

## VAJIRAM &amp; RAVI

SURE SHOT MAINS CAMP - 2025

<b>General Studies</b> <b>FLT - 1</b> <b>Test - 1</b> <b>GS - 1</b>	<b>Evaluator Code:</b> <b>Date of Assignment:</b> <b>CQ:</b>
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<b>NAME:</b>	ASEEM MAHAJAN	<b>Time allowed: 3 Hours</b>
<b>STUDENT ID.:</b>	25UR99191	<b>Email:</b>
<b>UPSC ROLL NO.:</b>	3500549	<b>Submission Date:</b>
<b>MOBILE NO.:</b>		28-07-2025

**QUESTION PAPER SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS**

Please read each of the following instructions carefully before attempting questions:

There are **TWENTY** questions printed in **ENGLISH**. All the questions are compulsory.

The number of marks carried by a question/ part is indicated against it. Word limit in questions, wherever specified, should be adhered to. Any page or portion of the page left blank in the Question-cum-Answer Booklet must be clearly struck off.

Q No.	Marks	Q No.	Marks	Q No.	Marks
Q1	/10	Q8	/10	Q15	/15
Q2	/10	Q9	/10	Q16	/15
Q3	/10	Q10	/10	Q17	/15
Q4	/10	Q11	/15	Q18	/15
Q5	/10	Q12	/15	Q19	/15
Q6	/10	Q13	/15	Q20	/15
Q7	/10	Q14	/15	Total	/250

**Instructions:-**

- Legible Scanning:** Exercise due diligence in scanning your scripts for clear legibility
- Submissions** marred by poor scanning, notably those with illegible sections or blackened pages due to improper scanning, risk being excluded from the evaluation process.
- Non-Adherence Consequences:** Failure to comply with the aforementioned instructions may lead to the disqualification of your submission.

**For Student Only**

<b>Start Time -</b> 10:30 a.m	<b>End Time -</b> 1:34 a.m
<b>Mode of Examination</b>	Online                      Offline <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Receiving date</b>	<b>Dispatch date -</b>

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Parameters		Good	Average	Needs Improvement
Conceptual Understanding				
Understanding Demand of Question				
Structure	Introduction			
	Body			
	Conclusion			
Presentation-Illustrations, flowcharts, diagrams, etc.				
Language and Handwriting				
No. of Questions Attempted				
Adherence to Word Limit: Yes/No				

### Mentor's Feedback

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## Evaluator/Reviewer Suggestions



## Evaluator/Reviewer Suggestions



# VAJIRAM & RAVI

(Answer questions in NOT MORE than the word limit specified for each in the parenthesis. Content of the answer is more important than its length.)

1. Ancient rock-cut caves are great examples of religious harmony. Illustrate using examples from Southern and Western India. (10 marks / 150 words)

We have seen examples of use of rock cut caves going all the way back to palaeolithic times (Bumlethra) right upto modern era (Saspol caves - 14th century) and are an excellent example of religious harmony

How Caves serve as examples of religious harmony

- ① Coexistence of various religious traditions

↳ Ellora caves - Hindu + Buddhist + Jain architecture

- ② Diversity in Patronage

↳ Elephanta caves

Hindu Parts  
By Rastriakutas

Jain Parts  
by Kadavas

- ③ Inclusivity in Indian philosophy

↳ Ajivika caves

For Charvaka → By Ashoka  
(Buddhist)

④ Use for secular art → Seen in Sittarwood caves

⑤ Mix of artists of different religions

→ Seen in Badami caves by Chalukyas

⑥ Iconism + Aniconism

→ Trend seen in Ajanta caves

⑦ Adoption of new religious

practices with time → Jainism

integrated in existing Buddhist

temples like Karle

Thus, caves became a symbol of religious harmony and coexistence of various philosophical traditions of India

Introduction

Body

Conclusion

Presentation

Marks:

# VAJIRAM & RAVI

2. The Gupta period marked a shift in the position of women in Indian society when compared to earlier times. Evaluate. (10 marks / 150 words)

Starting off with Sui Gupta till the eventual defeat of Guptas by the Hunas (2nd CE - BC - 3rd CE AD), guptas are often remarked as the 'golden age' of India and saw some major societal changes

### Shift in Position of women

Parameter	Earlier Times	Gupta Period
① Political role	Presence in Salvas and Samitis	Role diminished - Rise of importance of King
② Sati	No evidence present	First evidence of Sati in Eran
③ Outside perspective	Lack of information	<u>Fa Hien</u> - Condition of women was miserable

(Don't write anything in this part)

# VAJIRAM & RAVI

(Don't write anything in this part)

④ Legal protection	Against Injustices	Continued in this era → women were to be treated with respect
⑤ Female worship	Less common	Very common → Temples usually had consorts of gods
⑥ Social status	High	Lowered
⑦ Situation of widows	Remarriage was allowed	Miserable - Status attached to husband
⑧ Intercaste-tionally	Less	More → Lower caste women saw way more persecution

We must keep in mind that ancient practices cannot be evaluated from the lens of modern morality → They have to be studied in contextually

Introduction	
Body	
Conclusion	
Presentation	
Marks:	

3. "The pen was as mighty as the sword in India's struggle for freedom." Discuss the impact of art and literature in resisting colonial rule. (10 marks / 150 words)

We saw the role of the proverbial 'sword' - The extremists, the revolutionaries, the INA, etc. as remarkable in India's freedom struggle, but the 'pen' was equally important

Role of 'Pen' in India's freedom struggle

The impact of art

① Evolving nationalist imagery  $\rightarrow$

Raja Ravi Varma's Bharat Mata portrays

② Regional nationalist sentiment  $\rightarrow$

Kalighat art in Kalchata often had nationalist themes.

③ Rise of nationalist artists  $\rightarrow$  Abanindranath Tagore

$\rightarrow$  Started Indian school of art free from British influence

④ Art schools as hubs of nationalist

# VAJIRAM & RAVI

↳ Spontaneity by Rabindranath Tagore,

⑤ Recognition of our history ↳ Discovery of Copper Buddha in Bihar → Fostered national pride

## Impact of literature

⑥ Print Capitalism :- Freedom of Press led to spread of nationalist sentiment  
↳ Kesari and Mahratta by Tilak

⑦ Fostered martyr culture ↳ The philosophy of the Bomb → Vivek

⑧ Highlighted sacrifices ↳ Bhagat Singh's Jail diary

⑨ Helped organise movements ↳ Railway strike organised by Tilak's Mahratta in 1903

⑩ Social reform ↳ Cranderi's Indian Opinion paper

We have continued the trend of our national movement by issuing commemorative coins and publishing patriotic books

Introduction

Body

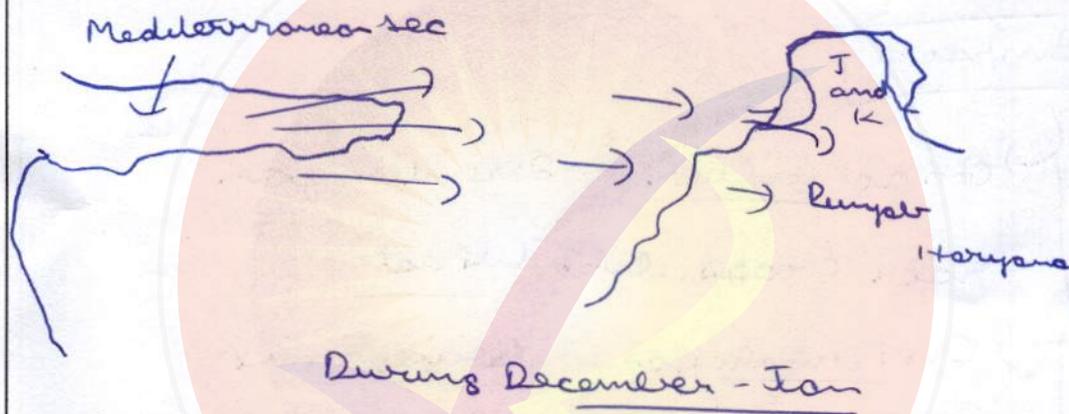
Conclusion

Presentation

Marks:

4. What are Western disturbances? Explain their role in influencing the weather patterns of northern India. (10 marks / 150 words)

Western disturbances are a system of incoming winds in northern India, especially during winter months, from the region around Mediterranean.



