

GS Paper 1 UPSC 2021: Instructions

- Total Marks: 250 marks, Time duration: 3 hours.
- There are 20 questions printed both in ENGLISH and HINDI.
- All questions are compulsory.
- The number of marks carried by a question/part is printed against it.
- Answers must be written in the medium authorized in the admission certificate which must be stated clearly on the cover of this question-cum-answer (QCA) booklet in the space provided.
- No marks will be given for answers written in the medium other than the authorized one.
- Answers to questions no. 1 to 10 should be in 150 words, whereas answers to questions no. 11 to 20 should be in 250 words.
- Keep the word limit indicated in the questions in mind.
- Any page or portion of the page left blank, must be struck off clearly.
- The content of the answer is more important than its length.

General Studies Paper 1 Question Paper – UPSC Civil Services Main Exam (Written) 2021

- Qn1. Evaluate the nature of the Bhakti Literature and its contribution to Indian culture. (Answer in 150 words) 10
- Qn2. Trace the rise and growth of socio-religious reform movements with special reference to Young Bengal and Brahma Samaj. (Answer in 150 words) 10
- Qn3. Assess the main administrative issues and socio-cultural problems in the integration process of Indian Princely States. (Answer in 150 words) 10
- Qn4. Differentiate the causes of landslides in the Himalayan region and the Western Ghats. (Answer in 150 words) 10
- Qn5. Despite India being one of the countries of the Gondwanaland, its mining industry contributes much less to its Gross Domestic Product(GDP) in percentage. Discuss. (Answer in 150 words) 10
- Qn6. What are the environmental implications of the reclamation of the water bodies into urban land use? Explain with examples. (Answer in 150 words) 10
- Qn7. Mention the global occurrence of volcanic eruptions in 2021 and their impact on the regional environment. (Answer in 150 words) 10
- Qn8. Why is India considered a subcontinent? Elaborate on your answer. (Answer in 150 words) 10
- Qn9. Examine the uniqueness of the tribal knowledge system when compared with mainstream knowledge and cultural systems. (Answer in 150 words) 10
- Qn10. Examine the role of the 'Gig Economy' in the process of empowerment of women in India. (Answer in 150 words) 10
- Qn11. To what extent did the role of the moderates prepare a base for the wider freedom movement? Comment. (Answer in 250 words) 15

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- Qn12. Bring out the constructive programmes of Mahatma Gandhi during Non-Cooperation Movement and Civil Disobedience Movement. (Answer in 250 words) 15
- Qn13. " There arose a serious challenge to the Democratic State System between the two World Wars." Evaluate the statement. (Answer in 250 words) 15
- Qn14. Briefly mention the alignment of major mountain ranges of the world and explain their impact on local weather conditions, with examples. (Answer in 250 words) 15
- Qn15. How does the melting of the Arctic ice and glaciers of the Antarctic differently affect the weather patterns and human activities on the Earth? Explain. (Answer in 250 words) 15
- Qn16. Discuss the multi-dimensional implications of the uneven distribution of mineral oil in the world. (Answer in 250 words) 15
- Qn17. What are the main socio-economic implications arising out of the development of IT industries in major cities of India? (Answer in 250 words) 15
- Qn18. Discuss the main objectives of Population Education and point out the measures to achieve them in India in detail. (Answer in 250 words) 15
- Qn19. What is Cryptocurrency? How does it affect global society? Has it been affecting Indian society also? (Answer in 250 words) 15
- Qn20. How does Indian society maintain continuity in traditional social values? Enumerate the changes taking place in it. (Answer in 250 words) 15



