

## 7 Simple Ways to Study Current Affairs

Current Affairs preparation is a very important cog in the wheel of the strategy to clear the IAS examination. There is no fixed formula on the weightage given to the current affairs in the UPSC Civil Service Exam. The weightage keeps changing every year, however it is obvious that the weightage given to it is important if a candidate is preparing seriously to clear the UPSC Civil Service Examination. It is important to understand the reason behind importance given to the Current Affairs by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) in the Civil Service Exam. The candidates who successfully clear the examinations are going to be generalists. They are not going to play the role of specialists. To put things into perspective, a civil servant will not be building bridges, roads, satellites or missiles. Rather they will be given opportunities to lead the public sector undertakings (PSU's) in highly technical domains, take part in decision making roles in the health care sector, finance, tourism domains etc. Hence it is imperative that UPSC expects its candidates to have a great deal of awareness and the curiosity to keep absorbing knowledge, information and develop the ability to synthesize vast amounts of information.

### Memorising - Concentrate More on Analysis

Most of the candidates just give importance to memorising the current affairs. One needs to understand that the UPSC is not checking your memorising skills in the current affairs. They are checking how well you have the ability to absorb the details and go beyond the information and look behind the screens. UPSC is more interested in checking your ability to answer questions on why, what, when, how. For example, they would not be interested in asking questions on when Chandrayaan Mission was launched by ISRO. Asking this question would be akin to checking a candidate's memorisation skills. Many would be aware of it and UPSC would not be able to differentiate the candidates who can add value to the Government. Rather they may be interested to know your knowledge on the importance of the Chandrayaan mission and the reason why the Government of India is willing to spend millions on this mission. They would be interested to know whether you are aware of the return on investments of this mission, on how it could benefit the country or its scientific community.

### Linking of Topics

This is a very important skill set that aspiring UPSC candidates must develop while studying current affairs. A good candidate should develop the ability to link one subject to another subject. For example, the ability to link Aryabhata, a topic on history with Aryabhata, India's first satellite. Another example would be UPSC may not be interested in knowing the date of inaugurating the Chabahar Port built in Iran, collaborating with India, rather they would be interested in testing candidates' knowledge on how it would further build India's relations and trade ties with Afghanistan, Central Asia, Europe and Russia or how the Chabahar port project

could impact India-US ties or how it can be used as a deterrence to growing presence of China in the region due to Gwadar Port in Pakistan. They may even test your ability to link Chabahar port project with International North South Transport Corridor and how it is different from Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of China and further link it to the importance given to BRI by China as an alternative route to Malacca Strait which could be used as a choke point to the China's burgeoning trade. Hence using 1 topic a candidate should be able to connect various dots. This can be done only if the candidate has a great deal of curiosity. This is a quality that UPSC is interested in its candidates.

## Newspapers

There are plenty of newspapers in the market. It is important to read the right news papers. Don't read newspapers which provide information on Page 3, socialites, gossips because there is no way it is going to help your preparation. Rather just stick to 1 newspaper because your preparation will be more focussed and it will help you in saving your most precious resource i.e. time. So far many successful candidates preferred to read newspapers like The Hindu which provides excellent analysis in its editorials concerning every topic that a prospective civil service candidate must be aware of.

## Magazines - Use Limited Numbers with Proven Track Record

There are plenty of magazines or periodicals that are available in the market for UPSC Current affairs preparation. Once again don't overburden yourself with too many magazines from the market. Rather stick to a few magazines that have a proven track record of providing right information with an excellent analysis which is an important attribute that UPSC is looking for in its prospective civil servants. The important magazines a candidate must concentrate on are listed below.

1. Yojana - It is a monthly magazine which concentrates on Socio-Economic Issues. It is available in many languages. Moreover, this is a magazine published by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Hence a candidate will find authentic information and ultimately save time on research for authentic information.
2. Kurukshetra - Once again it is a magazine published by the Government. It concentrates on the rural development aspects. It provides excellent analysis.
3. Science Reporter - It is a magazine published by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). It should help a candidate cover topics related to science and technological development.
4. Economic and Political Weekly.

## **Notes - Make it a Habit**

Most importantly never forget to make notes on the analysis of the topics you have studied. Make sure that you write your analysis as well. Notes will really help your preparation at the advanced stages of preparation while the exams are approaching very close.

## **Revise - Consistency**

Make sure that you consistently revise the topics from notes you have made. This is a crucial component to help you in retaining vast amounts of information that one has to absorb. Keep revising from the notes that you make regularly. This will help you to connect different topics as you keep gathering more and more relevant information and knowledge.

## **Limit your Sources**

Limit yourself to the above sources mentioned above, this will not only help you in attaining quality information and analysis but also give you more time bandwidth to cover other syllabus of UPSC Civil Service Examination.