

IAS MAINS 2015 GENERAL STUDIES PAPERS

Paper I - Essay

Write TWO Essays, choosing ONE from each of the Sections A and B, in about 1000-1200 words each: $125 \times 2 =$ Total 250 marks

Section A

1. Lending hands to someone is better than giving a dole
2. Quick but steady wins the race
3. Character of an institution is reflected in its leader.
4. Education without values, as useful as it is, seems rather to make a man more clever devil.

Section B

1. Technology cannot replace man power
2. Crisis faced in India – moral or economic
3. Dreams which should not let India sleep
4. Can capitalism bring inclusive growth

Instructions: Answer the following questions in not more than 200 words each. Contents of the answers are more important than their length. All questions carry equal marks.

Note: Each question carries 12.5 Marks ($12.5 \times 20 = 250$ Marks)

Duration: 3 hours

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| Paper II | General Studies I | Indian Heritage and Culture, History and Geography of the World and Society | 250 Marks |
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1. 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 (12.5M)
2. 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. (12.5M)
3. How difficult would have been the achievement of Indian independence without Mahatma Gandhi? Discuss.
4. Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B R Ambedkar, despite having divergent approaches and strategies, had a common goal of amelioration of the downtrodden. Elucidate. (12.5M)
5. 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.(12.5M)
6. 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?
7. To what extent can Germany be held responsible for causing the two World Wars? Discuss critically.

8. Describe any four cultural elements of diversity in India and rate their relative significance in building a national identity.
9. Critically examine whether growing population is the cause of poverty OR poverty is the main cause of population increase in India.
10. 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?
11. Discuss the changes in the trends of labour migration within and outside India in the last four decades.
12. Discuss the positive and negative effects of globalization on women in India?
13. Debate the issue whether and how contemporary movements for assertion of Dalit identity work towards annihilation of caste.
14. Explain the factors responsible for the origin of ocean currents. How do they influence regional climates, fishing and navigation?
15. 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?
16. India is well endowed with fresh water resources. Critically examine why it still suffers from water scarcity.
17. The states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand are reaching the limits of iconological carrying capacity due to tourism. Critically evaluate.
18. How far do you agree that the behaviour of the Indian monsoon has been changing due to humanizing landscape? Discuss.
19. Smart cities in India cannot sustain without smart villages. Discuss this statement in the backdrop of rural urban integration.
20. What are the economic significances of discovery of oil in Arctic Sea and its possible environmental consequences?

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| Paper III | General Studies II | Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice and International relations | 250 |
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1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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?

6. 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.
7. 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.
8. Examine critically the recent changes in the rule governing foreign funding of NGOs under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 1976.
9. 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.
10. How can be the role of NGO's be strengthened in India for development works relating to protection of the Environment? Discuss throwing light on the major constraints.
11. 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.
12. 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?
13. 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.
14. In the light of Satyam Scandal (2009), discuss the changes brought in the corporate governance to ensure transparency and accountability.
15. If amendment bill to the Whistleblowers Protection Act 2011 tabled in the Parliament is passed, there may be no one left to protect. Critically Evaluate.
16. For achieving the desired objectives, it is necessary to ensure that the regulatory institution remain independent and autonomous. Discuss in the light of experiences in recent past.
17. Increasing interest of India in Africa has its pro and cons. Critically Examine.
18. Discuss the impediments India is facing in its pursuit of a permanent seat in UNSC.
19. 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
20. 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.

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| Paper IV | General Studies III | Technology, Economic Development Bio-diversity, Environment, Security and Disaster Management | 250 |
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1. The nature of economic growth in India in recent times is often described as a jobless growth. Do you agree with this view? Give arguments in favour of your answer.
2. Livestock rearing has a big potential for providing non- farm employment and income in rural areas. Discuss suggesting suitable measures to promote this sector in India.