Role in influencing weather

① On temperature

-> A certain rise in temperature seen

-> Nights become less cold -> End of cold wave related to it.

② On local conditions

→ Calm, still conditions seen before arrival.

### ③ On precipitation

→ Moisture laden winds, bring winter rainfall from Mediterranean

### ④ On local air circulation

→ Replaced by these western winds

### Impacts

- On agriculture - Essential for rain crops like wheat
- On Himalayas - Bring much needed snowfall
- On weather - Relief from extreme cold of the plains
- On local economy - Bolstered due to improved harvest

By their impact on agriculture alone, western disturbances are a lifeline of northern India

Introduction	
Body	
Conclusion	
Presentation	
Marks:	

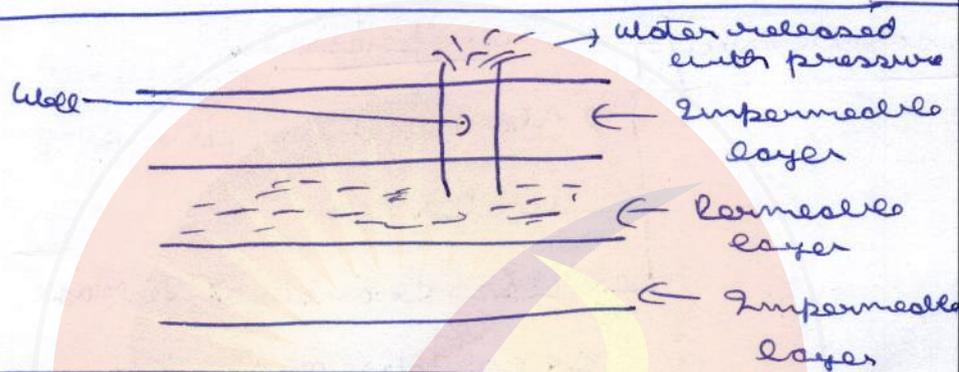
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5. Describe artesian aquifers and state the geological and environmental conditions necessary for their formation. (10 marks / 150 words)

Recently an artesian aquifer was discovered in Faisalmer during an excavation, leading to flooding of many fields in the area



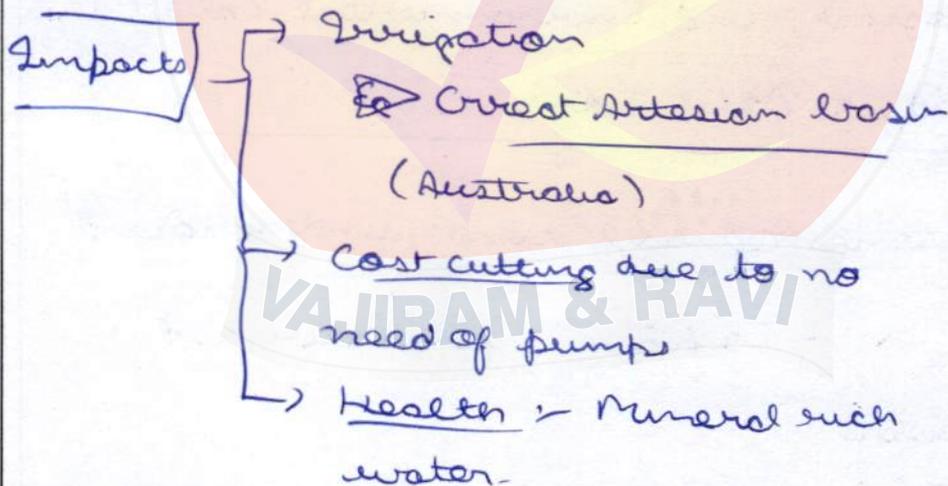
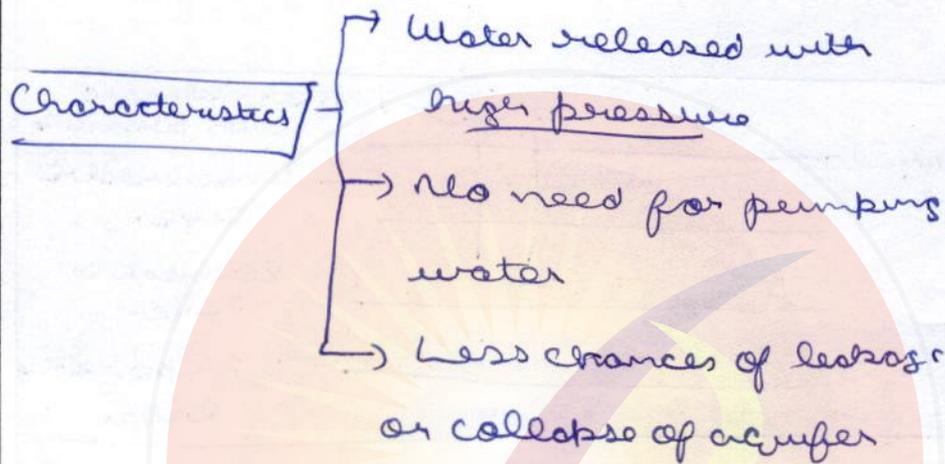
Geological and Environmental conditions needed for formations

- ① Presence of sufficient underground water : to have a pressurised release.
- ② Impermeable layers sandwiching a permeable layer between them
- ③ Inlet source to impermeable layer  $\Rightarrow$  An ancient reservoir

are a nearly ~~lake~~ lake.

④ Whether extensive rainfall is needed - No

⑤ Types of rocks were present -  
Hard metamorphic rocks



Australia's Simpson desert has been converted into a green pasture purely based on the water wealth of the great artesian basin

Introduction	
Body	
Conclusion	
Presentation	
Marks:	

6. How do ENSO, IOD (Indian Ocean Dipole), and MJO (Madden-Julian Oscillation) interact to influence the Indian monsoon system? (10 marks / 150 words)

The primary external variables used by IMD to compute and predict monsoon in its multimodal ensemble model are ENSO, IOD and MJO.

### ENSO

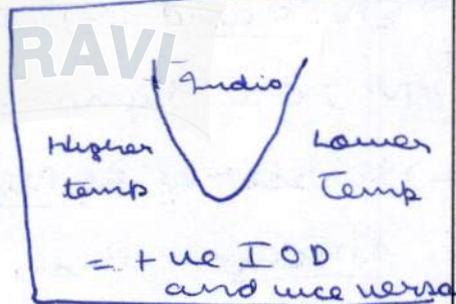
Cycle of  
→ Weakening / Strengthening of trade winds blowing from east central pacific ocean to west central pacific ocean.

