

UPSC Mains 2026: All GS Questions

79 Questions across GS Paper I-IV

UnlockIAS — www.unlockias.in

GS-I

2026 GS-I 10M · 150W

Q1. Analyze the importance of Ashokan inscriptions for reconstructing Mauryan history.

2026 GS-I 10M · 150W

Q2. Discuss the impact of Macaulay's Minute on colonial administration and education in India.

2026 GS-I 10M · 150W

Q3. "The significance of the Gandhian movements lay in the masses they mobilized." Elucidate.

2026 GS-I 10M · 150W

Q4. What is the Fujiwhara effect? Explain its impact on the movement and intensity of tropical cyclones.

2026 GS-I 10M · 150W

Q5. "Tundra regions are ecologically fragile but economically important." Examine this statement critically.

2026 GS-I 10M · 150W

Q6. Discuss the role of aeolian processes in desertification and land degradation.

2026 GS-I 10M · 150W

Q7. "Water resources are both an asset and a source of conflict in South Asia." Examine this statement giving examples.

2026 GS-I 10M · 150W

Q8. Unity in diversity remains the defining feature of Indian society despite the challenges from communalism and regionalism. Comment.

2026 GS-I 10M · 150W

Q9. How do you understand disability? Substantiate the need for inclusive policy framework in India in this regard.

2026 GS-I 10M · 150W

Q10. Do you think digital technology promotes social empowerment? Explain with examples.

2026 GS-I 15M · 250W

Q11. Vijayanagara architecture exemplifies the amalgamation of past traditions with contemporary practices. Elucidate with examples.

2026 GS-I 15M · 250W

Q12. Linguistic reorganization of Indian States was driven by popular pressure from below. Comment.

2026 GS-I 15M · 250W

Q13. The model of planned economy was adopted in India to address the regional imbalances left behind by colonial rule. Comment.

2026 GS-I 15M · 250W

Q14. Compare the Loo, Chinook and Foehn winds with respect to their regions of prevalence, their nature and climatic impacts.

2026 GS-I 15M · 250W

Q15. Analyze the role of satellite-based technologies in achieving climate-smart agriculture and food security in India.

2026 GS-I 15M · 250W

Q16. "The centre of global trade is gradually shifting from the Atlantic region to the Indo-Pacific region." Examine this statement.

2026 GS-I 15M · 250W

Q17. Analyze the major drivers of human-induced land-use changes in India and their geographical consequences.

2026 GS-I 15M · 250W

Q18. Is caste disappearing in urban India? Illustrate your answer with examples.

2026 GS-I 15M · 250W

Q19. Critically examine the challenges of demographic transition in contemporary India.

2026 GS-I 15M · 250W

Q20. Evaluate the impact of globalization on Indian youths with reference to social, political, economic and cultural spheres.

GS-II

2026 GS-II 10M · 150W

Q1. Right to privacy relating to self-identity is very dear to every human being and well protected under Article 21 of the Constitution. In this context, examine the effect of the amendment in 2026, to the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.

2026 GS-II 10M · 150W

Q2. "Women as a class neither belong to a minority group nor are they regarded as forming a backward class." In the light of this statement, discuss the evolution of women's reservation from local bodies to Parliament.

2026 GS-II 10M · 150W

Q3. Examine whether the constitutional office of the Lok Sabha Speaker has become vulnerable to partisan politics under the current anti-defection regime. What institutional changes are required to ensure the neutrality of the Lok Sabha Speaker in managing a polarised House?

2026 GS-II 10M · 150W

Q4. Is the right to vote a fundamental right? Discuss the position of the Election Commission of India while undertaking the revision of electoral rolls. Can it also examine the question of citizenship of voters?

2026 GS-II 10M · 150W

Q5. Do constitutional bodies like the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) possess adequate enforcement powers to secure substantive social equality? Suggest measures to enhance their institutional effectiveness.

2026 GS-II 10M · 150W

Q6. Does India's tribal development policy reflect the aspirations for a socially grounded and equity-based governance? Justify your answer.

