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DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS

BEST FOR UPSC | UP PCS EXAM

DATE : SEPTEMBER 9, 2026

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DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM STATIC PART

Question 1. With reference to the emergence of urban centres and associated socio-economic developments during the Later Vedic Age, consider the following statements:

1. The growth of fortified settlements in the Gangetic plains was facilitated by the increasing use of iron technology in agricultural expansion.
2. Later Vedic literature consistently criticized elaborate sacrificial rituals as socially divisive and economically burdensome.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

Explanation:
Statement 1 is correct. During the Later Vedic period, the use of iron implements enabled large-scale forest clearance and agricultural expansion in the Gangetic plains, contributing to surplus production and the rise of fortified settlements and proto-urban centres.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The Brahmana texts of the Later Vedic period largely endorsed and elaborated ritualistic sacrifices. Criticism of excessive ritualism became more pronounced in the Upanishadic phase and among later heterodox traditions.

Therefore, option (a) is the correct answer.

Question 2. Which one of the following best explains why biodiversity hotspots are generally considered more susceptible to ecological disruption than many temperate ecosystems with comparatively high species richness?

(a) They invariably exhibit lower levels of genetic diversity among endemic species.
(b) A large number of species inhabiting such regions possess narrow ecological tolerance and highly restricted geographical distribution.
(c) Their trophic structure is predominantly characterized by apex predator dominance.
(d) Such ecosystems generally lack effective nutrient cycling and ecological succession processes.

Answer: (b)

Explanation:
Biodiversity hotspots are marked by exceptionally high levels of endemism along with extensive habitat degradation. Species confined to narrow ecological niches and limited geographical ranges are particularly vulnerable to disturbances such as deforestation, climate change, and invasive species.

Option (a) is incorrect because biodiversity hotspots may exhibit considerable genetic diversity.
Option (c) is incorrect since apex predator dominance is not a defining ecological feature of hotspots.
Option (d) is incorrect because nutrient cycling and ecological succession are integral to all functioning ecosystems.

Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.

Question 3. Consider the following statements regarding economic growth and structural transformation in developing economies:

1. An increase in the share of the services sector in GDP necessarily indicates a decline in absolute industrial output.
2. In many developing economies, the workforce may continue to remain concentrated in agriculture even after the sector's contribution to GDP declines substantially.
3. Rapid financial deepening in the absence of productive investment may encourage speculative economic activity without generating proportionate employment opportunities.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

Explanation:
Statement 1 is incorrect. A rising share of services in GDP does not necessarily imply a decline in industrial output in absolute terms. Industrial production may continue to grow, albeit at a slower rate relative to services.

Statement 2 is correct. In several developing economies, including India, the decline in agriculture's share of GDP often outpaces the reduction in the workforce dependent on agriculture, reflecting disguised unemployment and incomplete structural transformation.

Statement 3 is correct. Excessive financialization without adequate productive investment may lead to speculative growth and asset inflation without corresponding employment generation.

Therefore, only Statements 2 and 3 are correct. Hence, option (b).

Question 4. Consider the following statements regarding constitutional governance in India:

1. The doctrine of collective responsibility requires a minister to resign if he or she publicly dissents from a Cabinet decision.
2. The Governor is constitutionally obligated to act solely on the advice of the Council of Ministers in all circumstances.
3. Parliament possesses the power to amend Fundamental Rights, subject to judicial review.
4. The Rajya Sabha may authorize Parliament to legislate on matters in the State List in the national interest through a special majority resolution.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

(a) Only one
(b) Only two

(c) Only three
(d) All four

Answer: (c)

Explanation:
Statement 1 is correct. The principle of collective responsibility requires ministers to publicly support Cabinet decisions; failure to do so conventionally necessitates resignation.

Statement 2 is incorrect. Although the Governor ordinarily acts on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers, the Constitution provides discretionary powers in certain exceptional situations.

Statement 3 is correct. Following the Kesavananda Bharati judgment, constitutional amendments, including those affecting Fundamental Rights, are subject to judicial review under the Basic Structure doctrine.

