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DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS

BEST FOR UPSC | UP PCS EXAM

DATE : **AUGUST 31, 2026**



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DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM STATIC PART

Q1. With reference to the Ghadar Movement, consider the following statements:

1. The Ghadar Party's strategy relied primarily on coordinating uprisings within British India rather than mobilizing Indian expatriates abroad.
2. The failure of the planned 1915 uprising was partly due to the infiltration of the movement by British intelligence networks.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) None
- (d) Both are incorrect

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is **incorrect**. The Ghadar Movement was fundamentally an overseas-led revolutionary effort driven by Indian expatriates, particularly in the United States and Canada. Its core strategy was to galvanize the Indian diaspora to return home and trigger a mutiny within the British Indian Army.
- Statement 2 is **correct**. The 1915 uprising failed largely because the British intelligence had deeply penetrated the network, especially through informers like Kirpal Singh, leading to pre-emptive arrests and disruption of the conspiracy. Thus, only one statement is correct.

Q2. Which of the following best explains the concept of a *microendemic* species in habitat ecology?

- (a) A species that is widespread globally but occupies only the uppermost trophic level in each ecosystem.
- (b) A species with an extremely restricted geographical distribution, often confined to a single, localized habitat patch.
- (c) A species that survives only within highly polluted ecological niches due to specialized physiological adaptations.
- (d) A species whose population numbers fluctuate drastically due to predator–prey imbalances across multiple ecosystems.

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- A *microendemic* species is one whose natural distribution is confined to a very small, specific area—often a single hill range, forest patch, island, or watershed.
- Such species are highly vulnerable to habitat alteration. Options (a), (c), and (d) describe other ecological patterns but not microendemism.

Q3. With reference to the economic reforms of 1991, consider the following statements:

1. The relaxation of industrial licensing directly reduced the government's discretionary control, but it simultaneously led to a surge in sector-specific protective tariffs.

2. The devaluation of the rupee in 1991, coupled with trade liberalization measures, contributed to an immediate improvement in the current account balance.
3. Financial sector reforms initiated in 1991 intentionally limited the autonomy of the Reserve Bank of India to manage inflation through monetary tools.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is **incorrect**. Industrial licensing was dismantled, reducing state discretion, but trade policy moved *away* from protectionism. Tariffs were progressively rationalized and reduced; they did not surge.
- Statement 2 is **correct**, but with nuance: trade liberalization and rupee devaluation improved export competitiveness and helped stabilize the external sector in the short run, contributing to better current account management after the crisis.
- Statement 3 is **incorrect**. Financial sector reforms increased—not reduced—the RBI's autonomy. Measures such as phased deregulation of interest rates and reduction of fiscal dominance strengthened monetary policy independence.
→ Therefore, only one statement (Statement 2) is correct.

Q4. Consider the following statements regarding constitutional provisions and institutional design in India:

1. The President's power to require the Council of Ministers to reconsider its advice is discretionary and can be exercised even in matters where the Constitution mandates action "in accordance with" ministerial advice.
2. A Money Bill can be certified only by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, and such certification is final but subject to judicial review on procedural grounds.
3. The Constitution permits both Houses of Parliament to jointly initiate impeachment proceedings against the Chief Justice of India, provided a special majority is ensured in each House.
4. The Concurrent List empowers both Parliament and State Legislatures to make laws; however, if both enact laws on the same subject, the Union law invariably prevails, irrespective of whether it was passed earlier or later.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is **incorrect**. The President may return advice once, but only in matters where such reconsideration is meaningful. Where the Constitution explicitly binds the President to act “in accordance with” ministerial advice (e.g., certain ordinance-related actions), discretion does not apply.
- Statement 2 is **correct** in substance but **incorrect** overall: Speaker’s certification is final **and NOT subject to judicial review**, as reaffirmed in *Rojer Mathew (2019)* though with limited scope for *procedural mala fides* debate. The standard UPSC-aligned interpretation remains that certification is beyond judicial review.
- Statement 3 is **incorrect**. Impeachment of Supreme Court judges (including the CJI) is not a “joint sitting” process. Motions must be introduced in either House and passed separately by each House with a special majority; joint initiation is not permitted.
- Statement 4 is **incorrect**. Union law prevails only in case of *repugnancy*, and even then, a State law can prevail if it receives Presidential assent (except where Parliament later overrides it).
→ Thus, none are correct → but as per options, “Only one” is the closest correct count = **(a)** because UPSC convention treats Statement 2 as technically correct only if judicial review is entirely excluded; here it is not. So zero statements correct → option (a).

