *"The Revolt of 1857 was neither merely a military mutiny nor a fully developed national movement; rather, it represented a complex convergence of political, economic, military and socio-cultural grievances."* Critically examine. (15 Marks)

Sample Answer

Introduction

The Revolt of 1857 marked the first large-scale armed challenge to British rule in India. Although it began with the mutiny of Indian sepoys at Meerut on 10 May 1857, it rapidly transformed into a widespread uprising involving dispossessed rulers, peasants, zamindars, artisans and sections of the urban population across northern and central India. Historians have interpreted it variously as a "Sepoy Mutiny", a "Peasant Revolt", the "First War of Independence", and a regional anti-colonial uprising, reflecting its multidimensional nature.

Political Causes

- The **Doctrine of Lapse** led to the annexation of states such as Jhansi and Satara, creating resentment among Indian rulers.
- The annexation of Awadh (1856) alienated not only the ruling elite but also taluqdars and soldiers recruited from the region.

- The symbolic authority of Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar was steadily eroded by British policies, hurting traditional political legitimacy.

Economic Causes

- Heavy land revenue settlements burdened peasants and weakened traditional landholding classes.
- Decline of handicrafts due to British industrial imports resulted in widespread unemployment among artisans.
- Commercialization of agriculture increased rural indebtedness and aggravated agrarian distress.

Military Causes

- Indian sepoys suffered discrimination in pay, promotions and service conditions.
- The **General Service Enlistment Act (1856)** created fears of overseas deployment, conflicting with prevailing religious beliefs.
- The introduction of the **Enfield rifle cartridges**, believed to be greased with cow and pig fat, became the immediate trigger for the uprising.

Socio-Religious Causes

- Social reforms such as the abolition of Sati and the legalization of widow remarriage, though progressive, were portrayed by many as attempts to interfere with traditional customs.
- Missionary activities generated apprehension regarding forced religious conversion.
- Rumours spread rapidly in an atmosphere of distrust, intensifying popular resistance.

Why It Cannot Be Considered a Fully National Movement

- Participation remained concentrated in northern and central India, while large parts of southern and eastern India remained relatively unaffected.
- Many princely states, including Hyderabad, Patiala and Gwalior (initially), supported the British.
- There was no unified national leadership, common political programme or coordinated command structure.
- Different participants pursued different objectives: restoration of old kingdoms, protection of traditional privileges or local grievances rather than national independence.

Why It Was More Than a Mere Sepoy Mutiny

- The rebellion spread beyond cantonments and received support from peasants, landlords, artisans and local rulers.
- Leaders such as **Rani Lakshmibai, Kunwar Singh, Begum Hazrat Mahal, Nana Sahib** and **Tantia Tope** mobilized civilian populations.
- The uprising challenged British political authority over vast territories for several months.
- It profoundly altered British administrative policies and colonial governance.

Consequences

- Company rule ended with the **Government of India Act, 1858**, and governance passed directly to the British Crown.
- The British reorganized the army by increasing the proportion of European troops and adopting a policy of divide and rule.
- Greater caution was exercised towards princely states and religious customs.
- Administrative centralization and surveillance increased, while the British avoided aggressive annexation policies.

Conclusion

The Revolt of 1857 represented a broad coalition of diverse social groups united by opposition to colonial rule, even though their aspirations were not identical. It lacked the ideological coherence and pan-Indian nationalist consciousness that characterized the freedom movement of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, it remains a landmark in India's anti-colonial history because it exposed the limits of colonial authority, reshaped British governance, and inspired future generations of nationalists.

Value Addition

Historiographical Perspectives

Historian	Interpretation
R.C. Majumdar	Primarily a military revolt with limited national character
V.D. Savarkar	First War of Indian Independence
S.N. Sen	A popular uprising with regional variations
Eric Stokes	Strong emphasis on peasant participation and agrarian grievances

UPSC Enrichment Points

- Immediate Trigger: Enfield rifle cartridges
- Political Symbol: Bahadur Shah Zafar
- Major Centres: Delhi, Kanpur, Lucknow, Jhansi, Bareilly, Arrah
- Legislative Outcome: Government of India Act, 1858
- Long-term Impact: End of Company Rule and beginning of Crown Rule

(GS Paper-II | 15 Marks | 250 Words)

Q.2 "Regional aspirations in India have evolved from demands for political autonomy to claims for equitable development and cooperative federalism. Discuss the constitutional mechanisms adopted to accommodate regional aspirations while preserving national unity. Critically examine the challenges that continue to persist." (15 Marks)

Sample Answer

Introduction

India is a **Union of States** characterized by immense diversity in language, ethnicity, religion, geography and socio-economic development. Since Independence, regional aspirations have emerged as a natural consequence of this diversity. While some movements demanded separate states or greater autonomy, others sought recognition of cultural identity, equitable resource distribution and balanced regional development. The Indian Constitution, through its flexible federal framework, has enabled the accommodation of these aspirations without compromising national integrity.

