UPSC CSE Mains 2023 — Complete GS (1–4) + Essay Pack

All 5 Merit Papers from UPSC Mains 2023 (87 questions & essay prompts) with syllabus micro-topics and word limits. Free from preplord.com.

GS Paper 1 (History, Society & Geography) (20 Qs | Code: SKYC-G-GSU)

1 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Indian Society → Diversity, Secularism & Communalism [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Role of geographical factors towards the development of Ancient India

2 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • History & Culture → Freedom Struggle [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Difference between Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore on education and nationalism

3 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • History & Culture → World History [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Socio-economic effects of the introduction of railways in different countries of the world

4 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Geography → Geophysical Phenomena & Climate [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Consequences of climate change on food security in tropical countries

5 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Geography → Natural Resources & Industrial Location [Explain | Static / Evergreen]
Why the world is confronted with a crisis of availability of and access to freshwater resources

6 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Geography → Salient Physical Features [Explain | Static / Evergreen]
How fjords are formed & why they constitute some of the most picturesque areas of the world

7 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Geography → Geophysical Phenomena & Climate [Analyze | Static / Evergreen]
Why South-West Monsoon is called 'Purvaiya' (easterly) in Bhojpur Region & impact on cultural ethos

8 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Indian Society → Women & Social Empowerment [Critically Examine | Static / Evergreen]
Whether marriage as a sacrament is losing its value in Modern India

9 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Indian Society → Women & Social Empowerment [Explain | Static / Evergreen]
Why suicide among young women is increasing in Indian society

10 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Indian Society → Urbanization & Family [Analyze | Static / Evergreen]
Child cuddling being replaced by mobile phones — impact on socialization of children

11 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • History & Culture → Art & Architecture [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Main features of Vedic society and religion & features still prevailing in Indian society

12 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • History & Culture → Literature & Culture [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Major technological changes during the Sultanate period & influence on Indian society

13 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • History & Culture → Modern Indian History (1757–1947) [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
How colonial rule affected tribals in India & tribal response to colonial oppression

14 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Geography → Salient Physical Features [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Resource potentials of India's long coastline & status of natural hazard preparedness

15 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Geography → Natural Resources & Industrial Location [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Factors for diversity of natural vegetation in India & significance of rain forest wildlife sanctuaries

16 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Indian Society → Population, Poverty & Development [Explain | Static / Evergreen]
Why human development failed to keep pace with economic development in India

17 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Geography → Natural Resources & Industrial Location [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
India's emergence from net food importer in 1960s to net food exporter to the world

18 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Indian Society → Urbanization & Family [Critically Examine | Static / Evergreen]
Whether urbanization leads to more segregation and/or marginalization of poor in Indian metropolises

19 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Indian Society → Diversity, Secularism & Communalism [Explain | Static / Evergreen]
Why caste identity in India is both fluid and static

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20 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Indian Society → Diversity, Secularism & Communalism [Analyze | Static / Evergreen]
Impact of post-liberal economy on ethnic identity and communalism

GS Paper 2 (Polity, Governance, Social Justice & IR) (20 Qs | Code: SKYC-G-GST)

1 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Polity & Constitution → Judiciary & Judicial Activism [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Constitutionally guaranteed judicial independence as a prerequisite of democracy

2 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Polity & Constitution → Judiciary & Judicial Activism [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Entitlement to free legal aid & role of NALSA in rendering free legal aid in India

3 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Polity & Constitution → Constitutional & Statutory Bodies [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Reluctance of Indian states to empower urban local bodies functionally and financially

4 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Polity & Constitution → Parliament & State Legislatures [Compare | Static / Evergreen]
Compare and contrast British and Indian approaches to Parliamentary sovereignty

5 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Polity & Constitution → Parliament & State Legislatures [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Role of Presiding Officers of state legislatures in order, impartiality & best democratic practices

6 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Social Justice → Education & Skill Development [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Inadequate attention to Human Resource Development in India & measures to address it

7 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Polity & Constitution → Constitutional & Statutory Bodies [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Role of Competition Commission of India (CCI) in containing abuse of dominant position by MNCs

8 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Governance → Civil Services & Accountability [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Inadequacies hampering e-governance's effectiveness, transparency and accountability

9 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Governance → E-Governance & Citizen Charters [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
'Virus of Conflict' affecting functioning of SCO & India's role in mitigating problems

10 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • International Relations → Indian Diaspora [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Indian diaspora scaling new heights in the West — economic and political benefits for India

11 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Polity & Constitution → Judiciary & Judicial Activism [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Constitution as a living instrument — expanding horizons of right to life and personal liberty

12 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Polity & Constitution → Judiciary & Judicial Activism [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Constitutional perspectives of Gender Justice with relevant provisions and case laws

13 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Polity & Constitution → Federalism & Centre-State Relations [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Legal and political factors for reduced frequency of Article 356 use since mid-1990s