2026 GS-II 10M · 150W

Q7. Malnutrition in India is not merely a public health concern; it is also a challenge of social equity, human development and effective welfare governance. Discuss.

2026 GS-II 10M · 150W

Q8. Analyse the advantages and limitations of the generalist structure of the Indian Civil Services in contemporary governance.

2026 GS-II 10M · 150W

Q9. "IPMDA (Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness) bridges the gap between India's SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) vision and the Quad's collective Indo-Pacific strategy." Make a critical assessment of the statement focusing on IPMDA.

2026 GS-II 10M · 150W

Q10. "BRICS acts as a powerful counterweight in global governance, actively amplifying the voice and influence of the Global South." Explain the role of BRICS in projecting itself as an alternative to other groupings.

2026 GS-II 15M · 250W

Q11. Discuss the position of the Governor in the federal polity of India. What is the nature of his power while giving assent to a bill passed by the State Legislature? Is he bound by the aid and advice of his Council of Ministers in all his functions?

2026 GS-II 15M · 250W

Q12. What is meant by judicial legislation? In this context, discuss the verdicts of the apex court allowing "passive euthanasia" and a "living will".

2026 GS-II 15M · 250W

Q13. How far has the Indian federal framework been successful in accommodating regional and cultural diversities? Highlight the role of asymmetric federalism and suggest measures to make dispute resolution mechanisms more effective.

2026 GS-II 15M · 250W

Q14. Examine how the separation of powers is practised in India compared to the rigid presidential model of the United States of America. In this context, compare the actual authority of the Indian Prime Minister with that of the President of the USA.

2026 GS-II 15M · 250W

Q15. To what extent do pressure groups, social movements and corporate lobbies deepen pluralistic democracy in India by representing excluded interests? Analyse whether the growing convergence of corporate wealth and political power poses a threat to the autonomy of formal democratic institutions.

2026 GS-II 15M · 250W

Q16. "Transparency and accountability in governance are not about controlling corruption but about creating the trust of stakeholders in the policy process by following the Rule of Law and Participatory Governance." Comment.

2026 GS-II 15M · 250W

Q17. Can the constitutional mandate of rights-based welfare be effectively realised in the context of non-integrated governance and minimal public investment? Examine.

2026 GS-II 15M · 250W

Q18. Should education be treated primarily as a welfare obligation of the state or as a strategic investment for building a globally competitive, knowledge-driven nation? Critically evaluate.

2026 GS-II 15M · 250W

Q19. "India's global diaspora acts as a living bridge, as a critical economic factor and knowledge network in transforming cultural heritage into geopolitical influence and strategic leverage worldwide." Critically examine this statement.

2026 GS-II 15M · 250W

Q20. "China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has transformed South Asia from a regional space into a theatre of great power competition." Analyse the strategic implications of the BRI for India's security and regional influence in South Asia.

GS-III

2026 GS-III 10M · 150W

Q1. What do you mean by Digital Rupee? In this context, explain the working and progress of India's Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC).

2026 GS-III 10M · 150W

Q2. Examine the view that financial inclusion is an integral part of social and economic inclusion in a country like India. Also throw light on the usefulness of the R.B.I.'s Financial Inclusion Index.

2026 GS-III 10M · 150W

Q3. Describe the various Technology Missions initiated in Indian agriculture and examine their role in food security.

2026 GS-III 10M · 150W

Q4. Explain the factors responsible for inefficiency of agri-produce marketing. How e-commerce helps to reduce inefficiency of agri-produce marketing? Explain.

2026 GS-III 10M · 150W

Q5. Explain by giving two examples, how biotechnology has helped the Indian farmers in processing their perishable crops.

2026 GS-III 10M · 150W

Q6. Distinguish between a Fast Breeder Reactor (FBR) and a thermal nuclear reactor. In the context of first indigenously developed prototype FBR at Kalpakkam, explain the term 'criticality'. What are its implications for clean energy future of our country?

2026 GS-III 10M · 150W

Q7. Discuss how the contradiction between 'rapid infrastructure development' and 'disaster-risk reduction' in ecologically-sensitive areas of India can be managed, with suitable examples.