Statement 4 is correct. Under Article 249, the Rajya Sabha may empower Parliament to legislate on matters in the State List in the national interest by passing a resolution supported by a two-thirds majority of members present and voting.

Hence, Statements 1, 3, and 4 are correct. Therefore, option (c) is the correct answer.

Question 5. Assertion – Reason type

Assertion (A): Regions characterized by monsoonal rainfall frequently experience pronounced seasonal fluctuations in river discharge.

Reason (R1): In monsoonal climates, a substantial proportion of annual precipitation is received within a limited period of the year.

Reason (R2): Most rivers in monsoonal regions are exclusively glacier-fed and are therefore largely unaffected by seasonal rainfall variation.

(a) Both R1 and R2 are correct, and both explain A.
(b) R1 is correct but R2 is incorrect.
(c) R1 is incorrect but R2 is correct.
(d) Both R1 and R2 are incorrect.

Answer: (b)

Explanation:
Assertion (A) is correct. Rivers in monsoonal regions typically exhibit high seasonal variability in discharge due to the concentration of rainfall during the monsoon season.

Reason (R1) is correct and appropriately explains the assertion. Concentrated seasonal rainfall results in high river discharge during wet months and comparatively low discharge during dry periods.

Reason (R2) is incorrect. Most rivers in monsoonal regions are not exclusively glacier-fed; many are rain-fed or possess mixed hydrological regimes. Consequently, seasonal rainfall exerts a major influence on river discharge.

Therefore, option (b) is the correct answer.

DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM CURRENT AFFAIRS

Question 1. *With reference to the* Komagata Maru Incident, *consider the following statements:*

1. The incident exposed the discriminatory immigration policies pursued by settler colonies within the British Empire against Asian migrants.
2. The passengers of the Komagata Maru were denied entry into Canada primarily because they refused to renounce British citizenship and allegiance to the Crown.

How many of the above statements are correct?

(a) Only one

(b) Both statements

(c) Neither statement

(d) Statement 2 only

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct. The Komagata Maru Incident highlighted the racially discriminatory immigration framework of Canada, especially the "continuous journey regulation," which effectively barred Indian migrants despite their status as British subjects.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The passengers were not denied entry because of refusal to renounce British citizenship. Rather, the Canadian authorities used exclusionary immigration laws designed specifically to restrict Asian immigration.

Hence, only one statement is correct. Therefore, option (a).

Question 2. With reference to the recently launched savings initiative by India Post Payments Bank for Self-Help Groups (SHGs), which one of the following best describes its broader developmental significance?

(a) It seeks to replace cooperative banking institutions in rural credit delivery.

(b) It primarily aims at integrating informal women-led savings networks into the formal digital financial ecosystem.

(c) It enables SHGs to directly participate in sovereign bond auctions through postal banking infrastructure.

(d) It grants statutory banking licenses to SHGs operating under the National Rural Livelihoods Mission.

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The SHG Savings Account initiative launched by India Post Payments Bank is intended to deepen financial inclusion by digitally integrating women-led Self-Help Groups into the formal banking system. It

complements initiatives under the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) and strengthens rural digital banking outreach.

Option (a) is incorrect because the scheme does not replace cooperative banks.
Option (c) is incorrect since SHGs are not being enabled for sovereign bond participation.
Option (d) is incorrect because statutory banking licenses are not granted to SHGs.

Therefore, option (b) is correct.

Question 3. Consider the following statements regarding Op Netra 1.0:

1. It is associated with India's capability to detect and monitor space debris and other orbital hazards.
2. The initiative is intended exclusively for civilian satellite navigation and has no strategic or defence relevance.
3. It reflects India's growing emphasis on indigenous Space Situational Awareness (SSA) infrastructure.

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. Op Netra 1.0 is designed to improve India's ability to track space debris, satellites, and potential orbital threats.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The programme has significant strategic and defence relevance, especially in the context of military satellites and space security.

