

TEST CODE : 3 2 0 3 2

FIAS – 2020 – Essay Test #2

ForumIAS

ACADEMY

GENERAL STUDIES

Name Of Candidate

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Date:

18/07/20

Time Allowed: Three Hours

Maximum Marks: 250

INDEX TABLE			INSTRUCTION	
Q. No.	Max. Marks	Marks Obtained	<p>1. Do furnish the appropriate details in the answer sheet (viz. Name, Email, Roll No, Mobile).</p> <p>2. There are TWO Sections. Each Section has TWO topics printed in English and Hindi. You have to write on 1 topic from Each part.</p> <p>3. One question in each part is compulsory.</p> <p>4. The number of marks carried by a question/part is indicated against it.</p> <p>5. 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>6. Word limit in questions, if specified, should be adhered to.</p> <p>7. Any page or portion of the page left blank in the Question-Cum Answer Booklet must be clearly Struck off.</p>	
Q.1				
Q.2				
Total Marks:				
Remarks:				
Start Time 2 pm		End Time 5 pm		
Mode Of Examination :		Online <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Offline <input type="checkbox"/>		
ECN CODE:		Evaluation Date:		

2nd Floor, IAPL House, #19, Pusa Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi – 110005

MARKING SCHEME

Parameter/Criteria	Aspects Considered	Total Marks	Essay 1	Essay 2
Basic Format	Introduction + Conclusion	10		
	Body	15		
Content	Data/Facts/Interpretation/Analysis	25		
Organisation	Flow of ideas/ Absence of Deviation from the topic	25		
Language Skills	Punctuation/Grammar/Sentence Formation/Spellings	25		
Examiner's Discretion	Perception/ Innovation/ Engaging	25		

Parameters	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor
Coherence				
Language				
Handwriting				
Pre-writing				

Very Good	Good	Average
120 and above	100-120	Below 100



SECTION - A

1. Women empowerment is essential for economic and sustainable development.
2. New India without a 'new woman' is a myth.

In 1931, Mahatma Gandhi arrived in London for the second Round Table conference. During his stay, he also met the fifty Indian undergraduates studying at Oxford University. All fifty students turned up, the women in their resplendent sarees. The first question Gandhi was asked was: "what will be the future of women in India?"

To this Gandhi replied: In Independent India, women will be free and equal to men, if not superior.

Gandhiji understood what women empowerment meant.

Like Mao Zedong once said, "women hold up half the

sky", Gandhiji too envisaged an India where women are free, equal, empowered individuals with agency, dignity and autonomy.

This ideal of women empowerment came to be valued for both its intrinsic and instrumental value.

The "promise of preamble" was justice, equality, liberty and fraternity to ensure women can become full individuals in a free society.

whereas, through specific provisions like Right to equality (Article 14), Right against discrimination (Article 15), Universal Adult Franchise (Article 326), women empowerment was secured as an "ideal for eternity".

And, for its instrumental goals of economic development and sustainable development, women empowerment has been mainstreamed and pursued through our legislative architecture. For, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar left us a benchmark in saying: "I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress of its women".

women Empowerment: Unpacking the Idea

Having established that women empowerment has been one of the paramount dreams of the Indian Republic, what will it mean, one may ask?

Amartya Sen and Jean Drèze in an "Uncertain Glory" and "The Country of First Boys" break it down for us. It would mean, women are no more "missing"; not aborted through sex selective abortions, nor "unwanted" which is measured through sex ratio of the last child. The skewed sex ratio of last child reflects

a cultural ideal of having at least one son in family.

Women empowerment would further mean, women get equal education, health and economic resources, and they can fully participate in economic activities or political or social activities without barriers.

The next question to ask is, how can this pursuit also ensure we achieve dreams of a \$5 trillion economy and development which "leaves no one behind"?

Women Empowerment and Economic Development: what is the link?

Former IMF Chief Christine Lagarde

had famously noted that if we achieve gender equality in economic participation, India's GDP will rise by 27%. In a post-COVID era, when we expect near zero, or negative growth rate, women's participation in economy will become key to revive the economic spirits of Indian economy. ANIMAL

If we zoom in, to assess the impact of gender diversity on individual corporations, women empowerment is the answer for success here too. According to a study by International Journal of Business Governance and Ethics, gender equity

improves performance of companies by 15% vis-a-vis those who score low on that front.

It also improves shareholder value and enhances trust.

After all, it's famously said that "if Lehman Brothers were a little more Lehman Sisters, the tragedy of 2008 financial crisis would be much less" (Christine Lagarde)

Further, an improved female labour force participation rate (FLFP) can help improve social welfare and secure gains of economic growth. How one may ask?

Labour Bureau data suggests while FLFP is only 16% in services, in critical sectors like

Education, Health etc. it is disproportionately higher. It is thus no surprise that at the forefront of the battle with COVID-19 are the 9 lakh ASHA workers.

