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<b>Name Of Candidate</b>	Ishita Kishore		
<b>Roll No.</b>	1910080460	<b>Date:</b>	

Time Allowed: Three Hours

Maximum Marks: 250

INDEX TABLE			INSTRUCTION				
Q. No.	Max. Marks	Marks Obtained	<p>1. Please do furnish Name, Email, Roll No and Mobile in the answer sheet.</p> <p>2. There are TWENTY questions printed in ENGLISH &amp; HINDI, all questions are compulsory.</p> <p>3. The number of marks carried by a question/part is indicated against it.</p> <p>4. Answers must be written in the medium authorized in the admission Certificate, which must be stated clearly on the cover of this Question-Cum-Answer (QCA) Booklet in the space provided.</p> <p>5. Word limit in questions, if specified, should be adhered to. Any page or portion of the page left blank in the Question-Cum Answer Booklet must be clearly Struck off.</p> <p><i>Any specific messages for ForumIAS Mentors/ Evaluators with respect to your copy? Write it here.</i></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>				
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<b>Total Marks:</b>			<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="border: none;"><b>Mode Of Examination:</b></td> <td style="border: none;">Online <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="border: none;">Offline <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	<b>Mode Of Examination:</b>	Online <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Offline <input type="checkbox"/>	
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<b>Evaluator's Discretion:</b> This is the marks awarded at the discretion of the evaluator based on your overall impression, on the basis of (but not limited to) your handwriting, presentation, use of diagrams, flowcharts, facts and figures or absolutely anything that he/she liked in your copy.			<b>For Office Use Only</b>				
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**Note:** You can discuss your evaluated copy with the Mentor. Raise a ticket from your portal to schedule a mentor call or visit the offline centre to meet mentor (all 7 days, Timings - 11 AM to 6 PM). Further if you are unsatisfied with the evaluation, you can seek re-evaluation of the copy.

Parameters	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
Language						
Structure						
Presentation						
Handwriting						
Content						
Attempt						

**ADDITIONAL REMARKS**







Section A

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Solution to India's Poverty Puzzle - alienation or  
eradication

Recently, the city of Delhi - one of the wealthiest in India, with wealth over \$400 bn as per World Wealth Report -

was shocked by the death of three little girls due to starvation. This tells the deeply disturbing story of poverty

Many find it unthinkable that anyone can starve to death in the capital.

Such deaths are rare but makes us wonder about the precarious race towards two square meals everyday. Further

if this is the reality of Delhi, what is the extent of problems in the rest of India, especially rural areas?



Let us find out through this essay the causes of poverty, the various possible solutions to tackle it, the debate b/w alleviation and eradication, impact assessment of various solution and finally an appropriate way forward.

### THE VICIOUS CYCLE OF POVERTY

Poverty is a complex problem wherein one fails to meet the basic needs.

In economic terms, it is due to unemployment or low income, poor living standards. This further leads to illiteracy, lack of access to health services, hunger etc. The main concern is that the causes mutually reinforce each other leading to a



perpetual state of helplessness.

As held by Mahatma Gandhi,  
poverty is the worst form of violence.  
It is one of the most powerful weapon  
of Mass Destruction. It dictates the  
future of multiple generations at once  
and limits their choices.

Inequality is a pertinent social  
cause of Poverty. Gender discrimination,  
caste system, marginalisation due to  
tribal way of life create fertile ground  
for poverty

Conflict is another common  
<sup>driver</sup>  
~~factor~~. This is evident in the  
gut wrenching stories of Afghanistan



Poor healthcare systems especially

for mothers and children also creates a cycle of poverty. Easily preventable diseases like diarrheas become fatal. Maternal mortality is common & without government support, there is no safety net.

Thus as held by Immanuel Kant, the invulnerability of human dignity is a categorical imperative and must be proactively resolved.