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2020

- 1. The rock-cut architecture represents one of the most important sources of our knowledge of early Indian art and history. Discuss.
- 2. Pala period is the most significant phase in the history of Buddhism in India. Enumerate. (Answer in 150 words)
- 3. Evaluate the policies of Lord Curzon and their long term implications on the national movement. (Answer in 150 words)
- 4. Discuss the geophysical characteristics of Circum-Pacific Zone. (Answer in 150 words)
- 5. The process of desertification does not have climatic boundaries. Justify with examples. (Answer in 150 words)
- 6. How will the melting of Himalayan glaciers have a far-reaching impact on the water resources of India? (Answer in 150 words)
- 7. Account for the present location of iron and steel industries away from the source of raw material, by giving examples. (Answer in 150 words)
- 8. Has caste lost its relevance in understanding the multi-cultural Indian Society? Elaborate your answer with illustrations. (Answer in 150 words)
- 9. COVID-19 pandemic accelerated class inequalities and poverty in India. Comment. (Answer in 150 words)
- 10. Do you agree that regionalism in India appears to be a consequence of rising cultural assertiveness? Argue. (Answer in 150 words)
- 11. Indian philosophy and tradition played a significant role in conceiving and shaping the monuments and their art in India. Discuss. (Answer in 250 words)
- 12. Persian literary sources of medieval India reflect the spirit of the age. Comment. (Answer in 250 words)
- 13. Since the decade of the 1920s, the national movement acquired various ideological strands and thereby expanded its social base. Discuss. (Answer in 250 words)
- 14. The interlinking of rivers can provide viable solutions to the multi-dimensional inter-related problems of droughts, floods and interrupted navigation. Critically examine. (Answer in 250 words)
- 15. Account for the huge flooding of million cities in India including the smart ones like Hyderabad and Pune. Suggest lasting remedial measures. (Answer in 250 words)
- 16. India has immense potential of solar energy though there are regional variations in its development. Elaborate. (Answer in 250 words)
- 17. Examine the status of forest resources of India and its resultant impact on climate change. (Answer in 250 words)
- 18. Is diversity and pluralism in India under threat due to globalisation? Justify your answer. (Answer in 250 words)
- 19. Customs and traditions suppress reason leading to obscurantism. Do you agree? (Answer in 250 words)
- 20. How have digital initiatives in India contributed to the functioning of the education system in the country? Elaborate your answer. (Answer in 250 words)

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2019

Q1. Highlight the Central Asian and Greco-Bactrian elements in Gandhara art.

(Answer in 150 words) 10

Q2. The 1857 Uprising was the culmination of the recurrent big and small local rebellions that had occurred in the preceding hundred years of British rule.

Elucidate. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Q3. Examine the linkages between the nineteenth century's "Indian Renaissance" and the emergence of national identity. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Q4. Assess the impact of global warming on the coral life system with examples.

(Answer in 150 words) 10

Q5. Discuss the causes of depletion of mangroves and explain their importance in maintaining coastal ecology. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Q6. Can the strategy of regional resource-based manufacturing help in promoting employment in India? (Answer in 150 words) 10

Q7. Discuss the factors for the localisation of agro-based food processing industries of North-West India. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Q8. What makes Indian society unique in sustaining its culture? Discuss.

(Answer in 150 words) 10

Q9. "Empowering women is the key to control population growth." Discuss

(Answer in 150 words) 10

Q10. What are the challenges to our cultural practices in the name of secularism?

(Answer in 150 words) 10

Q11. Many voices had strengthened and enriched the nationalist movement during the Gandhian phase. Elaborate. (Answer in 250 words) 15

Q12. Assess the role of British imperial power in complicating the process of transfer of power during the 1940s. (Answer in 250 words) 15

Q13. Explain how the foundation of the modern world was laid by the American and French Revolutions. (Answer in 250 words). 15

Q14. What is water stress? How and why does it differ regionally in India?

(Answer in 250 words) 15

Q15. How can the mountain ecosystem be restored from the negative impact of development initiatives and tourism? (Answer in 250 words) 15

Q16. How is efficient and affordable urban mass transport key to the rapid economic development of India? (Answer in 250 words) 15

Q17. How do ocean currents and water masses differ in their impacts on marine life and the coastal environment? Give suitable examples. (Answer in 250 words) 15