14 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Governance → Pressure Groups, NGOs & Civil Society [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Contribution of civil society groups for women's participation & representation in state legislatures

15 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Polity & Constitution → Federalism & Centre-State Relations [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Significance of 101st Constitutional Amendment Act & accommodative spirit of federalism

16 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Polity & Constitution → Parliament & State Legislatures [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Structure of Parliamentary Committee system & financial committees' role in institutionalising Parliament

17 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Social Justice → Poverty & Welfare Governance [Critically Examine | Static / Evergreen]
Whether development and welfare schemes for the vulnerable are discriminatory in approach

18 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Social Justice → Education & Skill Development [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Skill development programmes & linkages between education, skill and employment

19 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • International Relations → Bilateral & Global Groupings [Critically Examine | Static / Evergreen]
Whether expansion/strengthening of NATO and stronger US-Europe partnership works well for India

20 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • International Relations → Global Institutions & Treaties [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Role of IMO (International Maritime Organisation) in environment protection & maritime safety/security

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GS Paper 3 (Economy, Agri, S&T, Environment & Security) (20 Qs | Code: SKYC-G-GST)

1 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Economy → Infrastructure, Energy & Investment [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Increased share of manufacturing/MSMEs in GDP for faster economic growth — current Govt policies

2 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Economy → Inclusive Growth, Poverty & Employment [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Status of digitalization in Indian economy, problems faced & suggested improvements

3 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Agriculture → MSP, Subsidies & Marketing [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
How e-Technology helps farmers in production and marketing of agricultural produce

4 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Agriculture → Land Reforms [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Objectives/measures of land reforms in India & land ceiling policy under economic criteria

5 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Science & Tech → AI, IT & Emerging Tech [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Concept of Artificial Intelligence (AI), clinical diagnosis & privacy threats in healthcare

6 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Science & Tech → Biotechnology & Health Tech [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Ways in which microorganisms can help in meeting the current fuel shortage

7 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Environment & Disaster Management → Disaster Management [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Various causes of catastrophic dam failures & two examples of large dam failures

8 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Environment & Disaster Management → Conservation, Biodiversity & Pollution [Analyze | Static / Evergreen]
Oil pollution, impacts on marine ecosystem & why it is particularly harmful for India

9 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Internal Security → Extremism, Insurgency & Terrorism [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Winning 'Hearts and Minds' in terrorism-affected areas — Government measures in Jammu & Kashmir

10 • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Science & Tech → Space & Defence Tech [Compare | Static / Evergreen]
Cross-border use of UAVs by adversaries to ferry arms/drugs & counter-measures

11 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Economy → Inclusive Growth, Poverty & Employment [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Structural nature of unemployment in India — methodology to compute unemployment & improvements

12 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Economy → Inclusive Growth, Poverty & Employment [Compare | Static / Evergreen]
Distinguish 'care economy' vs 'monetized economy' & bringing care economy into monetized economy via women empowerment

13 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Agriculture → Cropping Patterns & Farm Productivity [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Changes in cropping pattern in India in context of consumption pattern and marketing conditions

14 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Agriculture → MSP, Subsidies & Marketing [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Direct and indirect farm subsidies in India & issues raised by WTO

15 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Economy → Infrastructure, Energy & Investment [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Growing adoption of electric vehicles — reducing carbon emissions & benefits over ICE vehicles

16 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Science & Tech → Space & Defence Tech [Discuss | Current-Affairs Linked]
India's third moon mission (Chandrayaan-3): main task, countries achieving it, subsystems & VSSC Virtual Launch Control Centre

17 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Environment & Disaster Management → Conservation, Biodiversity & Pollution [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
National Wetland Conservation Programme & Indian wetlands of international importance (Ramsar Sites)

18 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Environment & Disaster Management → Climate Change & Treaties [Analyze | Static / Evergreen]
IPCC prediction of ~1m global sea level rise by AD 2100 — impact on India & Indian Ocean region

19 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Internal Security → Cyber Security & Money Laundering [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Internal security challenges faced by India & role of Central Intelligence and Investigative Agencies

20 • 15 Marks • 250 Words • Internal Security → Cyber Security & Money Laundering [Discuss | Current-Affairs Linked]
Major sources of terror funding in India, curtailment efforts & 'No Money for Terror (NMFT)' Conference (Nov 2022)

GS Paper 4 (Ethics, Integrity & Aptitude) (19 Qs | Code: SKYC-G-GSF)

1(a) • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Ethics Theory → Foundational & Civil Service Values [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
'Moral integrity' and 'professional efficiency' in the context of corporate governance in India

1(b) • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Ethics Theory → Ethics & Human Interface [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
'Ethics in contemporary international aid' for helping resource-challenged nations

2(a) • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Ethics Theory → Ethics & Human Interface [Discuss | Current-Affairs Linked]
Corruption as manifestation of failure of core values — measures to uplift core values in society

