

## GS Paper 2 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 2 Question Paper – UPSC Civil Services Main Exam (Written) 2021

- Q1. 'Constitutional Morality' is rooted in the Constitution itself and is founded on its essential facets. Explain the doctrine of 'Constitutional Morality' with the help of relevant judicial decisions. (150 words – 10 marks)
- Q2. Discuss the desirability of greater representation to women in the higher judiciary to ensure diversity, equity and inclusiveness. (150 words – 10 marks)
- Q3. How have the recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission of India enabled the states to improve their fiscal position? (150 words – 10 marks)
- Q4. To what extent, in your view, the Parliament is able to ensure accountability of the executive in India? (150 words – 10 marks)
- Q5. "Pressure groups play a vital role in influencing public policy making in India." Explain how the business associations contribute to public policies. (150 words – 10 marks)
- Q6. "Besides being a moral imperative of Welfare State, primary health structure is a necessary pre-condition for sustainable development." Analyse. (150 words – 10 marks)
- Q7. "'Earn while you learn' scheme needs to be strengthened to make vocational education and skill training meaningful." Comment. (150 words – 10 marks)
- Q8. Can the vicious cycle of gender inequality, poverty and malnutrition be broken through microfinancing of women SHGs? Explain with examples. (150 words – 10 marks)
- Q9. "If the last few decades were of Asia's growth story, the next few are expected to be of Africa's." In the light of this statement, examine India's influence in Africa in recent years. (150 words – 10 marks)
- Q10. "The USA is facing an existential threat in the form of a China, that is much more challenging than the erstwhile Soviet Union." Explain. (150 words – 10 marks)

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- Q11. The jurisdiction of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) regarding lodging an FIR and conducting probe within a particular state is being questioned by various States. However, the power of States to withhold consent to the CBI is not absolute. Explain with special reference to the federal character of India. (250 words – 15 marks)
- Q12. Though the Human Rights Commissions have contributed immensely to the protection of human rights in India, yet they have failed to assert themselves against the mighty and powerful. Analysing their structural and practical limitations, suggest remedial measures. (250 words – 15 marks)
- Q13. Analyse the distinguishing features of the notion of Equality in the Constitutions of the USA and India. (250 words – 15 marks)
- Q14. Explain the constitutional provisions under which Legislative Councils are established. Review the working and current status of Legislative Councils with suitable illustrations. (250 words – 15 marks)
- Q15. Do Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees keep the administration on its toes and inspire reverence for parliamentary control? Evaluate the working of such committees with suitable examples. (250 words – 15 marks)
- Q16. Has digital illiteracy, particularly in rural areas, couple with lack of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) accessibility hindered socio-economic development? Examine with justification. (250 words – 15 marks)
- Q17. “Though women in post-Independent India have excelled in various fields, the social attitude towards women and the feminist movement has been patriarchal.” Apart from women education and women empowerment schemes, what interventions can help change this milieu? (250 words – 15 marks)
- Q18. Can Civil Society and Non-Governmental Organizations present an alternative model of public service delivery to benefit the common citizen? Discuss the challenges of this alternative model. (250 words – 15 marks)
- Q19. Critically examine the aims and objectives of SCO. what importance does it hold for India? (250 words – 15 marks)
- Q20. The newly tri-nation partnership AUKUS is aimed at countering China’s ambitions in the Indo-Pacific region. Is it going to supersede the existing partnerships in the region? Discuss the strength and impact of AUKUS in the present scenario. (250 words – 15 marks)

2020

- “There is a need for simplification of procedure for disqualification of persons found guilty of corrupt practices under the Representation of Peoples Act.” Comment. (150 words, 10 marks)
- “Recent amendments to the Right to Information Act will have profound impact on the autonomy and independence of the Information Commission.” Discuss. (150 words, 10 marks)
- How far do you think cooperation, competition and confrontation have shaped the nature of federation in India? Cite some recent examples to validate your answer. (150 words, 10 marks)