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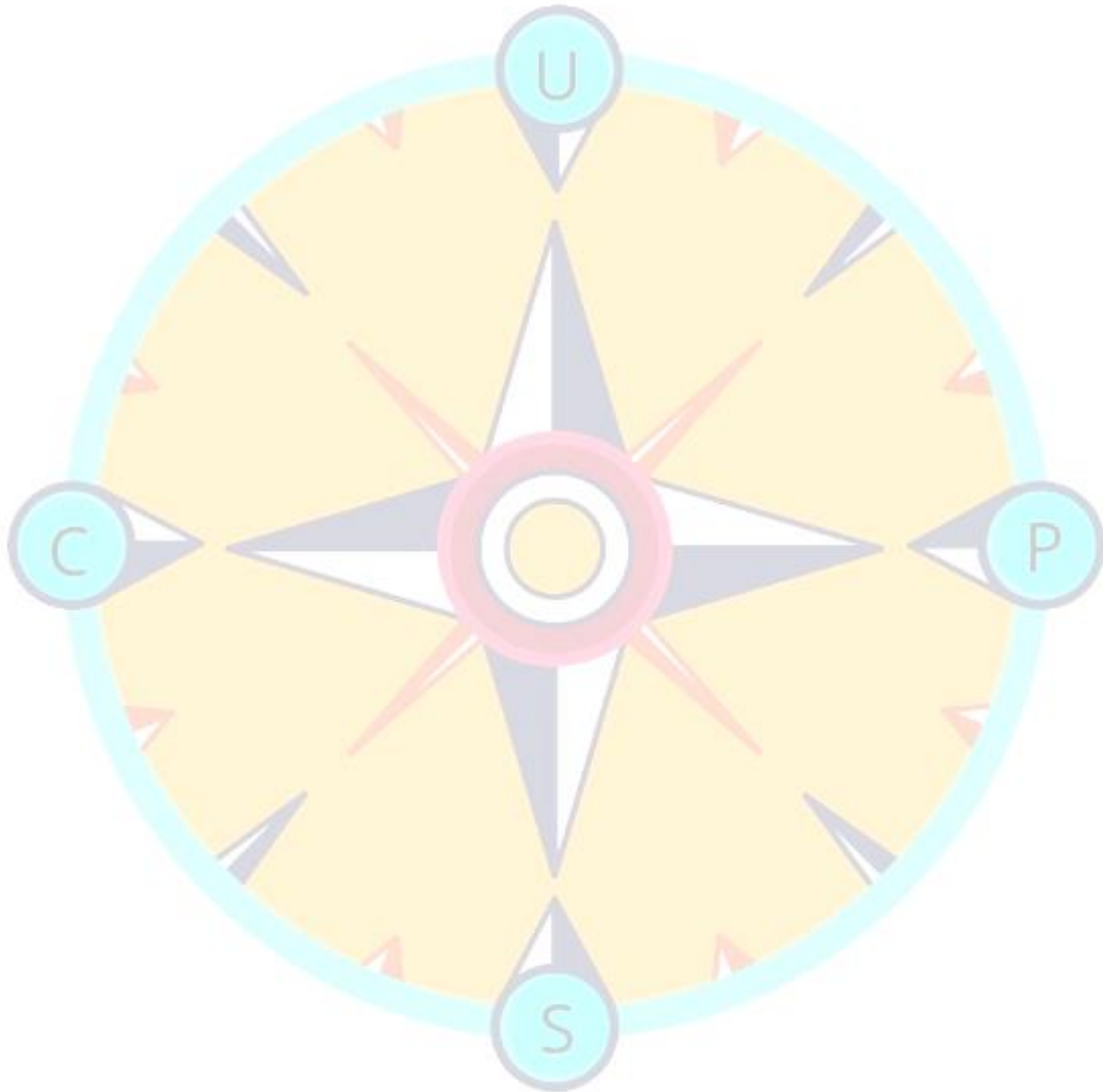
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Q18. Do we have culture pockets of small India all over the nation? Elaborate with examples.
(Answer in 250 words) 15

Q19. What are the continued challenges for women in India against time and space? (Answer in 250 words) 15

Q20. Are we losing our local identity for the global identity? Discuss.

