

GENERAL STUDIES - I

Answer the following questions in about 150 words each:

1. Discuss the significance of the elephant and serpent figures in Indian mythology, art and architecture.
10 Marks
2. In what ways did the Bhaumakara queens challenge traditional patriarchal norms, and what were the implications of their reign in Odisha during the early medieval period? 10 Marks
3. Discuss the various types of temples found in Odisha as per the Kalingan School of Architecture, highlighting their architectural features and distinguishing characteristics. 10 Marks
4. Assess the socio-religious impact of Sri Chaitanya's Bhakti movement on the populace of Odisha during the medieval period. 10 Marks
5. How did the Charyapadas serve as a cornerstone in the development of literary traditions in Odisha?
10 Marks
6. With the help of examples, highlight the diverse regional traditions showcased in Odisha's festivals.
10 Marks.
7. Caste identity in India is a complex interplay of historical legacies, socio-economic factors, and cultural norms. It is both fluid and static in nature. Discuss. 10 Marks.
8. How has the geography of Odisha influenced its culture? 10 Marks.

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9. Explain the geographical reasons behind the concentration of major tropical rainforests near the equator and their scarcity in the subtropical regions despite favorable climatic conditions. 10 Marks.

10. Explain the socio-political fragmentation prevalent in mid-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth-century India and its impact on the broader Indian polity. 10 Marks.

Answer the following questions in about 250 words each:

11. Discuss the factors that led to the Shimla Agreement of 1972 between India and Pakistan. Highlight the key elements and implications of this diplomatic accord. 15 Marks.

12. Describe the contribution of the Ganga rulers to the Society and Culture of Odisha. 15 Marks.

13. Discuss the multifaceted challenges faced by the state of Odisha regarding its water resources and the steps needed to address these issues comprehensively. 15 Marks.

14. Critically analyse the impact of globalisation on rural Odisha. 15 Marks.

15. Increasing urbanisation may result in microclimates for Indian cities, risking the health of people living there. Discuss in the context of urban heat islands in India. 15 Marks.

16. Why were the armies of the British East India Company, primarily consisting of Indian soldiers, consistently victorious against the larger and better-equipped forces of the indigenous Indian rulers during their conquests in India? Discuss. 15 Marks.

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17. Examine the role of power struggle and relative disparity in fostering communal tensions within societies, providing examples to support your argument. 15 Marks.
18. India is now one of the fastest-growing economies globally. However, this growth has not resulted in a corresponding increase in its Human Development Index (HDI). How can India ensure more equitable distribution of the benefits of its economic growth by prioritizing human development alongside various policy measures and investments in social infrastructure? 15 Marks.
19. Are we losing our local identity for the global identity? Discuss in the Indian context with the help of examples. 15 Marks.
20. How do socio-cultural influences, policy shortcomings, and regional dynamics collectively contribute to the declining Child Sex Ratio among tribal communities in India? 15 Marks

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Answer the following questions in about 150 words each:

1. Discuss the significance of the elephant and serpent figures in Indian mythology, art and architecture. 10 Marks

Introduction:

The elephant and serpent figures in Indian mythology, art, and architecture are emblematic symbols deeply rooted in religious narratives, artistic expressions, and architectural grandeur. Their significance spans across diverse aspects of Hindu beliefs, cultural expressions, and societal representations.

The elephant symbolizes strength, wisdom, and auspiciousness, prominently represented by deities like Ganesha and celestial beings such as Airavata. Similarly, serpents, known as Nagas, are revered as protectors, embodying cosmic energy and eternal balance in Hindu mythology.

Body:

Elephant in Indian Mythology:

- **Ganesha:** The elephant-headed deity, Ganesha, is one of the most revered and worshipped gods in Hinduism. He is the son of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati, symbolizing wisdom, intellect, and overcoming obstacles. Ganesha's association with elephants signifies strength, wisdom, and the ability to remove obstacles, making him the harbinger of new beginnings and success.
- **Airavata:** In Hindu mythology, Airavata is the divine, celestial elephant and the vehicle (vahana) of the king of gods, Lord Indra. Airavata is depicted as a white elephant with multiple tusks and is believed to have emerged during the churning of the cosmic ocean. It symbolizes purity, prosperity, and rain-bearing clouds.

Serpent in Indian Mythology:

- **Nagas:** Serpent deities or Nagas hold a significant place in Hindu mythology. They are considered semi-divine beings, sometimes associated with water bodies or natural elements. Nagas are

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worshipped and respected as protectors of treasures, guardians of sacred places, and often associated with fertility and regeneration.

- **Shesha:** Shesha is a primordial serpent in Hindu mythology, also known as Ananta, meaning 'endless' or 'infinite.' As per the Puranic texts, Shesha supports the entire universe on its hoods while Lord Vishnu rests on its coils during the cosmic dissolution. Shesha symbolizes timelessness, eternity, and the cosmic balance.

Representation in Art and Architecture:

- **Temple Sculptures:** Both elephants and serpents find elaborate depiction in sculptures adorning temple walls and pillars across India. Elephants represent auspiciousness and strength, while serpents, often as guardians, symbolize protection and cosmic energy.
- **Architectural Embellishments:** The architectural intricacies of Indian temples showcase these symbolic figures. Elephants and serpents are carved as elaborate motifs on temple entrances and as decorative elements, depicting their cultural and religious significance.

Examples in Indian Heritage Sites:

- **Virupaksha Temple, Hampi:** This UNESCO World Heritage Site features intricate elephant carvings that adorn the temple complex, symbolizing auspiciousness and strength.
- **Ranganathaswamy Temple, Srirangam:** The temple's entrance exhibits detailed Naga sculptures, portraying their role as protectors and symbols of cosmic energy.

Conclusion:

The elephant and serpent figures stand as revered symbols in Indian mythology, art, and architecture, embodying virtues, cosmic significance, and cultural heritage. Their portrayal in religious narratives, artistic expressions, and architectural embellishments highlights the deep-rooted spirituality and enduring legacy of India's cultural tapestry. From representing wisdom and auspiciousness to embodying cosmic balance and protection, these iconic figures intricately weave together the diverse layers of Indian heritage, showcasing the interplay of symbolism, creativity, and cultural expression in India.

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2. In what ways did the Bhaumakara queens challenge traditional patriarchal norms, and what were the implications of their reign in Odisha during the early medieval period? 10 Marks

Introduction:

The Bhaumakara dynasty, ruling from the mid-8th to mid-10th century CE in Odisha, witnessed a remarkable anomaly - the ascendancy of six queens to the throne. This unconventional occurrence challenged deeply entrenched patriarchal norms prevalent in ancient Indian politics, leaving a profound impact on Odisha's socio-political landscape.

Body:

Female Sovereignty:

- Tribhūvanamahādevī I, Prithivīmahādevī, Gaurīmahādevī, Daṇḍimahādevī, Vakulamahādevī, and Dharmamahādevī were among the notable Bhaumakara queens who assumed the throne as legitimate rulers.
- Unlike the prevalent norms that discouraged female leadership, the Bhaumakara queens assumed the throne as legitimate rulers, exercising tangible political authority.

Cultural and Religious Influences:

- Odisha's cultural ethos, deeply rooted in goddess worship and reverence for powerful female deities, likely contributed to the acceptance of female leadership.
- The dynasty's association with tantrism and Shaktism might have influenced the societal recognition of women in positions of power.

Challenge to Patriarchal Norms:

- The ascendancy of these queens directly challenged societal norms, providing a demonstration of women's proficiency and capacity to govern effectively.
- Their acceptance as rightful rulers disrupted the customary line of succession, highlighting their competence and leadership abilities.

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Societal Paradigm Shift:

- The queens' rule catalyzed a significant shift in societal perceptions, validating women's capabilities in governance and administration.
- Embracing masculine imperial titles was a testament to their assertiveness and determination to lead in a predominantly male-driven political environment.

