

UPSC CSE 2026 PRELIMS — GS PAPER 1 — COMPLETE ANALYSIS

1. OVERALL SUBJECT-WISE DISTRIBUTION

Subject	Q. Nos	Total	% Weight
HISTORY & ART/CULTURE	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 27	19	19%
GEOGRAPHY (Indian + World)	3, 21, 23, 24, 29, 35, 36	7	7%
ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY	22, 26, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 37, 70, 72	10	10%
ECONOMY & FINANCE	12, 25, 38, 39, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65	19	19%
POLITY & GOVERNANCE	79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 87, 88, 99	9	9%
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY	44, 45, 49, 66, 67, 68, 69, 71, 73, 74, 75, 85, 90, 93	14	14%
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS	34, 40, 43, 46, 89, 91, 92, 94, 95, 96, 97, 100**	12	12%
ETHICS / DECISION-MAKING (Case studies)	76, 77, 78	3	3%
MISC / SPORTS / AWARDS / FILM	41, 42, 47, 48, 50, 86, 98	7	7%

Total: 100 questions, 200 marks

2. DETAILED SUBJECT + CHAPTER-WISE BREAKDOWN

A. HISTORY & ART/CULTURE — 19 Questions

Ancient History (8 Qs)

Q.No	Topic	Chapter
Q1	Pleistocene river drainage (Yamuna-Indus-Sutlej shifts); <i>Nadi-Sukta</i> of Rigveda; Robert Bruce Foote	Geo-historical / Vedic geography
Q2	Empty seat in early Buddhist iconography (<i>Mahaparinibbana</i>)	Buddhist Art & Symbolism
Q4	Amaravati Stupa — Lower Krishna Valley; South-East Asia influence	Schools of Sculpture (Amaravati school)
Q5	Tamilakam dynasties — Senguttuvan/Chera, Udiyanjeral/Chola, Nedunjeliyan/Pandya	Sangam Age
Q10	<i>Kshetra-patni</i> term — Ashtadhyayi (Panini)	Sanskrit Texts
Q13	Pali texts — coins (<i>kahapana, nikkha, kamsa</i> ,	NBPW / Second

	<i>kakanika</i>); punch-marked silver coins	Urbanisation / Numismatics
Q15	Jain 4 forms of existence — <i>Deva, Yaksha, Manushya, Tiryancha</i> (Yaksha not included)	Jainism Philosophy
Q18	Harappan archaeological findings — spindle-whorls, weights, baked-brick houses	IVC / Harappan Civilization
Q20	Rigvedic agriculture — wells (<i>ashma chakra</i>), <i>parashu, kulisha, datra, sreni</i>	Rigvedic Society & Economy

Medieval & Art-Architecture (4 Qs)

Q.No	Topic	Chapter
Q9	Pandit Mallikarjun Mansur — Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana	Hindustani Classical Music
Q11	Carnatic Raga similar to <i>Raga Bilawal</i> — Dheera Shankarabharanam	Carnatic Music
Q14	Nagara-style shikhara temples — Dashavatara (Deogarh) only; Malegitti/Huchimalligudi/Virupaksha are Dravida	Temple Architecture
Q16	<i>Hallsalasya</i> painting (Bagh Caves) — A joyous folk dance	Cave Paintings
Q17	Place-value system — Mankani plates (AD 595-596) Gujarat; 9th century inscriptions	Ancient Indian Mathematics

Modern History — Freedom Struggle (7 Qs)

Q.No	Topic	Chapter
Q6	Forward Bloc formation 1939 — Subhas Chandra Bose; reasons	Revolutionary & Left-Wing Movements
Q7	British policy in Awadh post-1856 annexation — <i>taluqdars</i> , Summary Revenue Settlement	Annexation Policy / Causes of 1857
Q8	Montague-Chelmsford Reforms 1919 — Separate Electorates & community politics	Constitutional Development
Q12	Hilton-Young Commission 1926 — Rupee-Sterling exchange rate	Economic Policies (Colonial)
Q19	Eka Movement vs Bardoli Satyagraha	Peasant Movements (1920s)
Q27	Moidams of Tai-Ahom — UNESCO World Heritage; burial mounds of royals	Medieval History / Ahom Kingdom

B. GEOGRAPHY — 7 Questions

Q.No	Topic	Chapter
Q21	Tungurahua Volcano — Global Geopark 2025 (Ecuador)	World Geography / Volcanoes
Q23	Climate of Andaman & Nicobar Islands — tropical, both monsoons	Indian Climatology
Q24	Peninsular Block features — Velikonda/Mahendragiri hills	Indian Physiography
Q29	Lake Turkana — largest desert lake, Kenya, Jade Sea	World Lakes & UNESCO