Statement 3 is correct. It represents India's efforts toward developing indigenous Space Situational Awareness (SSA) capabilities.

Thus, Statements 1 and 3 are correct. Hence, option (b).

Question 4. With reference to the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC), consider the following statements:

1. AMOC plays a significant role in regulating heat distribution between the tropics and the North Atlantic region.
2. A substantial weakening of AMOC could potentially alter monsoonal systems and regional climatic stability across different continents.
3. AMOC is driven exclusively by surface wind circulation and remains unaffected by salinity variations in ocean waters.

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. AMOC transports warm surface waters northward and cold deep waters southward, thereby regulating global climate and heat distribution.

Statement 2 is correct. Scientific studies indicate that weakening of AMOC may disrupt rainfall systems, including monsoonal circulation, and affect climatic stability across regions.

Statement 3 is incorrect. AMOC is strongly influenced by thermohaline processes involving both temperature and salinity differences, not merely surface winds.

Therefore, only Statements 1 and 2 are correct. Hence, option (b).

Question 5. Consider the following statements regarding the election process of the United Nations Secretary-General:

1. The Secretary-General is formally appointed by the UN General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council.
2. Any permanent member of the Security Council can effectively block a candidate through the veto mechanism.
3. The UN Charter explicitly mandates rotational representation among continents for the post of Secretary-General.
4. The office of the Secretary-General combines administrative, diplomatic, and political responsibilities within the UN system.

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. Under Article 97 of the UN Charter, the Secretary-General is appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council.

Statement 2 is correct. Any permanent member (P5) can veto a candidate in the Security Council.

Statement 3 is incorrect. There is no constitutional provision in the UN Charter mandating continental rotation, although informal regional balancing practices exist.

Statement 4 is correct. The Secretary-General performs administrative as well as diplomatic and political functions.

Hence, Statements 1, 2, and 4 are correct. Therefore, option (c).

Question 6. With reference to Kanha Tiger Reserve, consider the following statements:

1. It lies within the Maikal range and forms part of the Satpura–Maikal landscape.
2. The Banjar and Halon rivers constitute important river systems associated with the reserve.
3. The reserve is located in the northwestern part of Madhya Pradesh adjoining the Chambal ravine ecosystem.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct. Kanha Tiger Reserve is situated in the Maikal hills within the broader Satpura–Maikal landscape.

Statement 2 is correct. The Banjar and Halon rivers are major river systems flowing through the reserve ecosystem.

Statement 3 is incorrect. The reserve is located in southeastern Madhya Pradesh, not in the Chambal ravine region of northwestern Madhya Pradesh.

Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.

DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAINS ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

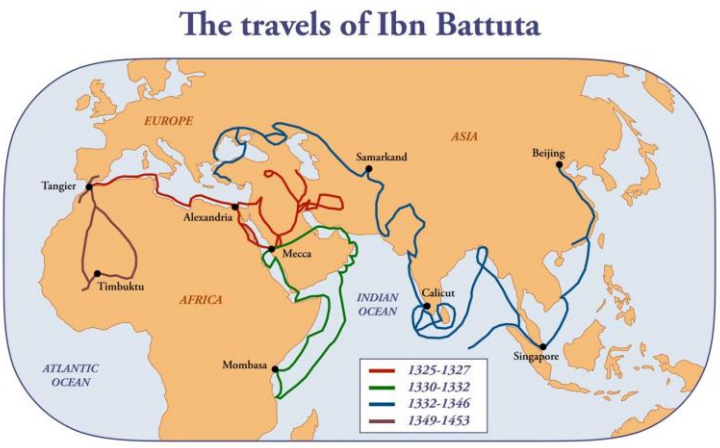
GS Paper 1 (History & Culture)

Q.1. Examine how the accounts of foreign travellers contributed to our understanding of medieval Indian society. Also discuss the limitations of such narratives.