Obstacles and Resistance:

- Despite their legitimate ascendancy, the Bhaumakara queens faced persistent opposition and interference from male family members and courtiers, hindering their autonomy and governance.
- The patriarchal structure of the court often undermined their authority, posing substantial challenges to their rule.

Conclusion:

The reign of the Bhaumakara queens was an extraordinary departure from traditional gender norms, underscoring the competence and resilience of women in governing a kingdom. Despite encountering multifaceted challenges and resistance, their rule symbolized a pivotal epoch in Odisha's history, marking a significant milestone in acknowledging women's leadership potential during India's early medieval era.

3. Discuss the various types of temples found in Odisha as per the Kalingan School of Architecture, highlighting their architectural features and distinguishing characteristics. 10 Marks

Introduction:

Odisha, renowned for its temple architecture, showcases the distinctive Kalingan School of Architecture, delineating three primary types of temples - 'Rekha', 'Bhadra' or 'Pidha', and 'Khakhara'. These architectural styles manifest distinct features in their sanctums, mukhasalas, and architectural compositions, defining the rich heritage of Odisha's temple constructions.

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Body:

Rekha Temple: The Rekha temple's prominent characteristic lies in its curvilinear superstructure divided into four parts - Pista, Bada, Gandi, and Mastaka. Each element symbolizes specific aspects of the temple resembling limbs of a cosmic being. The sanctum, known as Garbhagriha, represents the womb-like enclosure for the deity, fostering an atmosphere conducive to devout meditation.

Pidha Temple: The Pidha temple shares similarities with the Rekha temple in bada treatment but differs in the disposition of the gandi. Its jagamohana gandi takes a pyramidal shape, composed of pidhas (horizontal platforms) arranged in a pyramid-like form, diminishing in size from bottom to top. The mastaka crowning the pidha temple retains circular cross-section elements akin to the Rekha style.

Khakhara Temple: The Khakhara temple, distinct and limited in number, is primarily devoted to Sakti worship. Its gandi structure follows either the rekha or pidha style with minor variations. The unique feature is its elongated roof resembling a barrel vault, termed 'khakhara,' sometimes adorned by miniature amlas or kalasa flanked by lions.

Other Temple Types in Odisha: Apart from the three main temple styles, Odisha also houses the Gauriya temple, a fusion of Gothic and Indo-Aryan architecture, seen sparsely in Mayurbhanj and Puri. Additionally, the Hypaethral temple stands circular in ground plan without a roof, exemplified by the Yogini temples at Hirapur and Ranipur-Jharial.

Conclusion:

Odisha's temple architecture under the Kalingan School offers a diverse array of temple types - Rekha, Pidha, Khakhara, Gauriya, and Hypaethral. Each style reflects meticulous craftsmanship, distinct structural elements, and symbolic representations, enriching the cultural and architectural heritage of Odisha, showcasing the region's artistic and religious diversity.

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4. Assess the socio-religious impact of Sri Chaitanya's Bhakti movement on the populace of Odisha during the medieval period. 10 Marks

Introduction:

Sri Chaitanya (1486-1533 A.D.), who was known as Visvambhara before renouncing family life hailed from Navadvipa of Bengal. Sri Chaitanya, a revered saint, left an indelible mark on Odisha's socio-religious fabric during his visit. His Bhakti movement stirred profound religious devotion and enthusiasm among the people of Odisha, notably in Puri and Purl.

Body:

Religious Discourse and Conversion:

- Sri Chaitanya engaged in religious dialogues, converting renowned scholars like Vasudeva Sarbabhauma to Vaishnavism, impacting the local intellectual and religious landscape.

Cultural and Spiritual Influence:

- His philosophy identified Jagannath as Krishna, elevating the deity's significance, and emphasized devotion, reinforcing Vaishnavism.
- Sri Chaitanya's belief in Krishna as the complete manifestation of God heightened the importance of Radha and promoted devotion beyond caste distinctions.

Encounter with Gajapati Prataparudra:

- Initially hesitant to meet Gajapati Prataparudra due to detachment from worldly power, Sri Chaitanya eventually acknowledged the Gajapati's true devotion, impacting the ruler emotionally.

Teaching and Influence on the Panchasakha:

- Sri Chaitanya significantly influenced the Panchasakha poets by initiating them into the Chaitanya faith, albeit they maintained distinctiveness, emphasizing the concept of void and personal spiritual practices.

Social Reforms and Religious Synthesis:

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- Sri Chaitanya's teachings led to social reform efforts by the Panchasakha, challenging social hierarchies, embracing disciples from various castes, and striving for cultural innovation and social upliftment.

Legacy and Spiritual Impact:

- His presence and teachings continued to resonate in Odisha, shaping the spiritual ethos of the region even after his demise, exemplifying the enduring legacy of his Bhakti movement.

Conclusion:

Sri Chaitanya's sojourn in Odisha not only instilled profound religious fervor but also initiated debates, conversions, and cultural transformations, leaving a lasting imprint on the religious and cultural contours of the region.

5. How did the Charyapadas serve as a cornerstone in the development of literary traditions in Odisha? 10 Marks

Introduction:

The Charyapada, a collection of mystical poems in the Vajrayana Buddhist tradition, holds significant relevance to the literary and linguistic heritage of Odisha, marking the beginnings of Odia poetry and literature.

Body:

Literary and Cultural Significance: The Charyapada, composed by Mahayana Buddhist poets like Luipa, Kanhupa, Sarhapa, and Kambalamara from Odisha, forms the foundation of Charya Sahitya. This literature, written in the "Sandhya Bhasha" metaphor, represents a seminal phase in Odia poetry, exploring mystical and spiritual themes. The Charyapada's influence on medieval Odia literature, notably during the Panchasakha period (14th-16th century), underscores its profound impact on subsequent literary expressions in Odisha.

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Linguistic Continuity: The language of Charya Sahitya, considered a form of Prakrit closely related to Odra Prakrit, holds a pivotal place in the linguistic evolution of Odia. The Charyapada's linguistic elements and its relation to the modern Odia language highlight the continuum of Odia's linguistic traditions. This linguistic heritage, without translation, signifies the integral character of Odia as a classical language, showcasing its evolution over time.

Cultural Evolution and Influence: The Charyapada embodies the evolution of cultural and religious practices in Odisha, particularly within the Vajrayana school of Buddhism. It introduces concepts like Matri Dakini worship and "Kaya sadhana," contributing to the evolution of a new cultural paradigm in the region. The influence of Adi siddhas' ideas and experiences, expressed through the Charyapada's poetic expressions, reverberates through medieval Odia literature, shaping its themes and writing styles.

Musical Affinity and Continuity: The ragas utilized in the Charyapada, especially those attributed to Mahasiddhas originating in Odisha, exhibit a strong resonance with the ragas employed in Odissi music. This musical continuity, observable from the 12th-century Gitagovinda to classical Odia literature of the 14th to 19th centuries, underscores the enduring influence of Charyapada on the musical and artistic traditions of Odisha.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the Charyapada's legacy reverberates in Odisha's literary, linguistic, cultural, and musical realms. Its role as a foundational literary work in Odia literature, its linguistic continuum, and its profound influence on subsequent cultural and artistic expressions affirm its enduring significance in the tapestry of Odisha's heritage.

6. With the help of examples, highlight the diverse regional traditions showcased in Odisha's festivals. 10 Marks.

Introduction:

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Odisha, a land of vibrant cultural diversity, exhibits a tapestry of regional traditions deeply woven into its festivals. These celebrations, rooted in ancient practices, symbolize the rich heritage and socio-religious fabric of the state, showcasing a blend of diverse customs, rituals, and art forms.

These regional traditions, ranging from distinctive artistic expressions to unique culinary practices, play a pivotal role in preserving the cultural legacy of the state and fostering a sense of unity and shared cultural identity among its communities.

Body:

Durga Puja in Cuttack and Balasore:

- Cuttack and Balasore exhibit unique craftsmanship with silver filigree work on the idols during Durga Puja. Artisans create intricate silver jewelry and decorative pieces for the goddess and her entourage.
- The exclusive art of silver filigree work seen on the idols represents the specialized artisanal skills and the distinct artistic heritage of these regions.