3. In the view of the declining average size of land holdings in India which has made agriculture non – viable for a majority of farmers should contract farming and land leasing be promoted in agriculture? Critically evaluate the pros and cons.
4. How can the Digital India program help farmers to improve farm productivity and income? What step has the government taken in this regard?
5. In what way could replacement of price subsidy with direct benefit Transfer (DBT) change the scenario of subsidies in India? Discuss.
6. What are the impediments in marketing and supply chain management in developing the food processing industry in India? Can e-commerce help in overcoming this bottleneck?
7. Craze for gold in Indian has led to surge in import of gold in recent years and put pressure on balance of payments and external value of rupee. In view of this, examine the merits of Gold Monetization scheme.
8. “Success of make in India program depends on the success of Skill India programme and radical labour reforms.” Discuss with logical arguments.
9. To what factors can be the recent dramatic fall in equipment cost and tariff of solar energy be attributed? What implications does the trend have for thermal power producers and related industry?
10. There is a clear acknowledgement that Special Economic Zones (SEZs) are a tool of industrial development, manufacturing and exports. Recognising this potential, the whole instrumentality of SEZs require augmentation. Discuss the issue plaguing the success of SEZs with respect to taxation, governing laws and administration.
11. What do you understand by “Standard Positioning System” and “Precision positioning system” in the GPS era? Discuss the advantage India perceives from its ambitious IRNSS programme employing just seven satellites.
12. What are the areas of prohibitive labour that can be sustainably managed by robots? Discuss the initiatives that can propel the research in premier research institutes for substantive and gainful innovation.
13. Discuss the advantage and security implication of cloud hosting of servers vis-a-vis in house machine based hosting for government business.
14. India’s Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) which has a database containing formatted information on more than 2 million medicinal formulations is proving a powerful weapon in country’s fight against erroneous patents. Discuss the pro and cons of making the database available publicly available under open source licensing.
15. Discuss the Namami Gange and National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) programmes and causes of mixed results from the previous schemes. What quantum leaps can help preserve the river Ganga better than incremental inputs?
16. The frequency of earthquakes appears to have increased in the Indian subcontinent. However, India’s preparedness for mitigating their impact has significant gaps. Discuss various aspects.
17. Human right activists constantly highlight the fact that the Armed forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (AFSPA) is a draconian act leading to cases of human right abuses by security forces. What sections of AFSPA are opposed by the activists. Critically evaluate the requirement with reference to the view held by Apex Court.
18. Religious indoctrination via social media has resulted in Indian youth joining the ISIS. What is ISIS and its mission? How can ISIS be dangerous to the internal security of our country?
19. The persisting drives of the government for development of large industries in backward areas have resulted in isolating the tribal population and the farmers who face multiple displacements. With Malkangiri and Naxalbari foci, discuss the corrective strategies

needed to win the Left Wing Extremism (LWE) doctrine affected citizens back into mainstream of social and economic growth.

Considering the threats cyberspace poses for the country, India needs a “Digital Armed Forces” to prevent crimes. Critically evaluate the National Cyber Security Policy, 2013 outlining the challenges perceived in its effective implementation

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| Paper V | General Studies IV | Ethics, Integrity, and Aptitude | 250 |
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Section A

