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DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS

BEST FOR UPSC | UP PCS EXAM

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DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM STATIC PART

Question 1: Consider the following statements:

1. The Equator passes through more land area in the Eastern Hemisphere than in the Western Hemisphere.
2. All continents except Antarctica have land both north and south of the Equator.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Neither one nor two
- (d) Both one and two

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

The Equator crosses South America in the Western Hemisphere but passes through Africa and several islands in the Eastern Hemisphere. Africa alone contributes a larger equatorial land extent than South America; hence, Statement 1 is correct.

Antarctica lies entirely south of the Equator, making Statement 2 incorrect. Other continents such as Africa, South America, and parts of Asia (via Indonesian islands) have land on both sides of the Equator.

Question 2: Which one of the following pairs of ocean current and adjacent coastal desert is correctly matched?

- (a) Canary Current — Atacama Desert
- (b) Benguela Current — Namib Desert
- (c) Peru Current — Kalahari Desert
- (d) California Current — Sonoran Desert

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

Cold ocean currents along western continental margins create coastal aridity by stabilizing the atmosphere and reducing evaporation. The Benguela Current flows along the southwest coast of Africa and is directly responsible for the hyper-arid conditions of the Namib Desert.

The Canary Current is associated with the Sahara Desert, the Peru (Humboldt) Current with the Atacama Desert, and the California Current influences aridity in parts of Baja California and the Sonoran–Mojave region. Therefore, only option (b) is correctly matched.

Question 3: Consider the following statements regarding jet streams:

1. Subtropical westerly jet streams are strongest in winter due to greater pole–equator temperature contrast.

2. The Tropical Easterly Jet over India develops due to intense heating of the Tibetan Plateau in summer.
3. Polar front jet streams generally occur at higher altitudes than subtropical jet streams.

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, as stronger meridional temperature gradients in winter intensify subtropical westerlies.

Statement 2 is correct, since intense heating of the Tibetan Plateau during summer establishes upper-level easterlies (Tropical Easterly Jet) associated with the Indian monsoon.

Statement 3 is incorrect. Subtropical jet streams generally occur at higher altitudes (approximately 12–16 km), whereas polar front jet streams occur at relatively lower altitudes (around 9–12 km).

Thus, two statements are correct.

Question 4: Consider the following statements about karst topography:

1. Karst landforms develop predominantly in regions with high rainfall and thick limestone strata.
2. Sinkholes and dolines are surface expressions of subsurface dissolution.
3. Stalactites and stalagmites form due to mechanical weathering of limestone ceilings.
4. Karst aquifers are typically characterized by high porosity but low permeability.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct, as humid climates enhance the chemical solution of carbonate rocks.

Statement 2 is correct. Sinkholes and dolines result from collapse or dissolution of limestone above underground cavities.

Statement 3 is incorrect. Stalactites and stalagmites form by chemical precipitation of calcium carbonate from dripping water, not due to mechanical weathering.

Statement 4 is incorrect. Karst aquifers typically have high secondary permeability due to the presence of conduits and caves.

Therefore, only two statements are correct.

Question 5: Assertion Reason type -

Assertion (A): The western coasts of continents in subtropical latitudes often experience cold ocean currents and coastal deserts.

Reason 1 (R1): Prevailing trade winds drive surface waters away from western continental margins, causing upwelling of cold water.

Reason 2 (R2): Subsiding air in subtropical high-pressure belts suppresses cloud formation and precipitation.

(a) A is correct and both R1 and R2 are correct and explain A

(b) A is correct but only one of R1 and R2 explains A

(c) A is correct but neither R1 nor R2 explains A

(d) A is incorrect but R1 and R2 are correct

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Subtropical western continental margins (e.g., Namib and Atacama regions) coincide with eastern boundary cold currents and arid climatic conditions.

Reason 1 correctly explains the oceanographic mechanism: trade winds induce offshore Ekman transport, leading to upwelling of cold water.

Reason 2 correctly explains the atmospheric mechanism: descending limbs of the Hadley cell create dry and stable air conditions.

Both reasons collectively explain the assertion.

DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM CURRENT AFFAIRS

Question 1: Consider the following statements:

1. The wild Bactrian camel found in India is genetically distinct from the domesticated Bactrian camel of Central Asia.
2. In India, the Bactrian camel population is confined to a cold desert biosphere reserve notified under UNESCO's Man and Biosphere Programme.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Neither one nor two
- (d) Both one and two

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct. The Wild Bactrian camel (*Camelus ferus*) is genetically distinct from the domesticated Bactrian camel (*Camelus bactrianus*). The Indian population (Nubra Valley, Ladakh) consists mainly of domesticated Bactrian camels introduced via Silk Route trade.

Statement 2 is correct. The Bactrian camel population in India is located in the Cold Desert Biosphere Reserve (Himachal Pradesh–Ladakh region), which is part of UNESCO’s Man and Biosphere Programme.

Question 2: The Narayan Ramachandran Committee, recently seen in news, was primarily constituted to:

- (a) Review corporate social responsibility (CSR) compliance mechanisms in India
- (b) Examine governance standards and conflict-of-interest norms in sports bodies
- (c) Recommend reforms in cooperative banking regulation
- (d) Suggest restructuring of public sector undertakings

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The Narayan Ramachandran Committee was appointed by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports to review governance issues in national sports federations, especially conflict-of-interest provisions and compliance frameworks following judicial interventions.

Question 3: Consider the following statements regarding the Padma Awards:

1. The Padma Awards are conferred under Article 18 of the Constitution of India.
2. The recommendations for Padma Awards are made by a committee constituted by the Prime Minister and include the Cabinet Secretary and Home Secretary.
3. A Padma Award can be conferred posthumously and can also be withdrawn by the President of India.

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 incorrect. Article 18 abolishes titles except military and academic distinctions. Padma Awards

are civilian honours and not titles within the meaning of Article 18 (as clarified by Supreme Court in Balaji Raghavan case, 1996).

Statement 2 is correct. The Padma Awards Committee is constituted by the Prime Minister and includes senior officials like the Cabinet Secretary and Home Secretary.

Statement 3 is correct. The awards can be given posthumously and can be cancelled/annulled by the President.

Question 4: Consider the following statements regarding Agarwood:

1. Agarwood is formed as a pathological response of Aquilaria trees to fungal infection.
2. India permits export of naturally occurring wild-harvested agarwood without restriction under CITES Appendix II.
3. Artificial inoculation techniques are being promoted in Northeast India to enhance agarwood production sustainably.

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. Agarwood (Oud) forms when Aquilaria trees produce resin in response to fungal infection or injury.

Statement 2 is incorrect. Trade in agarwood species is regulated under CITES Appendix II; wild harvest is highly restricted, and India regulates export through permits.

Statement 3 is correct. Artificial inoculation methods are promoted in Assam and Northeast India to generate resin sustainably and reduce pressure on wild populations.

Question 5: Consider the following statements regarding the Jeevan Raksha Padak Awards:

1. They are civilian awards conferred for acts of gallantry in saving human life.
2. They are classified into three categories: Sarvottam Jeevan Raksha Padak, Uttam Jeevan Raksha Padak, and Jeevan Raksha Padak.
3. They are announced on the occasion of Republic Day and conferred by the Ministry of Home Affairs.
4. These awards are eligible for pensionary benefits similar to Param Vir Chakra awardees.

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. They are civilian life-saving gallantry awards.

Statement 2 is correct. There are three categories based on degree of gallantry.

Statement 3 is correct. They are announced around Republic Day by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Statement 4 is incorrect. They do not carry pensionary benefits similar to military gallantry awards like Param Vir Chakra.

Question 6: With reference to the recent archaeological excavations at Lakkundi, consider the following statements:

1. Lakkundi is located in the Malaprabha river basin.
2. The site flourished under the Western Chalukyas of Kalyani.
3. The excavations revealed stepped wells (Pushkarni) and temple architecture influenced by Vesara style.

