UPSC Mains Botany Optional Paper-II Syllabus

1. Cell Biology:
Techniques of cell biology. Prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells-structural and ultrastructural details; Structure and function of extracellular matrix (cell wall) and membranes-cell adhesion, membrane transport and vesicular transport; Structure and function of cell organelles (chloroplasts, mitochondria, ER, dictyosomes ribosomes, endosomes, lysosomes, peroxisomes; Cytoskeleton and microtubules; Nucleus, nucleolus, nuclear pore complex; Chromatin and nucleosome; Cell signaling and cell receptors; Signal transduction Mitosis and meiosis; molecular basis of cell cycle. Numerical and structural variations in chromosomes and their significance; Chromatin organization and packaging of genome; Polytene chromosomes; B- chromosomes-structure, behaviour and
significance.

2. Genetics, Molecular Biology and Evolution:
Development of genetics, and gene versus allele concepts (Pseudoalleles); Quantitative genetics and multiple factors; Incomplete dominance, polygenic inheritance, multiple alleles; Linkage and crossing over of gene mapping including molecular maps (idea of mapping, function); Sex chromosomes and sex-linked inheritance; sex determination and molecular basis of sex differentiation; Mutations (biochemical and molecular basis); Cytoplasmic inheritance and cytoplasmic genes (including genetics of male sterility).

Structure and synthesis of nucleic acids and proteins; Genetic code and regulation of gene expression; Gene silencing; Multigene families; Organic evolution-evidences, mechanism and theories.

Role of RNA in origin and evolution.

3. Plant Breeding, Biotechnology and Biostatistics: Methods of plant breeding-introduction, selection and hybridization (pedigree, backcross, mass selection, bulk method); Mutation, polyploidy, male sterility and heterosis breeding. Use of apomixes in plant breeding; DNA sequencing; Genetic engineering methods of transfer of genes; Transgenic crops and biosafety aspects; Development and use of molecular markers in plant breeding; Tools and techniques-probe, southern blotting, DNA fingerprinting, PCR and FISH. Standard deviation and coefficient of variation (CV). Tests of significance (Z-test, t-test and chi-square tests). Probability and distributions (normal, binomial and Poisson). Correlation and regression.

4. Physiology and Biochemistry:
Water relations, mineral nutrition and ion transport, mineral deficiencies. Photosynthesis-photochemical reactions, photophosphorylation and carbon fixation pathways; C, C+ and CAM pathways; Mechanism of phloem transport, Respiration (anaerobic and aerobic, including fermentation)-electron transport chain and phosphorylation; oxidative Photorespiration; Chemiosmotic theory and ATP synthesis; Lipid metabolism; Nitrogen fixation and nitrogen metabolism. Enzymes, coenzymes; Energy transfer and energy conservation. Importance of secondary metabolites. Pigments as photoreceptors (plastidial pigments and phytochrome). Plant movements; Photoperiodism and flowering, vernalization, senescence; Growth substances their chemical nature, role and applications in agri-horticulture; growth indices, growth movements. Stress physiology (heat, water, salinity, metal); Fruit and seed physiology. Dormancy, storage and germination of seed. Fruit ripening-its molecular basis and manipulation.

5. Ecology and Plant Geography:

Concept of ecosystem; Ecological factors. Concepts and dynamics of community; Plant succession. Concepts of biosphere; Ecosystems; Conservation; Pollution and its control (including phytoremediation); Plant indicators; Environment (Protection) Act.

Forest types of India-Ecological and economic importance of forests, afforestation, deforestation and social forestry; Endangered plants, endemism IUCN categories, Red Data Books; Biodiversity and its conservation; Protected Area Network; Convention of Biological Diversity, Farmers' Rights; and Intellectual Property Rights; Concept of Sustainable Development; Biogeochemical cycles. Global warming and climatic change; Invasive species; Environmental Impact Assessment; Phytogeographical regions of India.