Rath Yatra in Puri:

- Puri's Rath Yatra involves a grand chariot procession for Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra, and Subhadra. The chariots, adorned with vibrant colors and traditional motifs, draw millions of devotees.
- The opulent Rath Yatra procession in Puri signifies deep-rooted cultural traditions, communal unity, and religious devotion distinctive to this region.

Chhau Dance Festival in Mayurbhanj:

- The Chhau Dance Festival in Mayurbhanj showcases a unique dance form blending martial arts, folk dance, and elaborate costumes. Performances depict local stories and mythological themes.
- The festival epitomizes Mayurbhanj's cultural identity by preserving indigenous art forms and ancient narratives through dance.

Konark Dance Festival:

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- The Konark Dance Festival celebrates classical dance forms against the backdrop of the Sun Temple. Renowned dancers perform Odissi, Bharatanatyam, and Kathak, highlighting India's rich dance heritage.
- This festival is a testament to Odisha's dedication to preserving and showcasing classical dance forms, reflecting the region's cultural sophistication and artistic excellence.

Raja Parba:

- Raja Parba, predominantly observed in rural areas, venerates womanhood and fertility through customs like swinging on decorated swings (Doli) and preparing special dishes.
- The festival emphasizes rural Odisha's unique customs, paying tribute to agriculture, women's significance, and celebrating the natural cycle of fertility.

Conclusion:

The diverse regional traditions of Odisha's festivals exemplify the state's cultural richness and historical legacy. These celebrations, spanning various regions, signify a harmonious amalgamation of rituals, arts, and social customs, fostering a deep sense of community, cultural pride, and spiritual devotion among its people.

7. Caste identity in India is a complex interplay of historical legacies, socio-economic factors, and cultural norms. It is both fluid and static in nature. Discuss. 10 Marks.

Introduction:

Caste identity involves the positioning of one's caste group within a social hierarchy. Caste identity in India is a multi-layered construct shaped by historical legacies, socio-economic elements, and cultural norms.

Body:

Its nature reflects a unique blend of fluidity and static characteristics, exemplified by various factors:

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Historical Legacies:

- **Ancient Roots:** Caste systems have prevailed for centuries, deeply rooted in ancient texts and societal structures, defining social hierarchy and roles.
- **Traditional Norms:** Historical divisions based on occupation, social status, and rituals have contributed to the static aspects of caste identity.

Socio-economic Factors:

- **Occupational Roles:** Caste historically dictated professions, impacting socio-economic status and livelihoods, creating rigid identities.
- **Changing Professions:** Modernization and education have led to shifts in occupations, allowing some individuals to transcend traditional caste roles, reflecting fluidity.

Cultural Norms:

- **Caste Practices:** Rituals, marriages, and social interactions continue to be influenced by caste divisions, reinforcing static aspects of identity.
- **Resistance and Change:** Urbanization and globalization challenge traditional norms, fostering greater interaction among different castes, bringing about a sense of fluidity.

Fluidity:

- **Inter-caste Interactions:** Modern trends, education, and urbanization encourage more interactions across castes, leading to a gradual blurring of rigid caste lines.
- **Inter-caste Marriages:** Instances of inter-caste marriages have increased, indicating a shift towards a more fluid understanding of caste identity.

Static Nature:

- **Discrimination and Social Stigma:** Deep-rooted prejudices and discrimination based on caste persist, inhibiting social mobility and preserving static identities.
- **Political Utilization:** Caste-based politics and the perpetuation of social hierarchy for political gain can solidify and reinforce static aspects of caste identity.

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Factors Promoting Fluidity in Caste Identity:

- **Education and Urbanization:** The rise in education levels and urbanization has led to increased social mobility, loosening traditional caste ties, and fostering a change in occupational roles.
- **Sanskritization:** Lower-caste groups have adopted customs, rituals, and practices of upper-caste groups, aiming to enhance their social status.
- **Inter-caste Marriages:** A rising trend in inter-caste marriages indicates a shift away from rigid caste barriers, fostering social integration and reducing caste-based boundaries.
- **Occupational Changes:** There is a notable shift in occupational patterns, allowing individuals to pursue careers without strict adherence to traditional caste identities.
- **Government Policies:** Policies like reservations in education and government jobs have facilitated the socio-economic upliftment of lower-caste individuals, enabling them to move up the social ladder.
- **Religious Conversions:** Post-independence, some lower-caste individuals have converted to other religions to escape the constraints imposed by the caste system.

Factors Contributing to Static Aspects of Caste Identity:

- **Endogamy:** Marriages within one's caste remain a prevalent norm, especially in rural areas, restricting social interactions and perpetuating caste divisions.
- **Caste-based Discrimination:** Discrimination against lower castes persists, hindering their access to education, employment, and other opportunities, evident in the increased crimes against Scheduled Castes.
- **Occupational Identities:** Certain occupations are still predominantly linked to specific castes, perpetuating social and economic inequalities.
- **Social Stigma:** Deep-rooted biases and prejudices against certain castes continue to limit opportunities and social interactions for individuals from marginalized communities.
- **Caste-based Political Mobilization:** Identity politics and caste-based political parties often reinforce caste identities, leading to demands for caste-based reservations and perpetuating caste divisions.

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Complexity of Change:

- **Legal Interventions:** Anti-discrimination laws and reservations aim to counter caste-based inequalities but have also contributed to the categorization and reinforcement of caste identities.
- **Social Movements:** Various reform movements strive to challenge traditional norms, promoting fluidity, and advocating for social equality.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, caste identity in India represents a dichotomy—a historical and cultural legacy shaping rigid identities alongside modern influences fostering gradual fluidity. While there are visible shifts towards fluidity due to modernization and education, deeply embedded social norms, discrimination, and political interests perpetuate static aspects of caste identity. The ongoing evolution and complexities surrounding caste reflect a delicate balance between change and continuity in India's societal fabric. Efforts towards inclusive policies, education, and social reform are imperative for fostering a more egalitarian society.

8. How has the geography of Odisha influenced its culture? 10 Marks.

Introduction:

Odisha is located in the eastern part of the Indian peninsula and the Bay of Bengal lies to its East while Chhattisgarh shares its border in the west and north-west. The state also shares geographic boundaries with West Bengal in the north-east, Jharkhand in the north and Andhra Pradesh in the south. Physiographically, Odisha consists of coastal plains, central plateaus, central hilly regions, flood plains, and uplands. About a third of the state has a green cover. The geography of Odisha has played a pivotal role in shaping its culture through various means, influencing traditions, practices, and livelihoods across the region.

Body:

Coastal Location:

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- *Maritime Influence:* The extensive coastline along the Bay of Bengal has significantly shaped the cultural practices of coastal communities. Fishing, boat-making, and maritime trade are integral to their livelihoods, influencing their customs, cuisine, and festivals. The Jagannath Temple in Puri and its Rath Yatra are symbolic of the coastal influence on Odisha's culture.
- *Coastal Cuisine:* Seafood, especially fish and prawn dishes, is prominent in the coastal regions' cuisine. The use of coconut, rice, and various spices also reflects the maritime connection.

Forests and Natural Resources:

- *Tribal Culture:* The forested areas of Odisha are home to numerous indigenous tribes. Their distinct cultures, languages, handicrafts, and agricultural practices are deeply intertwined with the forests, displaying a harmonious relationship with nature.
- *Tribal Art and Craft:* The craftsmanship of tribal communities, such as Saura paintings, Dokra metalwork, and Pattachitra, are reflective of their connection with nature and their daily lives.

Agrarian Landscape:

- *Agricultural Practices:* The fertile plains and river valleys have led to a predominantly agrarian society. Festivals like Nuakhai (harvest festival) celebrate agricultural abundance, and rituals are deeply connected to the cycles of sowing and harvesting.
- *Folk Dances and Music:* Folk dances like Ghumura, Chhau, and Sambalpuri are linked to agricultural activities and reflect the vibrant rural life of the region.

