

05281

ENGLISH

Full Marks : 100

Time : 3 hours

The figures in the margin indicate full marks for the questions

All questions are compulsory

Word limit, wherever specified, should be adhered to

1. Write an essay in about 500 words on any one of the following topics : 30
- (a) Ecotourism is responsible tourism
 - (b) Man-Animal conflict in Assam
 - (c) Climate change and its impact on tourism
 - (d) India's North-East as a biodiversity hot spot

2. Write a précis of the following passage and add a suitable title to it : 20

From the viewpoint of population base, Assam may be called a cauldron, where the people of different racial, linguistic and socio-cultural groups have lived since time immemorial. In spite of its marginal location in the context of the Indian subcontinent, people from the north, east, south and west

across the high Himalayas, over the tangled mass of hills and valleys of the Patkai and Arakan Yoma and over the plains of the Ganga-Brahmaputra Doab came to settle and build up the population base of Assam. The State now has a population of more than twenty million over an area of 78523 sq. km with a density of over 260 per sq. km.

The geographical conditions of Assam, and for that matter, that of the North-East India, with fertile river valleys, heavy rainfall, abundant water, luxuriant vegetation and rich fauna were such that they could attract primitive man to settle and hence there were streams of migrations into it even during the Palaeolithic age. An analysis of the sequence of the peopling of Assam is not easy because of two reasons. Firstly, no clear evidences have so far been found on the human occupation of land during the prehistoric and early historic periods in this part of the country. Secondly, there has been such an intermixture of both blood and culture of different groups of people in this cauldron that little can be known about the succession of peopling.

With this hazy background, a probe into the present population of Assam reveals four racial traits, viz., Proto-Australoid, Mongoloid, Aryo-Mongoloid and Aryo-Mongolo-Dravidian. The racial traits reflected through the physical features of individuals are of such a varying degree that

it is perhaps safer to divide the State's population into ethno-linguistic groups. Such a division provides three major groups, viz., one group speaking Austro-Asiatic, another speaking Tibeto-Chinese and still another speaking Indo-European families of languages.

3. Read the passage given below carefully and answer the questions that follow (answers should be in your own words) :

When I was a child, one of the hurdles to be surmounted was a monthly shearing by our village barber. The task of initiating and supervising the process was given to our awe-inspiring grandpa, whose loud voice had a special effect on meek lambs like me and my cousin, Visu.

For grandpa, haircutting was an important affair. Periodically, he would sharply scrutinize our heads and frown at what he saw there, as if he were gazing at weeds on a field. When the locks crossed an imaginary line around the back of the head, grandpa would reach for the almanac in the *Puja* room and fix a shedding date. Our hearts would sink at the thought of scissors mercilessly snipping away our crowning glory.

On the auspicious day, the barber would appear shirtless at the crack of dawn, his small black box tucked under his arm. He

would perch in front of the house and spread the tools of his trade. His posture was that of a wicket-keeper sitting close to the stumps for spin bowling.

Clad only in faded shorts, I would squat before him hanging my head like a prisoner about to be beheaded. This submissive nature seemed to please him no end. Gently he would push my head further down and begin operation on my nape. The idea of wearing an apron had not yet caught on and the hair fell all over my near-naked body, giving me a tingling sensation. Consequently, I moved my head now and then.

The barber would not tolerate such nonsense. He would hold my head between his knees very hard. I could hardly steal a glance at the small cracked mirror he would thrust into my hands to witness for myself the beauty of his workmanship. Meanwhile, my grandpa hopped about at a distance shouting commands at the barber to snip here, snip there.

The preliminary shearing over, the barber would begin the embellishing work, all the while his unloosened tongue exchanging local gossip. When he had finished with me, it was my cousin's turn and Visu would pass me without a word, like a batsman going in to face a fast bowler.

The scene would now shift to the backyard. Unmindful of his age, my grandpa would draw water from the deep well and pour it noisily on my head. Wet and shivering, I would hop about like a chicken plucked off all its feathers. Now insult was added to injury as the females in the family would make their appearance, all teeth and giggles to steal a glance at my head. They would burst into shrieks of laughter, covering their faces with their sarees and hands.

I would stand there, bristling like a grumpy porcupine and try to splash them. But a sharp bang on my head by my killjoy grandpa would save the ladies from getting wet.

Years have rolled by. "How long your hair is!" the same ladies would gush with envy. I just smile without turning a hair.

Questions :

- (a) Which words in the passage mean the following? 1×2=2
- (i) Crouch or sit
- (ii) The back of a person's neck
- (b) Describe the entry of the barber into grandpa's house. 2
- (c) How did grandpa carry out his task of initiating and supervising the process of haircutting? 3

- (d) How did grandpa keep himself engaged while the haircutting was going on? 3
- (e) Give two expressions/words from the passage that are related to the game of cricket. $1 \times 2 = 2$
- (f) Why did the scene now pass to the backyard? What did grandpa do there? $1 + 2 = 3$
- (g) How did the ladies in the family react to see the boy after the haircut? 2
- (h) Give a suitable title for the passage. 3
4. Amplify (in about 200 words) the ideas contained in any one of the following : 15
- (a) A stitch in time saves nine
- (b) If winter comes, can spring be far behind
- (c) Rome was not built in a day
- (d) All that glitters is not gold
5. (a) Rewrite the following sentences as directed (any five) : $1 \times 5 = 5$
- (i) They are building a drain in front of my house. (Change the voice)
- (ii) The man was seen climbing over the fence. (Change the voice)

(Continued)

(7)

(iii) As soon as he went to bed he fell asleep.

(Rewrite using 'no sooner')

(iv) He found a wallet. It was full of money.

(Combine the sentences into a complex sentence)

(v) She is the brightest girl in the class.

(Change into positive degree)

(vi) What is the time ____ your watch?

(Supply appropriate preposition)

(b) Correct the following sentences (any five) : $1 \times 5 = 5$

(i) Don't meddle with my affairs.

(ii) They left the hostel with bag and baggage.

(iii) The house is having a large garden at the back.

(iv) My elder brother is a M.A. in History.

(v) Boxing is an exciting game.

(vi) One of the students were studying in the library.

(c) Fill in the blanks with proper forms of the verbs given in the brackets : $1 \times 3 = 3$

(i) They _____ (reach) the hall just before the play began.

(ii) I _____ (study) a thesis on deforestation.

(iii) The sky was clear when I went for my walk though _____ (rain) all night.

(d) Make sentences with the following (any two) : $1 \times 2 = 2$

Sit on the fence; Once in a blue moon; Bed of roses.