Q35	River identification — antecedent drainage, 3 countries, Tibet origin, no distributaries → Sutlej	Indian Drainage System
Q36	Indian States borders — UP shares most boundaries; Rajasthan longest international border; Sikkim's neighbours	Political Geography

C. ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY — 10 Questions

Q.No	Topic	Chapter
Q22	Madhav National Park (MP) — Tiger Reserve 2025; Sakhya Sagar Ramsar Site	Protected Areas
Q26	<i>Rhynchostylis retusa</i> (Foxtail Orchid) — State flower of Arunachal & Assam	Endemic Flora
Q28	UN Ocean Conference 2025 France — FAO "Blue Transformation" Four Betters	International Environmental Conferences
Q30	First Plan Vivo certified REDD+ project in India — Khasi Hills Community	Forest Conservation
Q31	India's Climate Change response — LT-LEDS, BUR-4 (Dec 2024), 8% GHG decrease	Climate Action
Q32	Western Hoolock Gibbons — only ape in India, brachiation	Wildlife Conservation
Q33	Rationale for mangrove protection — climate resilience	Coastal Ecosystems
Q37	Amur Falcons at Doyang Lake, Nagaland	Migratory Birds
Q70	Green Hydrogen — electrolysis with renewables, National Mission	Renewable Energy
Q72	Drone Swarms — Terahertz band, GPS spoofing	Defence Tech / Environment overlap

D. ECONOMY & FINANCE — 19 Questions

Q.No	Topic	Chapter
Q25	Sagarmala Programme & Sagarmala 2.0 — Viksit Bharat 2047	Infrastructure
Q38	Rainfed Area Development (RAD) under NMSA — Integrated Farming Systems	Agriculture Schemes
Q39	Oeko-Tex certification for Eri Silk — global textile standards	Trade & Exports
Q51	Blockchain features — consortium blockchain, immutability	Digital Economy
Q52	Dropshipping e-commerce model	E-commerce Models
Q53	Financial Inclusion Index (FI-Index) RBI — Access, Usage, Quality	RBI / Financial Inclusion
Q54	ONDC — Open Network for Digital Commerce	Digital Economy
Q55	UPI vs Digital Rupee differences	Payment Systems
Q56	RWA Tokenization — blockchain, 24×7 access	FinTech
Q57	Sustainability Bond — environmental + social projects	Sustainable Finance
Q58	M1xchange — MSME invoice discounting (Bills of Exchange)	MSME Financing

Q59	Crowding Out Effect — Govt borrowing → higher interest rates	Fiscal Policy
Q60	Rare Earth Elements & Critical Minerals — NCMM 2025	Strategic Minerals
Q61	Aviation insurance — Hull Insurance, Montreal Convention 1999	Insurance Sector
Q62	Crowdfunding for SMEs	Alternative Finance
Q63	Committees — Malhotra (Insurance), L.C. Gupta (Derivatives), Urjit Patel (Housing), Y.H. Malegam (Microfinance)	Reforms / RBI Committees
Q64	NBFCs — RBI registration, no demand deposits, no DICGC	Financial Institutions
Q65	Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) — Alkire-Foster, NITI Aayog 12 indicators	Poverty & Development

E. POLITY & GOVERNANCE — 9 Questions

Q.No	Topic	Chapter
Q79	Article 13 — meaning of "law"; includes ordinances, custom	Fundamental Rights
Q80	Constitution of India — naming, repeal of GoI Act 1935, 26 January 1950 commencement	Constitutional Provisions
Q81	Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan, NDFDC	Social Justice
Q82	SC/ST provisions — Sixth Schedule (Assam/Meghalaya/Tripura/Mizoram), Income Tax exemption, Panchayat reservation	Constitution & Tribal Provisions
Q83	Parliament Questions — Starred vs Unstarred	Parliamentary Procedure
Q84	Committee on Welfare of SCs and STs — Chairperson, members composition	Parliamentary Committees
Q87	Zero FIR under BNSS 2023	Criminal Law Reforms
Q88	CEIB, SFIO, CBI — controlling ministries	Investigation Agencies
Q99	Revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) — 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2026	PRI Schemes

F. SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY — 14 Questions

Q.No	Topic	Chapter
Q44	DHRUV64 chip — DIR-V Programme; India's first 64-bit dual-core 1.0 GHz	Semiconductors
Q45	IS 19445:2025 — bomb disposal standard (BIS)	Defence Standards
Q46	Nobel Prize 2025 winner (UK-born, US professor) — John Clarke (Physics)	International Awards
Q48	Semiconductor plants — CG Power-Renesas/STARS in Gujarat	Electronics