- Consequence :- Anomalous heating of waters near Peru = El Niño.
- Strengthening of ~~El Niño~~ ENSO = La Niña

→ On India →

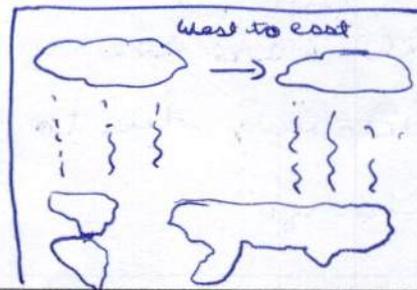
### IOD

→ Arabic sea ~~Indian~~ heats up more than Bay of Bengal = +ve IOD



### MJO

→ Dynamic movement of rain bearing clouds moving west to east



→ Covers a cycle within 35 to 40 days

## Interactions that impact monsoon

### Individual impacts

ENSO	IOD	MJO
• 7 out of 10 reduced monsoons linked to El Niño	• If -ve IOD, = Weakened monsoon	• If cycle is lengthy, = Weakened monsoon

### Interactions

→ El Niño does not always result in droughts due to impact of IOD and MJO.

→ ENSO and IOD are static while MJO is dynamic

→ Impact of El Niño is much stronger than the impact of other 2

All 3 are seeing increased unpredictability due to impact of climate change

Introduction

Body

Conclusion

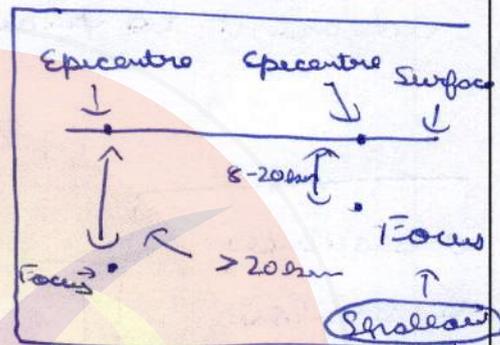
Presentation

Marks:

7. What are shallow-focus earthquakes? Discuss the factors responsible for their frequent occurrence in the Indo-Gangetic plain. (10 marks / 150 words)

A shallow focus earthquake is one in which the focus of an earthquake is closer to the surface, as recently seen in the afghanistan earthquake

Depth has a major correlation to the impact of earthquake



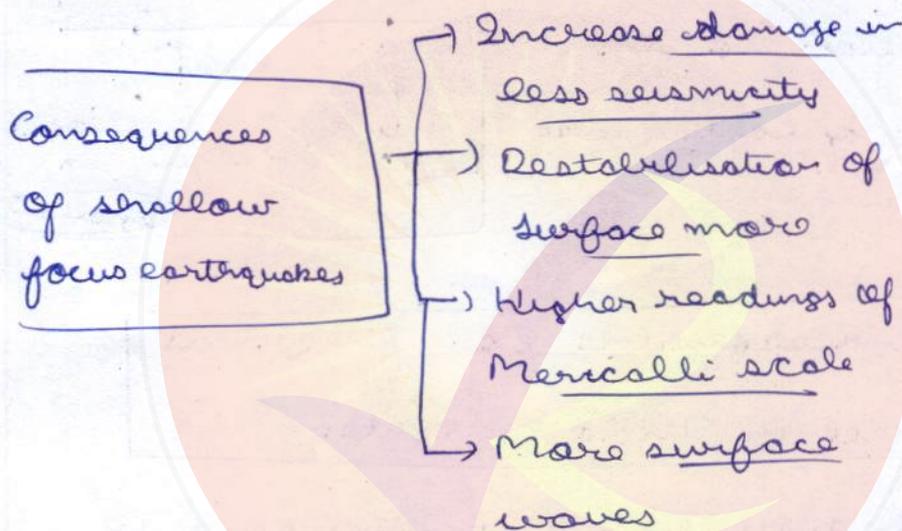
Factors responsible for frequent occurrence in Indo gangetic

- ① Indo-Australian plate merging in Eurasian plate - Plate is still moving at a pace of several cms per year,
- ② Main Frontal Thrust is adjacent to Indo gangetic plain.
- ③ Sediment base - Entire Indo-gangetic plain is based on sediments of Tethys sea

④ High Back Topography :- Plates are softer in the centre, ~~ie.~~ centre experiences more tremors.

⑤ Area specific earthquake zones :-

↳ Tidding Tuming Suture zone adjacent to plains.



Precautions in Indo Gangetic

- ↳ Retrofitting of buildings
- ↳ Struct Zonation laws
- ↳ Model building bye code.

India must take best practices from states like Taiwan such as the quake dampener in Taipei 10ft  
More use of India quake app

Introduction	
Body	
Conclusion	
Presentation	
Marks:	

8. "India's unity is often said to be sustained by its diversity." Discuss with reference to the key features of Indian society that foster this unity.

(10 marks / 150 words)

India is a land of diversity with over 600 languages, 200+ tribes, many ethnic races and high level of regional diversity, and that is the strength of our unity.

Features of Indian society that foster its unity

① Diverse freedom movement Eg

A. Rajgopalachari from south became governor general with a PM from the north.

② Institutional unity Eg Army sees active participation from Marathas, Punjab, Madras, etc.

③ Linguistic Overlap Eg Various dialects of Hindi can understand each other

④ Units for national symbols:

↳ During India's cricket matches

⑤ Common trends in practices despite

diversity ↳ Jagannath is prayed everywhere in India.

⑥ Religious unity ↳ Common

ethos of non-violence in Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism

Challenges

Way forward

① Increasing regionalism

① NCRW's Inter factor commission

② North v. South debate

② Community mediation

③ Communal polarisation

③ Preservation of Languages

Centre's Kashi Tamil Sangam is a great effort to preserve India's unity in diversity

Introduction	
Body	
Conclusion	
Presentation	
Marks:	

9. Explain how globalisation has led to the erosion of regional languages in India and what steps can be taken to preserve them. (10 marks / 150 words)

As per the Bhasa Anukang, over 600 languages of India are facing extinction with languages like Blasri having only a few 1000 speakers now.

Role of globalisation in erosion of regional languages

- ① Increased importance of english :- In terms of economy in a new emerging world.
- ② Absence of local language content on the internet.
- ③ Out migration leads to dissociation from local culture.
- ④ Hybridisation of culture  $\rightarrow$  'MTV culture' seen in Indian cities.
- ⑤ Colonial mindset pervasiveness  
 $\rightarrow$  Revivment on speaking in

local language in various school

## ⑥ Globalisation of western culture

By movies, films, etc

Steps that can be taken to preserve

① Policy steps :- NEP with its base in teaching 2 out of 3 regional languages must be adopted by states

② Institutional :- Strengthening Classical languages commission

③ Technological  $\Rightarrow$  Traditional Knowledge Digital Library to be expanded

④ Awareness  $\Rightarrow$  Program for languages on the lines of 'Bharat Ka Jnan Mission'

The Indian government has launched Bharatiya Bhasha Akademi for preservation of regional languages

10. Discuss the potential socio-political implications of implementing a nationwide caste census. (10 marks / 150 words)

The recently ~~was~~ announced 2026 census is going to have caste-wise enumeration for the first time after 1941, fulfilling the demand for caste census of various groups.

## Implications

### Social

+ve

Negative

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ① Can help in stronger <u>affirmative action</u>         | ① Leading to <u>increased casteism</u>                                |
| ② Caste identity quantified via numbers                  | ② <u>Backlash</u> from upper castes.                                  |
| ③ Needed for <u>social justice objective</u> of preamble | ③ <u>Impossible</u> to <u>enumerate</u> every caste                   |
| ④ Demand of social groups like <u>BSP</u>                | ④ <u>Caste dynamics</u> are <u>very fluid</u>                         |
|  | ⑤ <u>Exclusion errors</u><br>Eg Excluded due to <u>spelling error</u> |

## Political

+ Ue

- Ue

① Constitutional mandate  
: A.235 states representation for backwards

② Judicial mandate  
Uses Cravli judgement asked for quantifiable data for OBC's in local bodies

③ Strengthening  
Caste-based movements

① Increasing divide between upper and lower caste.