Temples and Religious Sites:

- *Heritage and Pilgrimage Sites:* Odisha's varied landscape hosts numerous temples and religious centers. The Konark Sun Temple, Lingaraj Temple, and others stand as architectural marvels and cultural landmarks, attracting pilgrims and tourists from across the globe.
- *Cultural Festivals:* Festivals like Rath Yatra, Durga Puja, and Konark Dance Festival showcase the rich heritage and religious fervor, adding to the cultural diversity of the state.

Cultural Synthesis:

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- *Historical Encounters:* Odisha's history of interactions with different cultures through trade, conquests, and colonial rule has resulted in cultural amalgamation. This is visible in the art, architecture, and language of the region, blending indigenous elements with external influences.

Cyclones and Natural Disasters:

- *Resilience and Adaptation:* The frequent cyclones and natural calamities in coastal regions have shaped the resilience and adaptive spirit of the local communities. This resilience is reflected in their cultural practices, including folk songs and stories of survival.

Conclusion:

Overall, the geographical diversity of Odisha, comprising coastal regions, forests, plains, and hills, has fostered a mosaic of cultures, traditions, art forms, and ways of life. The interplay between natural surroundings, livelihood practices, and historical experiences has contributed significantly to the rich and diverse cultural tapestry of Odisha.

9. Explain the geographical reasons behind the concentration of major tropical rainforests near the equator and their scarcity in the subtropical regions despite favorable climatic conditions. 10 Marks.

Introduction:

Tropical rainforests are rainforests that occur in areas of tropical rainforest climate in which there is no dry season – all months have an average precipitation of at least 60 mm – and may also be referred to as lowland equatorial evergreen rainforest. True rainforests are typically found between 10 degrees north and south of the equator; they are a sub-set of the tropical forest biome that occurs roughly within the 28-degree latitudes (in the equatorial zone between the Tropic of Cancer and Tropic of Capricorn).

Body:

Solar Radiation Distribution:

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- Near the equator, sunlight is more direct, resulting in higher temperatures and consistent warmth throughout the year. This provides an ideal environment for the growth of vegetation and facilitates high rates of evaporation and transpiration, leading to abundant rainfall.
- In contrast, subtropical regions, despite receiving adequate sunlight, experience less direct solar radiation due to the Earth's curvature. This phenomenon causes less consistent warmth, leading to fluctuations in temperature and lower evaporation rates, resulting in comparatively drier conditions.

Atmospheric Circulation Patterns:

- The Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) is a belt near the equator where the trade winds from the Northern and Southern Hemispheres converge. This convergence results in uplifted warm, moist air, leading to intense convective rainfall.
- Subtropical regions lie in the zones where the descending limbs of the Hadley cells are located. These descending air masses create high-pressure areas, inhibiting the uplift of moist air and thus limiting rainfall, creating drier conditions.

Rain Shadow Effects:

- Mountain ranges often intercept the path of moist air masses, causing the air to rise and release precipitation on the windward side. As the air descends on the leeward side, it becomes drier, leading to rain shadows and arid conditions.
- While equatorial regions may have some mountainous areas, the continuous uplift of moist air from the oceans minimizes the rain shadow effect. Subtropical regions, especially on the western sides of continents, experience rain shadows due to prevailing winds and mountain barriers, resulting in reduced rainfall and drier climates.

Ocean Currents:

- Equatorial regions are often influenced by warm ocean currents that contribute to higher humidity and increased moisture in the atmosphere, promoting the growth of rainforests.

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- Subtropical regions may be affected by cold ocean currents, reducing humidity and moisture content in the air, thereby creating less favorable conditions for rainforest development.

Conclusion:

The geographical distribution of major tropical rainforests near the equator is primarily due to the convergence of direct sunlight, consistent warmth, intense convectional rainfall caused by the ITCZ, and fewer barriers to moisture-laden air. Conversely, subtropical regions experience less direct sunlight, descending dry air masses, rain shadows, and the influence of cold ocean currents, leading to drier conditions and the scarcity of rainforests despite favorable climatic conditions.

10. Explain the socio-political fragmentation prevalent in mid-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth-century India and its impact on the broader Indian polity. 10 Marks.

Introduction:

During the mid-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century in India, the socio-political landscape was characterized by multifaceted fragmentation, leading to a weakened and divided polity. This period witnessed the decline of the Mughal Empire, the emergence of regional powers, British expansionism, and internal conflicts, all contributing to a highly fragmented political scenario.

Body:

Decline of Central Authority: The disintegration of the Mughal Empire resulted in the emergence of regional powers. The diminishing authority of the Mughals led to a power vacuum, enabling various princely states, regional kingdoms, and local rulers to assert their autonomy.

Emergence of Regional Powers:

a. **Maratha Confederacy:** The decline of the Marathas post the Third Battle of Panipat (1761) resulted in a fragmented confederacy. Maratha chieftains like the Peshwas, Gaekwads, Holkars, and Scindias asserted independent control over different regions, contributing to regional fragmentation.

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b. **Sikh Empire:** In Punjab, Maharaja Ranjit Singh established a robust Sikh Empire. However, after his death in 1839, internal discord among Sikh nobles weakened the empire, leading to disintegration.

British Policies and Expansion:

a. **Doctrine of Lapse:** British expansionism utilized policies such as the Doctrine of Lapse to annex princely states like Satara, Jhansi, and Awadh due to lapses in succession. This annexation further fragmented the political landscape and led to discontent among Indian rulers.

b. **Subsidiary Alliance:** The British implemented the Subsidiary Alliance system, securing control over princely states by making them accept British supremacy while allowing internal autonomy. However, this led to increased British interference and weakened the sovereignty of these states.

Internal Rivalries and Conflicts:

a. **Carnatic Wars:** Conflicts between the British East India Company and the French in the Carnatic region embroiled local rulers like the Nizam of Hyderabad and Nawab of Arcot, creating internal divisions and fragmented allegiances.

b. **Rajput States:** The Rajputana region saw internal rivalries among Rajput states like Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Udaipur, leading to political fragmentation and undermining collective resistance against external forces.

Impact on the Broader Polity:

- **Weakened Central Authority:** The absence of a dominant central authority led to a fractured political landscape. This fragmentation made it challenging to unite Indian territories against external threats.
- **Colonial Domination:** British expansionism capitalized on this fragmentation, exploiting internal rivalries to expand their control. Policies like annexation and subsidiary alliances accentuated the division of Indian territories.
- **Loss of Sovereignty:** Princely states, in accepting the Subsidiary Alliance or falling under the Doctrine of Lapse, lost their sovereignty and became subservient to British rule, furthering the fragmented political scenario.

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- **Cultural and Socioeconomic Disparities:** Fragmentation also led to variations in cultural practices and economic conditions across different regions, impacting social cohesion and uniform development.

Conclusion:

The disintegration of central authority, the rise of regional powers, and British colonial policies resulted in a fractured political landscape. This fragmentation weakened the collective strength of Indian territories against external influences, allowing British expansion and control to exploit internal divisions. The loss of sovereignty among princely states and varied cultural and socioeconomic disparities across regions further compounded the challenges of forging a unified resistance. Ultimately, this era of fragmentation left a lasting legacy, significantly impacting India's struggle for independence and the subsequent efforts towards unity and nation-building.

Answer the following questions in about 250 words each:

11. Discuss the factors that led to the Shimla Agreement of 1972 between India and Pakistan. Highlight the key elements and implications of this diplomatic accord. 15 Marks.

Introduction:

The Simla Agreement was a peace treaty signed between India and Pakistan on 2 July 1972 in Shimla, the capital city of Himachal Pradesh. It followed the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971, which began after India intervened in East Pakistan as an ally of Bengali rebels who were fighting against Pakistani state forces in the Bangladesh Liberation War. The Indian intervention proved decisive in the war and led to East Pakistan's breakaway from its union with West Pakistan and the emergence of the independent state of Bangladesh.