Constitutional and Institutional Mechanisms for Accommodating Regional Aspirations

1. Flexible Federal Structure

- Articles 1–4 empower Parliament to reorganize states to meet administrative and regional aspirations.
- The creation of states such as **Gujarat (1960)**, **Chhattisgarh (2000)**, **Telangana (2014)** and others demonstrates constitutional flexibility.

2. Linguistic Reorganization

- The **States Reorganisation Act, 1956** reorganized states largely on linguistic lines.
- Recognition of regional languages strengthened democratic participation while reducing linguistic conflicts.

3. Special Constitutional Provisions

- **Articles 371 to 371J** provide special arrangements for several states to address region-specific developmental and administrative needs.
- Autonomous councils under the **Sixth Schedule** protect the interests of tribal communities in parts of Northeast India.

4. Cooperative Federal Institutions

- **Inter-State Council** promotes consultation and coordination between the Union and States.
- **Finance Commission** ensures equitable fiscal distribution.
- **GST Council** represents a model of collaborative fiscal federalism.
- **NITI Aayog Governing Council** encourages participatory policy formulation.

5. Democratic Decentralisation

- The **73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments** strengthened local self-government, enabling grassroots participation in governance.

Why Regional Aspirations Continue to Grow

- Uneven regional development and persistent economic disparities.
- Demands for greater fiscal autonomy by states.
- Identity-based movements rooted in language, ethnicity and culture.
- Migration-induced demographic changes leading to local political mobilization.
- Resource-sharing disputes involving rivers, forests and minerals.

Major Challenges

Fiscal Federalism

- States increasingly demand greater flexibility in taxation and expenditure.
- Concerns over vertical and horizontal fiscal imbalances continue.

Centre-State Relations

- Debates regarding the role of Governors.
- Allegations relating to the use of constitutional provisions such as **Article 356**.
- Differences over centrally sponsored schemes and policy priorities.

Inter-State Disputes

- River water disputes.
- Boundary disagreements.
- Competition for investment and natural resources.

Regionalism versus National Integration

- Excessive regional mobilisation may sometimes weaken national consensus on strategic or developmental issues.
- Identity politics can occasionally fuel social tensions if not managed within constitutional limits.

Critical Examination

India's federal model is often described as "**holding together federalism**", unlike federations formed through the coming together of sovereign units. This structure has largely succeeded in preventing separatism through democratic accommodation rather than coercion.

However, constitutional provisions alone cannot address regional aspirations. Sustainable solutions require:

- Balanced regional development.
- Transparent fiscal devolution.
- Strengthening cooperative and competitive federalism.
- Respect for cultural diversity.
- Continuous political dialogue between the Union and States.

As India's economy and society evolve, regional aspirations are increasingly linked not only to identity but also to governance quality, infrastructure, employment and human development.

Conclusion

Regional aspirations are an inherent feature of India's democratic and federal polity rather than a threat to national unity. The Constitution provides sufficient flexibility to accommodate diversity while preserving the sovereignty and integrity of the nation. Going forward, strengthening cooperative federalism, ensuring equitable development and fostering institutional dialogue will be essential for transforming regional aspirations into drivers of inclusive national progress.

Value Addition

Constitutional Provisions

Provision	Significance
Article 1	India as a Union of States
Articles 2–4	Admission, formation and reorganisation of States
Article 263	Inter-State Council
Articles 280	Finance Commission
Articles 371–371J	Special provisions for specific States
Sixth Schedule	Autonomous administration in tribal areas

Important Committees/Commissions

- States Reorganisation Commission (1953)
- Sarkaria Commission (1983)
- Punchhi Commission (2007)
- Finance Commission (Constitutional Body)
- NITI Aayog (Cooperative Federalism)

(GS Paper-III | 15 Marks | 250 Words)

Q.3 "India's aspiration of becoming a developed economy by 2047 depends not merely on expanding infrastructure but on creating resilient, sustainable and technology-driven infrastructure systems." Discuss the role of infrastructure in economic development. Critically examine the major challenges and suggest a roadmap for achieving world-class infrastructure in India. (15 Marks)

Sample Answer

Introduction

Infrastructure forms the backbone of economic development by facilitating production, trade, investment and improvements in the quality of life. According to the NCERT, infrastructure includes **physical infrastructure** (transport, energy, communication, irrigation, water supply) and **social infrastructure** (education and healthcare). As India aims to become a **developed nation (Viksit Bharat) by 2047**, the focus has shifted from merely creating infrastructure assets to building systems that are **efficient, climate-resilient, digitally integrated and globally competitive**.