② Process has been heavily politicised

③ Renewed protests → Repeat of 1993

A utilitarian caste census must be

- ↳ Divorced from politics
- ↳ Use tech for efficient data gathering
- ↳ Objectivity in statistics

Moreover, identifying the fluidity of caste dynamics is also essential for proper implementation

Introduction	
Body	
Conclusion	
Presentation	
Marks:	

11. "India's pre-modern kingdoms evolved sustainable water management systems suited to regional ecological conditions." Examine with reference to the contributions of the Cholas and the Vijayanagara Empire.

(15 marks / 250 words)

India has always had a water problem — One of the suspected causes of decline of Harappan civilisation was a potent mega-drought, and Indian pre-modern kingdoms have always supported sustained water practices.

Water Management Practices  
suited regional ecological conditions

## Cholas

- ① Location of cities & Madurai was located on the Banks of Varahi rivers.
- ② Living deity status — Varahi was given the status of a living goddess.

③ Use of temples as reservoirs of water.  $\Rightarrow$  Buladeeshwara temple has a huge water tank

④ Use of sustainable fishing practices in the area.

⑤ Water deities were worshipped

⑥ Suspension of taxation in years of draught.

## Ujainagara empire

① Role in Castle building  $\rightarrow$  Sustainable agriculture was followed within walls of Hampi to sustain a siege

② Presence of 'Kunds' in temples such as Hozar Rameswamy temple

③ Dams: Anantaya Sagar Dam on Maldevi river by Kushmadeva Raja

Q Use of flood pathways for irrigation.

## Other Bio modern Water Techniques

- ↳ Sudanshan Lake by Chandragupta Maurya
- ↳ Zrudston canals in ~~in~~ gangetic plains
- ↳ Water harvesting structures by Kakatiyas.

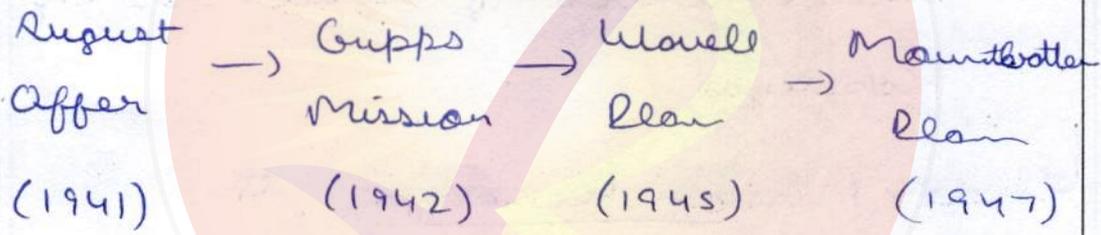
Under Mission Kakatiya, the Telangana government is reviving Kakatiya era water tanks for sustainable irrigation.

Introduction	
Body	
Conclusion	
Presentation	
Marks:	

12. Was the transition from August Offer to Mountbatten Plan a reflection of India's growing political maturity and British imperial decline? Discuss.

(15 marks / 250 words)

The August Offer was the first major conciliatory offer by British in the wake of World War II to offer self governance to Indians to ensure their compliance, but within years it transitioned to the Mountbatten plan which became the template for India Independent act, 1947



Transition from

August Offer → Mountbatten Plan

- ① Constituent assembly of mostly Indians → All Indians in assembly
- ② No proposals for division of country → Legislatures can vote for division

③ Britishers retained executive control → Assembly will act as interim government

④ Veto to minorities → No veto to minorities

## Reflection of Indian political maturity

- ① Acceptance of impending partition due to ongoing riots
- ② Understanding political realities → Direct action call of Jinnah
- ③ Inclusive political process → Princely states given representation in assembly
- ④ Proven track record of governance after the 1937 election
- ⑤ Negotiations instead of mass protests due to extensive backlash of Quit India movement.

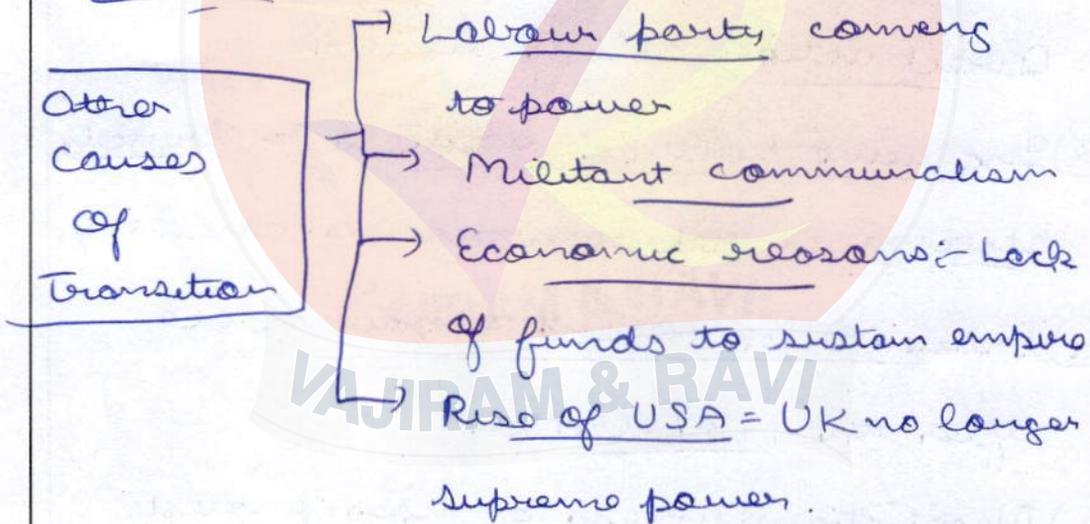
## Reflection of imperial decline

- ① Acceptance of inability to handle another

mass movement like Quit India.

- ② Failure of minority appeasement :- Jinnah crushed the wavell plan
- ③ Accepting post war exhaustion & inability to hold on to empire
- ④ Acceptance of self-Swamy :- Abandoning the dominion concept
- ⑤ Army revolts :- Revolt by Navy strikes in 1946

HOWEVER



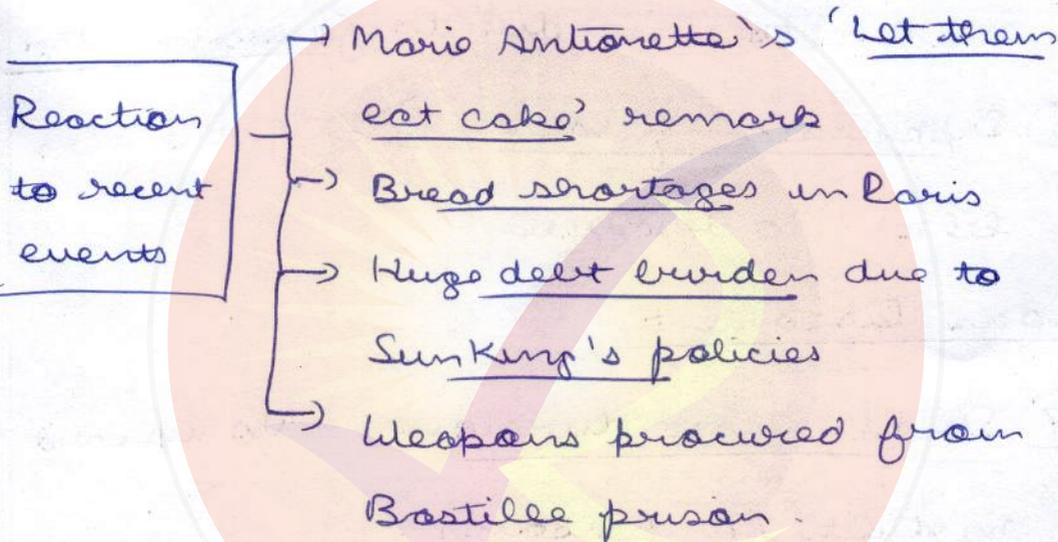
The provisions of Mountbatten plan accepted most congress demands like no independence to princely states in lieu of acceptance of partition.

