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Q1.

4 'In struggling with misfortune lies the true proof of virtue'

Young Bhimrao was excited to learn new subjects in School. However he was made to sit outside class as 'Sanskrit' was not meant for children from Dalit class. Although, undettered by such instances, he pursued his law degree

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from London and came back to practise as Barrister in Mumbai.

Still even after being more qualified, no one approached him. He was made to drink water from seperate pot. Under such series of misfortune, he excelled with determination, courage and wisdom to became one of most learned man in South Asia.

He was Dr. BR Ambedkar, the father of Indian Constitution who reversed the centuries of cycle of atrocities on dalits with his visionary reforms. Thus proving age old adage, 'In struggling with misfortune lies true proof of virtue'

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Similarly, the story of our life is a tale of continuous journey of ups & down. The 'cycle of time' throws several challenges at us in form of 'misfortunes'. Ronald Dworkin in his book 'Sovereign Virtue' calls such misfortunes as 'brute luck'.

It is brute as it is not in our hand. It leads to challenges on their own and not as result of our actions. A girl born in patriarchal society or dalit in caste ridden society face such 'brute luck'. It can be natural as well as seen with people born with disabilities

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These 'misfortunes' makes our personal and professional lives full of challenges. In challenge, emerge struggle as one tries to navigate these choppy waters of misfortune. Whether it was Jyotiba Phule or Martin Luther King Jr., the misfortunes of life leads to a journey full of struggles.

Virtues: The award of Struggle

'Diamond is a chunk of coal that did well in pressure'. Such is a person who rise through misfortune. In this battle over memory and skill sets are over 'virtues'. Virtue are

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moral values that are good or positive in nature. Lincoln once said, 'If you want to test a man's character, give him power'. Our true character emerges when we are faced with misfortunes of life.

The choice between being resilient i.e. getting up after beaten like Rosa Parks did when pushed from her seat or quitting because conditions are tough describe our virtue. To choose the path of honesty when a person is in huge debt, family's health crisis and reject corruption shows his integrity.

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The injustices of life in forms of misfortune determine our ethics. To still choose deontological approach and focusing on just means to achieve success lies true proof of existence of virtue.

The path to struggle with Misfortunes

'If you think you'll lose, you've lost,
For out in the world you'll find
Success begins with a fellow's will-
It's all in the state of mind

- poem by Walter Wintle

The 'Mental Fortitude' defines your ability to bounce back and stand strong in face of adversity. Nelson

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Mandela despite being jailed for 27 years kept his composure & liberate Africa from 'Apartheid'.

Niccolo Machiavelli in his book 'The Prince' defines misfortune as inevitable and guides king to always remain ready and prepare to his best as bad luck can strike any time.

The story of Japan's success in bouncing back after various Earthquakes & Tsunamis shows how being prepared allowed them to avoid misfortune.

Further as Zig Ziglar said, 'It is attitude & not aptitude, that determines a person's altitude'. Thus a positive and

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determined attitude turns tides of adversity into waves of prosperity. Abraham Lincoln despite losing many times kept on contesting elections to finally become one of greatest president of United States showing his resilient attitude.

Similarly as Aristotle held 'Knowledge is Virtue', a person with good knowledge and wisdom will strategise to navigate through darkness of misfortune. Thomas Edison despite failing 1800 times continued with courage & conviction to pursue his goal, thus rather than blaming on misfortune, he believed in himself and light up the whole world.

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The present scenario

This learning of path to struggle will help us insulate from sudden shocks in life. In today's world of Artificial Intelligence, jobs are being replaced. Rather than blaming on AI, one needs to upskill themself.

Similarly Covid-19 shock led to people losing near ones, job loss and health issues. These misfortunes triggered by 'act of god' requires strong 'virtue' to manage the struggles

Even in International

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arena the emerging challenges like climate change can't be just dealt by blaming it on 'misfortune of nature'. We as global citizens need to come together to handle these 'problems without passports'. The 'activist is not the person who says river is dirty, but one who cleans the river'.