Importance of Infrastructure in Economic Development

1. Enhances Economic Growth

- Reduces logistics and transaction costs.

- Improves productivity of agriculture, industry and services.
- Attracts domestic and foreign investment by creating a conducive business environment.

2. Generates Employment

- Infrastructure construction creates large-scale direct employment.
- Ancillary industries such as cement, steel, transport and engineering receive significant demand.

3. Promotes Regional Development

- Highways, railways and digital connectivity integrate backward regions with national markets.
- Better connectivity reduces regional disparities and promotes balanced development.

4. Improves Human Development

- Reliable electricity, clean drinking water, healthcare and education infrastructure improve living standards.
- Digital infrastructure enhances access to financial inclusion, governance and education.

5. Strengthens Strategic and National Security

- Border roads, ports, airports and communication networks improve military preparedness and disaster response.
- Maritime infrastructure strengthens India's role in the Indo-Pacific.

Major Challenges**Infrastructure Financing**

- Infrastructure projects require huge capital investments with long gestation periods.
- Limited fiscal space constrains public investment.

Land Acquisition and Rehabilitation

- Delays due to legal disputes, compensation issues and environmental clearances.
- Social resistance in densely populated regions.

Project Delays and Cost Overruns

- Administrative bottlenecks.
- Contractual disputes.
- Coordination failures among multiple agencies.

Urban Infrastructure Deficit

- Rapid urbanisation has outpaced infrastructure creation.
- Congestion, inadequate public transport, poor waste management and water scarcity remain major concerns.

Climate Change and Sustainability

- Infrastructure is increasingly vulnerable to floods, cyclones, heatwaves and sea-level rise.
- Future infrastructure must incorporate climate resilience and disaster-risk reduction.

Government Initiatives

- **PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan** for integrated multimodal infrastructure planning.
- **National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP)** to accelerate investment in key sectors.
- **National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP)** for efficient asset utilisation.
- **Bharatmala Pariyojana** for highway development.
- **Sagarmala Programme** for port-led development.
- **Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFCs)** to improve freight logistics.
- **Smart Cities Mission** for sustainable urban infrastructure.
- **Digital India Mission** and **BharatNet** to strengthen digital connectivity.

Roadmap for World-Class Infrastructure

Integrated Planning

- Adopt GIS-based planning and inter-ministerial coordination.
- Ensure multimodal transport integration.

Strengthen Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)

- Improve risk-sharing mechanisms.
- Encourage institutional investment through Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs) and pension funds.

Green Infrastructure

- Promote renewable energy integration.
- Encourage electric mobility infrastructure.
- Develop climate-resilient roads, bridges and urban systems.

Digital Transformation

- Expand Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things (IoT), Digital Twins and Building Information Modelling (BIM) in infrastructure planning and maintenance.
- Improve cyber resilience of critical infrastructure.

Governance Reforms

- Faster dispute resolution.
- Single-window project clearances.
- Performance-based monitoring using digital dashboards.

Conclusion

Infrastructure is not merely an economic asset but a strategic enabler of inclusive growth, competitiveness and national security. India's transition to a developed economy requires infrastructure that is **smart, sustainable, resilient and technology-driven**. With continued policy reforms, greater private participation and efficient project execution, India can transform its infrastructure ecosystem into a powerful engine of long-term economic growth while ensuring environmental sustainability and social inclusion.

(GS Paper-IV: Ethics, Integrity & Aptitude | 15 Marks | 250 Words)

Q.4 "Ethical leadership is tested not when decisions are easy, but when public interest conflicts with political pressure, personal relationships and institutional constraints." Discuss the significance of ethical leadership in public administration. Explain how a civil servant can uphold ethical governance while dealing with conflicting values and competing stakeholder interests. (15 Marks)

Sample Answer

Introduction

Ethical leadership refers to the ability of a public servant to make decisions based on **integrity, impartiality, accountability, transparency and commitment to public welfare**, even under difficult circumstances. In a democratic polity, the legitimacy of governance depends not only on legality but also on ethical conduct. As **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel** envisioned, civil servants are the "**Steel Frame of India**", entrusted with safeguarding constitutional values above personal or political considerations.