Introduction	
Body	
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Marks:	

13. The French Revolution was not merely a reaction to recent events but also the outcome of prolonged structural imbalances and social discontent. Explain.

(15 marks / 250 words)

The French revolution starting in 1789 is marked by the storming of Bastille prison but was more driven by structural and social reasons than by immediate events.



Outcome of -

Prolonged structural Imbalances

① Lack of political representation & Absolute monarchy under Bourbon,

② 3 estates

- Clergy
- Nobility
- Others — 90% of people, no representation

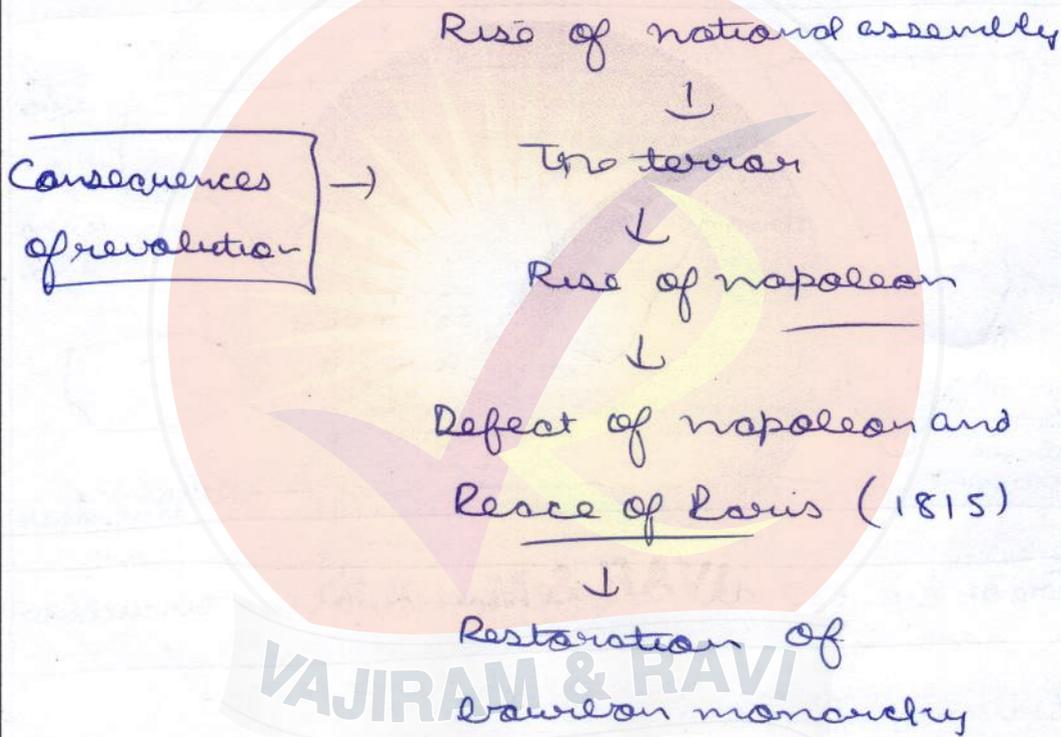
- ③ Inequality in national assembly voting :-  
First 2 estates always voted together, leaving 3rd estate unable to act.
  - ④ Income disparity :- High level of peasant impoverishment
  - ⑤ No meritocracy in army  $\Rightarrow$  Napoleon unable to rise due to foreign heritage
  - ⑥ Suppression of ideas  $\Rightarrow$  Of thinkers like Montesquieu
- Social Discontent
- ⑦ Strong class divisions :- No upward mobility for peasants.
  - ⑧ Tennis Court Oath impact :- National assembly formation gave voice to 3rd estate.
  - ⑨ Gender inequity :- Women were considered property under existing legal regime.
  - ⑩ Marginalisation of new territories :-

Nobles of areas like Sardinia were excluded from main nobility.

① Paris/Versailles oriented growth :-

Rural areas saw complete neglect.

② Farmers impact :- In the decade before the revolution.



'~~It~~ It is too soon to say'

- Deng Xiaoping when

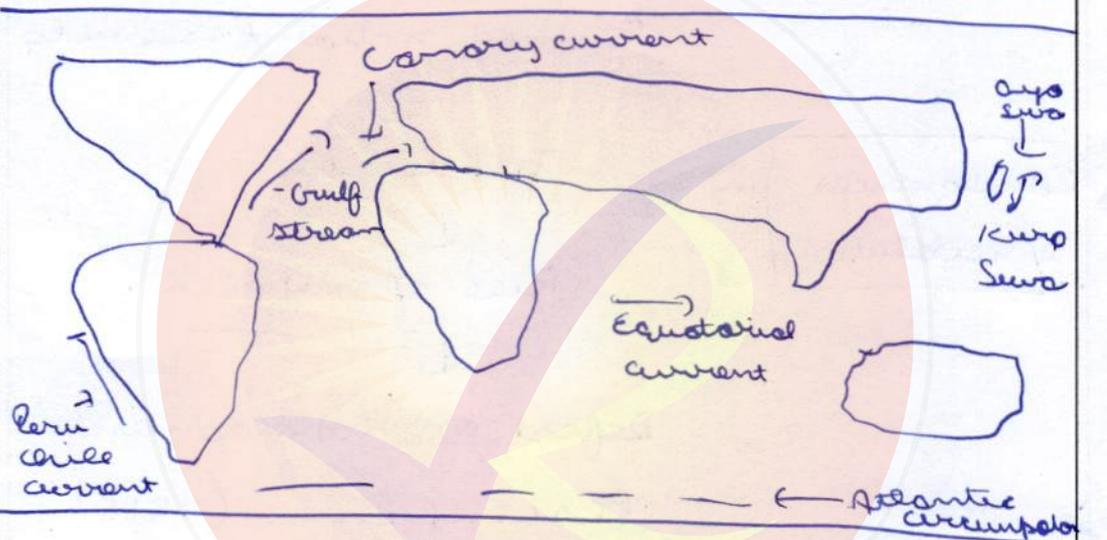
asked about the impacts of the

French revolution

Introduction	
Body	
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Presentation	
Marks:	

14. Evaluate the geophysical drivers behind ocean circulation systems and their implications for marine biodiversity and monsoonal variability.  
(15 marks / 250 words)

The ocean circulation system can be defined as a mixing of global ocean waters via a network of interconnected surface and deep ocean currents.



Geophysical drivers behind ocean circulation

Primary factors

- ① Differential heating by sun :- Leads to lifting of water level by 5cm near equator.
- ② Continentality :-  $\Rightarrow$  Waters in northern hemisphere are much hotter than

southern hemisphere

③ Winds Eg) Ansoero winds bring warm waters to coast.

④ Coriolis force : Ocean currents deflect to the right in northern hemisphere.

