

IAS Mains English 2004

1. Write an essay in about 300 words on any one of the following: (100)
 - a. Indian Budget is a Gamble on the Monsoons
 - b. Necessity of Water-Harvesting in India
 - c. Social Harmony vs. Communal Frenzy
 - d. Criminalization of Politics
 - e. 'All That Glitters Is Not Gold'
2. Read the following passage and answer, in your own words, the questions that follow at the end ($5 \times 15 = 75$)

The flowering of Indian civilization constitutes one of the most glorious chapters in the history of mankind. A culture, remarkable for its moral no less than for its material creativity, which has endured for three millennia and more, is necessarily a subject of great fascination. Yet over and above its longevity, Indian civilization is also characterized by some other features which deserve to be highlighted in any review of its past. The ability of this civilization to absorb alien cultures without losing its distinctive identity has intrigued scholars over the centuries; and this capacity for creative absorption is as much in evidence today, when India is undergoing a seminal transformation into a modern industrial community, as it was in the centuries past, when alien communities with novel ways of life migrated into the subcontinent, to be drawn into the living matrix of Indian society; The continuity of Indian civilization rests very substantially upon social institutions and upon the dissemination of a common corpus of religious values among different classes and communities in the subcontinent. This civilization was also geared to a cycle of agricultural activity which substantially determined the total ordering of society. Hence, the fact that the great epicentres of Indian civilization were located in the plains of the Indus and the Ganga in the north; and those of the Mahanadi, the Godavari, the Krishna, and the Cauvery in the south. Over the centuries the people living in these riverine regions had conjured into existence a round of economic activity and a set of social institutions, which were designed to produce the agricultural wealth which sustained life. Indeed, the structure of rural society; with a central place occupied by the cultivating classes, which were linked by ties of patronage and prescription to numerous artisanal and menial groups; and the fabric of caste society; with the interlocking institutions of Varna and Jati has to be looked upon as the historical answer of the Indian genius to the needs of sustaining production in a rural society; The striking feature of this social organization was the premium which it put on self-sufficiency and survival within the framework of an agrarian civilization.

 - a. What is the most distinctive feature of Indian civilization?
 - b. Which section of the society occupied a central place in Indian civilization?
 - c. Identify the great epicentres of Indian civilization as narrated in the passage.
 - d. On what did the Indian social organization lay emphasis?
 - e. What does the phrase conjured into existence mean?
3. Make a precis of the following passage in your own words in about 220 to 240 words. Marks will be deduced if the precis is not written on the separate precis sheets provided and if it is longer or shorter than the prescribed limit. State the number of words used by you in the precis at its end and securely fasten the precis-sheets inside the answer-book (75). There is some similarity between Italy and India. Both are ancient countries with long traditions of culture behind them, though Italy is a newcomer compared to India, and India is a much more vast country Both are split up politically, and yet the conception of Italia, like that of