(15 Marks)

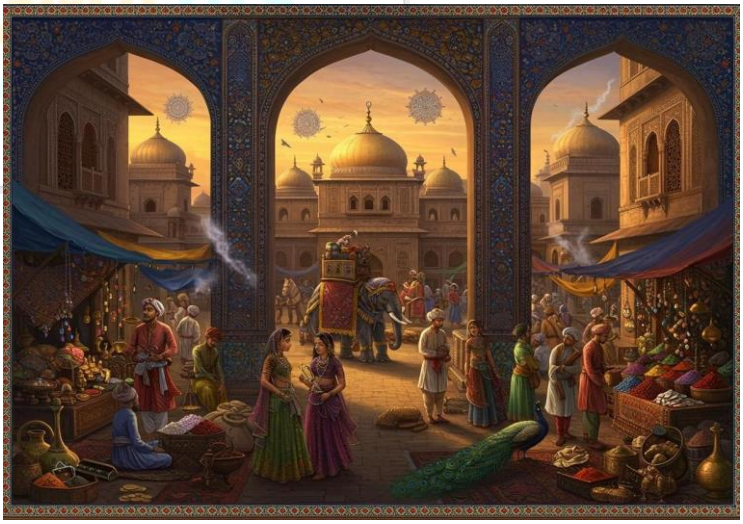
Sample Answer:

Foreign travellers' accounts constitute one of the most significant external sources for reconstructing medieval Indian history. Travellers such as Al-Biruni, Ibn Battuta, Marco Polo and François Bernier documented Indian society, economy, culture and administration from their own perspectives. These accounts supplement indigenous literary and archaeological evidence and help historians understand the socio-political dynamics of the period.



Al-Biruni, who accompanied Mahmud of Ghazni, provided a detailed account of Indian religion, philosophy, astronomy and caste practices in his work *Kitab-ul-Hind*. His comparative method and intellectual curiosity make his writings particularly valuable. Ibn Battuta, who visited India during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughlaq, vividly described urban life, trade networks, communication systems and the functioning of the Delhi Sultanate. François Bernier, a French traveller in Mughal India, commented extensively on land revenue systems, royal absolutism and social inequalities.

These narratives help historians in multiple ways. First, they provide insights into everyday life, trade practices and urbanisation which are often neglected in court chronicles. Second, they offer comparative observations because travellers frequently contrasted Indian society with their own cultures. Third, they help reconstruct political institutions and economic structures, especially where indigenous records are fragmented.



However, these accounts also possess several limitations. Travellers often lacked familiarity with local languages and depended on interpreters, leading to distortions. Their observations were shaped by cultural biases and preconceived notions. Bernier, for instance, exaggerated the despotic nature of Mughal rule by comparing it with European political systems. Similarly, many travellers focused disproportionately on elite life while ignoring the experiences of ordinary people.

Moreover, foreign travellers sometimes interpreted Indian social practices through religious or ethnocentric lenses. Their writings therefore cannot be accepted uncritically.

Thus, while foreign travellers' accounts remain indispensable historical sources, they must be corroborated with indigenous texts, inscriptions and archaeological evidence for a balanced understanding of medieval India.

GS Paper 2 (Polity & Governance)

Q.2. "The era of one-party dominance in India was both a source of political stability and a challenge to democratic competitiveness." Critically examine.

(15 Marks)

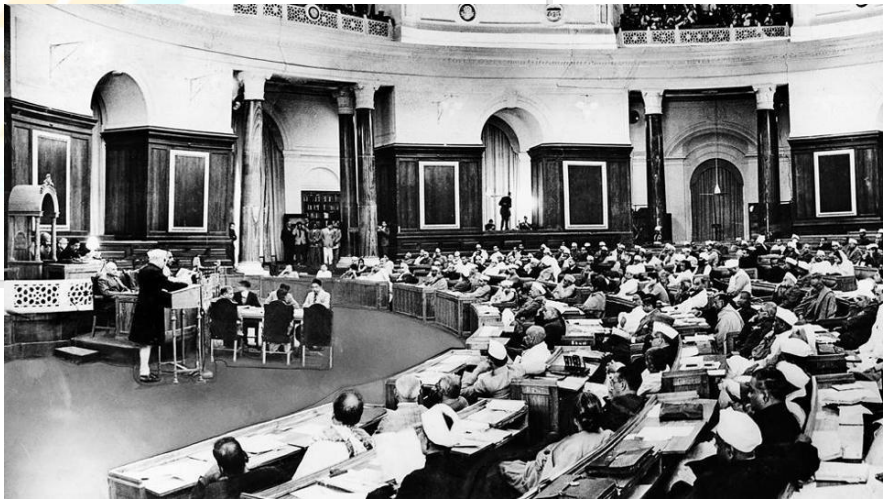
Sample Answer:

The period immediately following Independence witnessed the dominance of the Indian National Congress in electoral politics. From the first general elections in 1952 until the late 1960s, Congress remained the principal political force at both the Union and State levels. Political scientists often describe this phase as the "Congress system."

One-party dominance contributed significantly to political stability during a highly fragile phase of nation-building. India had recently experienced Partition, communal violence, refugee crises and economic backwardness. In such circumstances, a strong political organisation with nationwide legitimacy helped preserve unity and democratic continuity. Congress leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru enjoyed immense public credibility and successfully institutionalised parliamentary democracy.

The dominance of a single party also enabled long-term planning and policy continuity. Major initiatives such as land reforms, Five-Year Plans, linguistic reorganisation of states and the adoption of non-alignment in foreign policy were implemented without severe political instability. Congress acted as a broad coalition accommodating diverse ideological tendencies, castes, linguistic groups and regions.

However, one-party dominance also generated several democratic concerns. The weakness of opposition parties reduced effective parliamentary scrutiny and accountability. Electoral competition remained limited in many regions, allowing factional politics within Congress to substitute for genuine democratic alternatives.



Over time, excessive concentration of power led to tendencies of centralisation and political patronage. Dominance at both Union and State levels weakened federal balance in certain instances. Critics argue that the absence of strong opposition delayed the development of a robust multi-party democratic culture.

The decline of Congress dominance after 1967 demonstrated that democratic competition had eventually matured. Regional parties and ideological alternatives emerged more assertively, making Indian democracy more pluralistic.

Therefore, the era of one-party dominance was paradoxical in nature. While it provided stability during the formative years of the Republic, it simultaneously constrained competitive democratic politics. Nevertheless, the peaceful transition from dominance to multi-party competition reflects the resilience of Indian democracy.

GS Paper 3 (Economy)

Q.3. Analyze the structural distortions created by colonial rule in the Indian economy. How did these distortions affect post-independence development planning?

(15 Marks)

Sample Answer:

Colonial rule fundamentally transformed the structure of the Indian economy in a manner that primarily served British imperial interests rather than Indian development. By the time India attained Independence in 1947, the economy suffered from deep structural distortions, widespread poverty and low industrial capacity.

One major distortion was the destruction of indigenous industries. Traditional handicrafts and textile production declined sharply due to the influx of cheap machine-made British goods. India was converted into a supplier of raw materials and a market for British manufactured products, leading to deindustrialisation.

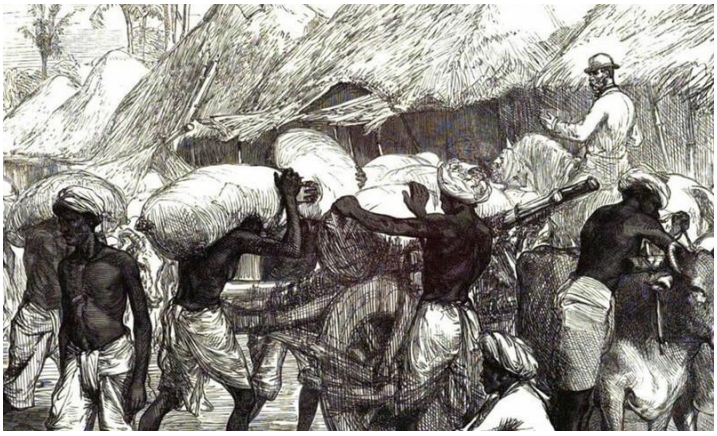
Agriculture also became highly exploitative and stagnant. Colonial land revenue systems such as Zamindari prioritised revenue extraction over agricultural productivity. Farmers faced indebtedness, insecurity and frequent famines. Commercialisation of agriculture encouraged cash crop cultivation at the expense of food security.