Q5. Assertion – Reason type -

Assertion (A): Western coastal plains of India exhibit higher long-term coastal erosion compared to the eastern coastal plains.

Reason (R1): The western coast experiences a narrower continental shelf and higher wave energy concentration than the eastern coast.

Reason (R2): The eastern coast receives larger sediment loads from major rivers, contributing to natural replenishment of beaches.

- (a) A is correct, and both R1 and R2 correctly explain A
- (b) A is correct, but only one of the reasons correctly explains A
- (c) A is correct, but neither R1 nor R2 explains A
- (d) A is incorrect, but both R1 and R2 are correct

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- The western coast—especially segments of Kerala, Karnataka, and Goa—faces higher erosion due to intense wave action, a steeper offshore slope, and a narrow continental shelf.
 - R1 is **correct**: high wave energy and narrow shelf increase erosive force.
 - R2 is **correct**: major rivers like the Ganga, Brahmaputra, Mahanadi, Krishna, and Godavari supply abundant sediments to the eastern coast, contributing to accretion in many stretches.
 - Therefore, A is correct and both reasons together explain the phenomenon.
-

DAILY PRACTICE QUESTIONS FROM CURRENT AFFAIRS PART

Q1. With reference to India's Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Sintered Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (REPM), consider the following statements:

1. The scheme allows 100% sourcing of rare earth oxides from foreign suppliers, provided the final magnet production occurs within India.
2. The scheme specifically aims to reduce import dependence for high-performance magnets used in electric mobility and strategic defence systems.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) None
- (d) Both are incorrect

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect.** REPM manufacturing incentives require **progressive indigenisation** of rare-earth inputs; full reliance on foreign-sourced oxides contradicts the objective of supply-chain security.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** India's REPM incentive framework focuses on magnets essential for **EV motors, drones, satellites, radars, and defence equipment**, aiming to overcome China-dominated supply chains.
→ Hence **only one** statement is correct.

Q2. Auramine O, recently in news, is best described as:

- (a) A bio-indicator used to trace microplastics in littoral ecosystems
- (b) A fluorescent dye used in laboratory detection of acid-fast bacteria
- (c) A stabiliser added to industrial rare-earth refining processes
- (d) A synthetic alkaloid used in treating drug-resistant malaria

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Auramine O** is a **fluorescent dye** employed in the **Auramine–Rhodamine staining technique** to detect *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and other acid-fast bacteria.
- It binds to mycolic acids in the bacterial cell wall and fluoresces under UV microscopy.

Q3. With reference to the Sirpur archaeological site, consider the following statements:

1. Excavations at Sirpur have revealed an integrated Buddhist–Shaiva–Vaishnava settlement pattern, indicating non-sectarian patronage under the Sharabhapuriya and Somavamshi rulers.

2. The Sirpur Buddhist Vihara represents one of the earliest structural monasteries in peninsular India, pre-dating both Nalanda and Vikramashila.
3. Recent findings at Sirpur indicate evidence of a planned urban layout, including a grid-based drainage system and large brick-built civic structures.

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.** Sirpur shows **Buddhist monasteries, Shaiva temples, Vaishnava shrines,** and Jain remains—reflecting a multi-religious urban centre.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect.** Sirpur Vihara is early (6th–8th century CE) but **post-dates** Nalanda's earliest layers (5th century CE).
- **Statement 3 is correct.** Archaeology confirms **planned streets, drainage channels, civic buildings, residential clusters,** and a trading network along the Mahanadi.
→ Thus **two statements** are correct.

Q4. Regarding the IMF's recent assessment giving India a 'C' grade for its National Accounts Statistics, consider the following statements:

1. A 'C' grade implies India's GDP estimation framework lacks methodological soundness rather than transparency or data availability.
2. The IMF's grading system evaluates countries on the UN's Data Quality Assessment Framework (DQAF) parameters, including integrity, methodological consistency, and serviceability.
3. India's transition from using corporate MCA-21 data to traditional Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) data is cited as the key reason for receiving the 'C' grade.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect.** IMF's 'C' grade signals concerns about **data coverage, quality, and transparency,** not solely methodology.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** IMF uses the **DQAF framework,** which evaluates accuracy, integrity, methodological soundness, and revision policy.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect.** India **uses MCA-21 corporate database extensively;** the concern is about **representativeness and classification,** not a shift back to ASI.
→ Only one statement is correct.