The Simla Agreement signed between India and Pakistan on July 2, 1972, aimed to resolve the longstanding conflicts between the two nations and lay the groundwork for sustainable peace. The agreement, signed by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi of India and President Z. A. Bhutto of Pakistan, established fundamental principles and mechanisms for bilateral relations between the two countries.

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Body:

Key Tenets of the Simla Agreement:

- **Peaceful Settlement of Disputes:** Both nations committed to resolving their differences through peaceful means and bilateral negotiations, refraining from altering the situation unilaterally. This laid the groundwork for fostering peaceful relations and curbing hostile actions detrimental to peace and harmony.
- **Prerequisites for Reconciliation:** The agreement emphasized the importance of mutual respect for territorial integrity, non-interference in internal affairs, and peaceful coexistence as prerequisites for sustainable peace. It aimed to address the fundamental issues that had plagued relations for over two decades.
- **Respect for Sovereignty:** Both countries pledged to uphold each other's national unity, territorial integrity, political independence, and sovereign equality. This commitment aimed to prevent external interference in internal matters and foster mutual respect.
- **Restoration of Relations:** Steps were outlined to gradually restore normalcy, including the resumption of communication links, facilitation of travel, promotion of economic cooperation, and exchange in science and culture. These measures were designed to incrementally rebuild trust and cooperation.
- **Ceasefire Line and Withdrawal:** In Jammu and Kashmir, the ceasefire line established post the 1971 conflict was recognized as the Line of Control (LOC). Both sides agreed not to unilaterally alter this line and committed to withdrawing their forces to their respective sides of the international border.
- **Implementation and Future Meetings:** The agreement required ratification by both countries and set the groundwork for further discussions on repatriation of prisoners of war, a final settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir issue, and the resumption of diplomatic relations.
- **Return of Territories:** India returned over 13,000 km² of Pakistani land captured during the conflict, except for a few strategic areas, leading to a formal settlement on territorial disputes.
- **Return of Prisoners of War (POWs):** A fundamental aspect of the agreement was the return of POWs. India agreed to repatriate all Pakistani POWs after the conflict's conclusion.

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Implications and Outcomes:

- **Normalization of Relations:** The agreement provided a framework for the normalization of relations between India and Pakistan, focusing on peaceful coexistence and respect for each other's sovereignty.
- **Bilateral Negotiations:** It highlighted the significance of bilateral dialogue in conflict resolution, affirming both nations' commitment to resolving disputes through diplomatic means.
- **Line of Control Establishment:** The agreement's emphasis on maintaining the Line of Control aimed to prevent unilateral changes and foster stability, though subsequent events strained this commitment.

Challenges and Limitations:

- **Subsequent Tensions:** Despite the agreement, Indo-Pak relations have witnessed numerous conflicts and hostilities, notably the Kargil War of 1999, revealing the limitations in maintaining lasting peace.
- **Territorial Disputes:** The Siachen Conflict and disputes over Kashmir continued despite the agreement, showcasing persistent areas of contention and disagreement.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, while the Simla Agreement provided a framework for peace between India and Pakistan, subsequent events and unresolved issues have led to ongoing tensions, highlighting the challenges in sustaining long-term peace in the region.

12. Describe the contribution of the Ganga rulers to the Society and Culture of Odisha. 15 Marks.

Introduction:

The Eastern Ganga dynasty were a large medieval era Indian royal Hindu dynasty that reigned from Kalinga from as early as the 5th century to the mid 20th century. The Ganga period in Odisha, spanning several centuries, marked a significant phase in the region's history, witnessing remarkable developments across various spheres of society and culture.

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Body:

Social Structure and Caste Dynamics:

- **Traditional Varna System:** During the Ganga period, the conventional Varna system of Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Sudras prevailed. Brahmanas enjoyed higher societal status, receiving land grants as scholars and priests.
- **Development of Karanas (Kayasthas):** The emergence of the Karanas, a hereditary class of writers, is documented during this era. They held key administrative posts, although their Varna status remains ambiguous in historical records.

Status of Women:

- **Royal Women's Esteem:** Royal women were highly respected, often mentioned in donative records and known for their piety and education in specialized arts like music and dance.
- **Restrictions and Independence:** While societal norms and texts restricted women's freedom, historical depictions and practices like temple dancing and artistic portrayals reveal a degree of independence and societal engagement.

Religious Shifts and Tolerance:

- **Shift in Religion:** The Ganga rulers initially followed Saivism but later embraced Vaishnavism, particularly the worship of Lord Jagannath in Puri, promoting devotion to Vishnu.
- **Religious Harmony:** Despite their allegiance to Lord Jagannath, the Ganga rulers patronized various deities like Siva, Parvati, and the Sun-God, striving for a synthesis of Saivism and Vaishnavism.

Art, Architecture, and Cultural Patronage:

- **Architectural Marvels:** The Ganga rulers contributed significantly to Odisha's architectural glory, erecting iconic temples such as the Jagannath Temple in Puri and the Sun Temple in Konark.

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- **Patronage of Learning:** Ganga monarchs supported learning centers, temples, and scholarly Brahmins, fostering Sanskrit literature, intellectual luminaries, and the evolution of the Odia language and script.

Music, Dance, and Trade:

- **Cultural Promotion:** The Ganga rulers were great patrons of music and dance, evident from the temple Natamandapas where Devadasis performed. They also supported musical and artistic expressions.
- **Overseas Trade:** Odisha's economic prosperity during this period facilitated overseas trade, maintaining commercial relations with Southeast Asian countries, exporting textiles, diamonds, and elephants.

Conclusion:

The Ganga period in Odisha stands as a hallmark of cultural prosperity, architectural grandeur, and socio-religious dynamism. The era's contributions to societal structure, art, literature, religious synthesis, and trade depict a vibrant and harmonious society, leaving an enduring legacy that shaped Odisha's identity and cultural heritage.

13. Discuss the multifaceted challenges faced by the state of Odisha regarding its water resources and the steps needed to address these issues comprehensively. 15 Marks.

Introduction:

Odisha, a coastal state of Eastern India is rich in natural resources but one of the economically backward states being low down in development index. Nearly one third of the state is populated by the tribals. Odisha grapples with a range of challenges pertaining to its water resources, which significantly impact its economic development and environmental sustainability. Odisha possesses abundant natural resources, but its water management issues hinder the state's progress and growth prospects.

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Body:

Challenges in Odisha's Water Resources:

River Water Management:

- **Mahanadi River:** Considered the lifeline of Odisha, the Mahanadi River faces several challenges due to mindless construction of dams and diversion of flow in Chhattisgarh, its upper riparian state. This has led to a decreasing trend in yield from the upstream catchment area, impacting water availability downstream in Odisha.
- **Brahmani and Baitarani Rivers:** Pollution in the Brahmani River and mining hazards in the Baitarani River have contributed to the deterioration of these crucial water sources, exacerbating water-related problems in the state.

Groundwater Challenges:

- **Terrain and Salinity Issues:** Approximately 85% of Odisha's area is characterized by hard rock terrain with poor to moderate groundwater potential. The remaining 15% coastal tract, while having high groundwater potential, faces salinity problems, limiting its usability.

Climate Change and Environmental Impact:

- **Drought-Flood Syndrome:** Despite an average annual rainfall of 1100 mm, Odisha frequently experiences a cycle of droughts and floods, impacting the state's economy and agricultural productivity.
- **Ecological Vulnerability:** Climate change impacts coupled with vulnerable ecology make Odisha susceptible to water-related crises, necessitating proactive measures.

Addressing Odisha's Water Resource Issues:

Integrated Water Resource Management:

- Prioritize conservation, augmentation, and judicious utilization of both surface water and groundwater resources.
- Advocate for technical guidance and unbiased support in managing water resources effectively.