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- The judicial systems in India and UK seem to be converging as well as diverging in recent times. Highlight the key points of convergence and divergence between the two nations in terms of their judicial practices. (150 words, 10 marks)
- 'Once a Speaker, Always a Speaker!' Do you think this practice should be adopted to impart objectivity to the office of the Speaker of Lok Sabha? What could be its implications for the robust functioning of parliamentary business in India? (150 words, 10 marks)
- In order to enhance the prospects of social development, sound and adequate health care policies are needed particularly in the fields of geriatric and maternal health care. Discuss. (150 words, 10 marks)
- "Institutional quality is a crucial driver of economic performance." In this context suggest reforms in Civil Service for strengthening democracy. (150 words, 10 marks)
- "The emergence of Fourth Industrial Revolution (Digital Revolution) has initiated e-Governance as an integral part of government." Discuss. (150 words, 10 marks)
- Critically examine the role of WHO in providing global health security during the Covid-19 pandemic. (150 words, 10 marks)
- 'Indian diaspora has a decisive role to play in the politics and economy of America and European Countries.' Comment with examples. (150 words, 10 marks)
- Indian Constitution exhibits centralising tendencies to maintain unity and integrity of the nation. Elucidate in the perspective of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897, the Disaster Management Act, 2005 and recently passed Farm Acts. (250 words, 15 marks)
- Judicial Legislation is antithetical to the doctrine of separation of powers as envisaged in the Indian Constitution. In this context justify the filing of large number of public interest petitions praying for issuing guidelines to executive authorities. (250 words, 15 marks)
- The strength and sustenance of local institutions in India has shifted from their formative phase of 'Functions, Functionaries and Funds' to the contemporary stage of 'Functionality'. Highlight the critical challenges faced by local institutions in terms of their functionality in recent times. (250 words, 15 marks)
- Rajya Sabha has been transformed from a 'useless stepney tyre' to the most useful supporting organ in past few decades. Highlight the factors as well as the areas in which this transformation could be visible. (250 words, 15 marks)
- Which steps are required for constitutionalization of a Commission? Do you think imparting constitutionality to the National Commission for Women would ensure greater gender justice and empowerment in India? Give reasons. (250 words, 15 marks)
- "The incidence and intensity of poverty are more important in determining poverty based on income alone." In this context analyse the latest United Nations Multidimensional Poverty Index Report. (250 words, 15 marks)
- "Micro-Finance as an anti-poverty vaccine, is aimed at asset creation and income security of the rural poor in India." Evaluate the role of the Self Help Groups in achieving the twin objectives along with empowering women in rural India. (250 words, 15 marks)
- National Education Policy 2020 is in conformity with the Sustainable Development Goal-4 (2030). It intends to restructure and reorient education system in India. Critically examine this statement. (250 words, 15 marks)
- 'Quadilateral Security Dialogue (Quad)' is transforming itself into a trade bloc from a military alliance, in present times – Discuss. (250 words, 15 marks)



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- What is the significance of Indo-US defence deals over Indo-Russian defence deals? Discuss with reference to stability in the Indo-Pacific region. (250 words, 15 marks)

2019

- Do you think that constitution of India does not accept principle of strict separation of powers rather it is based on the principle of 'checks and balance'? Explain.(10)
- "The Central Administration Tribunal which was established for redressal of grievances and complaints by or against central government employees, nowadays is exercising its powers as an independent judicial authority." Explain.(10)
- What are the methods used by the Farmers organizations to influence the policy-makers in India and how effective are these methods? (10)
- From the resolution of contentious issues regarding distribution of legislative powers by the courts, 'Principle of Federal Supremacy' and 'Harmonious Construction' have emerged. Explain.(10)
- What can France learn from the Indian Constitution's approach to secularism?(10)
- Despite Consistent experience of High growth, India still goes with the lowest indicators of human development. Examine the issues that make balanced and inclusive development elusive.(10)
- There is a growing divergence in the relationship between poverty and hunger in India. The shrinking of social expenditure by the government is forcing the poor to spend more on Non- Food essential items squeezing their food – budget.- Elucidate.(10)
- Implementation of information and Communication Technology (ICT) based Projects / Programmes usually suffers in terms of certain vital factors. Identify these factors, and suggest measures for their effective implementation.(10)
- 'The time has come for India and Japan to build a strong contemporary relationship, one involving global and strategic partnership that will have a great significance for Asia and the world as a whole.' Comment.(10)
- 'Too little cash, too much politics, leaves UNESCO fighting for life.' Discuss the statement in the light of US' withdrawal and its accusation of the cultural body as being 'anti-Israel bias'.(10)
- On what grounds a people's representative can be disqualified under the Representation of People Act, 1951? Also mention the remedies available to such person against his disqualification.(15)
- "Parliament's power to amend the Constitution is a limited power and it cannot be enlarged into absolute power." In the light of this statement explain whether Parliament under Article 368 of the Constitution can destroy the Basic Structure of the Constitution by expanding its amending power?(15)
- "The reservation of seats for women in the institutions of local self- government has had a limited impact on the patriarchal character of the Indian Political Process." Comment.(15)
- "The Attorney-General is the chief legal adviser and lawyer of the Government of India." Discuss.(15)
- Individual Parliamentarian's role as the national lawmaker is on a decline, which in turn, has adversely impacted the quality of debates and their outcome. Discuss.(15)

