TEST CODE	8	1	0	4	0	1		**JATF 2025**

Time Allowed : 3 Hours समय : 3 घंटे	**↗ Forum IAS**	Maximum Marks : 250 अधिकतम अंक : 250

ESSAY / निबंध

Name Of Candidate परीक्षार्थी का नाम	ABHISHEK KUMAR JHA		
Roll No./अनुक्रमांक	1910181272	Medium/माध्यम	English ☑ हिंदी ☐
Center Code/परीक्षा केंद्र	1900	Date/दिनांक	09/07/2025

*Center Code : For Online – 1900 /Delhi : Karol bagh – 1901, ORN - 1902, Mukharji Nagar - 1903 / Patna : Boring Rd. – 2001 /Hyderabad : Jawahar Nagar - 2101

INDEX TABLE / अनुक्रमणिका		
Q. No. प्र.सं.	Max. Marks अधिकतम अंक	Marks Obtained प्राप्तांक
Q.1		
Q.2		
Total Marks/कुल अंक		
Remarks/टिप्पणी :		

INSTRUCTION / अनुदेश

1. Please do furnish Name, Email, Roll No and Mobile in the answer sheet.
कृपया उत्तर–पुस्तिका में नाम, ईमेल, रोल नंबर और मोबाइल नंबर भरें।

2. Write **two** essays, choosing **one** topic from each of the following Section A and B in about 1000 - 1200 words each.
खण्ड A व B प्रत्येक में से एक विषय चुनकर दो निबंध लिखिए, जो प्रत्येक लगभग 1000 – 1200 शब्दों का हो।

3. The number of marks carried by a question/part is indicated against it.
एक प्रश्न / भाग द्वारा किए गए अंकों की संख्या इसके सामने इंगित की गई है।

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.
उत्तर प्रवेश पत्र में अधिकृत माध्यम में लिखे जाने चाहिए, जो कि दिए गए स्थान में इस प्रश्न–सह–उत्तर (क्यूसीए) पुस्तिका के कवर पर स्पष्ट रूप से लिखा जाना चाहिए।

5. Word limit in questions, if specified, should be adhered to.
प्रश्नों में शब्द सीमा, यदि निर्दिष्ट हो, का पालन किया जाना चाहिए।

6. Any page or portion of the page left blank in the Question-Cum Answer Booklet must be clearly Struck off.
प्रश्न–सह–उत्तर पुस्तिका में खाली छोड़ा गया कोई भी पृष्ठ या पृष्ठ का भाग स्पष्ट रूप से काट दिया जाना चाहिए।

For Student Only / केवल परीक्षार्थी प्रयोग हेतु

Start Time/प्रारंभ करने का समय : 1740	End Time/समाप्त करने का समय : 2100
Mode Of Examination/ परीक्षा की विधि :	Online/ऑनलाइन ☑ Offline/ऑफलाइन ☐

For Office Use Only / केवल कार्यालय प्रयोग हेतु

ECN CODE/ ईसीएन कोड :	EG/ईजी : ① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Evaluation Date/ मूल्यांकन तिथि :

MARKING SCHEME

Parameter/ criteria	Aspects Considered	Marks Allotted	Essay 1	Essay 2
Basic Format	Introduction	10		
	Body	15		
	Conclusion	10		
Content	Topic interpretation	10		
	Quotations and ideas	10		
	Analytical skills	10		
Organization	Flow of ideas	10		
	Absence of deviation	10		
	Ease of reading	10		
Language skills	Language and sentence construction	10		
	Grammar and spelling	10		
Examiner's discretion	perception/ innovation/ engaging	10		

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

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प्रश्न संख्या
(Question No.)

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'The glass ceiling is not invisible, it is just too high for many to see'.

Laxmi is a daughter, one of many of a rural landless labourer. She studies in the local government school. Upon reading the story of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam in her course-work, she was inspired. It became her dream to become a space scientist, and contribute to national progress. But fate had other ~~things pl~~ plans, and she was married off at the age of 16.

This tale is similar to life stories of millions of young girls in our country. Owing to their backgrounds, and deprivations, they must give up on their ~~d~~ dreams even before knowing what barriers lie ahead on the path. This is because for them, the barriers are too far ahead to see, as even their basic aspirations are not met. It is there-

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fore, truly held that most are unable to see the glass ceiling as it is too high for them, even though it might not be invisible.

Glass ceiling refers to the upper limit to which persons from particular backgrounds and sections can rise in an organization or setup. They are unable to rise further than this ceiling. In contemporary times, the ceiling is not exactly invisible. Most of the people are aware about the limits imposed by it. But, not many of the deprived people, rising even as high so as to understand & be exactly aware of the limits imposed on them is not possible. The structure of the system remain such that the gap between one's rise and the ceiling is seldom bridged - ingraining deprivations deeper.

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In this context, it is relevant to examine the reasons contributing to this phenomena, and understand how it manifests across the world.