SOLVING POVERTY PUZZLE - MILES TO GO BEFORE WE SLEEP

The most prominent approach has been that of Amartya Sen, a nobel laureate.



He recommended 'Capacity Development' as there are geographical, biological & social factors that may amplify or reduce poverty. For him poor does not mean living below an imaginary poverty line but rather it means having an income level that does not allow an individual access to basic amenities.

Thus the government must provide basic services like education, health, social security to ensure a bare minimum. Thus his approach reaffirms Welfare States where state takes a paternal responsibility towards citizens.

This is in contrast to Jagdish Bhagwati's



approach of "trickle down" effect of growth. He believed that neoliberal policies will foster <sup>high</sup> growth rates of growth which will seep down to the bottom of the pyramid. As held by UNDP, India has lifted more than 140 million people from poverty between 2005-14. This is a remarkable achievement & proves his thesis right as India witnessed even double digit growth in the same period.

However recent report by Oxfam - "Time to care" shows a simultaneous rise in inequality. India's top 1% holds more than 40% of its wealth. This is a worrying



trend as all benefits are reaped by a small section. During the pandemic, more than 85% households faced fall in income but the billionaires became richer.

Thus, it highlights the importance of inclusive growth. This can be achieved with development of physical infrastructure, financial inclusion (eg- JAM Trinity), human development and ecological protection.

India has taken various steps in this regard like BharatNet, to bridge the digital divide, Ayushman Bharat & Judradhanush for preventive & curative healthcare etc.



This can be further improved  
with decentralised decision making &  
creating grievance redressal mechanisms  
Eg - Social auditing in MGNREGA

Thus, proactive alleviation of  
poverty is a method that leads to  
its ultimate eradication. The debate  
isn't b/w the two strategy but rather  
one is a means & the other is an  
end.

A CHAIN IS AS STRONG AS ITS  
WEAKEST LINK

Poverty is further complicated by  
the complex challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> century

Kofi Annan refers to these as

'Problems without Passports' -



climate change, cross border organised crime, human trafficking, human rights, terrorism, ethnic conflicts, etc. pandemic etc.

Each of these problems is both a cause as well as a consequence of poverty and exclusion. Thus there is a need for renewed effort to fight poverty not just w/ national policies but by leveraging multilateralism at a global scale. As held by Nelson Mandela; injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

The defining problems of our generation - COVID-19 and climate change have backtracked decades of



efforts. Pertinent examples are those of the migrant workers on foot who were invisible until their march back home, and climate refugees who remain invisible in policy making even today.

Thus inclusion of all marginalised groups is imperative in the blueprint for poverty alleviation & subsequent eradication. There is a need to sustain livelihoods so that people do not fall back in that trap.

Resilience must be built, by imparting education, skills and creating jobs. Improving food security with fortification & better mapping of



beneficiaries is the need of the hour.

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This can enable India to not only get back on track on achieving SDE by 2030 but also fulfil its long cherished dream of emerging as the Knowledge Power of the world

[ शशो धर्मा तशो जयः ॥  
Where there is justice, there is victory ]



## Section B

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What people believe prevails over the truth

In 2020, one of the worst humanitarian crises since ~~World~~ World War II surged and spread like wildfire - COVID-19. Governments, scientists, individuals, corporates remained in a state of flux as an invisible virus claimed lives, livelihoods and triggered a global lockdown. Yet US President's remarks created confusion <sup>over</sup> ~~at~~ the use of mask, despite it being recommended by doctors unanimously. Brazilian President denied the seriousness of the disease, even as thousands died. And years later, as the world grappled w/ the ramifications of the third wave,



radical protests have broken out in

Canada over mandatory vaccination

despite facing the brutality of SARS.

Was COVID-19 manufactured in a lab?

Is wearing a mask useful? Are

vaccines serving vested interests?

These questions have factual answers

backed by scientific research but

for a section of people refuses to

believe it.