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Policy Reforms and Regulation Strengthening:

- Introduce stringent regulations in water policies to address impending water scarcity and pollution concerns.
- Rethink large-scale piped water supply schemes, emphasizing bore wells, perennial river flows, and Ranney wells for better water management.

Managing Groundwater Decline:

- Implement a temporary moratorium on tube well drilling in areas witnessing a decline in groundwater levels.
- Initiate large-scale rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge efforts in identified revenue blocks experiencing declining groundwater levels.

Assessment and Planning:

- Evaluate the current water availability in Odisha's rivers comprehensively.
- Formulate action plans to enhance base flows by implementing water harvesting structures in the catchment areas.

Conclusion:

Addressing the multifaceted water challenges in Odisha demands a comprehensive strategy. Sustainable economic development and environmental preservation in the state hinge on prudent water resource management, policy reforms, and proactive measures to mitigate the impact of ecological degradation and ensure future water security.

14. Critically analyse the impact of globalisation on rural Odisha. 15 Marks.

Introduction:

Since the advent of globalization in 1991, India has been experiencing a lot of changes in economic, social, cultural & political spheres. Globalization brought about tremendous development in HDI, GDP, industry, technology, transport, communication, literacy, health & economic growth. It is multidimensional in nature.

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Odisha, one of the backward states of India has taken the advantages of new opportunities of globalization. It has designed its policies to attract foreign investment in its state. In due course of industrialization, improvement of employment opportunities, increase of export (GDP), aid and support, creation of job, extensive rights to women, cheaper communication, information and generation of innovative ideas through education & research are some of the reformations marked out in Odisha.

Body:

Economic Insecurity and Disparities:

- **Industrial Ventures vs. Rural Population:** Odisha's economic landscape has experienced a significant shift due to globalization. While signing numerous Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with reputed investors, the state's industrial growth hasn't translated equally into rural economic development.
- **Displacement and Land Acquisition:** The establishment of new projects often leads to the displacement of marginal farmers and small-scale industries, impacting the economic stability of rural communities.
- **Agricultural Sector Decline:** The share of the agricultural sector in Odisha's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) has decreased over the years, affecting local farmers' livelihoods.

Environmental Concerns:

- **Industrialization and Environmental Degradation:** Rampant industrialization, mining activities, and large-scale projects have resulted in environmental degradation, including deforestation, pollution, climate change, and loss of biodiversity.
- **Impact on Local Communities:** Rural areas like Jharsuguda, Angul, Sundargarh, and Sambalpur have experienced adverse environmental effects due to industrial activities, leading to health issues and natural disasters.

Social Injustice and Inequality:

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- **Education and Healthcare:** Access to quality education and healthcare facilities remains unequal, leading to a disparity in opportunities. This inequality prompts meritorious students to seek education and jobs abroad.
- **Economic Disparity:** Rural areas like Bolangir, Kalahandi, Ganjam, and Mayurbhanj witness migration due to economic hardships, affecting local businesses and industries.

Governance Challenges:

- **Corruption and Mismanagement:** Odisha faces governance challenges marked by corruption, mismanagement, and lack of accountability in managing resources and implementing welfare schemes.
- **Internal Security Issues:** Globalization has brought about increased exposure to security threats like terrorism, drugs, and cybercrimes, necessitating enhanced security measures.

Disruption and Challenges:

- **Social Disruption:** The advent of globalization has transformed traditional social structures, impacting local businesses and livelihoods.
- **Unequal Benefits:** While technological advancements and global integration have ushered in convenience, the benefits often remain unequal, disproportionately favoring a few sections of society.

Way Forward:

- Initiatives focused on women's empowerment, such as access to education, healthcare, skill development, and ensuring their participation in decision-making processes, are pivotal for holistic rural development.
- Encouraging sustainable agricultural practices, promoting agro-based industries, and providing better market access for rural agricultural produce can improve the economic condition of rural communities. This would mitigate the dependency on traditional agriculture and enhance livelihood opportunities.

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- Strengthening healthcare infrastructure in rural areas, ensuring access to affordable healthcare services, and promoting awareness about sanitation and hygiene practices are fundamental for improving overall health indicators and reducing health-related vulnerabilities in rural Odisha.
- Implementing inclusive and transparent governance mechanisms, emphasizing the participation of local communities, and ensuring the equitable distribution of resources and benefits derived from development initiatives can contribute significantly to addressing rural poverty and fostering sustainable growth in Odisha.
- Foster partnerships and collaborations between government agencies, non-governmental organizations, private sectors, and civil society groups to synergize efforts and resources for effective rural development, poverty reduction, and ensuring social justice.
- Continuous monitoring, evaluation, and periodic review of policies and programs related to rural development should be conducted to assess their impact and make necessary adjustments for better outcomes, ensuring that they align with the evolving needs of the rural population in Odisha.

Conclusion:

No doubt, globalisation is a major force of prosperity. If we look at the condition of rural Odisha, it is experiencing some of serious problems like poverty, injustice, starvation, backwardness, marginalisation, IMR, criminal activities, diseases like AIDS, HIV & migration to a large extent. Urban-rural gap is gradually widening in matters of per capita income. Globalisation process badly affected the rural communities specifically the socio-economic life of farmers & women. Thus, globalization seems to be a 'necessary evil'. It would bring immediate prosperity and wellbeing of the people as well as the area. But the ground reality is not what we have been seen around us. Process of globalisation has become advantageous only for 30% of rural population, majority are excluded from its benefit. It is imperative for the Government and citizens to undergo intensive study, innovative ideas & projects to find out its effects on rural Odisha, profound outcomes & suggest measures to make fruits of globalisation available to majority of rural population of Odisha.

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15. Increasing urbanisation may result in microclimates for Indian cities, risking the health of people living there. Discuss in the context of urban heat islands in India. 15 Marks.

Introduction:

Increasing urbanization in Indian cities has led to the emergence of urban heat islands (UHIs), which pose significant risks to the health and well-being of the residents. UHIs are localized areas within urban settings where the temperature is notably higher than its surrounding rural areas. This phenomenon is primarily caused by human activities, construction materials, and reduced vegetation, exacerbating the effects of climate change.

The phenomenon of urban heat islands (UHIs) in Indian cities like Delhi and Mumbai is becoming increasingly evident due to rapid urbanization. As per research by the Delhi-based Energy and Resources Institute (Teri), these cities are experiencing significantly warmer climates compared to their surrounding rural areas, with temperature increases of 2 to 3 degrees Celsius over just 15 years. Specifically, during summer nights, these cities can be 5 to 7 degrees Celsius warmer than the nearby rural regions.

Body:

Causes of Urban Heat Islands:

- **Reduced Green Spaces:** The rapid expansion of urban areas has resulted in the loss of green spaces, parks, and trees. Trees provide shade and evaporative cooling, but their absence in urban environments leads to increased heat absorption and reduced cooling effect through evapotranspiration.
- **Increased Artificial Surfaces:** The proliferation of concrete buildings, asphalt roads, and other artificial surfaces in cities absorbs and retains heat, raising local temperatures significantly.
- **Industrial Activities:** Industrial zones and factories release heat, air pollutants, and greenhouse gases, contributing to localized warming.

Impact on Health:

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- **Heat-Related Illnesses:** UHIs intensify heatwaves, leading to heat-related illnesses such as heatstroke, dehydration, and heat exhaustion, particularly among vulnerable populations like the elderly and children.
- **Exacerbation of Air Pollution:** Higher temperatures can worsen air quality, increasing the concentration of pollutants like ozone and particulate matter, triggering respiratory problems and aggravating existing health conditions like asthma.
- **Mental Health Impact:** Persistent exposure to extreme heat can also impact mental health, leading to stress, anxiety, and other psychological issues.

