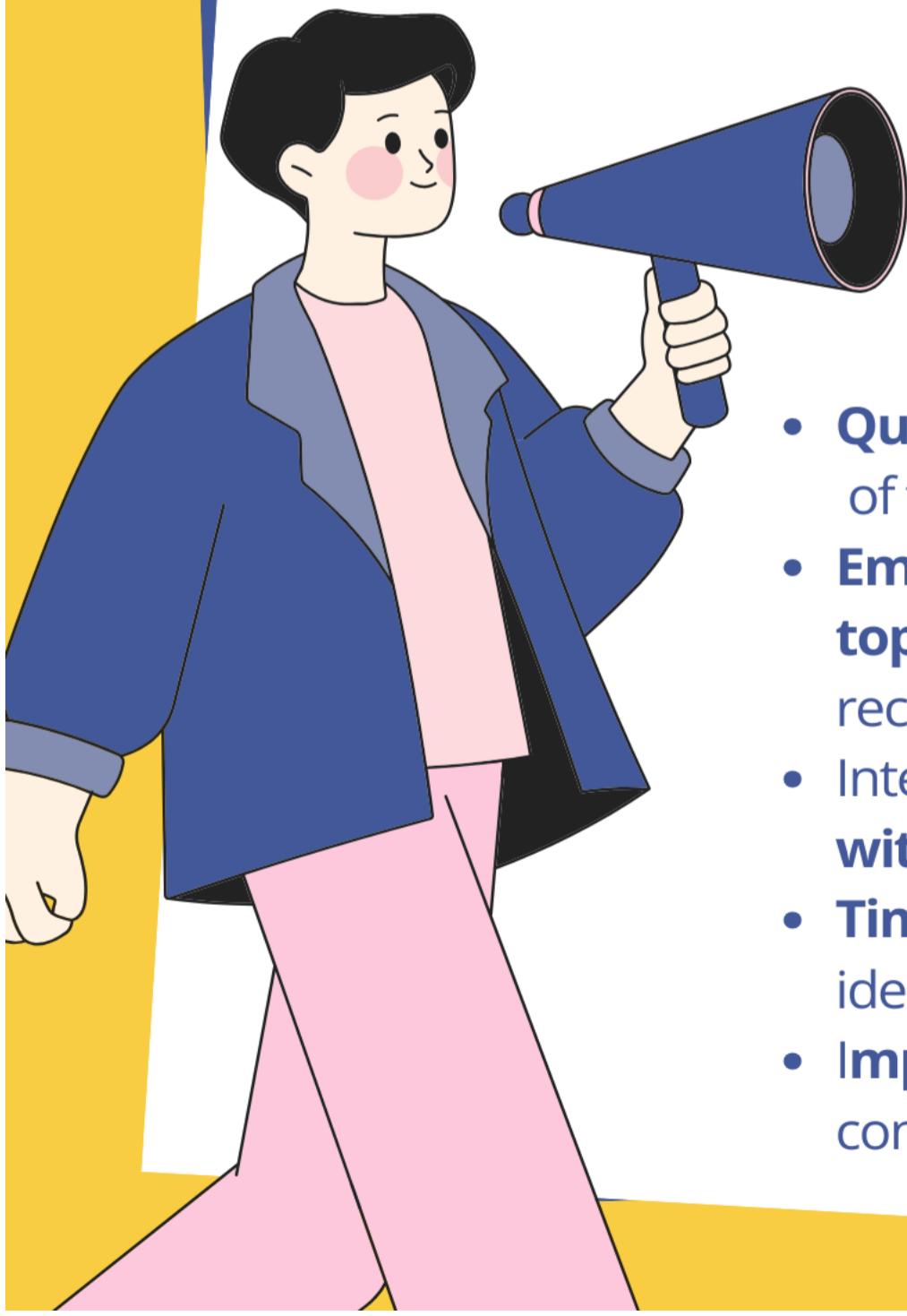


CRASH COURSE – UPSC CSE (PRELIMS)

GEOGRAPHY

“Geography provides the spatial lens through which development and disasters are understood.”



Benefit:

- **Quick and focused revision** of the entire UPSC syllabus
- **Emphasis on high-yield topics** based on PYQs and recent trends
- Integration of **static concepts with current affairs**
- **Time-efficient preparation**, ideal for last-phase revision
- **Improves exam orientation**, confidence, and accuracy

CRASH COURSE – UPSC CSE (PRELIMS) IQRA IAS (POLITY)

The **Geography** segment in the **UPSC Civil Services Examination (CSE) Prelims** remains a **high-weight and integrative component of General Studies Paper I**, contributing **12-20 questions on average each year**. It tests a candidate's **conceptual understanding of physical and human processes, spatial reasoning ability, and skill in applying geographical concepts to current events**. In recent years, UPSC has increasingly shifted from static fact-based geography toward applied and analytical geography, with strong emphasis on **mapping, climate systems, disaster geography, and environment-linked current affairs**, requiring a clear grasp of processes, interlinkages, and real-world relevance.