1. (a) What is meant by ‘environmental ethics’? Why is it important to study? Discuss any one environmental issue from the viewpoint of environmental ethics. (150 words) (10)
(b) Differentiate between the following (10 marks) (200 Words)
 - I. Law and ethics
 - II. Ethical management and management of ethics
 - III. Discrimination and preferential treatment
 - IV. Personal Ethics and Professional Ethics
2. Given are two quotations of moral thinkers/philosophers. For each of these bring out what it means to you in the present context.
 - (a) “The weak can never forgive; forgiveness is the attribute of strong.” (10) (150 words)
 - (b) “We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark; the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light” (10 marks) (150 words)
3. (a) “A mere compliance with law is not enough, the public servant also have to have a well developed sensibility to ethical issues for effective discharge of duties” Do you agree? Explain with the help of two examples where (i) an act is ethically right, but not legally and (ii) an act is legally right, but not ethically. (10 Marks) (150 words)
(b) How do the virtues of trustworthiness and fortitude get manifested in public service? Explain with examples (10) (150 words)
4. (a) Social values are more important than economic values. Discuss the above statement with examples in the context of inclusive growth of a nation. (150 words) (10 Marks)
(b) Some recent developments such as introduction of RTI Act, media and judicial activism, etc. are proving helpful in bringing about greater transparency and accountability in the functioning of the government. However, it is also being observed that at times the mechanisms are misused. Another negative effect is that the officers are now afraid to take prompt decisions. Analyse the situation in detail and suggest how the dichotomy can be resolved. Suggest how these negative impacts can be minimised. (150 words) (10 Marks)
5. Two different kinds of attitudes exhibited by public servants towards their work have been identified as bureaucratic attitude and the democratic attitude. (10 Marks) (150 words)
 - a) Distinguish between these two terms and write their merits and demerits.
 - b) Is it possible to balance the two to create a better administration for the faster development of our country?
6. Today we find that in-spite of various measures of prescribing codes of conduct, setting up vigilance cells/commissions, RTI, active media and strengthening of legal mechanism, corrupt practices are not coming under control. (10 Marks) (150 words)
 - (a) Evaluate the effectiveness of these measures with justifications

- (b) Suggest more effective strategies to tackle this menace
7. At the international level, bilateral relations between most nations are governed on the policy of promoting one's own national interest without any regard for the interest of other nations. This lead to conflicts and tension between the nations. How can ethical consideration help resolve such tensions? Discuss with specific examples. (10 Marks) (150 words)
8. Public servants are likely to confront with the issues of "Conflict of Interest". What do you understand by the term "Conflict of Interest" and how does it manifest in the decision making by public servants? If faced with the conflict of interest situation how would you resolve it? Explain with the help of examples. (10 Marks) (150 words)

Section – B

9. A private company is known for its efficiency, transparency and employee welfare. The company though owned by a private individual has a cooperative character where employees feel a sense of ownership. The company employs nearly 700 personnel and they have voluntarily decided not to form union.

One day suddenly in the morning, about 40 men belonging to political party gate crashed into the factory demanding jobs in the factory. They threatened the management and employees, and also used foul language. The employees feel demoralized. It was clear that those people who gate crashed wanted to be on the payroll of the company as well as continue as the volunteers/members of the party.

The company maintains high standards in integrity and does not extend favours to civil administration that also includes law enforcement agency. Such incident occur in public sector also. (20 Marks) (250 Words)

- (a) Assume you are the CEO of the company. What would you do to diffuse the volatile situation on the date of gate crashing with the violent mob sitting inside the company premises?
- (b) What can be the long term solution to the issue discussed in the case?
- (c) Every solution/action that you suggest will have a negative and a positive impact on you as (CEO), the employees and the performance of the employees. Analyse the consequences of each of your suggested actions.
10. You are the Sarpanch of a Panchayat. There is a primary school run by the government in your area. Midday meals are provided to children attending the school. The headmaster has now appointed a new cook in the school to prepare the meals. However, when it is found that cook is from Dalit community, almost half of the children belonging to higher castes are not allowed to take meals by their parents. Consequently the attendance in the schools falls sharply. This could result in the possibility of discontinuation of midday meal scheme, thereafter of teaching staff and subsequent closing down the school. (20 Marks) (250 Words)
- (a) Discuss some feasible strategies to overcome the conflict and to create right ambiance.
- (b) What should be the responsibilities of different social segments and agencies to create positive social ambiance for accepting such changes?
11. One of the scientists working in the R&D laboratory of a major pharmaceutical company discovers that one of the company's bestselling veterinary drugs has the potential to cure a currently incurable liver disease which is prevalent in tribal areas. However, developing a variant of the drug suitable for human being entailed a lot of research and development having a huge expenditure to the extent of Rs. 50 crores. It was unlikely that company would recover the cost as the disease was rampant only in poverty stricken areas having very little market otherwise.