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- 'In the context of neo-liberal paradigm of development planning, multi-level planning is expected to make operations cost effective and remove many implementation blockages.'-Discuss.(15)
- The need for cooperation among various service sector has been an inherent component of development discourse. Partnership bridges bring the gap among the sectors. It also sets in motion a culture of 'Collaboration' and 'team spirit'. In the light of statements above examine India's Development process.(15)
- Performance of welfare schemes that are implemented for vulnerable sections is not so effective due to absence of their awareness and active involvement at all stages of policy process – Discuss.(15)
- "The long-sustained image of India as a leader of the oppressed and marginalised Nations has disappeared on account of its new found role in the emerging global order" Elaborate(15)
- "What introduces friction into the ties between India and the United States is that Washington is still unable to find for India a position in its global strategy, which would satisfy India's National self- esteem and ambitions" Explain with suitable examples.(15)

2018

- In the light of recent controversy regarding the use of Electronic Voting Machines (EVM), what are the challenges before the Election Commission of India to ensure the trustworthiness of elections in India? (10)
- Whether National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) can enforce the implementation of constitutional reservation for the Scheduled Castes in the religious minority institutions? Examine. (10)
- Under what circumstances can the Financial Emergency be proclaimed by the President of India? What consequences follow when such a declaration remains in force? (10)
- Why do you think the committees are considered to be useful for parliamentary work? Discuss, in this context, the role of the Estimates Committee. (10)
- "The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has a very vital role to play." Explain how this is reflected in the method and terms of his appointment as well as the range of powers he can exercise. (10)
- "Policy contradictions among various competing sectors and stakeholders have resulted in inadequate 'protection and prevention of degradation to environment.'" Comment with relevant illustrations.
- Appropriate local community level healthcare intervention is a prerequisite to achieve 'Health for All' in India. Explain.
- E-governance is not only about utilization of the power of new technology, but also much about critical importance of the 'use value' of information. Explain. (10)
- "India's relations with Israel have, of late, acquired a depth and diversity, which cannot be rolled back." Discuss. (10)
- A number of outside powers have entrenched themselves in Central Asia, which is a zone of interest to India. Discuss the implications, in this context, of India's joining the Ashgabat Agreement, 2018. (10)

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- Whether the Supreme Court Judgement (July 2018) can settle the political tussle between the Lt. Governor and elected government of Delhi? Examine. (15)
- How far do you agree with the view that tribunals curtail the jurisdiction of ordinary courts? In view of the above, discuss the constitutional validity and competency of the tribunals in India. (15)
- Indian and USA are two large democracies. Examine the basic tenets on which the two political systems are based.
- How is the Finance Commission of India constituted? What do you know about the terms of reference of the recently constituted Finance Commission? Discuss. (15)
- Assess the importance of the Panchayat system in India as a part of local government. Apart from government grants, what sources the Panchayats can look out for financing developmental projects? (15)
- Multiplicity of various commissions for the vulnerable sections of the society leads to problems of overlapping jurisdiction and duplication of functions. Is it better to merge all commissions into an umbrella Human Rights Commission? Argue your case. (15)
- How far do you agree with the view that the focus on lack of availability of food as the main cause of hunger takes the attention away from ineffective human development policies in India? (15)
- The Citizen's Charter is an ideal instrument of organisational transparency and accountability, but it has its own limitations. Identify the limitations and suggest measures for greater effectiveness of the Citizen's Charters. (15)
- What are the key areas of reform if the WTO has to survive in the present context of 'Trade War', especially keeping in mind the interest of India? (15)
- In what ways would the ongoing US-Iran Nuclear Pact Controversy affect the national interest of India? How should India respond to its situation? (15)