“Geography is not about locations alone; it is about understanding processes, patterns, and their impact on human life
— and UPSC rewards those who see these connections.”

UPSC CSE PRELIMS – GEOGRAPHY PYQ ANALYSIS (2015–2025)

1. Year-wise PYQ Trend Analysis

Year	No. of Questions	Nature of Questions	Focus Areas	Remarks
2015	12	Static / Conceptual	Physical Geography, Rivers	NCERT-dominant
2016	13	Static + Applied	Monsoon, Climatology	Some current linkage
2017	14	Applied	Drainage, Soils	Analytical trend begins
2018	10	Static	Indian Relief, Agriculture	Moderate difficulty
2019	14	Static + Map	Rivers, Mapping	Spatial reasoning
2020	10	Applied	Climate, Resources	Interpretation-based
2021	10	Current + Applied	Ports, River projects	Infrastructure linkage
2022	16	Static + Conceptual	Terrain, Physical Geography	Balanced paper
2023	16	Mixed	Mapping, Rivers	Reasoning heavy
2024	20	Analytical	Climate, Mapping	Higher difficulty
2025	23	Conceptual + Applied	Climate events, Human Geography	Trend of integration

2. High-Yield & Hot Topics (Geography)

Theme	Key Focus Areas
Rivers & Drainage	Tributaries, source-mouth, river linking
Monsoon System	Onset, retreat, jet streams, ENSO, IOD
Mapping (India & World)	Straits, seas, gulfs, passes, ranges
Climatology	Cyclones, heat waves, circulation
Soils of India	Characteristics, crops, distribution
Physiography	Himalayas, plateaus, coastal plains
Oceanography	Currents, upwelling, El Niño/La Niña
Vegetation	Biodiversity hotspots
Agriculture Geography	Cropping patterns, irrigation
Resources	Coalfields, oil basins, renewables

3. Hot Topics Based on Recent Trends (2023–2025)

Area	Focus
Climate Change	Heat domes, marine heatwaves, extreme rainfall
Places in News	War zones, canals, straits, polar regions
River Projects	Interlinking, inland waterways
Disaster Geography	Floods, cyclones, landslides, earthquakes
Urban Geography	Smart cities, urban flooding, heat islands
Renewable Energy	Solar parks, wind corridors, hydrogen zones
Cryosphere	Himalayan glaciers, permafrost
Ocean-Atmosphere	ENSO, IOD impact

4. Priority Topics for Prelims 2026

A. Physical Geography (Very High Priority)

Topic	Key Areas	Expected Question Type
Climate & Weather	Monsoon, jet streams, ENSO, heat waves	Assertion-Reason, Analytical
Oceanography	Currents, upwelling, cyclones	Matching, Conceptual
Geomorphology	Plate tectonics, earthquakes, landforms	Conceptual depth

B. Indian Geography (Extremely High Priority)

Topic	Focus Areas	Expected Pattern
Rivers & Drainage	Sources, tributaries, deltas, interlinking	Map-based
Physiography	Himalayas, plateau, ghats	Conceptual
Soils	Types, crops, conservation	Static + Applied

C. Mapping & Location-Based Geography

Category	Coverage
India Mapping	Rivers, passes, parks, ports
World Mapping	Straits, seas, polar regions
Question Nature	Location + current affairs

D. Human & Economic Geography

Topic	Focus Areas
Agriculture	Cropping patterns, irrigation
Resources	Coal, oil, renewables, lithium
Energy Transition	Green hydrogen hubs

E. Disaster & Environment-linked Geography

Topic	Coverage
Disasters	Cyclones, floods, landslides
Cryosphere	Glaciers, permafrost, ice sheets

F. Urban & Contemporary Geography

Topic	Focus Areas
Urban Geography	Heat islands, flooding
Contemporary Issues	Smart cities, coastal vulnerability

5. Priority Classification (Prelims 2026)

Priority Level	Topics
Must-Do	Monsoon, Rivers, Mapping, Climate systems
High Probability	Oceanography, disasters, soils, resources
Selective	Urban geography, agriculture

6. Detailed Unit-wise Syllabus

Unit	Core Coverage
UNIT I - Geomorphology	Earth structure, plate tectonics, landforms
UNIT II - Climatology	Atmosphere, winds, monsoon, ENSO
UNIT III - Oceanography	Currents, tides, reefs, heatwaves
UNIT IV - Biogeography	Ecosystems, vegetation, biodiversity
UNIT V - Indian Physical Geography	Physiography, rivers, soils
UNIT VI - Human Geography	Population, migration, urbanisation
UNIT VII - Economic Geography	Agriculture, minerals, transport
UNIT VIII - Disaster Geography	Hazards, mitigation
UNIT IX - Mapping	Straits, passes, rivers, places in news

