

IAS 2016



SUMAN NALA

"Life is the biggest exam. UPSC tests not just your academic knowledge but also patience and perseverance. Keep moving ahead."

CSC: What were the basic mantras of your success?

Suman: I focused on developing good understanding of each topic mentioned in the syllabus. Timely revision and good guidance kept me on track to succeed in Civil Services Examination.

CSC: When did you start preparation for the IAS Examination? When should one ideally begin thinking about preparing for this exam?

Suman: I started my preparations for the IAS examination in 2014. It is a matter of personal choice and circumstances to decide the commencement of preparation, but, I think one should start in college days to have an edge over others.

CSC: What were your strategies for the lengthy syllabus of General Studies for both Prelims and Mains Examinations?

Suman: I focussed on solving more and more questions for both Prelims and Main Examinations.

CSC: What was your optional subject? What was the basis of selecting this particular optional subject?

Suman: I took 'HISTORY' as my optional subject. It is very interesting and it covers a major part of syllabus of compulsory papers of General Studies. It benefits in Essay paper and in interview as well.

CSC: Did you follow the myth that only so called popular optionals should be opted?

Suman: No, I opted purely on basis of interest, current trend and relevance. Now a days History is very safe and is scoring very well.

CSC: How did you come to know that which sources of reading materials are standard? Please give a list of books, magazines and Newspapers.

Suman: I followed the guidance of my teacher Shri S. Baliyan Sir. I read whatever Sir suggested. Toppers' strategy shared on their blogs and magazines also benefitted.

CSC: Tell us something about preparation of 'Essay' paper.

Suman: I practiced by writing many essays and tried to include as many dimensions as possible in my essays.

CSC: How much time did you devote for the IAS Examination?

Suman: It took me a total of two years to prepare and crack IAS Examination. I studied 10 to 12 hours daily on a consistent basis.

CSC: Which is the most difficult part of this examination and why? What was your strategy to tackle this difficult part?

Suman: I think Prelims stage is the most difficult part of IAS Examination. I tackled it by solving lot of questions. I had a set of 4000-5000 questions to practice.

CSC: Did you attend any coaching institute? How helpful are the coaching institutes? What is your overall opinion about the coaching institutes?

Suman: I attended 'INSIGHT IAS ACADEMY' of Shri S. BALIYAN Sir at Delhi. The coaching classes helped me a lot. Continuous support, motivation and guidance provided by S. BALIYAN Sir played a crucial role in my success in Civil Services Examination. Sir was always accessible. Due to coaching classes I could consolidate such a vast syllabus in a very short time.

CSC: What are your suggestions for freshers who want to join coaching institutes for preparation?

Suman: I think coaching classes are almost compulsory otherwise such a vast syllabus will be difficult to cover. Mentorship plays an important role towards success in Civil Services Examination.

CSC: What was your style of writing in the exam? How was it distinct from the general writing style? How did you develop this writing style?

Suman: I followed a mixed format of writing in which both bullets and paragraph were used. I developed it during practice while writing test series.

CSC: What should be the best strategy to tackle negative marking in Prelims exam?

Suman: Elimination method should be followed to remove wrong options in those questions where one is not sure about answer. One should practice at home and find out his/her way of guessing.

CSC: How helpful is one's academic background in his/her success in IAS examination?

Suman: I think it plays an important role in 'Essay' and 'Ethics' paper atleast.

CSC: How did you prepare for interview?

Suman: I took lot of mock interviews and followed toppers' strategy.

CSC: Which types of questions were asked in the interview? Did you answer them all?

Suman: Questions were mostly related to my educational background and events of that day. Analytical History questions were also many. I answered most of the questions asked by the interview board.

CSC: Was there any specific area they emphasized upon?

Suman: My educational background and my optional subject.

CSC: Whom would you give credit for your success?

Suman: My parents, my husband, friends like Anuj Tare and my teacher Shri S. Baliyan Sir.

CSC: What is your advice to the freshers who are going to appear in this exam?

Suman: Be consistent and take small steps daily.

CSC: What is your advice to the candidates who have failed in this exam?

Suman: Life is the biggest exam. UPSC tests not just your academic knowledge but also patience and perseverance. Keep moving ahead.

CSC: Since when have you been reading Civil Services Chronicle magazine? What are your suggestions to make it more useful for civil service aspirants?

Suman: I read Civil Services Chronicle magazine during the days of my preparation, though I could not follow it regularly. It is very informative magazine and covers issues in detail.

CSC: *Ms. Suman, thanks a lot for giving your valuable time and sharing your insight on civil services examination.*

Suman: Thank you very much.