2(b) • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Ethics Theory → Probity & Corporate Governance [Compare | Static / Evergreen]
Differentiate between 'coercion' and 'undue influence' in work environment with examples

3(a) • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Thinker Quotes → Quote-Based Questions Vault [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Mahatma Gandhi quote: The simplest acts of kindness are more powerful than a thousand heads bowing in prayer

3(b) • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Thinker Quotes → Quote-Based Questions Vault [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Jawaharlal Nehru quote: To awaken the people, it is the women who must be awakened

3(c) • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Thinker Quotes → Quote-Based Questions Vault [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Swami Vivekananda quote: Do not hate anybody; hatred or love comes back completing the circle

4(a) • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Ethics Theory → Attitude & Emotional Intelligence [Compare | Static / Evergreen]
EQ vs conventional IQ for success, character, happiness and lifelong achievements

4(b) • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Ethics Theory → Ethics & Human Interface [Compare | Static / Evergreen]
Differentiate 'moral intuition' from 'moral reasoning' with suitable examples

5(a) • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Ethics Theory → Ethics & Human Interface [Critically Examine | Static / Evergreen]
Whether conscience is a more reliable guide than laws, rules and regulations in ethical decision-making

5(b) • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Ethics Theory → Probity & Corporate Governance [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Probity is essential for an effective system of governance and socio-economic development

6(a) • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Ethics Theory → Ethics & Human Interface [Discuss | Static / Evergreen]
Major teachings of Guru Nanak & their relevance in the contemporary world

6(b) • 10 Marks • 150 Words • Ethics Theory → Ethics & Human Interface [Explain | Static / Evergreen]
Explain the term social capital & how it enhances good governance

7 • 20 Marks • 250 Words • Case Studies → Corruption, Probity & Conflict of Interest [Case Study | Static / Evergreen]
Nationalised bank executive learns manager secretly released ■10 lakh from dormant account to fund colleague's father's urgent heart surgery

8 • 20 Marks • 250 Words • Case Studies → Tech, AI & Data Ethics [Case Study | Static / Evergreen]
AIIMS-trained District Magistrate at remote Uttarkashi landslide facing emergency blood transfusion dilemma for bleeding pregnant woman without blood bank

9 • 20 Marks • 250 Words • Case Studies → Workplace Ethics, Medical & Administrative Integrity [Case Study | Static / Evergreen]
Joint Secretary Rashika asked at 9:30 PM Saturday to work Sunday while juggling two young kids — work-life balance & 4 laws for women's workplace

10 • 20 Marks • 250 Words • Case Studies → Tech, AI & Data Ethics [Case Study | Static / Evergreen]
Honest IAS officer Vinod (MD, State Road Transport Corp) handed bribe video against CM-linked Chairman by Opposition Board Member seeking political gain

11 • 20 Marks • 250 Words • Case Studies → Tech, AI & Data Ethics [Case Study | Static / Evergreen]
ADG of CPWD handling insecure retiring Chief Architect harassing brilliant UK-trained woman Senior Architect Seema contemplating resignation

12 • 20 Marks • 250 Words • Case Studies → Tech, AI & Data Ethics [Case Study | Static / Evergreen]
Ministry official's 11-year-old son bullied; viral fake video accuses official of bullying kids; official posts counter-video identifying perpetrators — social media ethics

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Essay Paper (Philosophical & Policy Prompts) (8 Qs | Code: SKYC-G-ESSY)

A1 • 125 Marks • 1200 Words • Philosophical / Epigrammatic → Self, Mind & Philosophy [Essay | Static / Evergreen]
Thinking is like a game, it does not begin unless there is an opposite team.

A2 • 125 Marks • 1200 Words • Philosophical / Epigrammatic → Self, Mind & Philosophy [Essay | Static / Evergreen]
Visionary decision-making happens at the intersection of intuition and logic.

A3 • 125 Marks • 1200 Words • Philosophical / Epigrammatic → Self, Mind & Philosophy [Essay | Static / Evergreen]
Not all who wander are lost.

A4 • 125 Marks • 1200 Words • Philosophical / Epigrammatic → Self, Mind & Philosophy [Essay | Static / Evergreen]
Inspiration for creativity springs from the effort to look for the magical in the mundane.

B1 • 125 Marks • 1200 Words • Philosophical / Epigrammatic → Society, Gender & Inclusion [Essay | Static / Evergreen]
Girls are weighed down by restrictions, boys with demands — two equally harmful disciplines.

B2 • 125 Marks • 1200 Words • Philosophical / Epigrammatic → Education, Science & Knowledge [Essay | Static / Evergreen]
Mathematics is the music of reason.

B3 • 125 Marks • 1200 Words • Philosophical / Epigrammatic → Governance, Ethics & Leadership [Essay | Static / Evergreen]
A society that has more justice is a society that needs less charity.

B4 • 125 Marks • 1200 Words • Philosophical / Epigrammatic → Education, Science & Knowledge [Essay | Static / Evergreen]
Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school.

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