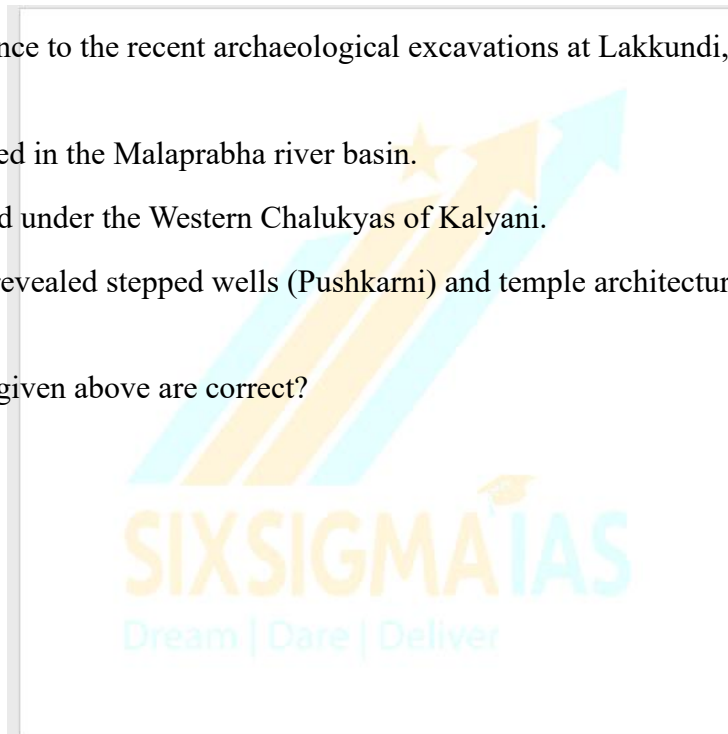
Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

Explanation:

Lakkundi is located in present-day Karnataka in the Malaprabha basin region. It flourished under the Western Chalukyas (Kalyani Chalukyas). The site is famous for its stepped wells (Pushkarnis) and intricate Vesara-style temples blending Nagara and Dravida elements.

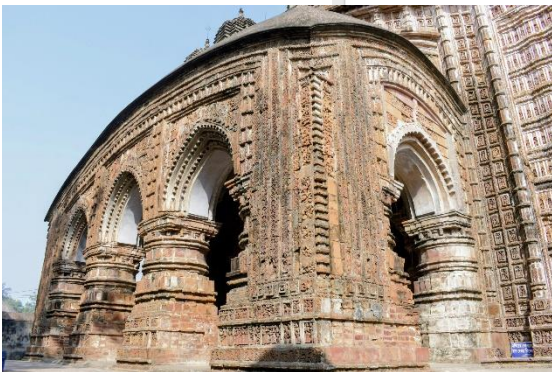


DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAINS ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

GS Paper 1 (Indian Culture & History)

Question 1 – *The temple architecture of the Western Chalukyas represents a significant transitional phase in Indian temple architecture. Examine its features and historical significance with suitable examples.*

Answer



The Western Chalukyas of Kalyani (10th–12th century CE) played a pivotal role in the evolution of Indian temple architecture. Their style, often termed the **Vesara style**, represents a transitional synthesis between the **Nagara (North Indian)** and **Dravida (South Indian)** architectural traditions.

Key Architectural Features

1. Hybrid Superstructure (Shikhara):

The superstructure reflects a blend of curvilinear Nagara elements with tiered Dravidian forms.

2. **Use of Soapstone:**

Enabled intricate carvings and ornate lathe-turned pillars, later perfected by the Hoysalas.

3. **Star-shaped Platforms & Jagati:**

Temples were often built on raised platforms, enhancing their grandeur.

4. **Elaborate Doorways & Ceilings:**

Highly decorated lintels and ceiling panels depict mythological themes.

5. **Pushkarnis (Stepped Wells):**

Sites like Lakkundi reveal sophisticated water architecture.

Historical Significance

- Marked a **transition from Early Chalukya (Badami) to Hoysala architecture**.
- Reflected political stability and economic prosperity.
- Demonstrated technological advances in stone carving.
- Served as centres of socio-cultural integration.

Thus, Western Chalukya temples symbolize a creative architectural experimentation phase that shaped medieval Deccan temple traditions.

GS Paper 2 (Polity & Governance)

Question 2 – *Discuss the constitutional position of civilian awards in India in light of Article 18. Do such awards violate the principle of equality?*

Answer



Article 18 of the Constitution abolishes titles except military and academic distinctions. The issue of civilian awards like Bharat Ratna and Padma Awards was examined in **Balaji Raghavan v. Union of India (1996)**.

Constitutional Position

- The Supreme Court held that civilian awards are **not titles** within the meaning of Article 18.
- They are recognitions of merit and cannot be used as prefixes or suffixes.