Q5. With reference to recent cyclones Ditwah and Senyar over the Arabian Sea, consider the following statements:

1. Both cyclones originated within the Arabian Sea basin, but only one of them achieved ‘Very Severe Cyclonic Storm’ status under IMD classification.
2. Cyclone Ditwah exhibited unusual westward movement due to strong subtropical ridge steering, pushing it toward the Gulf of Aden.
3. Cyclone Senyar intensified rapidly because it formed during a peak warm-anomaly phase associated with the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD).
4. IMD named both cyclones based on a rotational naming list contributed by India and Oman jointly.

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 incorrect.** Ditwah was named by Yemen but **did not intensify** beyond a deep depression; Senyar too remained below “Very Severe” category.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** Ditwah indeed moved **westwards**, unlike typical recurving Arabian Sea storms.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** Senyar’s strengthening coincided with **positive IOD warm anomalies**, supporting cyclogenesis.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect.** Names follow the **WMO/ESCAP list contributed by 13 nations**, not jointly by India & Oman.
→ Two statements are correct.

Q6. Keibul Lamjao National Park, the world’s only floating national park, is located on which water body?

- (a) Loktak Lake
- (b) Sone Beel
- (c) Rudrasagar Lake
- (d) Pulicat Lake

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Keibul Lamjao National Park** in Manipur sits on **phumdis (floating biomass)** inside **Loktak Lake**.
- It is the last natural refuge of **Sangai (Rucervus eldii eldii)**, the dancing deer of Manipur.

SUBJECTIVE QUESTIONS FOR DAILY PRACTICE

GS Paper 1

Q1. “Regional art forms in India represent not just aesthetic traditions but also the socio-economic and political trajectories of the regions in which they evolved.” Discuss with suitable examples.

Sample Answer :

Regional art forms in India are deeply intertwined with their socio-economic milieus, belief systems, ecological settings, and historical processes. These artistic traditions are not isolated aesthetic expressions; rather, they mirror the lived experiences, power structures, cultural negotiations, and economic activities of their regions.

For example, the **Madhubani paintings** of Mithila originated as a domestic ritual art painted on hut walls by women, depicting fertility, auspiciousness, and social obligations. Their geometric precision and natural pigment use reflect the agrarian economy and caste-based occupational structures of Mithila society. The commercialization of Madhubani in the 20th century also mirrors the region's economic hardships and the push toward monetizing traditional skills.

Similarly, **Pattachitra of Odisha** evolved around the Jagannath cult, reflecting the region's theocratic political structure where temple rituals dominated social life. Themes such as Krishna Leela, Dashavatara, and Gita Govinda highlight the syncretic devotional traditions patronized by kings and temple communities.

In western India, **Warli art** of Maharashtra reflects a tribal worldview centered on nature. Its depiction of farming, hunting, and communal festivals illustrates a subsistence economy and collective social organization, free from rigid hierarchies. The circular tarpa dance motifs symbolize the cyclic notion of time in tribal cosmology.

South Indian **Tanjore paintings**, on the other hand, showcase opulence, gold leaf use, and elaborate ornamentation—mirroring the political power and artistic patronage of the Nayak and Maratha rulers. Their themes show how temple-centered polity shaped regional spiritual aesthetics.

Even performing arts demonstrate the relationship between society and artistic expression. **Kathakali** in Kerala evolved under feudal patronage and borrows from martial traditions, reflecting the militarized socio-political environment of medieval Kerala. **Yakshagana** in Karnataka exhibits dramatic storytelling suited for agrarian communities seeking night-long entertainment after daytime labor.

Thus, regional art forms act as socio-historical texts, capturing economic transitions (as in commercialization of folk arts), spiritual movements, caste dynamics, and political patronage. Understanding these art forms therefore provides an interpretive lens into India's diverse civilizational experiences.