Secondary factors

⑤ Salinity : Water from saline regions mixes with non saline water -

⑥ Shape of continents Eg) Shape of South America deflects ~~co~~ equatorial current towards Gulf stream

⑦ Ocean bottom relief Eg) Mid atlantic ridge creates gyres

Implications for

Marine Biodiversity

① As resource base Eg) Cold water currents bring fresh resources

Monsoon variability

① weakening of Peru-Chile current directly linked

from depths

② As Breeding grounds

→ Where warm - cold ocean currents meet

③ As migration aids

↳ Whales and turtles use circulation to cover long distances

to El - Niño

② Warmer West

Indian Ocean ⇒

Stronger Monsoon

High = Stronger Monsoon.

③ Indian Ocean

Dipole influenced by ocean currents

Threats to ocean circulation systems

- Melting of glacier ice
- Global temperature changes
- Tipping points ↳ Gulf

stream is a tipping point

There is an urgent need to study global circulation systems and gather data on impact that they face from climate change, to determine crossing of tipping points and prevent it

Introduction

Body

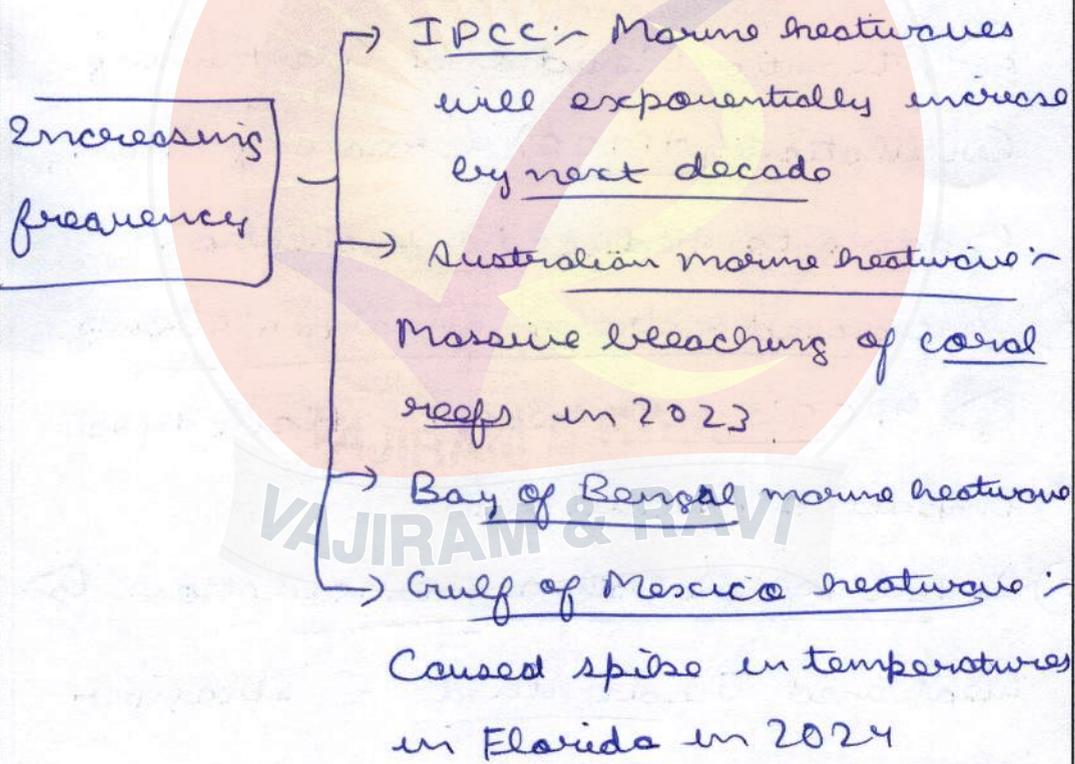
Conclusion

Presentation

Marks:

15. What are marine heatwaves? Examine the causes of the increasing frequency of marine heatwaves. How do they influence the onset of the summer monsoon in India? (15 marks / 250 words)

Marine heatwaves is a spike in ~~area~~ ocean temperature compared to its long term average for 3+ days. There was a months long marine heatwave seen in Bay of Bengal recently, signalling its increased frequency



### Causes of Increased frequency

① Global warming - 80% of increased

global temperature is absorbed by oceans

- ② Decreased albedo due to decreased cloud cover in many areas.
- ③ Ocean circulation changes  $\Rightarrow$  Increased intensity of Gulf Stream
- ④ Related phenomena  $\Rightarrow$  El Niño leads to higher ocean temperatures
- ⑤ Impact of ocean 'tipping points'  $\Rightarrow$  Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC) breaking down, leading to reduced circulation
- ⑥ Increased extreme weather events  $\Rightarrow$  IPCC's 6th report  $\Rightarrow$  Have direct impact on heatwaves
- ⑦ Impact of global air circulation  $\Rightarrow$  Weakened Trade Winds = Stronger El Niño

Influence on Onset of Summer monsoon

- ① Strengthening mesoscale high leads

to a stranger onset.

② Increased unpredictability  $\Rightarrow$

Monsoon is 10 days earlier this year.

③ Hindrances in onset due to increasing tropical cyclones

④ Reduced pressure difference between land and sea = ~~low~~ Reduced onset of monsoon

⑤ Indirect impact via alteration of air circulation  $\Rightarrow$  Localised winds gain more prominence

IMD needs to gather more data to factor in monsoon activities in its multiple ensemble model used for prediction of monsoon

Introduction

Body

Conclusion

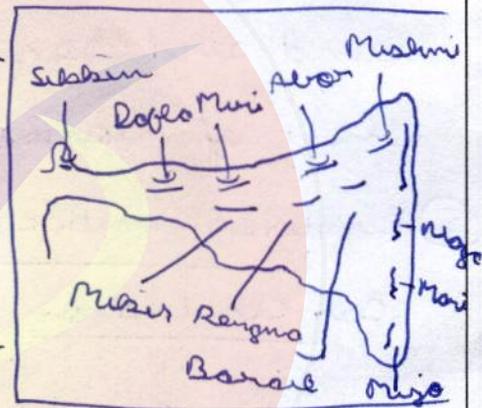
Presentation

Marks:

16. The Eastern Himalayan and Northeastern region of India holds immense strategic and ecological value. Comment on its resource potential and highlight the constraints affecting its effective utilisation. (15 marks / 250 words)

The collision of the Eurasian and the Indo-australian plates led to the formation of multiple mountain ranges in the northeast, marked by the Syntaxial bend near Manchao Barua

Use of Eastern hilly areas and northeast



Strategic value

① Geographical barrier

Between Myanmar - India and China - India

② Accessible passes Eg Mather La in

Sibkin for constant monitoring

③ Natural defence due to rugged

terrain Eg In a natural

④ Community bondings across border due to shared heritage

## Ecological value

- ⑤ Hub for Schedule I Species  $\rightarrow$  Sangai deer
- ⑥ Geographical heritage : Unnakoti Caves of Meghalaya
- ⑦ Sacred groves  $\rightarrow$  Khecchpurai Lake in Sibsim
- ⑧ Valuable genetic resources  $\rightarrow$  Blue flowers of Mt. Saramadi
- ⑨ Resources of locals  $\rightarrow$  Freshwater of Loktak Lake

## Resource potential of the area

- ① Agriculture : Best zone for growing palm oil
- ② Human resources : Literacy rate of Nizoram is 90%+
- ③ Minerals -  $\rightarrow$  Untapped reserves of Uranium + Coal

# VAJIRAM & RAVI

- ④ Logistics - Access to south east Asian markets
- ⑤ Energy - Bhutan has highest hydropower potential
- ⑥ Renewable energy → Strong monsoon winds in Meghalaya valley