In this essay, we will examine what is truth, then we will understand

what forms beliefs - based on role of

culture, big-tech, education. Thereafter

we will find ways to reconcile the

two.



## THE TRUTH SETS US FREE

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The truth can be synonymous with facts or reality. Facts can be fundamental principles Eg: the water cycle. Facts can also be empirical ie based on observation Eg: strong correlation b/w consumption of oily food and cholesterol issues.

However with the example of a map we can differentiate b/w natural facts and socially constructed ones. Physical map depicts topography - the location of Himalayas is indisputable. But political borders are a result of human interaction. Areas of <sup>Ladakh</sup> ~~Kashmir~~ appear on maps of both India & China.



Thus, this is where perception matters.

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In a tight contest, the winner is ultimately the one who convinces people to believe their version of reality.

This is also evident in court trials. The same situation can be interpreted in as many ways as there are people in it. This is why the judiciary takes the account of multiple witnesses. They all may be speaking different truths of the same situation. Thus coherence is an important aspect of truth.

Let us now try to understand how different versions of reality can exist in the form of faith, belief etc



## FAITH, BELIEF AND TRUTH

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Faith is often considered as trust in God and it largely shapes the reality of a significantly portion of the population. There are no facts to back it, yet people's belief drives them into praying, preaching, professing and practicing something that science has failed to explain.

This shows that facts, observations, empiricism have no value when people continue to believe what they feel is true. This also brings us to an undefined aspect of life - gut feeling or a sixth sense.



A lot of people rely on their inner voice. Despite all visible facts & figures. Sometimes it is proven right in hindsight and is hailed as an important aspect in determining truth. However it is not reliable.

This is why judges are trained to give decision on material facts and not their inner biases or public sentiments.

There can be cultural, political or religious. Some believe it propels good decisions while others consider it to be a recipe for disaster.

A similar concept forms the base of post modernism - lets evaluate it. 6



## INCRECULITY TOWARDS META NARRATIVES

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Post modernists reject claims of absolute truths - They believe

Universe to be in a state of chaos

and not other. Knowledge is dynamic

and provisional. Thus truth is

what the majority believes.

Foucault gives the example of

heterosexuality being "normal". Thus

they marginalise the homosexuals

of dominate with their versions of truth.

This can also be explained with

laws around marital rape. Feminists

believe lack of adequate representation

of women leads to laws that are



unfavourable towards them. In India

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only 14% legislators are women. Thus

there is a lack of women perspective

in laws. Eg - Initial imposition of tax on sanitary pads.

Thus post modernists recommend

deconstruction of facts. This can help

in a thorough analysis of notions

or dictated truths. It also needs

developing curiosity from formative

years.

This becomes especially true with the advent of Big Tech &

social media. One can even go to

the extent of say that not only has

it distorted our existing reality but

also created a new one - VIRTUAL.



## Information, Information, EVERYWHERE!

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The present generation is a victim of not the lack of resources but a flood of it. Vested interests have used this to spread misinformation and commence disinformation campaigns.

This has led to grave social problems like mob lynching on unverified rumors. It also fuels hate. And all of this spreads like wildfire, thanks to instant communication.

It also gives disproportionate powers to few firms who decide what people see with their algorithms. It can also threaten national security as seen in the



meddling in US elections in case of  
Cambridge Analytica.

Thus, we live in a world where we see, what they want us to see. This largely shapes our notions of reality. It has sadly made disorder the order of the day.

It has pushed us towards a "post truth" society. Despite several scientific reports on climate change (eg IPCC Special Reports), a portion of society still denies it. This is also prevalent in distortion of history.



Thus, in conclusion we can say that it is imperative to reconcile science and popular belief. Otherwise there will be infinite versions of truth. While people must be allowed to question & analyse facts, conclusions are possible only with proper inclusion & representation and of all stakeholders.

As held by Henry Ford

'Coming Together is Beginning

Keeping Together is Progress

Working Together is Success'