Another structural distortion was the underdevelopment of modern industries. Industrial growth remained limited and concentrated in a few sectors like jute and cotton textiles. Capital goods industries and technological capabilities were poorly developed. Infrastructure such as railways and ports was built mainly to facilitate colonial trade rather than balanced regional development.

The colonial economy also suffered from extreme poverty and unemployment. Per capita income stagnated and literacy levels remained abysmally low. Regional disparities widened significantly.

These distortions heavily influenced post-independence development planning. Indian policymakers recognised the need for rapid industrialisation, state-led planning and self-reliance. Consequently, the Planning Commission and Five-Year Plans prioritised heavy industries, public sector enterprises and import substitution industrialisation.

Land reforms and community development programmes were introduced to address agrarian inequalities inherited from colonial rule. The emphasis on public investment in infrastructure, education and scientific research also reflected attempts to overcome colonial underdevelopment.



Thus, colonial economic policies created long-term structural weaknesses that shaped India's developmental priorities after Independence. Much of early planning in independent India can be understood as an effort to reverse the distortions embedded during colonial rule.

GS Paper 4 (Ethics, Integrity & Aptitude)

Q.4. "Ethical leadership is not merely about exercising authority, but about creating trust and institutional credibility." Discuss with suitable examples from public administration.

(15 Marks)

Sample Answer:

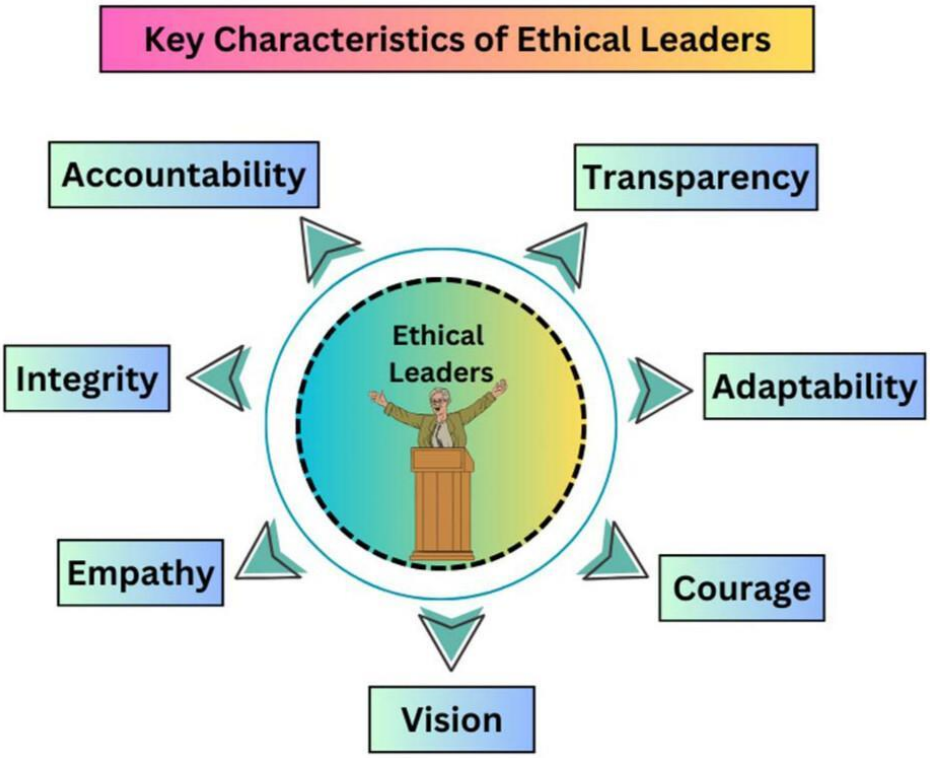
Ethical leadership refers to leadership grounded in integrity, accountability, empathy and commitment to public welfare. In public administration, ethical leadership is essential because governance ultimately depends not only on laws and institutions but also on public trust and moral legitimacy.