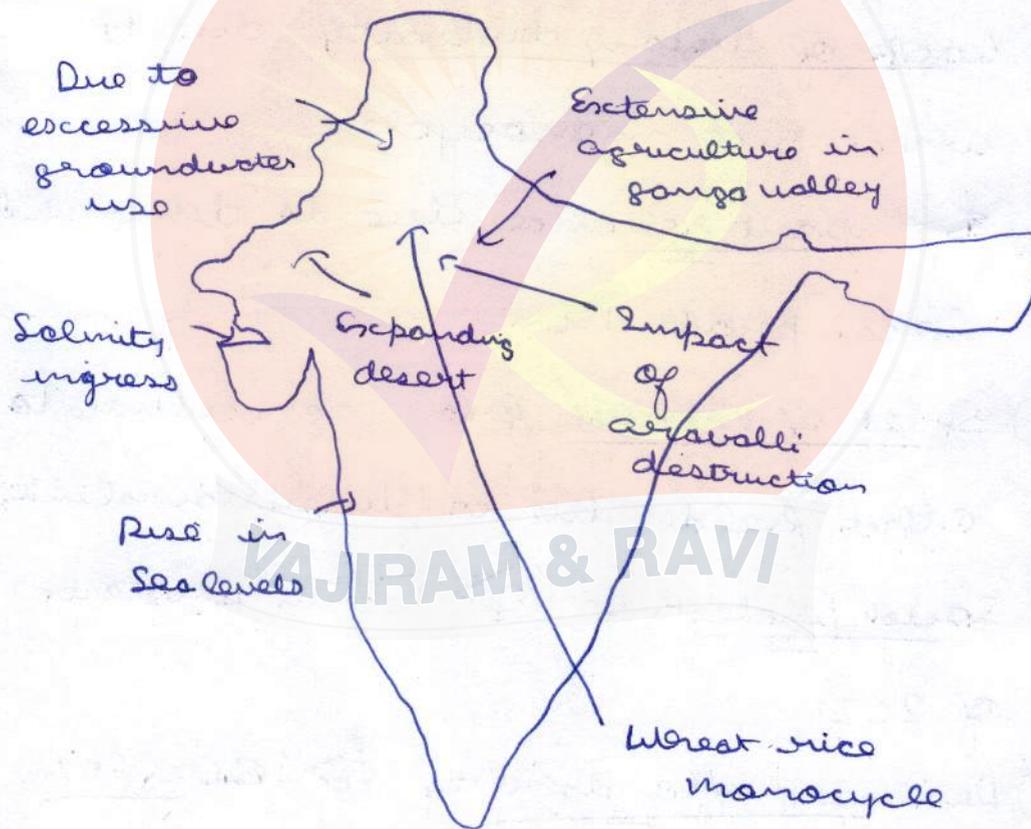
Constraints in Utilisation	Solutions being worked on
① <u>Access</u> - Mountainous terrain	IMT bilateral highway
② <u>Inter-country access</u>	Kohyong airport in Sikkim, PM UDAN
③ Lack of resources in agriculture	National mission on Palm oil
④ Local discontent - Regionalism	Borderland territorial region

India's act east policy can only reach fruition when we convert geographical challenges of North-east to geographical strengths

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17. Explain the regional variation in desertification trends across India. What impact does it have on food security? (15 marks / 250 words)

Desertification is a process of reduced land productivity and production, making it unsuitable for economic usage by humans (Definition as per UNCCD). The causes of desertification vary across India



Regional variations in desertification trends

## Impact on food security

- ① Decreased production : Per acre yield is already suffering in Europe
- ② Reduced acreage area  $\Rightarrow$  Due to subsidence under sea.
- ③ End of local varieties  $\Rightarrow$  Seen in Gujiat due to salinity.
- ④ Lack of dietary diversity due to wheat rice monocycle
- ⑤ Import reliance due to diminished local production.
- ⑥ Shift of labour from agriculture to other fields due to unsustainability
- ⑦ Social protests :  $\Rightarrow$  Farm protests of 2021
- ⑧ Decreased affordability  $\Rightarrow$  Over 10% food inflation in recent years
- ⑨ Decreased accessibility : Food swamps and food deserts

## Measures to correct desertification

### National

- ① Stats :- Desertification and land degradation atlas of India (ISRO)
- ② Structural :- (Eg) CAZRI is planting desert crops to prevent spread of Thar.
- ③ Legal (Eg) Mera Khami Mera Umraot of Haryana to end wheat - succ monocycle.
- ④ Shift in vegetation (Eg) Ben Drop Moro crop

### International

- ⑤ UNCCD
- ⑥ Bonn challenge - India has pledged to restore 23 million hectares.

Desertification can benefit from international efforts like the Great Green Wall of Sahel via collaboration.

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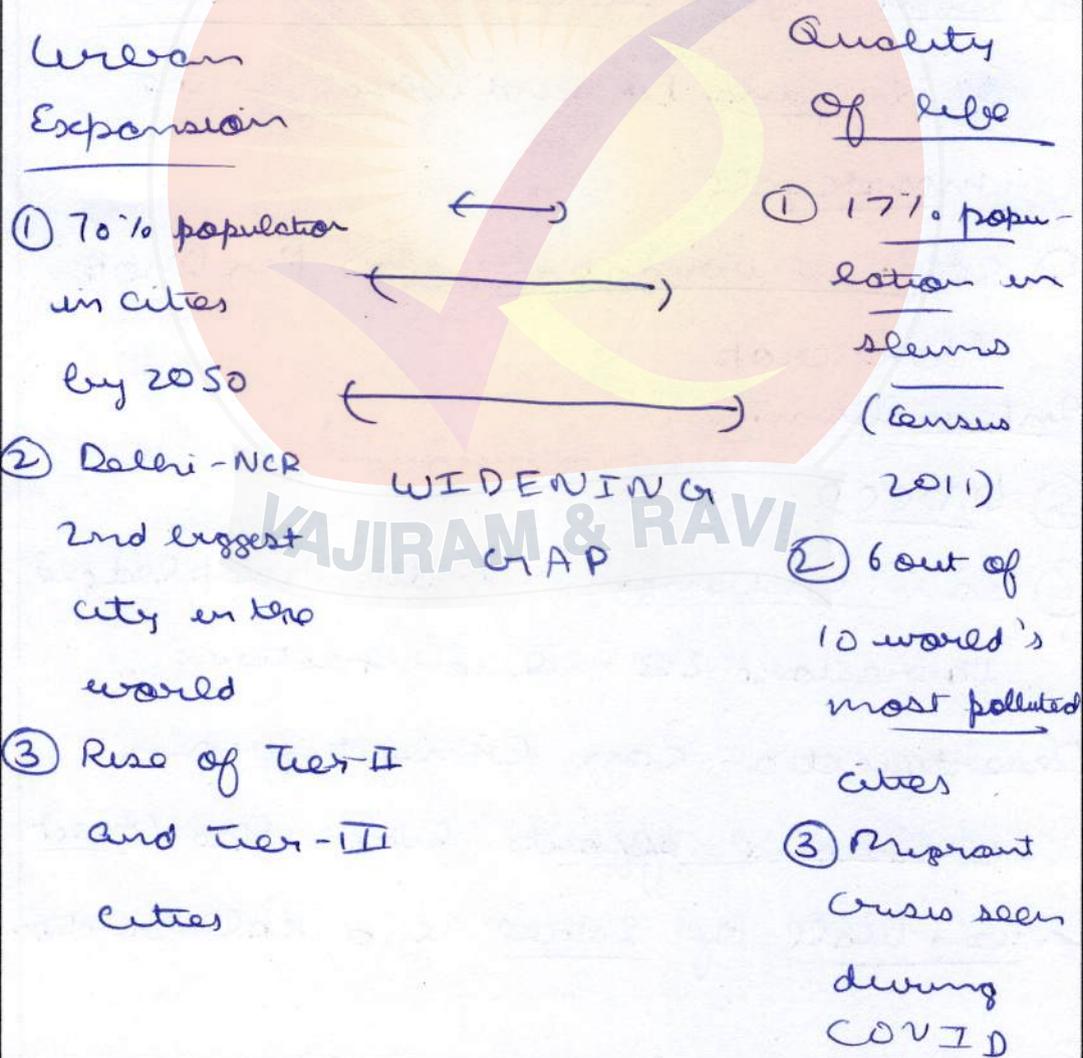
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Marks:

18. The phenomenon of 'livability atrophy' in Indian cities reflects the widening gap between urban expansion and quality of life. Examine the causes and consequences of this trend, and suggest measures to make urban growth more humane and sustainable. (15 marks / 250 words)

The recent inundation of Guwahati in monsoons, which has become a yearly phenomenon, reflects the 'livability atrophy', or the decrease in quality of life in Indian cities, primarily led by expansion



## Causes of widening gap

- ① Rural neglect  $\rightarrow$  Seen in ghost villages of Uttarakhand
- ② Lack of planning  $\rightarrow$  Only 10% of Indian cities have a master plan
- ③ Lack of devolution of powers  $\rightarrow$  Mayors are often elected only for 1 year.
- ④ Huge burden  $\rightarrow$  Delhi has a population over 2 cr.
- ⑤ Lack of finances  $\rightarrow$  Municipal revenue is < 1% of GDP
- ⑥ Unplanned expansion is leading to a widening peri urban sprawl  
 $\rightarrow$  Delhi - Gurgaon jams

## Consequences

- ① Centrifugation of core areas  $\rightarrow$  Unaffordability of Mumbai
- ② Conurbation of cities  $\rightarrow$  Neglect of

peripheries

- ③ 'Gated community' trend - Leading to social exclusion
- ④ Decline in human capital  $\Rightarrow$  Dengue outbreak in Dharavi
- ⑤ Social unrest  $\Rightarrow$  Against Behruv in Madhavashtra

## Measures for Humane - Sustainable expansion

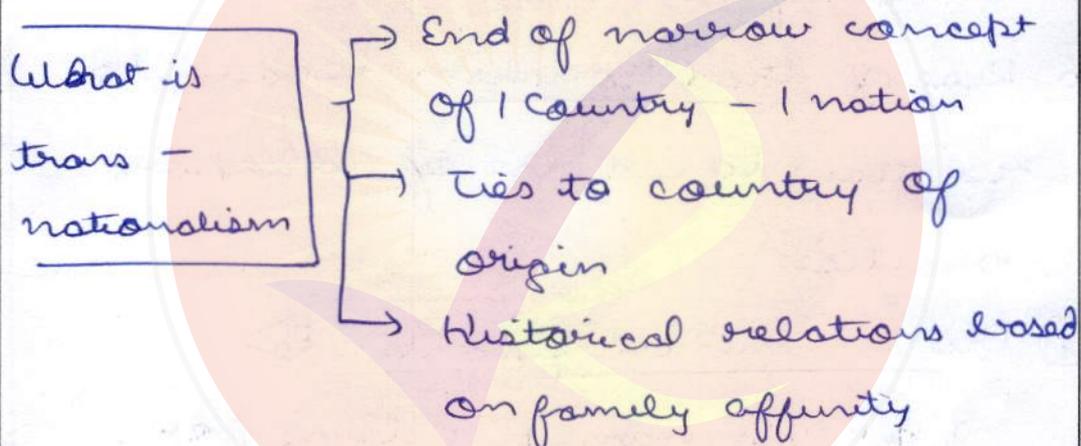
- ① Institutions
  - $\rightarrow$  More powers to MC's
  - $\rightarrow$  Regular SFC establishment
  - $\rightarrow$  Indian Municipal services
- ② Planning
  - $\rightarrow$  Master plans like Delhi Master Plan
  - $\rightarrow$  Transit oriented development (Tamil Nadu)
- ③ Sustainability
  - $\rightarrow$  Walkable cities (Bengaluru)
  - $\rightarrow$  Slum rehabilitation (Adani Project in Dharavi)

As per 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan, livability atrophy is not due to extensive migration but due to lack of development, and must be addressed as such

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19. Define transnationalism and examine the factors that have led to the increasing global interconnectedness of diaspora communities. (15 marks / 250 words)

Transnationalism means a feeling of sense of global community, particularly towards your country of origin and towards the country you are currently resident in, particularly relevant in context of diaspora



Factors leading to rise of global interconnectedness of diaspora

- ① Social - Search for a sense of identity in our ancestors
- ② Technological  $\Rightarrow$  DNA testing, connectivity via video calls, etc

- ③ End of colonialism Eg Curmityes or forced labour from India want to relate to their homeland
- ④ Economic Eg Prosperous communities like Indians in US find social consciousness via Indian roots.
- ⑤ Globalisation → Leads to hybridisation of cultures.
- ⑥ Rise of traditionalism leading to relation to source of diaspora practices.
- ⑦ Governmental efforts Eg
  - PM's recent calls for Curmityes relations
  - Bharat Ka Teeno Program
  - India House in countries
  - Buddhist circuit in India
- ⑧ Political :- Rise of political consciousness via measures like registration of NRI's for voting under RPA act

## Consequences of global interconnectedness of diaspora

① Soft power → Ruqai being celebrated in the white house

② Tourism - 5% y/o/y increase since COVID.

③ Increased remittance flow → 111 bn \$ in 2024

④ Personal relations with states → President of Swiname has indian roots

⑤ Cosmopolitanism in global relationships.

India's diaspora is not merely linked to its culture but acts as a 'Bharat - Root' across the globe, as per our Foreign minister

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20. With urban flood events rising, examine how unplanned urban expansion amplifies climate risk. Suggest long-term and institutional measures to build resilient urban infrastructure. (15 marks / 250 words)

The recent floodings of Delhi and Mumbai in Monsoons, coupled with an increased frequency of urban floodings in Tier-II towns like Chandigarh (2023), Agartala (2022), etc. point to rising a trend

Unplanned urban expansion

Amplifying climate risk

① Lack of proper zonation

Delhi floods affected people in  Yamuna floodplain most

② Stress on scarce resources

→ absence of contingency plan for restores

③ lack of a sustainable transit policy

→ hindrances in rescue during tornadoes

④ Absence of green infra → Barriers to disaster removed Eg → Lakes of Bangalore encroached

⑤ Lack of a unified disaster policy → Amplification of smaller disaster  
Eg → Sauragar floods (2015)

## Building resilient urban infrastructure

### Institutional measures

- ① Municipal power devolution - Eg → Directly elected mayor model.
- ② Enhanced resources Eg → Social Impact Bonds by Pune MC.
- ③ City Master Plans Eg → Delhi Master Plan of 2035
- ④ Urban Disaster Management Authorities  
on the lines of state disaster

management authority . . .

⑤ Strict Implementation of zoning law

Long-term Measures

⑥ Retrofitting of buildings  $\rightarrow$  Stilted buildings in Assam.

⑦ Blue-Green Infrastructure  $\rightarrow$

Lake restoration in Chennai and Bangalore.

⑧ Sponge Cities on China Model to increase permeability.

⑨ State resources to be effectively devolved to MC's

and Devarangere  
India's Agartala  $\wedge$  ~~and~~ has proved to be a model city by recovering an urban flooding resistant city

tag from the centre

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# Space for Rough Work



**Space for Rough Work**