(Answer in 250 words) 15



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2018

- Q.1. Safeguarding the Indian art heritage is the need of the moment. Discuss.
- Q.2. Assess the importance of the accounts of the Chinese and Arab travellers in the reconstruction of the history of India.
- Q.3. Throw light on the significance of the thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi in the present times.
- Q.4. Why is Indian Regional Navigational Satellite System (IRNSS) needed? How does it help in navigation?
- Q.5. Why is India taking a keen interest in resources of the Arctic region?
- Q.6. Define mantle plume and explain its role in plate tectonics.
- Q.7. What are the consequences of spreading 'Dead Zones' on marine ecosystem?
- Q.8. "Caste system is assuming new identities and associational forms. Hence, caste system cannot be eradicated in India." Comment.
- Q.9. 'Despite implementation of various programmes for eradication of poverty by the Government of India, poverty is still existing.' Explain by giving reasons.
- Q.10. How the Indian concept of secularism is different from the western model of secularism? Discuss
- Q.11. The Bhakti movement received a remarkable re-orientation with the advent of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Discuss
- Q.12. Discuss whether formation of new states in recent times is beneficial or not for the economy of India.
- Q.13. Why indentured labour was taken by the British from India to other colonies? Have they been able to preserve their cultural identity over there?
- Q.14. "The ideal solution of depleting ground water resources in India is water harvesting system." How can it be made effective in urban areas?
- Q.15. Defining blue revolution, explain the problems and strategies for pisciculture development in India.
- Q.16. What is the significance of Industrial Corridors in India? Identifying industrial corridors, explain their main characteristics.
- Q.17. Mention core strategies for the transformation of aspirational districts in India and explain the nature of convergence, collaboration and competition for its success.
- Q.18. 'Women's movement in India has not addressed the issues of women of lower social strata.' Substantiate your view.
- Q.19. 'Globalization is generally said to promote cultural homogenization but due to these cultural specificities appear to be strengthened in the Indian Society' Elucidate.
- Q.20. 'Communalism arises either due to power struggle or relative deprivation.' Argue by giving suitable illustrations.