GS Paper 2

Q2. Critically examine how India's cooperative federalism is being reshaped by recent fiscal and institutional developments. Do these trends strengthen or weaken the federal architecture?

Sample Answer :

India's federal architecture has always functioned as a dynamic balance between central authority and regional autonomy. Recent fiscal and institutional developments—spanning GST, Finance Commission recommendations, centrally sponsored schemes, and institutional expansions—are significantly reshaping cooperative federalism.

The introduction of the **Goods and Services Tax (GST)** is the most transformative change. By subsuming state taxation powers into a unified tax system and creating the GST Council, India adopted an innovative institutional mechanism for cooperative decision-making. While states gained a platform for consensus-based policymaking, they also lost significant fiscal autonomy. The GST compensation dispute during COVID-19 highlighted structural tensions and asymmetry in bargaining power, raising concerns about centripetal trends.

The **15th Finance Commission's recommendations**—especially performance-based grants, revised devolution formulas, and higher conditionalities—represent a shift from earlier principles of equalization. While these measures incentivize financial discipline and national development priorities, states argue that excessive conditionality dilutes the federal spirit.

The increased reliance on **Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS)** also impacts federal dynamics. Although CSS support national objectives such as health, nutrition, and education, their design and cost-sharing patterns often limit state discretion. States with weaker fiscal capacity are disproportionately affected, widening inter-state disparities.

Institutionally, bodies like **NITI Aayog** promote collaborative governance through sub-groups of chief ministers and cooperative planning. However, critics note that unlike the Planning Commission, NITI Aayog lacks financial authority, reducing states' influence in long-term resource allocation.

On the positive side, platforms like the Inter-State Council and GST Council promote dialogue-driven federalism. Additionally, cooperative responses to crises such as COVID-19 and natural disasters demonstrate the potential of a coordinated federal system.

Overall, the trends reflect a **mixed trajectory**. While institutional mechanisms for consultation have strengthened, **fiscal centralization** and conditionality-based transfers pose challenges to true cooperative federalism. A sustainable federal future will require restoring fiscal balance, empowering states in decision-making, and strengthening institutional forums to ensure that cooperation does not become coercion.

GS Paper 3

Q3. “India’s push for circular economy needs more than policy intent; it requires systemic re-engineering of production, consumption, and waste governance.” Analyse.

Sample Answer :

The circular economy (CE) aims to decouple growth from resource extraction by promoting reuse, recycling, durability, and regenerative design. India’s policy intent is clear—seen in the Plastic Waste Management Rules, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), National Resource Efficiency Policy (draft), and battery recycling guidelines. However, policy intent alone cannot achieve CE unless the entire ecosystem of production, consumption, and waste governance undergoes systemic transformation.

On the **production front**, Indian industries still rely heavily on linear “take–make–dispose” models. Low adoption of eco-design, limited use of secondary raw materials, and large dependence on imported primary materials hinder circularity. MSMEs, which dominate India’s manufacturing landscape, face technological and financial barriers in transitioning to circular practices. Incentives for green technology adoption, recycled-content standards, and tax benefits for circular products are insufficiently developed.

In terms of **consumption patterns**, growing urbanization and rising disposable incomes are increasing material footprint. E-commerce, fast fashion, and single-use plastics amplify waste generation. Public

awareness of circular consumption—such as repair culture, product longevity, and shared mobility—is still nascent. Behavioural economics suggests that nudges, labeling systems, and green certifications could shift consumer preference, but India lacks a coordinated framework.

In **waste governance**, structural issues persist. Although waste segregation is mandated, compliance is low. The informal sector plays a crucial role in recycling but remains poorly integrated into formal waste systems. Inefficiencies in municipal waste collection and inadequate material recovery facilities hamper circular flows. EPR enforcement is improving but remains fragmented, with tracking and verification still weak.

A truly circular economy requires **cross-sectoral coordination**—urban planning, energy systems, water management, agriculture, and industry must align with regenerative principles. Additionally, digital tools (blockchain for traceability, AI for waste sorting) can enhance efficiency. International collaboration, especially through technologies for rare-earth recovery and e-waste recycling, is equally crucial.

Thus, circularity is not merely a technological upgrade but a **holistic redesign of economic behavior and governance**. India's success depends on embedding circular principles across the value chain, supported by strong institutions, financial incentives, and stakeholder participation.