One of the important & foremost contributing factors is the prevailing mindset of the society. Patriarchal views and associated attitudes limit the avenues of growth, especially for women. Such thinking is prevalent in our society. A pertinent example of restrictions on women is seen in reduction of female labour force participation rate post marriage (NFHS 5). This is due to thinking that 'married women must not work'. Such attitude not only causes loss of economic growth, but hampers rise of women too.

In a similar manner, historical injusti-

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...ces towards sections of society limit their reach to positions of power. Such Historical factors as racial discrimination, untouchability have led to social backwardness in contemporary times. This limit the scope of equality of opportunity for them. Black & 'African-Americans' in USA have ~~been~~ faced such barriers till recent times. Even today, less than 1% of American CEOs are Blacks, as most black face barriers of backwardness.

Norms of society also reinforce the gap between groups of people and their ability to view and understand limits on their rise. They are justified in the name of traditions, and folkways which must not be tampered with.

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The concentration of power in the hand of the 'church' and clergy in medieval Europe explains this reason. In such societies, the 'third estate' — the common man could not ~~dare~~ dream of power. For him, rise of ambition was subdued even before he could explore further.

Similar phenomenon in modern times is seen in the glaring wealth and income inequality in the world. The poor in such a system lack equality of opportunity. In India, top 10% people own >50% of wealth, revealing wide gap between have & have nots — directly impacting their ability to rise. If we view the schooling system, which prepares children for the future, the quality of government schools barely match the mediocre private schools. Thus, the children

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of the rich have greater opportunities.

Inequality in economic realm is one facet, & in contemporary India, political deprivation is another. For certain sections, it means muffling of their voices and inability to rise to top of their profession. The culture of 'Pradhan-Pati' is prevalent in rural India. The husband acting as village head in place of 'real' head - the wife reduces political grip & ability to rise of the women. A similar example that there are only ~15% women MPs in 18ᵗʰ Lok Sabha. Thus, political deprivation of women hinders their progress in the political domain too.

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In organization and institutions, there have also been instances of discriminatory behaviour. This is meant to keep certain sections at the lowest rungs - capping their growth capabilities. Even if certain section are elevated to higher rungs, it is only as scapegoats. This tends to reinforce stereotyping regarding such groups. In the present context, less than 5% of top executives of the world's fortune 500 are women. This is in part due to such discriminatory attitudes.

An attempt to cap the potential of groups of people is also seen in categorisation of certain employments as suitable to those groups. For example Pink collar jobs for women ♥ is generally pronounced.

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However, such 'neo-racism' or a categorisation also harms equality of opportunity and growth potential across the sectors. This is a means to enforce caps on the ability to rise of certain groups.

Now, critics may argue that the ceilings are indeed invisible, and not just high. It might be said that anyone who dares to dream might not also see and breach it, however high they rise. But as already expounded, factors pulling one back hamper the opportunity to rise itself. There are numerous examples of those having ample opportunities not just rising high, but also seeing & shattering the ceiling. Indira Gandhi, in those patriarchal times, became 'Durga' due to such opportunities and rose

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beyond the limits.

There can be another view that such inequalities of opportunity are part of growth story. Many might argue that this is how competition works, that some are left behind. But, if there is no level playing ground in the beginning itself, how can it be called a fair competition? ~~then~~ For example, In India, more than 50% of women are anemic. How can they compete with others, when they are so health deprived? They will surely fall behind.

In view of these arguments, it is important to consider ways to increase opportunities, and remove glass ceilings for ~~po~~ people. However, there are challenges which hamper this journey.

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There is great digital divide in the society, which increases knowledge gap and access to opportunities. This furthers the deprivation of have-nots. Such divide is visible both in digital literacy — less than 10% of rural population digitally literate, and digital infrastructure — less than 45% population have access to smartphones.

Gender gap is also glaring, and doesn't seem to be reducing. In 2025, India has ranked 131/159 in Global Gender Gap Index. This gap needs to be addressed through better health — Ayushman Bharat Yojana; Education — National Education policy; and Entrepreneurship

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and credit access to women — through PM MUDRA, SHG – Bank linkage, and DAY – NRLM.

There is a challenge of increasing intolerance across the world. It is manifested in xenophobic attitudes, racism and gender-wars. The need is to improve equity-based hiring, as well as greater social democracy to restore acceptance.

AI is also a great barrier, which may cause deprivation of millions. This could be due to job losses, impersona-tion, frauds etc. The need is for better regulations and ethical AI putting human values at the core.

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Thus, deprivations and social-economic background guide the inability rise of old many groups to portions of influence. It is evident through inequality in opportunity in various domains. The need is to tackle the challenge of persistent inequality and rising technologies to ensure an inclusive and equitable world.

Our dream should be a world where Gandhi's Talisman is adhered to, such that no Laxmi must face barriers to achieving her dreams.

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"Judge a man by his questions, rather than his answers"

This is the battlefield of Kurukshetra. The mighty armies of Pandavas and Kauravas are facing each other. But the great warrior, Arjuna has only one answer for Krishna — that he will not pick weapons to kill his own kins.

His thought provokes him to ask questions to Lord Krishna. What should he do? Why should he fight? What is the need? These questions of the most fundamental nature were unfolded in front of the armies. And it were these questions that led to the exposition of 'The Bhagavad Gita' — reflecting on the most basic of human dilemmas. True, it were Arjuna's great questions the remain the lighthouse in the Gita.