2017

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- "The local self-government system in India has not proved to be an effective instrument of governance". Critically examine the statement and give your views to improve the situation. (150 words)
- Critically examine the Supreme Court's judgement on 'National Judicial Appointments Commission Act, 2014' with reference to the appointment of judges of higher judiciary in India. (150 words)
- 'Simultaneous election to the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies will limit the amount of time and money spent in electioneering but it will reduce the government's accountability to the people' Discuss. (150 words)

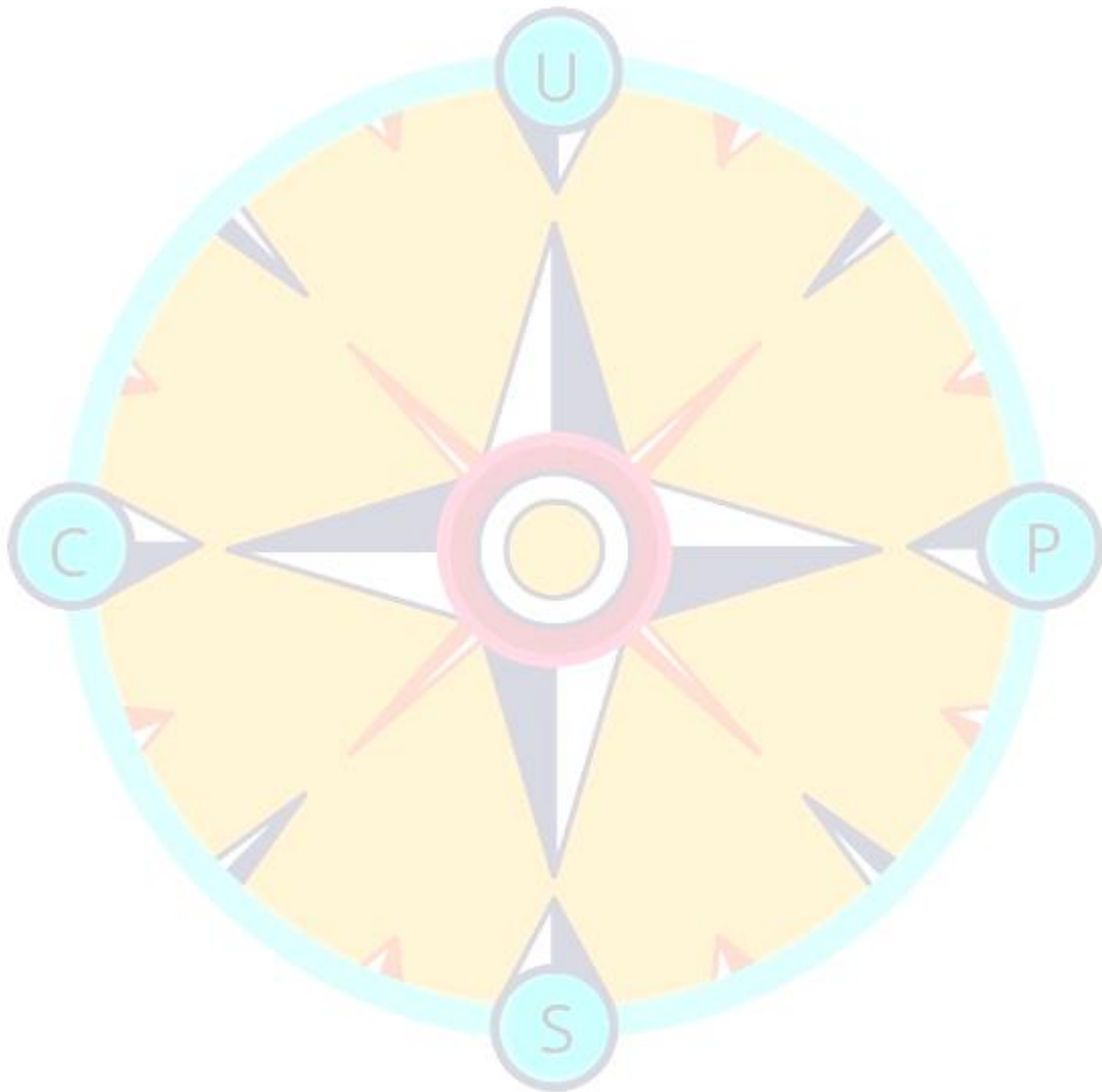


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- How do pressure groups influence Indian political process? Do you agree with this view that informal pressure groups have emerged as powerful than formal pressure groups in recent years? (150 words)
- Discuss the role of Public Accounts Committee in establishing accountability of the government to the people. (150 words)
- 'To ensure effective implementation of policies addressing water, sanitation and hygiene needs, the identification of beneficiary segments is to be synchronized with the anticipated outcomes' Examine the statement in the context of the WASH scheme. (150 words)
- Does the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 ensure an effective mechanism for empowerment and inclusion of the intended beneficiaries in the society? Discuss (150 words)
- Hunger and Poverty are the biggest challenges for good governance in India still today. Evaluate how far successive governments have progressed in dealing with these humongous problems. Suggest measures for improvement. (150 words)
- 'China is using its economic relations and positive trade surplus as tools to develop potential military power status in Asia', In the light of this statement, discuss its impact on India as her neighbour. (150 words)
- What are the main functions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)? Explain different functional commissions attached to it. (150 words)
- Explain the salient features of the Constitution (One Hundred and First Amendment) Act, 2016. Do you think it is efficacious enough 'to remove cascading effect of taxes and provide for a common national market for goods and services'? (250 words)
- Examine the scope of Fundamental Rights in the light of the latest judgement of the Supreme Court on Right to Privacy. (250 words)
- The Indian Constitution has provisions for holding a joint session of the two houses of the Parliament. Enumerate the occasions when this would normally happen and also the occasions when it cannot, with reasons thereof. (250 words)
- To enhance the quality of democracy in India the Election Commission of India has proposed electoral reforms in 2016. What are the suggested reforms and how far are they significant to make democracy successful? (250 words)
- Is the National Commission for Women able to strategize and tackle the problems that women face at both public and private spheres? Give reasons in support of your answer. (250 words)
- 'The emergence of Self Help Groups (SHGs) in contemporary times points to the slow but steady withdrawal of the state from developmental activities'. Examine the role of the SHGs in developmental activities and the measures taken by the Government of India to promote the SHGs. (250 words)
- 'Poverty Alleviation Programmes in India remain mere show pieces until and unless they are backed by political will'. Discuss with reference to the performance of the major poverty alleviation programmes in India. (250 words)