GS Paper 4

Q4. “Civil servants often face ethical dilemmas not between right and wrong but between competing ‘rights’.” Explain this idea and illustrate with examples from public administration.

Sample Answer :

Ethical dilemmas arise when public officials must choose between two morally justifiable options that are mutually incompatible. Unlike clear-cut right–wrong situations, these dilemmas involve conflicts between competing “rights,” such as justice vs. compassion, transparency vs. confidentiality, law vs. equity, or public interest vs. individual rights.

For instance, a district magistrate deciding whether to evict encroachers from public land faces a dilemma: **upholding rule of law** versus **protecting vulnerable livelihoods**. Both principles are ethically sound, yet only one can prevail in a particular action. Ethical resolution requires balancing legality with humane rehabilitation measures.

Another dilemma emerges in **disaster relief allocation**, where resources are limited. Prioritizing the most affected is ethically right, but ensuring equitable distribution across all regions is also right. The officer must decide based on evidence, proportionality, and fairness.

Similarly, whistleblowing presents a conflict between **institutional loyalty** and **public accountability**. Protecting internal confidentiality may be right, but exposing corruption for public good is equally right. Civil servants must apply codes of conduct, values of integrity, and long-term implications to make such decisions.

In policing, dilemmas occur between **public order** and **civil liberties**. Controlling violent protests requires firm action, yet excessive force violates rights. Officers must balance authority with constitutional morality.

Administrative ethics teaches that resolving such dilemmas requires:

- **Rational analysis** of consequences (utilitarianism)
- **Respect for rights and duties** (deontological ethics)

- **Justice-based reasoning**
- **Institutional codes and legal frameworks**
- **Empathy and compassion**
- **Transparency in decision-making**

Training, ethical mentoring, role-playing scenarios, and strong organizational culture equip civil servants to navigate such dilemmas.

Ultimately, ethical governance is less about choosing between “good” and “bad,” and more about **prioritizing values in context-specific situations**. This is what distinguishes ethical competence from mere legal compliance in public administration.

Current Affairs

Q5. Assess the environmental, economic, and safety implications of increasing the use of bamboo scaffolding in India's construction sector. Should it be mainstreamed as a sustainable alternative?

Sample Answer:

Bamboo scaffolding has long been used in parts of Asia, including India, for low-rise constructions and repair works. With rising emphasis on sustainable infrastructure, bamboo is re-emerging as a viable alternative to steel scaffolding. Its implications span environmental, economic, and safety dimensions.

Environmentally, bamboo is one of the fastest-growing renewable biomaterials. It sequesters carbon rapidly, regenerates without replanting, and requires minimal chemical inputs. Compared to steel—which carries a heavy carbon and energy footprint—bamboo offers a significantly lower embodied energy. Promoting bamboo scaffolding aligns with India's commitments to circular economy, sustainable construction, and green building norms. Additionally, bamboo cultivation in tribal and rural areas improves soil stability and biodiversity.

Economically, bamboo scaffolding is **cost-effective**, locally available, and labor-friendly. It reduces dependence on imported steel and promotes rural livelihoods through bamboo farming and processing. The National Bamboo Mission already aims to strengthen bamboo-based value chains; scaffolding can become a high-volume commercial application. For small contractors, bamboo offers affordability and flexibility.

However, **safety concerns** persist. Bamboo has variable strength, is susceptible to moisture, pests, and degradation if not treated properly. Steel remains superior for high-rise buildings where load-bearing precision is critical. Countries like Hong Kong have demonstrated bamboo's safe use even in skyscrapers, but only under strict standards and certification systems. India currently lacks uniform national safety codes for bamboo scaffolding, leading to inconsistent practices.

Mainstreaming bamboo requires:

- Development of **IS standards** for load-bearing capacity, treatment, and durability
- Training programs for construction workers
- Integration with the Smart Cities Mission and green-building codes
- Investment in engineered bamboo composites for enhanced strength
- Ensuring sustainable harvesting to avoid ecological stress

In conclusion, bamboo scaffolding **should be mainstreamed selectively**, especially for low- to mid-rise construction, repair works, and temporary structures. With proper regulatory standards, skilled workforce,

and quality control, bamboo can become a sustainable, economical, and safe alternative that supports both environmental goals and rural economies.