Mitigation Strategies:

- **Increasing Green Cover:** Implementing strategies to increase green spaces, rooftop gardens, and urban forestry can help mitigate UHIs by providing shade and promoting natural cooling.
- **Cool Roof Initiatives:** Adopting cool roof technologies that reflect sunlight and absorb less heat, reducing building temperatures and overall urban heat.
- **Urban Planning and Building Design:** Incorporating urban design features such as permeable pavements, strategic landscaping, and energy-efficient buildings can help combat heat islands.
- **Awareness and Public Health Measures:** Public awareness campaigns, early heat warnings, and access to cooling centers during heatwaves are crucial for protecting vulnerable populations.

Conclusion:

Addressing urban heat islands in Indian cities is imperative for safeguarding public health. Implementing sustainable urban planning, prioritizing green infrastructure, and raising awareness about heat-related health risks are essential steps toward creating healthier and more resilient urban environments. Balancing rapid urbanization with sustainable practices is crucial to mitigate the adverse effects of UHIs and ensure the well-being of urban residents in India.

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16. Why were the armies of the British East India Company, primarily consisting of Indian soldiers, consistently victorious against the larger and better-equipped forces of the indigenous Indian rulers during their conquests in India? Discuss. 15 Marks.

Introduction:

The East India Company was an English, and later British, joint-stock company founded in 1600 and dissolved in 1874. It was formed to trade in the Indian Ocean region, initially with the East Indies, and later with East Asia. The ascendancy of the British East India Company in India during the colonial period was characterized by its triumphs over larger, better-equipped indigenous Indian forces.

Body:

- **Military Tactics and Technology:** The Company possessed advanced military tactics and superior technology, including firearms and cannons. The Battle of Plassey in 1757 is a prime example where the Company, led by Robert Clive, used guile and strategic positioning to outmaneuver the Nawab of Bengal's forces.
- **Political Fragmentation and Diplomatic Manipulation:** Internal divisions and political rivalries among Indian rulers were exploited by the Company. They adeptly played off rival factions against each other, weakening collective resistance. The Battle of Buxar in 1764 showcased how the Company exploited discord between Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II and the Nawabs of Awadh and Bengal.
- **Economic and Administrative Superiority:** The East India Company had an efficient bureaucratic system and better governance mechanisms than many indigenous rulers. Their administrative reforms, like those initiated by Lord Cornwallis, established a structured and systematic control over conquered territories, ensuring efficient governance.
- **Economic Exploitation and Trade Dominance:** The Company's economic prowess and control over trade routes, especially in raw materials and textiles, gave it an economic edge. The Company's policies, like the imposition of heavy taxes and exploitative trade practices, weakened indigenous economies and bolstered its financial strength.

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- **Divide and Rule Policy:** The Company further solidified its dominance by employing a "divide and rule" strategy. They exacerbated existing religious, caste, and regional divisions within Indian society, fostering tensions between different communities. By accentuating differences and exploiting animosities, they sowed seeds of distrust among Indian rulers and their subjects, making unified resistance more difficult.
- **Foreign Support and Technological Advancements:** At times, the Company received support from other European powers, further bolstering its military might. Additionally, they had access to the latest technological advancements in weaponry and warfare, providing them with a considerable advantage over Indian forces.

Conclusion:

The victories of the British East India Company's armies against the indigenous Indian forces were not solely due to military superiority but also resulted from a combination of factors like technological prowess, diplomatic manipulation, administrative efficiency, economic exploitation, and the divisive strategy of "divide and rule." These multi-dimensional strategies facilitated the Company's ascendancy and eventual colonial control over India.

17. Examine the role of power struggle and relative disparity in fostering communal tensions within societies, providing examples to support your argument. 15 Marks.

Introduction:

Communalism, in its essence, refers to the mobilization of religious or ethnic identities for political or social gain. It often leads to the division of society along religious or ethnic lines, fostering mistrust, antagonism, and conflicts between different groups. The origins of communalism are multifaceted, emerging from a combination of factors such as historical grievances, economic disparities, political manipulations, and social insecurities.

Body:

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Power Struggle: Communal tensions can be exacerbated by power struggles among different religious or ethnic groups vying for control or dominance:

- **Partition of India in 1947:** The struggle for power between Hindus and Muslims during India's partition led to communal violence. The demand for a separate Muslim nation, Pakistan, was born out of the perceived fear of Hindu domination in an independent India. This power struggle eventually culminated in communal riots and the mass migration of populations along religious lines.
- **Babri Masjid Demolition:** The demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya in 1992 was a manifestation of power struggle narratives between Hindus and Muslims over a religious site. The dispute over the land ownership of the Babri Masjid site was steeped in historical religious rivalries, and the demolition triggered widespread communal violence across India.

Relative Deprivation: Communal tensions can also arise due to feelings of relative deprivation, where communities perceive themselves as economically or socially disadvantaged compared to others:

- **Gujarat Riots in 2002:** The Gujarat riots were sparked by the Godhra train burning incident, leading to communal violence predominantly between Hindus and Muslims. The underlying cause was a sense of relative deprivation among certain groups, where economic disparities and perceived inequality contributed to the eruption of violence.
- **Rohingya Crisis in Myanmar:** The Rohingya, a Muslim minority group in Myanmar, faced persecution due to their economic and social marginalization. The community's relative deprivation in terms of citizenship rights, economic opportunities, and societal status fueled communal conflict and resulted in their mass exodus from Myanmar.

Conclusion:

Communalism's roots in power struggles or relative deprivation are evident in numerous historical and contemporary examples worldwide. Whether arising from a quest for political power or a sense of relative disadvantage, these dynamics often deepen divisions, fuel prejudices, and foster communal tensions, leading to conflicts and social discord within diverse societies. Efforts to address

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communalism require comprehensive strategies that tackle both power dynamics and socio-economic disparities to foster harmony and inclusivity among different groups within a society.

18. India is now one of the fastest-growing economies globally. However, this growth has not resulted in a corresponding increase in its Human Development Index (HDI). How can India ensure more equitable distribution of the benefits of its economic growth by prioritizing human development alongside various policy measures and investments in social infrastructure? 15 Marks.

Introduction:

India was one of the fastest-growing major economies in FY22/23 at 7.2%. India's growth rate was the second highest among G20 countries and almost twice the average for emerging market economies. Human development transcends mere economic growth, encompassing the expansion of freedoms, enhancement of capabilities, and ensuring a fulfilling, healthy, and equitable life for all. India's rapid economic growth has not been synonymous with an equivalent rise in its Human Development Index (HDI). Despite being among the fastest-growing economies globally, India lags in HDI, ranking 132 out of 191 countries, trailing behind nations like Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

Addressing this requires a nuanced understanding of subnational disparities, as revealed by a new index developed by Nandalal Mishra, emphasizing the necessity for holistic policy measures.

Mishra's index highlights stark variations among Indian states in terms of HDI. While Delhi and Goa stand out with high HDI scores akin to Eastern European countries, states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh continue to grapple with medium levels of human development. Factors contributing to these discrepancies include varying levels of literacy, healthcare infrastructure, income, and pandemic impacts.

Body:

Obstacles Hindering India's Human Development:

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Uneven Distribution of Economic Growth: The concentration of wealth in the hands of a small segment of the population, with the top 10% controlling 77% of the wealth, leads to significant disparities in access to basic amenities, healthcare, and education, perpetuating inequalities.

Quality Deficits in Services: Despite strides in poverty reduction and educational access, the substandard quality of healthcare and education services remains a concern. Achieving near-universal primary education enrollment doesn't equate to ensuring quality education for all.

Challenges in Infrastructure and Nutrition: Issues encompass a lack of proper educational infrastructure, widespread malnutrition among children, and inadequate social security for the informal sector, hindering optimal development opportunities for many.

Persistent Gender Inequality: Gender disparity persists in education, employment, and healthcare, with women and girls facing discrimination and violence, reflecting a substantial gender gap in various spheres.

The Way Forward:

Addressing Income and Gender Inequality: Implementing policies like equal pay, education enhancement, skill development, and empowering programs for women can significantly reduce income and gender disparities. Government schemes like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao and National Skill Development Mission play a crucial role.