One final dimension for purposes of this essay is the relationship between women empowerment and agricultural growth. With higher migration rates of men, the face of agriculture today are women. Though one-third of the agricultural labour force, they own only 13% of land.

However, Development Economist BINA AGARWAL in her famous

book "A FIELD of one's own" has evidentially proved that women ownership of land helps break the vicious poverty trap and has intergenerational economic and social benefits for children.

Women Empowerment and Sustainable Development: leaving no one behind

Having established how women empowerment creates and sustains economic development, it is pertinent to ask, how does it help attain the 17 goals of sustainable development? How does a singular ideal ensure: "no one is left behind"

Women empowerment, according to Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo in "Poor Economics" ensures improved life outcomes for all in the family.

In education for example, the ASER report by N40 Pratham proves that women with higher levels of education positively impact the early childhood care and schooling outcomes for children.

On the other hand, the first ever comprehensive Nutrition survey proves that higher education level of women are linked with diversity in diet of children and reduced consequence of child stunting and wasting.

Similarly, improved bargaining power of women in households improves productive investments like transition to clean energy sources.

As women get empowered, and participate more in economy, politics and business, the degree and quality of women representation in politics and governance shall also increase. This can create a sustainable society that addresses needs of all gender - for example through gender budgeting.

Already 1.2 million out of 3 million Panchayat leaders are women, while 14% of women Sabha members are the face of an empowered new Indian women.

The demonstration effect of their public visibility shall lead to reduced violence, fulfilling Goal 16 of SDGs: peaceful and inclusive society.

When women are empowered, nature finds its best conservers. From Chipko movement to the Stork sisters of North-East. Women have led the crusade against unbridled exploitation of nature.

And over and above everything women empowerment in reducing inequalities and fulfilling Goal 10 of SDGs is the primary goal of any civilised society that dreams of a sustainable tomorrow.

Women Empowerment: CRISIS and Response

Notwithstanding the stated positive relationships, we do face a crisis at hand. With 63 million missing women, 21 million unwanted girls (Economic Survey), 614 million anaemic women, MMR rate of 122/1 lakh (sample registration survey 2015-17) and only one in 6 board members in Indian corporates, we have a major structural challenges.

These need to be bridged by Attitudinal changes, Policy nudges, for example Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao or Amma VODI scheme - incentivising women to take charge and improve

educational outcomes. Female health must be prioritised through Anganwadi and nutritional interventions. A system of reservation in employment can also help improve FLFP. It is thus imperative, as Kofi Annan once noted to treat women empowerment as more than a goal, ^{rather} it is the predeterminant for all development.

Feedback

Feedback to be provided in terms of (1) Introduction (2) Sentence Constructions (3) Paragraph Formation (4) Legibility (5) Deviation from Topic (6) Coverage of dimensions (7) Simplicity / ease of reading



SECTION - B

1. Man's goodness is a flame that can be hidden but never extinguished.
2. Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful.

In the midst of the war at Kurukshetra between the Kauravas and Pandavas, Yudhishtira, the upholder of Dharma resorted to treachery. He says a purported lie: "Ashuathama is dead" to hurt Dronacharya and weaken the Kauravas. Though he apparently says, Ashuathama the elephant, this was an act of treachery. Nevertheless, he was given a seat in heaven and is remembered today as the "king who weeped for his subjects".

During the war, his goodness was a flame hidden but it never

got extinguished. After the war, he served the subjects of Hastinapur, established law, order and prosperity for over thirty years.

much like Ashoka, the Mauryan king whose quest for power and ambitions to conquer distant lands hid his flame of goodness. But was it extinguished?

History offers a resounding no for an answer. Ashoka, driven by remorse found the hidden flame of goodness, established a state based on ethics of "Dhamma": good conduct and welfare of all. The instrument of expansion

transitioned from Bherighosha (conquest by war and expansion) to Dharmaghosha (conquest by Dhamma)

Much like these two kings of different era, individuals and societies also find their flames of goodness hidden or weakened by metaphorical forces of wind, rain or thunder. However, that which is essential, inseparable and inalienable can not be extinguished.

The Flame of man's goodness

But, one may ask - how do we know man is good?

The English philosopher John Locke has an answer.

Locke believed man has reason that makes him pursue his own good and that of the society. His goodness guides man to not harm others in respect to "life, liberty, property".

This is in contrast to the view of another English Philosopher Thomas Hobbes who believed man was essentially selfish and evil, and thus if left to himself, human life would be "nasty, poor, brutish and short".
Who was correct, Hobbes or Locke? What does history tell us?

A WALK THROUGH HISTORY:
GAME OF HIDE AND SEEK?

History is replete with the theme

of hide and seek, that human goodness has played with the universe. A crisis of evil has given way to rise of goodness, only to descend back to an age of evil.