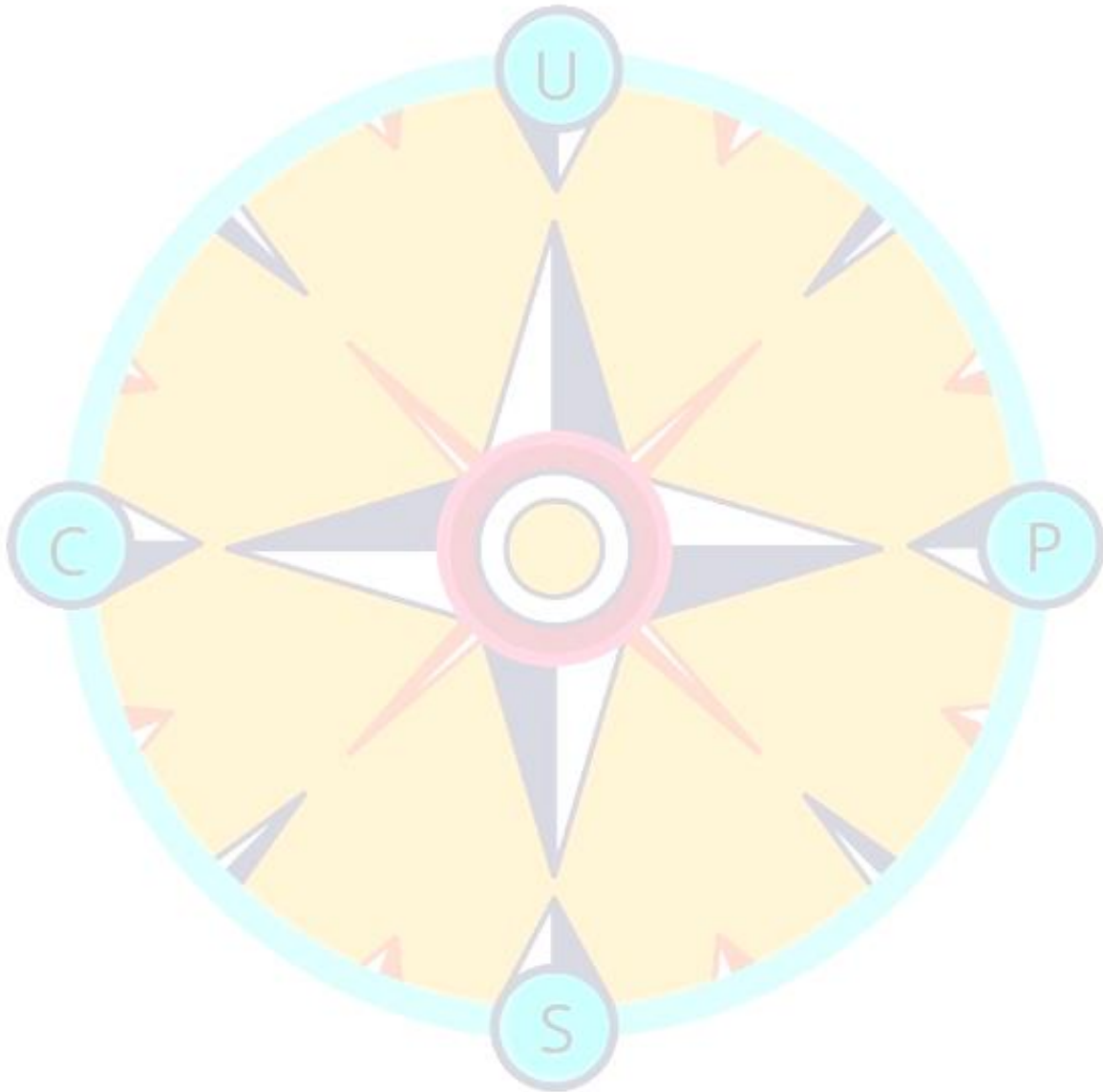
2017

- How do you justify the view that the level of excellence of the Gupta numismatic art is not at all noticeable in later times? (150 words, 10 marks)
- Clarify how mid-eighteenth-century India was beset with the spectre of a fragmented polity. (150 words, 10 marks)
- Why did the 'Moderates' fail to carry conviction with the nation about their proclaimed ideology and political goals by the end of the nineteenth century? (150 words, 10 marks)
- What problems are germane to the decolonization process in the Malay Peninsula? (150 words, 10 marks)
- How does the Juno Mission of NASA help to understand the origin and evolution of the Earth? (150 words, 10 marks)
- "In spite of adverse environmental impact, coal mining is still inevitable for development". Discuss (150 words, 10 marks)
- Mention the advantages of the cultivation of pulses because of which the year 2016 was declared as the International Year of Pulses by United Nations. (150 words, 10 marks)
- How does the cryosphere affect global climate? (150 words, 10 marks)
- In the context of the diversity of India, can it be said that the regions form cultural units rather than the States? Give reasons with examples for your viewpoint. (150 words, 10 marks)
- What are the two major legal initiatives by the State since Independence addressing discrimination against Scheduled Tribes (STs)? (150 words, 10 marks)
- The spirit of tolerance and love is not only an interesting feature of Indian society from very early times, but it is also playing an important part at the present. Elaborate. (250 words, 15 marks)
- Examine how the decline of traditional artisanal industry in colonial India crippled the rural economy. (250 words, 15 marks)
- Highlight the importance of the new objectives that got added to the vision of Indian Independence since the twenties of the last century. (250 words, 15 marks)
- Account for variations in oceanic salinity and discuss its multi-dimensional effects. (250 words, 15 marks)
- Petroleum refineries are not necessarily located nearer to crude oil producing areas, particularly in many of the developing countries. Explain its implications. (250 words, 15 marks)
- In what way can floods be converted into a sustainable source of irrigation and all-weather inland navigation in India? (250 words, 15 marks)
- What characteristics can be assigned to monsoon climate that succeeds in feeding more than 50 percent of the world population residing in Monsoon Asia? (250 words, 15 marks)
- The women's questions arose in modern India as a part of the 19th-century social reform movement. What are the major issues and debates concerning women in that period? (250 words, 15 marks)

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- Distinguish between religiousness/religiosity and communalism giving one example of how the former has got transformed into the latter in independent India. (250 words, 15 marks)
- “The growth of cities as I.T. hubs has opened up new avenues of employment, but has also created new problems”. Substantiate this statement with examples (250 words, 15 marks)