Investment in Education and Healthcare: Prioritizing education through infrastructure development, teacher recruitment, scholarships, and focusing on affordable healthcare services accessible to all citizens are pivotal for comprehensive human development. Government initiatives like Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana and education schemes need continued support and enhancement.

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Tackling Poverty: Implementing social welfare programs targeting poverty alleviation, including unemployment benefits, food assistance, and housing subsidies, is vital to address the barriers hindering human development.

Promoting Gender Equality and Human Rights: Enforcing policies ensuring equal opportunities, protecting human rights, and empowering marginalized communities, especially women, is crucial for inclusive development.

Infrastructure Development and Innovation: Investments in infrastructure projects improving basic services and fostering an environment supportive of innovation and entrepreneurship can drive economic and human development simultaneously.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, India's journey towards holistic human development necessitates a concerted effort encompassing policy reforms, investment in social sectors, gender parity, poverty alleviation, and infrastructure development. By addressing these multifaceted challenges, the nation can bridge the gap between economic growth and comprehensive human development, ensuring a prosperous, equitable, and inclusive society for all its citizens.

19. Are we losing our local identity for the global identity? Discuss in the Indian context with the help of examples. 15 Marks.

Introduction:

Globalization represents the interconnectedness and interdependence of nations, characterized by the free flow of goods, services, capital, information, and cultural influences across borders. It encompasses economic, political, technological, and socio-cultural dimensions, facilitating the integration of nations into a global community.

The emergence of globalization has triggered a discourse on the potential erosion of local identity in favor of a global one, prompting discussions about the impact of global influences on distinct cultural

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identities. In the Indian context, this debate underscores the tension between preserving indigenous traditions and embracing global trends, raising pertinent questions about the sustainability of local identity amidst rapid societal changes.

Body:

Impact on Traditional Practices:

- **Example:** The infiltration of Western fashion trends and lifestyles in urban Indian settings has altered sartorial choices, potentially diminishing the visibility and relevance of traditional attire. This shift poses challenges to sustaining age-old clothing traditions unique to different regions across India.

Linguistic Diversity and Global Languages:

- **Example:** The ascendancy of English as a lingua franca in professional and urban spheres raises concerns about the possible decline of regional languages. The growing preference for English education may dilute the use and preservation of native languages, impacting cultural nuances and vernacular expressions.

Media and Cultural Influences:

- **Example:** The dominance of Western media, films, and entertainment platforms in shaping popular culture often overshadows indigenous artistic expressions. The proliferation of globalized content might overshadow local narratives, impacting storytelling traditions and indigenous art forms.

Resistance and Cultural Preservation:

Resilience in Cultural Practices:

- **Example:** Despite global trends, India continues to uphold diverse cultural practices and festivals, such as Diwali, Holi, Pongal, and regional celebrations. These festivities reaffirm cultural identities, acting as a bulwark against homogenization.

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Indigenous Art and Crafts Revival:

- **Example:** Efforts to revive and promote traditional handicrafts, like Chanderi and Banarasi weaves or Pashmina craftsmanship, exhibit a commitment to preserving local artistry. Government initiatives and grassroots movements support artisans, ensuring the continuity of indigenous crafts.

Convergence and Synthesis:

Hybrid Cultural Expressions:

- **Example:** Cultural fusion in art, music, and cuisine showcases a synthesis of local and global elements. Contemporary Indian music integrating classical ragas with modern beats or fusion cuisine marrying regional delicacies with global flavors reflect this blend.

Adaptation to Globalization:

- **Example:** Educational institutions integrating global education standards with regional cultural studies strike a balance. Institutions offering courses in local history, literature, and arts alongside global curricula foster a holistic understanding while preserving cultural legacies.

Conclusion:

In sum, while global influences have undoubtedly impacted local identities in India, the preservation of cultural richness persists through conscious efforts and a resilient societal ethos. The interplay between global and local elements has led to both adaptation and preservation. India's ability to synthesize diverse cultural threads, adapt to changing global dynamics, and maintain a delicate balance between embracing global influences and safeguarding local identities is emblematic of its cultural resilience. It underscores a narrative of cultural amalgamation rather than complete erasure, showcasing a society evolving in the context of globalization while cherishing its distinct local identity.

20. How do socio-cultural influences, policy shortcomings, and regional dynamics collectively contribute to the declining Child Sex Ratio among tribal communities in India? 15 Marks

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Introduction:

The report titled "Missing Girls: Mapping the Adverse Child Sex Ratio in India (Census 2011)" sheds light on the concerning decline in the Child Sex Ratio (CSR) among tribal districts in India, contrasting these figures with those of non-tribal areas. It also highlights discrepancies in the CSR among Scheduled Tribes (STs) and the potential factors contributing to this adverse trend. Several factors and reports have been referenced in this analysis, offering insights into the complexities underlying the declining sex ratio and its implications across various states in India.

Body:

Trend Analysis of Child Sex Ratio (CSR) in Tribal Districts:

Decline in Tribal Districts' CSR:

- **Shift from 2001 to 2011:** The report reveals a worrisome shift in the CSR among tribal districts, where the previously higher CSR above the national average in 2001 saw a decline by 2011.
- **Geographic Trends:** The maps depict a contiguous pattern of districts showing a CSR ranging between 900-949, extending across India from west to east, particularly noticeable in the northeastern regions.

Comparing CSR between Tribal and Non-Tribal Areas:

- **Diffusion of CSR Decline:** An observable trend indicates a diffusion of declining CSR from non-tribal to tribal regions, suggesting a spreading influence on the CSR decline phenomenon.
- **Disparities in Declining CSR:** The CSR downturn appears more pronounced in tribal areas, further underscoring the need to examine the factors impacting these communities differently.

CSR among Specific ST Groups:

- **Varying CSR among ST Groups:** Contradictory reports cite specific ST groups with higher CSR, such as the Langkai Tangsa tribe in Arunachal Pradesh, contrasting with other groups like the Bhattadas/Dhotadas and Bhuias/Bhuyans from Orissa, noted for a CSR above 1,000.

Factors Influencing CSR Decline among STs:

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Modernization and Cultural Influences:

- **Impact of Urbanization:** Increased urbanization has led to heightened access to modern technology, including prenatal ultrasonography, contributing to the growing popularity of sex determination tests among tribal communities.
- **Cultural Shifts:** Emulation of cultural preferences prevalent among higher castes, emphasizing the importance of sons for lineage, inheritance, and caregiving, has permeated into some tribal communities, impacting their attitude towards sex preference.

Socio-Economic and Insurgency Effects:

- **Literacy Gender Gap:** Gender disparities in literacy rates perpetuate gender-based inequality, potentially influencing sex preference within these communities.
- **Insurgency and Security Measures:** Insurgency in certain regions, leading to the imposition of draconian laws and military presence, can impact sex preference dynamics, especially in conflict zones where violations of human rights occur.

Shortcomings in Policy Implementation:

- **Ineffective PCPNDT Act Enforcement:** Poor implementation of the Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994, due to political apathy and lack of stringent enforcement, contributes to the persistence of sex determination tests.
- **Lack of Convictions and Compliance:** Reports cite minimal convictions under the PCPNDT Act, inadequate inspection of clinics, and delays in adjudication, highlighting systemic flaws in monitoring and enforcement mechanisms.

Impact of Population Policies:

- **Adverse Effects of Two-Child Norm:** Implementation of the two-child norm in several states has inadvertently perpetuated son preference, impacting the sex ratio and gender equality.

Conclusion:

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The various analyses and reports presented underscore the complex interplay of social, cultural, and policy-related factors contributing to the decline in the Child Sex Ratio among tribal communities in India. Addressing this multifaceted issue necessitates holistic interventions, including robust enforcement of existing laws, awareness campaigns, and targeted policies to counter the cultural shifts and socio-economic disparities influencing sex preference. Efforts aimed at tackling systemic inadequacies, ensuring gender parity in education and healthcare, and fostering societal changes are crucial to restoring and maintaining a balanced Child Sex Ratio, especially within marginalized tribal communities.

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