2026 GS-III 10M · 150W

Q8. Discuss the aim and goals of Kunming-Montreal global biodiversity framework. Mention India's commitments and initiatives to achieve the goals and targets of this framework giving suitable examples.

2026 GS-III 10M · 150W

Q9. Explain how fake news and disinformation pose threat to Internal Security and Public Order in Indian context? In this regard, discuss salient features of amendments in respect of Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021.

2026 GS-III 10M · 150W

Q10. Ladakh is strategically located between China and Pakistan. As a measure to win hearts and minds of locals, discuss the Border Area Development Programmes (BADP) by the Central Government and civic actions by the Army. Also discuss demand of promulgation of provision of the Sixth Schedule of constitution for Ladakh.

2026 GS-III 15M · 250W

Q11. Explain the key challenges for India's energy security. What measures do you suggest for ensuring energy security along with economic growth and sustainability?

2026 GS-III 15M · 250W

Q12. How are startups in India promoting entrepreneurship, innovation and employment? Discuss the global and domestic challenges in their working and suggest suitable measures to overcome these challenges.

2026 GS-III 15M · 250W

Q13. How Indian agriculture has been transformed from food scarcity to food surplus level? Explain the various government policies implemented for diversification of Indian agriculture.

2026 GS-III 15M · 250W

Q14. Discuss the different types of subsidies and supports provided by the Government of India to agricultural sector. Examine the related issues pertaining to Agreement on Agriculture of World Trade Organisation (WTO).

2026 GS-III 15M · 250W

Q15. Mention salient features of 'Mission Drishti'. Discuss the imaging techniques used in the satellite launched on 3rd May 2026. Why it is being considered world's first satellite of its kind?

2026 GS-III 15M · 250W

Q16. What is agentic Artificial Intelligence (AI)? Explain its working. Describe its applications with suitable examples. Discuss the advantages, risks and challenges associated with agentic AI systems.

2026 GS-III 15M · 250W

Q17. What are the challenges to solid waste management in India? Discuss the governmental policy framework on solid waste management. Discuss the success/failure cases of Delhi and Indore cities highlighting the salient feature of their solid waste management initiatives.

2026 GS-III 15M · 250W

Q18. "Community participation is the cornerstone of effective disaster management". Analyse this statement with suitable examples from India. Also discuss the challenges to community participation and measures to strengthen it.

2026 GS-III 15M · 250W

Q19. Separatist movements have been one of the major factors contributing to militancy and instability in Jammu & Kashmir (J & K). Bring out actions taken by the Government to bring J & K into national mainstream. Discuss pre and post abrogation status of Articles 370 and 35A. Also bring out positive impacts of abrogation of both articles in mainstreaming the state.

2026 GS-III 15M · 250W

Q20. Discuss counterfeit currency and money laundering as major sources of terror funding in India. State the actions being taken at International level to check these menaces. Highlight the role of Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and methods of compliance by its member states in preventing terror funding.

GS-IV

2026 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q1. Owing to paucity of time, a university professor generates a Ph.D. evaluation report using Artificial Intelligence and submits it with some modifications. Discuss this from the perspective of accountability and integrity.

2026 GS-IV 20M · 250W

Q1. Lata, a mother of two, was admitted for acute abdominal pain. During a laparoscopy under general anesthesia, Dr. Mansi's team found a possibly malignant tumor in her uterus. Instead of a biopsy, Dr. Mansi removed the uterus with the written consent of Lata's sister-in-law Sujatha. Lata, informed the next day, felt betrayed and went to court. (a) Discuss the ethical issues involved. (b) Discuss the moral conduct of the doctor.

2026 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q2. A business house is working on a project that could displace a forest community from their habitat. As the administrative officer of that district, what ethical challenges are you likely to face?

2026 GS-IV 20M · 250W

Q2. Ravi, an SP, installed AI-enabled predictive policing that captures biometric data from crowds. It flagged an immigrant, low-income neighbourhood; policing improved, but community leaders allege the system is biased, built on faulty historical data, and that surveillance without residents' knowledge has bred tension. (a) What are the ethical issues, including biases, in AI and data-driven policing? (b) In Ravi's role, discuss the alternatives and justify the action that best combines ethics and compliance.