An ethical leader inspires confidence by ensuring transparency and fairness in decision-making. Such leadership strengthens institutional credibility because citizens perceive governance processes as impartial and accountable. In democratic systems, legitimacy derives not merely from constitutional authority but also from ethical conduct.

Ethical leadership is particularly important in public administration where officials exercise discretionary powers affecting citizens' lives. Abuse of authority, corruption and arbitrariness can erode public trust and weaken institutions. Conversely, ethical conduct promotes citizen cooperation and social harmony.

For example, E. Sreedharan's leadership in the Delhi Metro project demonstrated integrity, professionalism and accountability. Timely completion of projects with minimal corruption enhanced public confidence in government institutions. Similarly, T.N. Seshan's tenure as Chief Election Commissioner strengthened the credibility of electoral institutions through strict enforcement of electoral norms.

Ethical leadership also plays a crucial role during crises. During natural disasters or pandemics, citizens expect administrators to act compassionately, honestly and efficiently. Leaders who communicate transparently and prioritise public welfare enhance institutional trust.



However, ethical leadership faces several challenges such as political pressure, bureaucratic inertia, conflict of interests and systemic corruption. Therefore, institutional mechanisms like vigilance systems, transparency laws and ethics training are essential complements to personal integrity.

In contemporary governance, ethical leadership increasingly involves participatory decision-making and empathy toward vulnerable groups. Administrators must balance efficiency with justice and legality with morality.

Ultimately, ethical leadership is not confined to personal virtue alone. It creates a culture of trust, accountability and institutional credibility that strengthens democracy and improves governance outcomes. Without ethical leadership, even well-designed institutions may lose public confidence and effectiveness.

Current Affairs

Q.5. Discuss the ecological and socio-cultural significance of Kavu Nurseries in the context of biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in India.

(15 Marks)

Sample Answer:

Kavu Nurseries are associated with the traditional ecological heritage of sacred groves, particularly in southern India. The term “Kavu” generally refers to sacred forest patches protected by local communities due to religious and cultural beliefs. In recent times, Kavu Nurseries have gained attention for promoting biodiversity conservation, ecological restoration and community participation.

Ecologically, Kavu ecosystems function as micro biodiversity hotspots. They preserve native flora, medicinal plants, reptiles, birds and pollinators that may otherwise disappear due to urbanisation and deforestation. Since these groves are protected through community traditions rather than state enforcement alone, they represent an important model of community-led conservation.

Kavu Nurseries contribute to ecological restoration by propagating indigenous species adapted to local climatic conditions. Unlike commercial monoculture plantations, such nurseries support ecological balance

and enhance resilience against climate change. They also help in groundwater recharge, soil conservation and maintenance of local hydrological cycles.

From a socio-cultural perspective, Kavu traditions reflect the deep relationship between culture and ecology in Indian civilisation. Sacred groves historically served as community-managed ecological commons where exploitation of resources was regulated through customary norms. This demonstrates how cultural values can reinforce environmental ethics.

The concept also aligns with modern ideas of sustainable development. Contemporary conservation policies increasingly recognise the importance of indigenous knowledge systems and community participation. Kavu Nurseries can support sustainable livelihoods through eco-tourism, medicinal plant cultivation and environmental education.

However, rapid urban expansion, changing lifestyles and weakening traditional institutions threaten these ecosystems. Commercial encroachment and declining community participation have reduced the extent of many sacred groves.

Therefore, conservation of Kavu Nurseries requires integration of traditional ecological knowledge with modern environmental governance. Strengthening local participation, promoting awareness and supporting indigenous conservation practices can make Kavu Nurseries an important instrument for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in India.

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