

ENGLISH (COMPULSORY)
[According to the syllabus of 2026] 3/A
First Paper
Time— 1 hour
Full Marks – 37
Subject code: 107

[N.B-The figures in the right margin indicate full marks.]

Read the passage below and answer the questions 1 & 2

The Republic of Maldives is an island country in the Indian Ocean. It has 1199 islands that are clustered into 26 major atolls. An atoll is a ring-shaped coral reef or a string of closely spaced coral islands. The natural coral reefs of the Maldives are surrounded by the sea all around and stand out as a pearl in the Indian Ocean. The Maldives is the eighth smallest country in the world with an area of only 300 square kilometers. It is the smallest Asian country in terms of population and size.

People have been living on the islands of the Maldives for nearly 3000 years. They set sail from different parts of the world - Asia, Arabia, Europe and America - to come to these islands. The earliest settlers of the Maldives were probably from southern India and Sri Lanka who came to these islands in the fourth and fifth centuries BC. In the 12th century AD, sailors from East Africa and Arab countries came to the Maldives. As a result, the Maldivians who were originally Buddhists were converted to Sunni Islam in the mid-12th century. In 1344 Ibn Batuta, a famous Arab historian and scholar travelled around the Maldives.

In the 16th century, the Portuguese conquered the Maldives and ruled the country for 15 years. Although governed as an independent Islamic sultanate for most of its history from 1153 to 1968, the Maldives was a British colony from 1887 to 1965. Following independence from Britain in 1965, the sultanate continued to operate for another 3 years. On November 11, 1968, the sultanate was abolished and replaced by a republic and the country assumed its present name.

The Maldives is famous as a tourist destination because of its pleasant weather, heavenly beaches and lagoons, luxurious holiday resorts and the peace-loving people. The Maldives was ranked as the best country for beautiful beaches and facilities for recreation in 2008.

The Maldives is well known for being the lowest country in the world. Unfortunately, this small country with idyllic natural beauty is under threat from rising sea levels due to global warming. Most of the country is just 1.5 meters above sea level with the highest point of 2.3 meters! Many predictions have been made with respect to Maldives being swept away by the rising water level in the Indian Ocean. When the power tsunami of 2004 hit the island nation, many of the island's dry parts were flooded by the sea water. The government of the Maldives has begun to purchase land from nearby countries for resettling its people in case the islands go under water! In order to highlight the threats of global warming to its low lying islands, the government of Maldives held a cabinet meeting underwater in 2009.

That was the first ever underwater cabinet meeting in the world. The meeting took place about 5 meters underwater, in a blue-green lagoon on a small island. While underwater, the cabinet signed a document calling on all nations to cut their carbon emissions.

1. Choose the best answer from the alternates.

1x7=7

a) The word "atoll" refers to:

- i) A coral reef or a string of closely spaced islands
- iii) A type of weather phenomenon

- ii) A type of fish
- iv) A mountain range

b) The word "idyllic" refers to:

- i) Pleasant, peaceful, and picturesque
- iii) Crowded and noisy

- ii) Stormy and challenging
- iv) Dangerous and chaotic

c) The word "carbon emissions" refers to:

- i) The release of harmful gases into the air
- iii) The depletion of the ozone layer

- ii) The increase in the global population
- iv) The reduction of air pollution

d) Who were the first settlers of the Maldives?

- i) Sailors from East Africa
- ii) Sailors from Arabia
- iii) People from Southern India and Sri Lanka
- iv) Sailors from Europe

e) What natural threat is the Maldives facing according to the text?

- i) Earthquakes
- ii) Global warming and rising sea levels
- iii) Hurricanes
- iv) Volcanic eruptions

f) What was the significance of the underwater cabinet meeting held in 2009?

- i) It was the first meeting to discuss tourism
- ii) It was a routine governmental meeting
- iii) It highlighted the threats of global warming to low-lying islands
- iv) It focused on building new resorts

g) Which statement is true based on the text?

- i) The Maldives became a British colony in 1968.
- ii) The highest point in the Maldives is 5 meters above sea level.
- iii) The Maldives held the first underwater cabinet meeting in 2009.
- iv) The Maldives was once ruled by the Portuguese for over 50 years.

2. Write short answers to the following questions:

2x5=10

- a. What makes the Maldives a popular place for tourists?
- b. Why is the Maldives in danger because of rising sea levels?
- c. How did the Maldives change from being a sultanate to a republic?
- d. What happened to the Maldives when the 2004 tsunami hit?
- e. How did people first come to live in the Maldives?

3. Answer the following questions [any five]

2x5=10

- a) How are the two mothers different from each other?
- b) What would be the speaker's advice to her own children?
- c) Who is Mary and what task is she given in the poem?
- d) How does the poet describe the weather when Mary goes out?
- e) How does the poet use "imagery" to describe Mary's hair?
- f) How does the speaker describe Time in the poem?
- g) What does the speaker mean by "Time, you old gipsy man"?
- h) What gifts does the poet offer Time to make him stay?

4. Suppose you are Labib/Lbiba and your friend Rashed/Rasheda. Now make a dialogue between two about the preparation for the examination.

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