- Initially, Civil Services in India were designed to achieve the goals of neutrality and effectiveness, which seems to be lacking in the present context. Do you agree with the view that drastic reforms are required in Civil Services? Comment (250 words)
- The question of India's Energy Security constitutes the most important part of India's economic progress. Analyze India's energy policy cooperation with West Asian Countries. (250 words)
- Indian Diaspora has an important role to play in South-East Asian countries' economy and society. Appraise the role of Indian Diaspora in South- East Asia in this context (250 words)

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2016

- Discuss the essentials of the 69th Constitutional Amendment Act and anomalies, if any, that have led to recent reported conflicts between the elected representatives and the institution of the Lieutenant Governor in the administration of Delhi. Do you think that this will give rise to a new trend in the functioning of the Indian federal politics?
- To what extent is Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, bearing marginal note “temporary provision with respect to the State of Jammu and Kashmir”, temporary? Discuss the future prospects of this provision in the context of Indian polity.
- “The Indian party system is passing through a phase of transition which looks to be full of contradictions and paradoxes.” Discuss.
- Exercise of CAG’s powers in relation to the accounts of the Union and the States is derived from Article 149 of the Indian Constitution. Discuss whether audit of the Government’s policy implementation could amount to overstepping its own (CAG) jurisdiction.
- Discuss each adjective attached to the word ‘Republic’ in the ‘Preamble’. Are they defensible in the present circumstances?
- What was held in the Coelho case? In this context, can you say that judicial review is of key importance amongst the basic features of the Constitution?
- Did the Government of India Act, 1935 lay down a federal constitution? Discuss.
- What is quasi judicial body? Explain with the help of concrete examples.
- Professor Amartya Sen has advocated important reforms in the realms of primary education and primary health care. What are your suggestions to improve their status and performance?
- “In the Indian governance system, the role of non-state actors has been only marginal.” Critically examine this statement.
- “Effectiveness of the government system at various levels and people’s participation in the governance system are inter-dependent/” Discuss their relationship in the context of India.
- In the integrity index of Transparency International, India stands very low. Discuss briefly the legal, political, social and cultural factors that have caused the decline of public morality in India.
- Has the Indian governmental system responded adequately to the demands of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization started in 1991? What can the government do to be responsive to this important change?
- “Traditional bureaucratic structure and culture have hampered the process of socio-economic development in India.” Comment.
- Examine the main provisions of the National Child Policy and throw light on the status of its implementation.
- “Demographic Dividend in India will remain only theoretical unless our manpower becomes more educated, aware, skilled and creative.” What measures have been taken by the government to enhance the capacity of our population to be more productive and employable?
- “The broader aims and objectives of WTO are to manage and promote international trade in the era of globalization. But the Doha round of negotiations seem doomed