	(Sanand), Tata Assam, HCL-Foxconn UP (not MP), SicSem Odisha	Mission
Q49	Bharat Forecast System — IIT-M (not Delhi); Panchayat-cluster level	Weather Tech
Q66	Genetic Medicine — corrects faulty genes, lipid nanoparticles	Biotechnology
Q67	Large Language Models (LLMs) — probability-based, not unbiased	Artificial Intelligence
Q68	Stealth technology — RAM coating, metamaterials	Defence Tech
Q69	Aircraft Black Boxes — orange (not red), titanium/stainless steel memory	Aviation Tech
Q71	Private space entities — IN-SPACE, Agnikul Cosmos (3D-printed engine)	Space Sector
Q73	GenomeIndia Project — DBT-funded, Indian genetic diversity	Biotechnology
Q74	National Quantum Mission — 50-1000 qubits, 4 T-Hubs	Quantum Tech
Q75	Deep Ocean Mission — MoES (not Ports), Matsya-6000, Samudrayaan	Ocean Sciences
Q85	Mission Sudarshan Chakra — air defence, BMD, by 2035	Defence Strategy
Q93	Indian defence hardware — Su-30 MKI, T-90 MK-III, Akula Class (Russia, not India)	Defence Procurement

G. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS — 12 Questions

Q.No	Topic	Chapter
Q34	Vizhinjam International Seaport — Kerala, deep draft, reduces trans-shipment dependence	India's Maritime Strategy
Q40	Strait of Hormuz — Bahrain, Qatar must cross	Strategic Chokepoints
Q41	INTERPOL Notices — Silver/Blue/Black/Green matching	International Police Cooperation
Q42	NIRANTAR platform — MoEFCC verticals	Environmental Governance
Q43	German Chancellor visit January 2026 — MoUs (AIIA-Hamburg, Hockey, Indo-Pacific)	Bilateral Relations
Q89	International Conventions not ratified by India — Migrant Workers, Refugees, Statelessness	International Treaties
Q90	AI Impact Summit 2026 New Delhi — Sutras (People, Planning, Progress); 7 Chakras Pillars	AI Diplomacy
Q91	ASEAN connectivity — Kaladan, IMT Trilateral Highway (NOT Agartala-Akhaura)	India-ASEAN
Q92	India-supported projects — Mangdechhu (Bhutan), Stor Palace (Afghanistan), Dickoya (Sri Lanka), Maldives	Neighbourhood First
Q94	Multilateral platforms — Colombo Process, Abu Dhabi Dialogue, GFMD	Migration Governance
Q95	UN Agencies awarded Nobel twice — UNHCR (1954, 1981), WFP (2020) — total 2	UN Bodies
Q96	UN Peacekeeping Operations matching — UNMIL, MINURCAT, MINUSTAH, UNMISSET	UN Peacekeeping
Q97	BIMSTEC Centres — NOIDA, Bengaluru, Colombo,	BIMSTEC

	Thimphu	
Q100	EU Member states — Poland, Germany (Belarus & Switzerland not EU)	European Union

H. ETHICS / CASE STUDY — 3 Questions

Q.No	Topic	Chapter
Q76	Public Administration — Vaccine quality scandal → Accountability	Ethics in Public Service
Q77	Conflict Resolution — tribal-urban waste site dispute → multi-stakeholder dialogue, cultural sensitivity, ESIA	Ethics / Governance
Q78	Confidentiality vs Transparency — contractor info dilemma → "limited disclosure" to oversight committee	Ethical Dilemmas

I. MISCELLANEOUS — 7 Questions

Q.No	Topic
Q47	Grand Slam Tennis governance (only Q3 about Wild Cards is correct)
Q50	Film ' Boong ' — BAFTA Children's & Family Film; directed by Lakshmipriya Devi
Q86	Border river bridges — Maitri Setu (Feni-Bangladesh), Jhulaghat (NOT Myanmar), Mechi (Nepal)
Q98	Indian Army Corps HQs — 3 Corps Dimapur, 4 Corps Tezpur, 14 Corps Leh, 33 Corps Sukna (NOT Srinagar)