Arguments Alleging Violation

- Potential politicization in selection.
- Possibility of creating an elitist hierarchy.

Arguments Supporting Validity

- Encourage excellence in public life.
- Promote national integration.
- Awardees cannot use titles as status symbols.

Safeguards

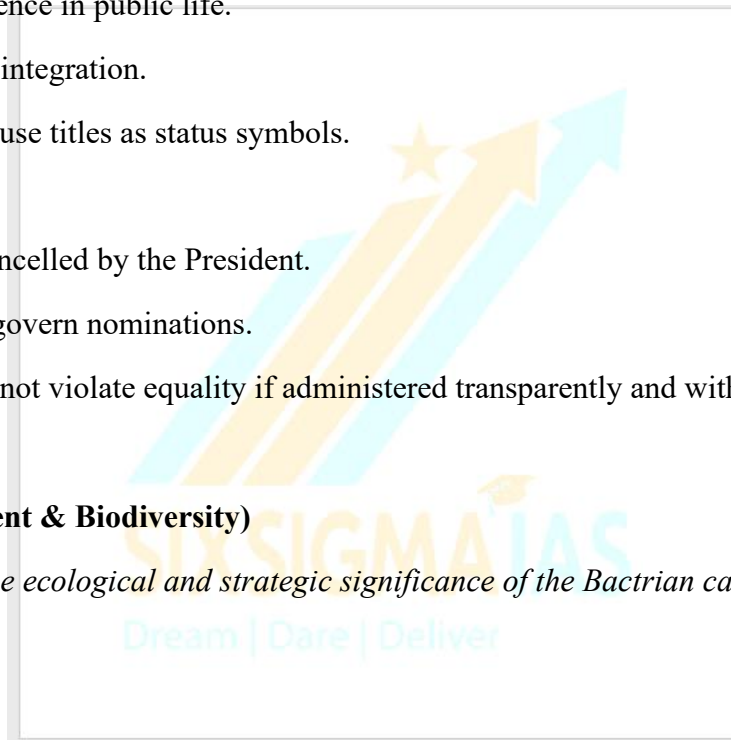
- Awards can be cancelled by the President.
- Strict guidelines govern nominations.

Thus, civilian awards do not violate equality if administered transparently and without political bias.

GS Paper 3 (Environment & Biodiversity)

Question 3 – *Examine the ecological and strategic significance of the Bactrian camel in India's cold desert ecosystem.*

Answer





The Bactrian camel (double-humped) inhabits the cold desert of Ladakh, especially the Nubra Valley.

Ecological Significance

- Adapted to extreme temperatures (-30°C to 40°C).
- Integral to fragile cold desert ecosystems.
- Aids in seed dispersal and supports biodiversity.

Economic & Cultural Role

- Historically linked to Silk Route trade.
- Source of wool, milk, and tourism livelihood.

Strategic Importance

- Useful in high-altitude logistics near border areas.
- Symbol of India's trans-Himalayan heritage.

Conservation Challenges

- Declining numbers due to mechanization.
- Climate change impacts on habitat.

Hence, conserving Bactrian camels is vital for ecological sustainability and borderland socio-economic stability.

GS Paper 4 (Ethics, Integrity & Aptitude)

Question 4 – *Acts of civilian bravery, such as those recognized by the Jeevan Raksha Padak Awards, reflect core ethical values in public life. Discuss.*

Answer

The Jeevan Raksha Padak Awards honour civilians who risk their lives to save others.

Ethical Dimensions

1. **Altruism:** Selfless service without expectation of reward.
2. **Courage:** Acting despite personal risk.
3. **Empathy:** Sensitivity toward human suffering.
4. **Public Responsibility:** Upholding moral duty beyond legal obligation.