The given topic asks one to judge not on the basis of one's answers, but their question. It is because questions reflect a person's innermost thoughts - which are shielded from the external world. while answers are a demonstrable, kinetic thing visible to one and all. In this sense, question ions are ~~too~~ fundamental & not answers.

The nature of questions are also a mirror to the value possessed by an individual. They are a view into the principles a man holds. while answers are more products of circumstances and reality. To understand the ideals of a person, their dreams and vision, ~~there~~ ~~an~~ and the resultant path chosen, questions are the most valuable tool.

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Judge by questions, rather than answers

The questions asked by an individual are reflection of the forces shaping him/her. Answers are a measure of how he adheres to them. Righteous and pure forces lead a person to greatness and good work, as such an individual is in quest for something true.

MK Gandhi in his autobiography reflects this argument. Upon stealing once during his childhood, he felt guilt. He asked the question— Is it the correct thing to do? His internal forces did not allow. He apologized to his brother and faced punishment. This made him vow never to steal. It became a foundation of his philosophy of Truth.

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Questions also stem from curiosity. ~~A From~~ Such curiosity is the basis of science and of rationality. If the question are right, the right results appear. Even while facing failure, a scientist asks 'what could be done better?'. This is a quality question, and basis of human development of technology and scientific endeavour.

Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, the 'Missile Man of India' faced multiple setbacks in the development of missile technology. His 'Nandi' copter also failed miserably. But it were his questions- of what needs to be done, and what needs to get better - that made him great. This endeavour pioneered missile program of ~~India~~ your

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Question posed by people are also determinants of social transformation. This is because questions challenge the existing inequities and practices. Questions are also raised to reason. As a result of these, social transformation is nudged.

Saint Kabir lived in the time-s of extreme religious turbulence and orthodoxy. Even though he was a resident of contemporary society, his question revealed deep inequalities and desire for transformation. His words are even today sung as they reflect today's situation as well. Thus, his questioning of orthodoxy paved way for social reform.

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Even in the ethical sphere, questions of man are critical. Ethics, deals with the everlasting question of 'what is right?'. What the answer is. is immaterial. This question itself acts as a check against self. It also guides towards 'rightness, and prevents violation of basic human values.

A pertinent debate in ethics is that of 'means versus ends'. Some believe that 'means justify ends', while others opine that 'ends justify means'. Both the schools are trying to answer "what is the Right thing to do?". — the answers differ but the importance of question persists.

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Having argued thus far, on why a man should be judged by his questions, rather than answers, understanding the other side is also important:

Some critics may argue that one may get the right answers from asking wrong questions. This is possible. Many scientific discoveries and inventions are attributed to such favourable accidents. An example of this is the discovery of penicillin.

However, this might not always be true. If one is not clear on questions before reaching answers, the results may be devastating. For example, the question on war-time use of

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nuclear technology was not asked prior to it development. The answer was vaporisation of 2 cities on Earth. Thus, clarity on questions might not be sufficient but it is essential.

Another argument could be that answers reflect the lived reality of individuals. The lived reality is what one perceives, feels and perform one activities in. Thus, answers are also important to judge.

While it is true that lived reality is because of answer devised by man, the question of 'how to live' is a result of ideal world, the world of questions. One may have many tools

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at their disposal, but to benefit from them, questions about their purpose and utility must be asked.

This can be seen in the context of materialism in our times. While people are gaining material things, they are losing the vision of who they themselves are. Such a people confuse 'who we are' with 'what we have'. Thus, for long term peaceful living, and sustainable life, Questions are far more pertinent than the answers we currently have.

In context of this, the present society and human discourse faces multiple challenge pertaining to asking questions. It is relevant to

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understand these.

The first major challenge is the decrease in quality of questions asked by man. This is due to disinterest in the surrounding world & quest for self arising from proliferation of technology. It has made us believe that since we have all the answers to our needs, we do not need to ask questions.

Division in society at multiple levels and segments also deter the posing of questions of common interest, and larger welfare. Such divisions also cause arguments over prevailing answers, but the focus on the core question is diluted.

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☒ One can glance at the state of employment in the country to understand this. While there are arguments over how to best provide jobs, there is very less focus on questioning the 'employability' of graduates.

There is also increased repression, which is stifling the natural right to ask questions. This is visible in the discourse on Graza war, where even the loss of more than 60,000 lives have not led humanity to the right questions. And those who ask them face repression.

Additionally, questions are progressively reflecting vested interests. This causes lead to particanship, even in matters of global importance. A

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pertinent example would be the question on Terrorism. Terrorists harm people all over the world, still the powers-that-be engage in the game of 'Good Terrorism - Bad Terrorism.'

As argued and outlined over this essay, questions are the reflection of deepest quest of man. Questions have been at the core of human endeavour and clarity on questions is needed for right answers. ~~Through~~

As Arjuna, through right questions gained the deepest understanding, so must the world focus on the right questions in face of challenges.