

FREE EXTRACT

Mains Model Answers

Three questions from inside the book, with the explanation written out as it appears throughout. Nothing here is abridged for the sample.

1

Comment on how the annexation of Awadh in 1856 shaped the popular character of the Revolt of 1857 in the region. (8 marks, answer in 125 words)

Answer: Opening (one sentence): Awadh was annexed in February 1856 on the plea of misgovernment, and the resentment this caused turned what began as a sepoy mutiny into a broad popular rising in the region.

Point one, the dispossessed landed elite: The summary settlement made after annexation stripped many taluqdars of villages and revenue rights, so when the sepoys rose the taluqdars joined with their armed retainers and tenants.

Point two, the sepoy who was also a villager: A very large share of the Bengal Army was recruited from Awadh, so the soldier's grievance over annexation, loss of privileged standing and the new enlistment rules was the same grievance as his family's at home.

Point three, a focus of legitimacy: The exile of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah to Calcutta left a vacant throne, and Begum Hazrat Mahal's proclamation of the boy Birjis Qadr gave the rising a legitimate head; the siege of the Lucknow Residency became its rallying point.

Point four, the length of the resistance: Awadh remained in arms after Delhi fell and was subdued only by prolonged campaigning in 1858, and Canning's proclamation confiscating proprietary rights showed how deep the countryside's involvement had gone.

Closing (one sentence): Because peasant, taluqdar and sepoy grievances converged here, Awadh is the strongest evidence in the argument that 1857 was more than a military mutiny.

This is a Section A question, so the examiner wants a tight, well-selected answer, not a narrative of the whole revolt. The key word is 'popular': you are being asked why the rising in Awadh drew in ordinary people, and every paragraph must earn its place by answering that. Most candidates lose marks by retelling the greased cartridge story and the fall of Delhi, which is not what has been asked. The marks lie in linking annexation to the land settlement, the land settlement to the taluqdars and their tenants, and the recruitment pattern of the Bengal Army to the sepoys' personal stake in Awadh. Naming Wajid Ali Shah, Begum Hazrat Mahal and Birjis Qadr shows regional command, which matters in a paper with a Uttar Pradesh orientation. In 125 words you can afford about four short points and a one-line close, so write in complete but economical sentences and avoid a long introduction.

2

Describe the constitutional provisions relating to Panchayati Raj institutions and examine the extent to which the devolution of functions, funds and functionaries has been achieved in Uttar Pradesh. (12 marks, answer in 200 words)

Answer: Opening (two lines): The Seventy-third Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 inserted Part IX into the Constitution and gave panchayats a constitutional basis, but devolution in practice is a matter of state law and state will.

Constitutional scheme: Part IX covers Articles 243 to 243-O; it provides for the Gram Sabha, a three-tier structure in larger states, direct elections and a five-year term, reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in proportion to population and of not less than one-third of seats for women, a State Election Commission to conduct elections, and a State Finance Commission every five years to review panchayat finances. Article 243G empowers, but does not compel, the state to entrust panchayats with the twenty-nine subjects listed in the Eleventh Schedule.

Uttar Pradesh position: The state runs the three tiers of Gram Panchayat, Kshettra Panchayat and Zila Panchayat under its own panchayat laws and has one of the largest networks of gram panchayats in the country.

Functions: Subjects have largely been transferred on paper, but line departments retain effective control, and centrally sponsored schemes and parallel bodies set the local agenda, so activity mapping remains incomplete.

Funds: Own-source revenue is thin, and panchayats depend on Finance Commission grants and state transfers that are largely tied, while State Finance Commission recommendations are acted upon slowly.

Functionaries: Panchayats have very little staff of their own, the secretary usually serves several panchayats and answers to the block, so accountability runs upwards rather than to the elected body.

Qualification: Gram Panchayat Development Plans, online transfer of funds and social audit under employment guarantee work have improved transparency, though proxy functioning in reserved seats persists.

Way forward and close: Complete activity mapping, timely action on State Finance Commission reports, dedicated panchayat cadres and capacity building would convert constitutional status into real self-government.

The question has two commands joined together, 'describe' and 'examine', and the marks are split roughly between them, so a candidate who writes only the constitutional provisions can hope for barely half. Keep the first half factual and compact: Part IX, the article range, the Eleventh Schedule, and above all the point that Article 243G merely enables the state to devolve. That single observation is the hinge of the whole answer, because it explains why panchayats can be constitutionally secure and functionally weak at the same time. The second half is for the examiner to judge, but it should be a critical analysis of the extent to which the devolution of functions, funds and functionaries has been achieved in Uttar Pradesh.

3

Critically examine the role of the One District One Product programme in reviving traditional craft clusters and expanding exports from Uttar Pradesh. (12 marks, answer in 200 words)

Answer: Opening (two lines): Launched by the state government in 2018, One District One Product identifies an indigenous product for every district and builds support around it, making it Uttar Pradesh's principal attempt at cluster-based, decentralised industrialisation.

Design of the programme: Support is offered through margin money and credit assistance, common facility centres, toolkits and skill training, design and packaging help, and marketing through exhibitions and online platforms, with district administrations made responsible for their own product.

What it has achieved: It has given identity and visibility to clusters such as Bhadohi carpets, Moradabad metal craft, Firozabad glassware, Kannauj perfume, Banaras silk weaving, Lucknow chikankari, Aligarh locks and Meerut sports goods; it has pushed geographical indication registration and convergence with central efforts on food processing and on developing districts as export hubs; and it has strengthened the state's non-farm rural employment base.

Critical assessment: Benefits tend to reach established entrepreneurs and traders rather than the wage-earning artisan; formal credit remains hard for household units to obtain; common facility centres are sometimes under-used for want of ownership; design and technology upgradation lags behind changing markets; and clusters face genuine environmental and occupational problems, such as effluent treatment in leather and fuel use and worker health in glass.

Wider risk: Export performance still depends on demand abroad and on freight and compliance costs, which a state scheme alone cannot control.

Close: The idea is sound, and its next stage must place credit, design and direct market access in the hands of the artisan rather than the intermediary.

'Critically examine' means the examiner is looking for both sides in a settled proportion, roughly half the answer on what the programme does and has achieved and half on where it falls short, ending in a judgement rather than a shrug. The commonest failure is to write an advertisement for the scheme, listing districts and products until the words run out; naming clusters is useful but it is evidence, not argument. Name four or five clusters at most, then move to the mechanisms, because a mention of margin money, common facility centres, geographical indication tagging and export-hub convergence proves you understand how the scheme actually works. On the critical side, distinguish clearly between the artisan and the trader, since that distinction is where the real policy question lies, and add the environmental and occupational angle, which examiners in this state paper reward.

Avoid quoting export figures or unit counts from memory, as an inaccurate number invites doubt about the rest of the answer. Finish with a forward-looking sentence in the language of policy, not of praise.

The full book

Every question from the papers, each explained like this.

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