If you were the CEO, then (20 Marks) (250 Words)

- (a) Identify the various actions that you could take
- (b) Evaluate the pros and cons of each of your actions

12. There is a disaster prone state having frequent landslides, forest fires, cloudbursts, flash floods and earthquakes, etc. Some of these are seasonal and often unpredictable. The magnitude of the disaster is always unanticipated. During one of the seasons a cloudburst caused a devastating floods and landslides leading to high casualties. There was major damage to infrastructure like roads, bridges and power generating units. This led to more than 100000 pilgrims, tourist and other locals trapped across different routes and locations. The people trapped in your area of responsibility includes senior citizens, patients in hospitals, women and children, hiker, tourist, ruling parties, regional presidents along with his family, additional chief secretary of the neighboring state and prisoners in jail.

As a civil services officer of the state, what would be the order in which you would rescue these people and why? Give Justifications (20 Marks) (200 Words)

13. You are heading a district administration in a particular department. Your senior officer calls you from the State Headquarters and tells you that a plot in Rampur village is to have a building constructed on it for a school. A visit is scheduled during which he will visit the site along with the chief engineer and the senior architect. He wants you to check out all the papers relating to it and ensure that the visit is properly arranged. You examine the file which relates to the period before you joined the department. The land was acquired for the local panchayat at a nominal cost and the papers showed that clearance certificates are available for the two of the three authorities who have to certify the site's suitability. There is no certification by the architect available on file. You decide to visit Rampur to ensure that all is in the order as stated on file. When you visit Rampur, you find that the plot under reference is a part of Thakurgarh fort and that the walls, ramparts, etc., are running across it. The fort is well away from the main village, therefore a school here will be a serious inconvenience for the children. However, the area near the village has potential to expand into a larger residential area. The development charges on the existing plot, at the fort, will be very high and question of heritage site has not been addressed. Moreover, the Sarpanch, at the time of acquisition of the land, was a relative of your predecessor. The whole transaction appears to have been done with some vested interest. (25 Marks) (250 Words)

- (a) List the likely vested interest of the concerned parties.
- (b) Some of the options for action available to you are listed below. Discuss the merits and demerits of each of the options:
 - (i) You can await the visit of the superior officer and let him take a decision.
 - (ii) You can seek his advice in writing or on phone.
 - (iii) You can consult your predecessor/ colleagues, etc, and then decide what to do.
 - (iv) You can find out if any alternate plot can be got in exchange and then send a comprehensive written report.

Can you suggest any other option with proper justifications?

14. You are recently posted as district development officer of a district. Shortly thereafter you found that there is considerable tension in the rural areas of your district on the issue of sending girls to schools.

15. The elders of the village feel that many problems have come up because girls are being educated and they are stepping out of the safe environment of the household. They are the view that the girls should be quickly married off with minimum education. The girls are also competing for jobs after education, which have traditionally remained in boys' exclusive domain, adding to unemployment amongst male population.

16. The younger generation feels that in the present era, girls should have equal opportunities for education and employment, and other means of livelihood. The entire locality is divided between sexes in both generations. You come to know that in Panchayat or in other local bodies or even in busy crossroads, the issue is being acrimoniously debated.
17. One day you are informed that an unpleasant incident has taken place. Some girls were molested, when they were en route to schools. The incident led to clashes between several groups and a law and order problem has arisen. The elder after heated discussion have taken a joint decision not to allow girls to go to school and to socially boycott all such families, which do not follow their dictate. (250 words) (25 Marks)
- (a) What steps would you take to ensure girls' safety without disrupting their education?
- (b) How would you manage and mould patriarchic attitude of the village elders to ensure harmony in the inter-generational relations?