due to differences between the developed and the developing countries.” Discuss in the Indian perspective.

- Evaluate the economic and strategic dimensions of India’s Look East Policy in the context of the post Cold War international scenario.
- “Increasing cross-border terrorist attacks in India and growing interference in the internal affairs of member-states by Pakistan are not conducive for the future of SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation).” Explain with suitable examples.
- What are the aims and objectives of the McBride Commission of the UNESCO? What is India’s position on these?

2015

- Discuss the possible factors that inhibit India from enacting for its citizen a uniform civil code as provided for in the Directive Principles of State Policy.
- The concept of cooperative federalism has been increasingly emphasised in recent years. Highlight the drawbacks in the existing structure and extent to which cooperative federalism would answer the shortcomings.
- In the absence of well – educated and organised local level government system, Panchayats and Samitis have remained mainly political institutions and not effective instrument of governance. Critically Discuss.
- Khap panchayats have been in the news for functioning as extra – constitutional authorities, often delivering pronouncements amounting to human right violations. Discuss critically the actions taken by the legislative, executive and judiciary to set the things right in this regard.
- Resorting to ordinances has always raised concern on violation of the spirit of separation of power doctrine. While noting the rationales justifying the power to promulgate, analyse whether the decision of the Supreme Court on the issue have further facilitated to resorting to this power. Should the power to promulgate the ordinances be repealed?
- What are the major changes brought in the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1966 through the recent ordinance promulgated by the President? How far will it improve India’s dispute resolution mechanism? Discuss.
- Does the right to clean environment entail legal regulation on burning crackers during Diwali? Discuss in the light of Article 21 of Indian Constitution and judgements of the apex in this regard.
- Examine critically the recent changes in the rule governing foreign funding of NGOs under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 1976.
- The Self Help Group (SHG) Bank Linkage Program (SBLP), which is India’s own innovation , has proved to be one of the most effective poverty alleviation and women empowerment programme. Elucidate.
- How can be the role of NGOs be strengthened in India for development works relating to protection of the Environment? Discuss throwing light on the major constraints.
- The quality of higher education in India requires major improvement to make it internationally competitive. Do you think that the entry of foreign educational institutions would help improve the quality of technical and higher education in the country. Discuss.

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- Public health system has limitation in providing universal health coverage. Do you think that private sector can help in bridging the gap? What other viable alternatives do you suggest?
- Though there have been several different estimates of poverty in India, all indicate reduction in poverty over time. Do you agree. Critically examine with reference to urban and rural poverty indicators.
- In the light of Satyam Scandal (2009), discuss the changes brought in the corporate governance to ensure transparency and accountability.
- If amendment bill to the Whistleblowers Protection Act 2011 tabled in the Parliament is passed, there maybe no one left to protect. Critically Evaluate.
- For achieving the desired objectives, it is necessary to ensure that the regulatory institutions remain independent and autonomous. Discuss in the light of experiences in recent past.
- Increasing interest of India in Africa has its pro and cons. Critically Examine.
- Discuss the impediments India is facing in its pursuit of a permanent seat in UNSC.
- Project 'Mausam' is considered a unique foreign policy initiative of Indian government to improve relationship with its neighbours. Does the project have a strategic dimension? Discuss
- Terrorist activities and mutual distrust have clouded India – Pakistan relations. To what extent the use of soft power like sports and cultural exchange could help generate goodwill between the two countries. Discuss with suitable examples.