2026 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q3. An endangered tribe has developed a severe skeletal deformity. A university research has identified a mineral supplement as a possible remedy, though clinical trials are yet to be conducted. Should the District Magistrate (DM) use this research on the tribe? Discuss from the perspective of medical and administrative ethics.

2026 GS-IV 20M · 250W

Q3. Seema, an honest senior bureaucrat, is DC of Surinder Nagar, where a tout network working through subordinate officials is selectively clearing land-use applications for bribes. Employees are scared, the backlog grows, the public suffers. She must break the network without halting daily administration. (a) What are the ethical issues? (b) Discuss her options, identify the recommended option and justify it.

2026 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q4. Discuss how national security can be balanced with concerns of human rights.

2026 GS-IV 20M · 250W

Q4. Vikas, DC of remote Nainipura, runs the PDS for the poorest. Biometric checks meant to stop leakages keep failing for growing children, manual labourers and senior citizens, worse when WiFi is slow; distributors then decide by personal discretion. Strict rules ensure fiscal probity but hurt the poorest and may touch their Article 21 rights. (a) What options does Vikas have, and how should he balance fiscal probity with empathy? (b) Discuss the ethics of using technology as a gatekeeper for welfare schemes.

2026 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q5. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had cautioned that employing civil disobedience within a constitutional democracy equates to endorsing 'anarchy'. How should modern democracies navigate the ethical dilemmas posed by civil disobedience movements that aim to promote social justice against policies that may raise genuine concerns?

2026 GS-IV 20M · 250W

Q5. Rajan is the new DM of Rajapuram, a border district where ethnic conflict between the Jhara and Biru communities has killed many. The rivalry has seeped into the local administration and police; both communities distrust the government. A neighbouring country could exploit the unrest. Rajan favours a controlled approach: reopen the highway for food and medicines, consider CRPF support. (a) Discuss the ethical issues. (b) What are his options, and which protects his non-partisan image without compromising ethics?

2026 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q6. In what ways can an Indian Administrative Officer apply Gandhi's notion of 'trusteeship' to ensure fairness in governance?

2026 GS-IV 20M · 250W

Q6. Ajit heads Weapon Sales in the Ministry of Defence Production. Production limits mean he can sell to only one of two developing countries: A, outside all alliances, needing arms against a troublesome neighbour, seeking a long-term loan; or B, alliance-backed, military-first at its people's cost, not an NPT signatory, supporter of guerrilla forces abroad, ready with advance payment. (a) Discuss his options and which he should choose and why. (b) How can he balance the nation's economic and strategic interests with ethical considerations?

2026 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q7. Shakespeare in Henry IV says, "The arms are fair when the intent of bearing them is just". What ethical implications does this have in governance?

2026 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q8. Citing the serious adverse effects of long-term medication, a doctor convinces the family of a female patient for surgery. This led the patient to reluctantly consent for the surgery, though her original choice was to opt for medication. Explain the concepts of paternalism and beneficence by analysing the doctor's action.

2026 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q9. Efficiency is doing things right, while effectiveness is doing the right thing. How do you strike a balance between the two to enhance productivity?

2026 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q10. Usually schools, working in remote areas, do not fully comply with government regulations. However, if the rules are enforced strictly, it would lead to most schools closing down. How should an administrator strike a balance between enforcement of rules and educational rights of children?

2026 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q11. In international relations, ethical considerations are often subjugated to the strategic interests of nation-states. Discuss this from an ethical perspective.

2026 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q12. On the request of his Personal Assistant (PA), the District Magistrate (DM) stops the transfer of a schoolteacher who takes private tuition for his daughter diagnosed with learning disability. In this context, discuss the aspects of empathy versus compliance with rules.

2026 GS-IV 10M · 150W

Q13. Some moral philosophers argue that spending some of your resources, without significantly affecting your financial stability, to help other people who badly suffer is our moral duty and not merely a matter of charity. Justify this claim by explaining the distinction between duty and charity.