3 KEY PATTERNS & TRENDS OBSERVED

Question-Type Distribution

- **Statement-based "Which is correct"** — ~55 questions (most dominant pattern)
- **Match the following** — 6 questions (Q41, Q63, Q88, Q92, Q96, Q97)
- **"Consider the following pairs" not correctly matched** — Q3, Q5, Q48, Q86, Q98
- **Direct factual single-answer** — Q2, Q9, Q10, Q11, Q21, Q30, Q46, Q50, Q52, Q53, Q54, Q57, Q59
- **Assertion-Reason / Statement-Validating** — Q1, Q8, Q25, Q31
- **Case study (Ethics-style)** — Q76, Q77, Q78

Difficulty Level Assessment

- **Easy (30%)** — direct factual questions on familiar topics
- **Moderate (45%)** — needed conceptual clarity + 2-step elimination
- **Tough (25%)** — niche current affairs (Q22 Madhav, Q26 Foxtail Orchid, Q44 DHRUV64, Q97 BIMSTEC Centres), multiple correct-statement format

Current Affairs Integration

A very high proportion of questions ($\approx 45+$ questions) directly or indirectly drew from 2024-2026 current affairs:

- **2025-2026 events** — German Chancellor visit Jan 2026, AI Impact Summit 2026, Sagarmala 2.0, NCMM 2025, IS 19445:2025, UNOC June 2025 France, Madhav Tiger Reserve 2025, Tungurahua UNESCO Geopark 2025, BUR-4 Dec 2024
- **Schemes/laws** — Revamped RGSA, RAD-NMSA, BNSS 2023, Mission Sudarshan Chakra, National Quantum Mission, Bharat Forecast System
- **Personalities** — Pandit Mallikarjun Mansur, John Clarke (Nobel 2025), Lakshmipriya Devi

Notable Pattern Shifts vs Earlier Years

1. **Ancient History dominance** — IVC, Vedic, Buddhist, Jain, Sangam, Numismatics — 9 questions (very high vs typical 4-5)
2. **Economy at par with History** — 19 Qs each; reflects increasing financial-literacy emphasis
3. **Science & Tech upweighted to 14 Qs** — heavy AI, quantum, semiconductor, genome focus
4. **International Relations + IR-overlap at 12 Qs** — heaviest in recent memory
5. **Polity reduced to 9** (vs typical 12-15) — but with deep BNSS/BNS integration
6. **Case-study Ethics questions (3 Qs)** — relatively new trend in Prelims, borrowed from Mains GS-IV style

4 TOP 10 MOST CHALLENGING QUESTIONS

#	Q.No	Why Tough
1	Q3	Ancient-modern river name pairing (Vitasta/Asikni/Parushni/Yavyavati) requires Vedic geography mastery
2	Q9	Mallikarjun Mansur's gharana — niche music knowledge
3	Q17	Mankani plates AD 595-596 — specific epigraphy date
4	Q22	Madhav Tiger Reserve 2025 — current affair + geography
5	Q26	Foxtail orchid as State flower of two states
6	Q44	DHRUV64 chip — DIR-V programme + 64-bit spec
7	Q53	FI-Index sub-indices (Access, Usage, Quality)
8	Q60	NCMM 2025 + REE-13 elements + China-India mining share
9	Q63	Four committees-organizations 4-row matching
10	Q92	India-supported projects matching with 4 countries

5 AP/TG-RELEVANT QUESTIONS (Bonus Note for Your APPSC Students)

These UPSC 2026 questions touch AP/TG content directly:

- **Q4** — Amaravati Stupa (AP, Lower Krishna Valley)
- **Q5** — Sangam Tamilakam (relevant for South India syllabus)
- **Q17** — Place-value system (relevant for Aryabhata/Brahmagupta)
- **Q24** — Velikonda hills (Velikonda range in AP/TG)

6 STUDY STRATEGY TAKEAWAYS FOR APPSC/TGPSC/UPSC CONTENT CREATION

Based on this paper, future UPSC-style content should emphasize:

1. **Niche Art & Culture** — gharanas, schools of sculpture, temple architecture sub-styles, classical music ragas, cave paintings
2. **Ancient sources & textual references** — Ashtadhyayi, Pali texts, Rigvedic terminology
3. **2024-2026 current affairs** — every government scheme, mission, and international summit
4. **Economy concepts deeply** — fintech (RWA tokenization, Digital Rupee, FI-Index), insurance, NBFCs
5. **Geography of news-relevant places** — Tungurahua, Lake Turkana, Vizhinjam, Strait of Hormuz
6. **New criminal laws** — BNSS Zero FIR, IPC→BNS transitions
7. **AI/Quantum/Semiconductor ecosystem** — IN-SPACE, NQM, GenomeIndia, DIR-V
8. **UN/International organisations** — Nobel-winning agencies, peacekeeping missions, BIMSTEC, ASEAN connectivity