Importance of Ethical Leadership in Public Administration

1. Upholds Constitutional Morality

- Ensures governance is guided by the Constitution rather than partisan interests.
- Protects the principles of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity.

2. Builds Public Trust

- Ethical conduct enhances citizens' confidence in government institutions.
- Transparency and fairness strengthen democratic legitimacy.

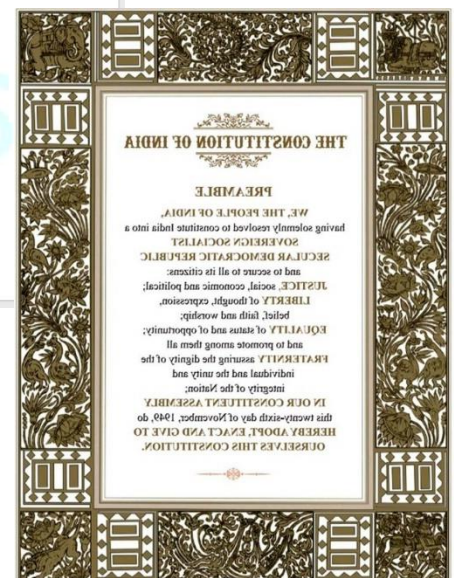
3. Promotes Good Governance

Ethical leadership ensures:

- Accountability
- Transparency
- Responsiveness
- Rule of Law
- Citizen-centric administration

These are the core pillars of good governance.

4. Prevents Corruption



- Integrity discourages abuse of public office.
- Ethical officers create institutional cultures resistant to corruption.

5. Facilitates Fair Decision-Making

Public officials frequently face competing claims involving:

- Economic development vs environmental protection
- Majority welfare vs minority rights
- Political directives vs constitutional principles

Ethical reasoning enables balanced decisions based on public interest.

Ethical Dilemmas Faced by Civil Servants

Political Pressure

- Illegal transfer or posting requests.
- Awarding contracts to favoured individuals.
- Misuse of discretionary powers.

Conflict of Interest

- Personal relationships influencing official decisions.
- Acceptance of gifts or post-retirement benefits.

Resource Constraints

- Limited budgets requiring difficult prioritisation.
- Balancing efficiency with equity.

Public Expectations

- Immediate relief versus procedural compliance.
- Popular decisions versus legally sustainable decisions.

Ethical Principles for Resolving Conflicts

Integrity

Maintaining consistency between personal values and official conduct.

Objectivity

Decisions should be evidence-based and free from bias.

Accountability

Public officials must remain answerable for every administrative action.

Compassion

Policies should particularly protect vulnerable and marginalised sections.

Courage of Conviction

An ethical civil servant must resist unlawful orders despite personal consequences.

Institutional Mechanisms Supporting Ethical Governance

- Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)
- Central Information Commission (RTI framework)
- Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG)
- Lokpal and Lokayuktas
- Conduct Rules for Civil Servants
- Citizen Charters
- E-Governance initiatives reducing discretion and increasing transparency

Way Forward

- Strengthen ethics training during and after induction into civil services.
- Promote value-based leadership instead of rule-based compliance alone.
- Encourage whistle-blower protection.
- Use digital governance to reduce human discretion.
- Develop institutional mechanisms rewarding ethical behaviour.
- Foster organisational cultures based on integrity rather than fear.

Conclusion

Ethical leadership is the foundation of democratic governance. While laws define what public servants **can do**, ethics determine what they **ought to do**. In situations involving conflicting interests, constitutional values, integrity and public welfare must remain the guiding principles. A civil servant who combines competence with ethical courage contributes not only to efficient administration but also to strengthening citizens' faith in democracy.

