

Practice Question Paper

History & Political Science (Set -3)

Answer Key

History

1. How did the geographical discoveries help in the expansion of trade? (5)

Ans-

- The pre-modern world shrank greatly in the sixteenth century after European sailors found a sea route to Asia and also successfully crossed the western ocean to America.
- For centuries before, the Indian Ocean had known a bustling trade, with goods, people, knowledge, customs, etc. criss-crossing its waters. The Indian subcontinent was central to these flows and a crucial point in their networks. The entry of the Europeans helped expand or redirect some of these flows towards Europe.
- Before its 'discovery', America had been cut off from regular contact with the rest of the world for millions of years. But from the sixteenth century, its vast lands and abundant crops and minerals began to transform trade and lives everywhere.
- Precious metals, particularly silver, from mines located in present day Peru and Mexico also enhanced Europe's wealth and financed its trade with Asia.
- Legends spread in seventeenth-century Europe about South America's fabled wealth. Many expeditions set off in search of El Dorado, the fabled city of gold.

2. How far can you say that the disease played a critical role in the colonization of America?(5)

Ans-

The Portuguese and Spanish conquest and colonisation of America was decisively under way by the mid-sixteenth century.

- European conquest was not just a result of superior firepower. In fact, the most powerful weapon of the Spanish conquerors was not a conventional military weapon at all.
- It was the germs such as those of smallpox that they carried on their person. Because of their long isolation, America's original inhabitants had no immunity against these diseases that came from Europe.
- Smallpox in particular proved a deadly killer. Once introduced, it spread deep into the continent, ahead even of any Europeans reaching there.
- It killed and decimated whole communities, paving the way for conquest.

- Guns could be bought or captured and turned against the invaders. But not diseases such as smallpox to which the conquerors were mostly immune.

Political Science

1. Define a 'Patriarchal Society'. Explain the various ways women face disadvantage, discrimination and oppression in society. (1+4=5)

Ans - A male dominated society is called a patriarchal society.

Or, Literally, rule by father, this concept is used to refer to a system that values men more and gives them power over women.

Women face disadvantage, discrimination and oppression in various ways:

- The literacy rate among women is only 54 per cent compared with 76 per cent among men. Similarly, a smaller proportion of girl students go for higher studies. When we look at school results, girls perform as well as boys, if not better in some places. But they drop out because parents prefer to spend their resources for their boys' education rather than spending equally on their sons and daughters.
- No wonder the proportion of women among the highly paid and valued jobs is still very small. On an average an Indian woman works one hour more than an average man every day. Yet much of her work is not paid and therefore often not valued.
- The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 provides that equal wages should be paid to equal work. However, in almost all areas of work, from sports and cinema, to factories and fields, women are paid less than men, even when both do exactly the same work.
- In many parts of India parents prefer to have sons and find ways to have the girl child aborted before she is born. Such sex-selective abortion led to a decline in child sex ratio (number of girl children per thousand boys) in the country to merely 919.
- There are reports of various kinds of harassment, exploitation and violence against women. Urban areas have become particularly unsafe for women. They are not safe within their own home from beating, harassment and other forms of domestic violence.

(Or any other relevant point)

2. A communal mind often leads to a quest for political dominance of one's own religious community.' ---- Justify the statement. (2)

Ans – A communal mind often leads to a quest for political dominance of one's own religious community.

- For those belonging to majority community, this takes the form of majoritarian dominance.
- For those belonging to the minority community, it can take the desire to form a separate political unit.

(Or any other relevant point)

3. How does caste take various forms in politics?

(3)

Ans - Caste can take various forms in politics:

- When parties choose candidates in elections, they keep in mind the caste composition of the electorate and nominate candidates from different castes so as to muster necessary support to win elections. When governments are formed, political parties usually take care that representatives of different castes and tribes find a place in it.
- Political parties and candidates in elections make appeals to caste sentiment to muster support. Some political parties are known to favour some castes and are seen as their representatives.
- Universal adult franchise and the principle of one-person-one-vote compelled political leaders to gear up to the task of mobilising and securing political support. It also brought new consciousness among the people of castes that were hitherto treated as inferior and low.

(Or any other relevant point)