India, never died, and in all their diversity the unity was predominant. In Italy the unity was largely a Roman unity, for that great city had dominated the country and been the fount and symbol of unity. In India there was no such single centre or dominant city, although Benares might well be called the Eternal City of the East, not only for India, but also for Eastern Asia. But, unlike Rome, Benares never dabbled in empire or thought of temporal power. Indian culture was so widespread all over India that no part of the country could be called the heart of that culture. From Kanyakumari to Amarnath and Badrinath in the Himalayas, from Dwarka to Pun, the same ideas coursed, and if there was a clash of ideas in one place, the noise of it soon reached distant parts of the country. Just as Italy gave the gift of culture and religion to Western Europe, India did so to Eastern Asia though China was as old and venerable as India. And even when Italy was lying prostrate politically, her life coursed through the veins of Europe. It was Metternich who called Italy a geographical expression, and many a would-be Metternich has used that phrase for India, and, strangely enough, there is a similarity even in their geographical positions in the two continents. More interesting is the comparison of England with Austria, for has not England of the twentieth century been compared to Austria of the nineteenth, proud and haughty and imposing still, but with the roots that gave strength shriveling up and decay eating its way into the mighty fabric. It is curious how one cannot resist the tendency to give an anthropomorphic form to a country. Such is the force of habit and early associations. India becomes Bharat Mata, Mother India, a beautiful lady, very old but ever youthful in appearance, sad-eyed and forlorn, cruelly treated by aliens and outsiders, and calling upon her children to protect her. Some such picture rouses the emotions of hundreds of thousands and drives them to action and sacrifice. And yet India is in the main, the peasant and the worker, not beautiful to look at, for poverty is not beautiful. Does the beautiful lady of our imaginations represent the bare-bodied and bent workers in the fields and factories? Or the small group of those who have from ages past crushed the masses and exploited them, imposed cruel customs on them and made many of them even untouchable? We seek to cover truth by the creatures of our imaginations and endeavour to escape from reality to a world of dreams. And yet, despite these different classes and their mutual conflicts there was a common bond which united them in India, and one is amazed at its persistence and tenacity and enduring vitality. What was this strength due to? Nor merely the passive strength and weight of inertia and tradition, great as these always are. There was an active sustaining principle, for it resisted successfully powerful outside influences and absorbed internal forces that rose to combat it. And yet with all its strength it could not preserve political freedom or endeavour to bring about political unity. These latter do not appear to have been considered worth much trouble; their importance was very foolishly ignored, and we have suffered for this neglect. Right through history the old Indian ideal did not glorify political and military triumph, and it looked down upon money and the professional moneymaking class. Honour and wealth did not go together, and honour was meant to go, at least in theory, to the men who served the community with little in the shape of financial reward. The old culture managed to live through many a fierce storm and tempest, but though it kept its outer form, it lost its real content. Today it is fighting silently and desperately against a new and all-powerful opponent. The bania civilization of the capitalist West. It will succumb to this newcomer, for the West brings science, and science brings food for the hungry millions. But the West also brings an antidote to the evils of this cut-throat civilization--the principles of socialism, of cooperation, and service to the community for the common good.

4. Answer the following questions

- a. Fill in the blanks using the appropriate forms of the words given below: (10) burn, near, harm, perfect, invite, create, join, administer, spendthrift, skill
 - i. I did not accept the-because I was angry
 - ii. An honest man is the noblest of God.

- iii. His father prevented him from a dance school.
 - iv. A judge should equal justice to all.
 - v. He looks gentle enough, but he can be-at times.
 - vi. He has is case to my satisfaction.
 - vii. Your opponent is too to cope with:
 - viii. Despite suggestions to the contrary, he continued to be a
 - ix. The-. Sun made the traveller thirsty.
 - x. Bombay is the seaport to Europe.
- b. Use each of the following words in two separate sentences, first as a noun and then as a verb: (10)
- i. present
 - ii. move
 - iii. issue
 - iv. pain
 - v. crowd
- c. Rewrite the following sentences as directed within brackets: (5)
- i. He had to sign or be executed (Turn into a complex sentence).
 - ii. Given the order (Use the passive form).
 - iii. I was doubtful whether it was you (Turn into a negative sentence).
 - iv. He was disgraced his family (Use the noun form of disgraced).
 - v. He was so tired that he could not stand (Turn into a simple sentence replacing so by too).
5. Answer the following questions
- a. Correct the following sentences: (10)
- i. The rain was accompanied by hail and storm.
 - ii. I cannot help but think that he is a fool.
 - iii. I have never seen a clever man at engineering than him.
 - iv. It is all the more better if he marries your daughter.
 - v. Objections to this proposal can be stated as thus.
 - vi. He travelled from one corner of India to the other.
 - vii. She could not make up the mind.
 - viii. They tried to wipe out the poor widow's tears.
 - ix. It is the best ideal each person may aspire for:

x. You are not entitled for admission

b. Choose the appropriate words from those given in the brackets to fill in the blanks in the following sentences: 10. Answer the following questions

i. She has a- . Appearance (gracious, graceful).

ii. Our principal is a man of kind and-ature (judicious, judicial)

iii. He is-o both praise and blame (sensible, sensitive).

iv. Gandhiji was the-eader of the Congress party (virtuous, virtual)

v. I do not regard his scheme as (practicable, practical)

vi. The Equator is an-line round the world (imaginative, imaginary).

vii. The ship sailed ashore in spite of-difficulties (elemental, elementary).

viii. Acts of-negligence are punishable by law (willing, wilful).

ix. He was offered a-ob (temporal, temporary).

x. I am the-wner of the house (rightful, righteous).

c. Use the following phrases in your sentences so as to bring out their meaning: (5)

i. to call forth

ii. to fall through

iii. to get along

iv. to lay bare

v. to put up with