Value Addition

Nolan's Seven Principles of Public Life

Principle	Relevance to Civil Services
Selflessness	Decisions solely in public interest
Integrity	Avoid conflicts of interest
Objectivity	Merit-based decision-making
Accountability	Answerability to citizens
Openness	Transparency in governance

Principle	Relevance to Civil Services
Honesty	Truthfulness in official conduct
Leadership	Leading by personal example

Constitutional Values Guiding Ethical Governance

Constitutional Value Administrative Application

Justice	Fair and equitable decisions
Equality	Non-discriminatory governance
Liberty	Protection of fundamental freedoms
Fraternity	Inclusive and compassionate administration
Rule of Law	Equal application of laws
Constitutional Morality	Upholding constitutional ideals over personal or political interests

(GS Paper-II | Current Affairs | 15 Marks | 250 Words)

Q.5 "The Third India–Australia Annual Summit marks the transition of bilateral relations from a trade-centric partnership to a comprehensive strategic partnership in the Indo-Pacific. Examine the major outcomes of the Summit and analyse its significance for India's strategic, economic and geopolitical interests." (15 Marks)

Sample Answer

Introduction

India and Australia elevated their relationship to a **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP)** in 2020. The **Third India–Australia Annual Summit**, held in **Melbourne (July 2026)**, marked another milestone by broadening cooperation from trade and education to defence, maritime security, critical minerals, advanced technologies, clean energy and Indo-Pacific governance. The Summit reflects the growing convergence of interests between two major democracies committed to a **free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific**.

Major Outcomes of the Summit

1. Strengthening Defence and Maritime Security

- Adoption of the **Joint Declaration on Defence and Security Cooperation**.
- Establishment of an **Annual Defence Ministers' Dialogue**.
- Expansion of military interoperability under the **Mutual Logistics Support Arrangement**.



- Greater cooperation in maritime domain awareness and Indian Ocean security.

2. Expanding Economic Partnership

- Reaffirmation of commitment to conclude the **Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA)**.
- Continued implementation of the **Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA)**.
- Focus on reducing non-tariff barriers and promoting bilateral investments.
- Greater collaboration between businesses through the CEO Forum.

3. Critical Minerals and Supply Chain Resilience

- Deepened partnership on **critical minerals** such as lithium, cobalt and rare earth elements.
- Promotion of long-term supply arrangements and value-addition.
- Efforts to build resilient and diversified global supply chains for strategic industries.

4. Technology and Innovation

- Cooperation in:
 - Cyber security
 - Critical and emerging technologies
 - Artificial Intelligence
 - Space cooperation
 - Advanced manufacturing
- Strengthening research and innovation partnerships between academic and industrial institutions.

5. Indo-Pacific Cooperation

- Reaffirmed commitment to the **Quad**.
- Enhanced cooperation through the **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)**.
- Support for a rules-based maritime order and freedom of navigation.
- Expansion of trilateral cooperation involving India, Australia and Indonesia.

Significance for India

Strategic Significance

- Strengthens India's position in the Indo-Pacific.
- Enhances maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region.
- Improves defence interoperability with a trusted strategic partner.
- Supports India's vision of **SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region)**.

Economic Significance

- Diversifies India's trade partnerships.

- Secures access to critical minerals essential for:
 - Electric Vehicles
 - Semiconductor manufacturing
 - Renewable energy technologies
- Encourages investment in manufacturing under **Make in India**.

Geopolitical Significance

- Reinforces democratic partnerships in the Indo-Pacific.
- Contributes to resilient supply chains amid geopolitical uncertainties.
- Enhances cooperation in multilateral forums such as the **Quad**, **IORA** and the **G20**.

Challenges

- Delay in finalising the CECA.
- Balancing strategic cooperation without creating bloc politics.
- Ensuring timely implementation of defence and technology agreements.
- Managing global supply-chain disruptions and geostrategic competition.

Way Forward

- Expedite conclusion of the CECA.
- Deepen cooperation in defence manufacturing under **Make in India**.
- Expand joint naval exercises and maritime surveillance.
- Strengthen collaboration in critical technologies, clean energy and digital innovation.
- Promote academic exchanges, skilled mobility and people-to-people ties.

Conclusion

The Third India–Australia Annual Summit represents a significant advancement in bilateral relations, reflecting shared democratic values and converging strategic interests. By expanding cooperation across defence, trade, critical minerals, technology and regional security, both countries have laid the foundation for a more resilient and future-oriented partnership. As geopolitical competition intensifies in the Indo-Pacific, a stronger India–Australia partnership will play a crucial role in promoting regional stability, economic prosperity and a rules-based international order.

Value Addition

Key Outcomes at a Glance

Area	Major Outcome
Defence	Joint Declaration on Defence & Security Cooperation
Security	Annual Defence Ministers' Dialogue

Area	Major Outcome
Trade	Commitment to early conclusion of CECA
Critical Minerals	Long-term supply chain cooperation
Technology	Cyber, AI, Space and Emerging Technologies
Maritime	Indian Ocean cooperation and Maritime Domain Awareness
Regional Cooperation Quad, IORA and India–Australia–Indonesia Trilateral	