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2016

- Q1. Early Buddhist Stupa-art, while depicting folk motifs and narratives successfully expounds Buddhist ideals. Elucidate.
- Q2. Krishnadeva Raya, the King of Vijayanagar, was not only an accomplished scholar himself but was also a great patron of learning and literature. Discuss.
- Q3. Explain how the Uprising of 1857 constitutes an important watershed in the evolution of British policies towards colonial India.
- Q4. Discuss the role of women in the freedom struggle especially during the Gandhian phase.
- Q5. Highlight the differences in the approach of Subhash Chandra Bose and Mahatma Gandhi in the struggle for freedom.
- Q6. Has the formation of linguistic States strengthened the cause of Indian Unity?
- Q7. The anti-colonial struggles in West Africa were led by the new elite of Western-educated Africans. Examine.
- Q8. To what extent globalization has influenced the core of cultural diversity in India? Explain.
- Q9. "An essential condition to eradicate poverty is to liberate the poor from the process of deprivation." Substantiate this statement with suitable examples.
- Q10. Why are the tribals in India referred to as the Scheduled Tribes? Indicate the major provisions enshrined in the Constitution of India for their upliftment.
- Q11. With a brief background of quality of urban life in India, introduce the objectives and strategy of the 'Smart City Programme'.
- Q12. What is the basis of regionalism? Is it that unequal distribution of benefits of development on regional basis eventually promotes regionalism? Substantiate your answer.
- Q13. Discuss the concept of air mass and explain its role in macro-climatic changes.
- Q14. "The Himalayas are highly prone to landslides." Discuss the causes and suggest suitable measures of mitigation.
- Q15. The effective management of land and water resources will drastically reduce the human miseries. Explain
- Q16. South China Sea has assumed great geopolitical significance in the present context. Comment.
- Q17. Major cities of India are becoming more vulnerable to flood conditions. Discuss.
- Q18. Present an account of the Indus Water Treaty and examine its ecological, economic and political implications in the context of changing bilateral relations.
- Q19. Enumerate the problems and prospects of inland water transport in India.
- Q20. In what way micro-watershed Development projects help in water conservation in drought prone and semi-arid regions of India?

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2015

- The ancient civilization in Indian sub continent differed from those of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Greece in that its culture and traditions have been preserved without breakdown to the present day. Comment.
- Mesolithic rock cut architecture of India not only reflects the cultural life of the times but also a fine aesthetic sense comparable to modern painting. Critically evaluate this comment.
- How difficult would have been the achievement of Indian independence without Mahatma Gandhi? Discuss.
- Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B R Ambedkar, despite having divergent approaches and strategies, had a common goal of amelioration of the downtrodden. Elucidate.
- It would have been difficult for the Constituent Assembly to complete its historic task of drafting the Constitution for Independent India in just three years, but its experience gained with the Government of India Act, 1935 .Discuss.
- Why did the industrial revolution first occur in England? Discuss the quality of life of the people there during the industrialization. How does it compare with that in India at present times?
- To what extent can Germany be held responsible for causing the two World Wars? Discuss critically.
- Describe any four cultural elements of diversity in India and rate their relative significance in building a national identity.
- Critically examine whether growing population is the cause of poverty OR poverty is the mains cause of population increase in India.
- How do you explain the statistics that show that the sex ratio in Tribes in India is more favourable to women than the sex ratio among Scheduled Castes?
- Discuss the changes in the trends of labour migration within and outside India in the last four decades.
- Discuss the positive and negative effects of globalization on women in India?
- Debate the issue whether and how contemporary movements for assertion of Dalit identity work towards annihilation of caste.
- Explain the factors responsible for the origin of ocean currents. How do they influence regional climates, fishing and navigation?
- Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata are the three Mega cities of the country but the air pollution is much more serious problem in Delhi as compared to the other two. Why is this so?
- India is well endowed with fresh water resources. Critically examine why it still suffers from water scarcity.
- The states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand are reaching the limits of ecological carrying capacity due to tourism. Critically evaluate.
- How far do you agree that the behaviour of the Indian monsoon has been changing due to humanizing landscape? Discuss.
- Smart cities in India cannot sustain without smart villages. Discuss this statement in the backdrop of rural urban integration.
- What are the economic significance of discovery of oil in Arctic Sea and its possible environmental consequences?

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