Relevance to Civil Services

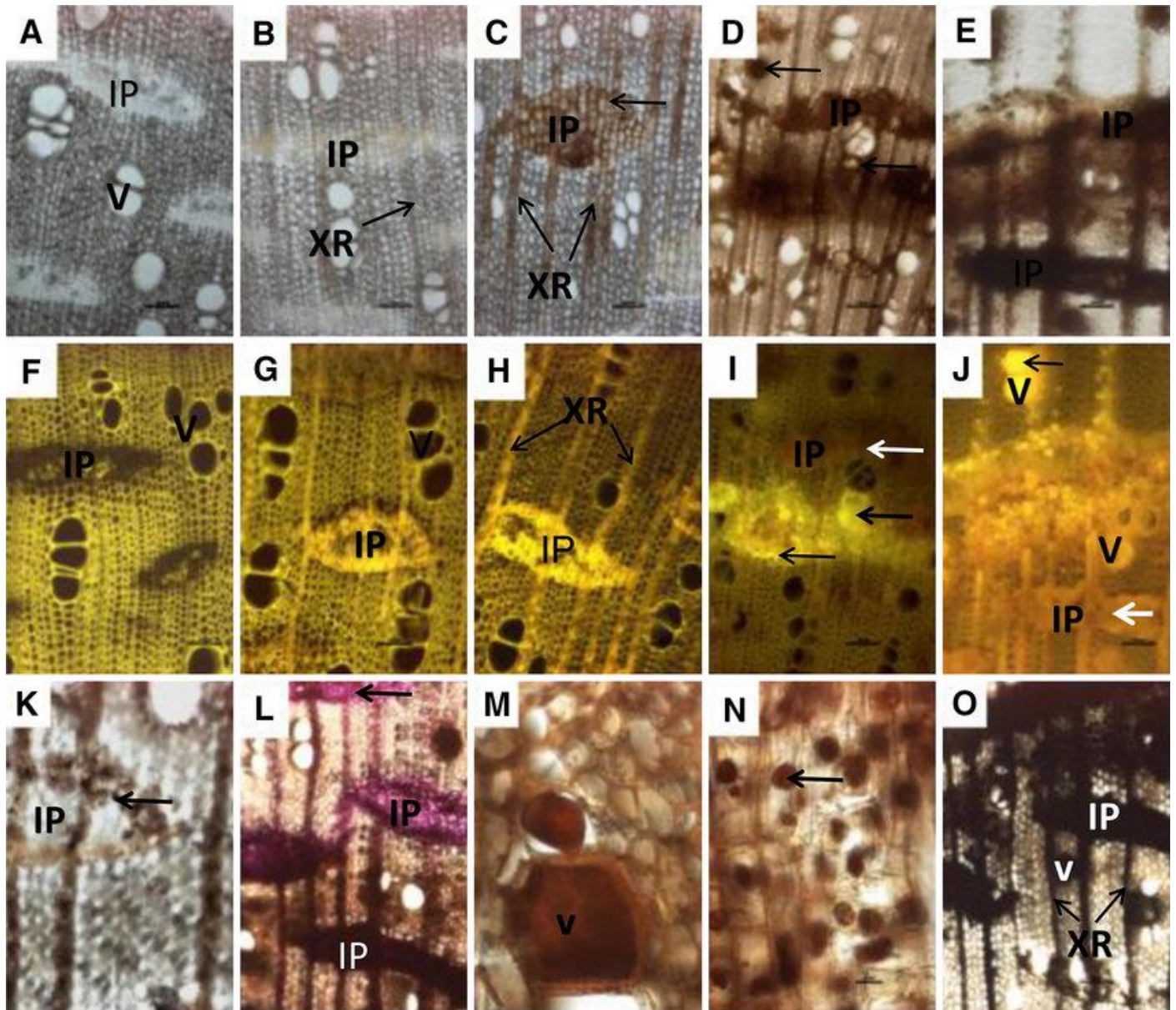
- Promotes compassion in governance.
- Encourages moral leadership.
- Strengthens social trust.

Such recognition reinforces ethical behaviour in society and inspires citizens to act beyond self-interest.

Current Affairs (Environment & Economy)

Question 5 – Agarwood cultivation has emerged as a sustainable livelihood option in Northeast India. Critically examine its economic potential and environmental concerns.

Answer



Agarwood forms when Aquilaria trees produce resin in response to fungal infection.

Economic Potential

- High global demand in perfume and incense markets.
- Boosts farmer income in Assam and Northeast India.
- Export potential under regulated CITES framework.

Environmental Concerns

- Illegal harvesting of wild trees.
- Biodiversity loss.
- Over-dependence on monoculture plantations.

Way Forward

- Promote artificial inoculation techniques.
- Strengthen CITES compliance.
- Encourage agroforestry models.

Thus, agarwood offers a model for green growth if sustainability safeguards are ensured.