In the ethical crisis of later Vedic societies, where inequalities and discrimination were at a rise - the flame of goodness was hidden. Rituals took precedence, women and shudra were denied equality. An era of goodness followed with śramana traditions of Buddhism and Jainism which emphasised above all right conduct and action. Goodness of man was not extinguished, societies like that of magadha prospered, women

and Shudras were restored their dignity.

Similarly, in medieval India, when the flame of goodness was hidden behind the veil of religious disharmony and unspeakable inequality, Bhakti saints like Kabir, Nanak, Ravidas, reinvigorated the flame of goodness through their songs. Kabir thus sang: "Sakal hans mein Ram Viraje", "Ghat ghat mein panchni bolta hain" meaning, In each of us is the same voice of God, none different, none high, none low.

It is the marvel of this goodness, that when as societies we end

up on a wrong path and the flame of societal well-being is weakened, it jolts us all back from sleep. For example - while the Industrial Revolution brought gains of improved productivity and growth it also took the country on path of poverty and inequalities. If the flame of human goodness would have been extinguished, we would never have seen a society wide demand for improved working conditions. The Chartist movement that brought equitable political representation for all would not have followed the inequities of Industrial revolution.

THE HIDDEN FLAMES OF GOODNESS: WHAT ABOUT TODAY?

Having taken a brief walk of history, the question is, are the flames of goodness burning bright today? Or are they dimmed by human greed and selfishness?

If we look around us, ~~our~~ our society is fractured on lines of caste, class, gender, race.

In USA, George Floyd a black man suffers custodial death at the hands of a police officer. In a Saudi Arabia embassy a renowned journalist Jamal Khashoggi is brutally murdered. A woman in Telangana is raped and burnt to death.

and a little girl in Kathua, Jammu and Kashmir suffers brutality of similar kind. And under a nation-wide lockdown, migrants walk back thousands of kilometres home, sixteen of them decimated under a goods train. Where is goodness, one may ask? of individuals, society, companies and government?

The flames of goodness also seems to be dimmed, when politics serves the goal of a few powerful individuals over the society. Howe-trading to undermine democratic governments, like in Rajasthan today or the collapse of decency in political dialogue demands a

question: Is it goodness that terms some people "termites", is it human goodness that makes electoral promises during campaigns but never delivers?

If politics and society were not so saddening case, a look at how our companies and economies function will convince us that the flame of goodness has dimmed. Whether it is the Harshad Mehta scam, Satyam Computers scam, the fall of Lehman Brothers or the massive PNB scam, when individuals pursued selfish evil goals of self-aggrandisement, the flame of goodness was undermined deeply for the entire society.

Similarly, our neglect of human goodness have led us to the era of fourth mass extinction, where the Paradise of Biodiversity is soon becoming "Paradise lost". According to a UN report, by the end of 2100, 60% fishes will be lost and irreversible losses in biodiversity will follow.

Individuals thus have always been at the centre of the universe, their goodness have established a peaceful world, but when that flame dims: we have a crisis of magnanimous proportion.

Reinvigorating the flame of Goodness

In a letter that Rabindranath Tagore wrote to Romain Rolland

he writes: The cloud may hide the sun, but it cannot extinguish it like the sun, human ^{days} goodness has to shine back again. How do we do this?

Our societies, need to have a free flow of ideas, love and harmony, what Dr. B. R. Ambedkar called social Endosmosis. It can sometimes take a movement like #Blacklives-matter or #metoo and sometimes constitutional safeguards like Right to equality, and against discrimination (Article 14 and 15). Human goodness can only flourish in such a society.

The ethical crisis which undermines human goodness needs to be

rectified by socialisation that
in the words of Jean Jacques
Rousseau (Emile) educates children
"to expand their circle of concern."
when a child can empathise
with a poor person, a differently
abled person, with nature and
wildlife, she/he is bound to be
good.

Further sometimes we need
Institutions that can hold the
flame of goodness shining
bright. For example EVC, CAB,
CBI and instruments like
RTI, Social Audits and Citizens'
Charters create a culture where
human goodness rather than
selfishness and corruption ^{one where}
flourishes.

Finally, what better a pole star to guide the goodness in us, than our civilisational culture, ^{shaped by} of Buddha, Mahavira, Akbar, Nanak, Kabir and above all the Indian Constitution. Bhupen Hazarika in song "Manuher Manuher Babe" sums up the necessity of goodness for us:

"If man will not think of man, who will dear friend? If we repeat the mistakes of history, how will we progress?"

Feedback

Feedback to be provided in terms of (1) Introduction (2) Sentence Constructions (3) Paragraph Formation (4) Legibility (5) Deviation from Topic (6) Coverage of dimensions (7) Simplicity / ease of reading

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