To sum up in this essay we learnt about 'fortune' leading to changes in life and often it is in terms of 'misfortune' beginning a life long struggle. But as 'success is not a destination but a journey', we

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emerge through these struggles was 'virtues' existing in us.

Thus just like Dr. B.R Ambedkar fought with all misfortune of his life, we need to take our 'destiny in our control' and become victorious. To conclude these lines from Poem 'Invictus' by 'William Ernest Henley' highlight the journey against misfortune.

'It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishment the scroll
I am the master of my fate
I am the captain of my soul'

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Q2.

8 'We can not despair of humanity, since we ourselves are human beings'

'30 children went missing in last month in Patna!', read the initial lines of a column by this journalist. He reported regularly on human trafficking rackets, child labor and other issues highlighting the nexus between politicians, police, mafia

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in promoting these crimes. When 'Rakshak become Bhakshak' (protector turn exploiters) the faith in humanity disappears.

This journalist however went on to become a leading child rights activist, initiating 'Bachpan Bachao Andolan', liberating over 10 million child labors, forcing implementing laws by government for Child Labor. He is 'Kailash Satyarthi', the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize winner.

He shows that 'we can not despair of humanity, since we ourselves are human beings. In this essay we will look at why we despair humanity?, why we can't keep

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doing so as we are human beings, what if we fail to preserve humanity and its relevance in present time.

Darkness of Humanity

Lets begin by understanding reasons behind despairing humanity. If we look around us crimes against women are increasing. The rapes of 'Kuki Women' shook the soul of our nation. Somebody video of Dalit Man being peed on or people watching while a girl was murdered on streets in Delhi, makes us feel hopless of any redemption of humanity.

In Politics, criminals getting

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elected have 3 times more chances as compared to candidate with clean record as per ADR. Ramchandra Guha in 'The Unquiet Woods' (Book) says 'Dead rivers, vanished forests & displaced tribals is what we see 90 years after Chipko.' highlighting the violence on nature by humanity.

Thus whether it was death of George Floyd in US or Nahel M in France at hands of 'police', the 'institution' to save humans; the crimes against humanity leads to people being dejected and alienation from making efforts to improve situation at ground.

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Human Being: the beacon of hope

Despite the evils of humanity, it is us who are the change agent. In the movie Shawshank Redemption, Ellis says to Andy, 'Hope is a dangerous thing. It drives a person insane'. Andy replies, 'Fear makes a person prisoner, while hope sets you free'.

This 'hope' is what made Mahatma Gandhi fight the evils of humanity in British India. He advocated 'non-violence', 'satyagraha', 'sarvodaya', 'rejecting untouchability', 'tolerance' to unite the whole nation and rekindle the lights of humanity.

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The evils that exist in society is due to us not understanding true meaning of being human. Life being a long journey from being human to being humane, a true human being will never despair of humanity.

Just like Mother Teresa treated patients with leprosy and dedicated her life for humanity, we need to participate in social activism. People like Bezwada Wilson who made government ban 'Manual Scavenging' shows that being despair of evil practices of humanity is not required but rather one should become part of solution.

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We can not sit hoping that god will improve everything as maybe he is counting upon you to bring change. As human beings realising our true potential will make us this beacon of hope. Does this mean if we try to reform humanity, success is guaranteed?

It's okay to fail sometimes

The path to bringing reform is full of obstacle and failures are inevitable. However they need to be treated as stepping stones to success and achieving our goals.

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'The woods are lovely, dark and deep
But I have promises to keep
And miles to go before I sleep
And miles to go before I sleep'

These lines by Robert Frost shows that in our struggle to bring changes there will be lot of pushback but what matters is continuous pursuit of keeping alive humanity.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy in early 19th century fought against evil of 'Sati Practice'. He felt the pushback by our community in name of interfering with religion. However being resolute, undeterred by anything, he was successful in abolishing Sati.

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Everything changes but change itself. Change is the rule of life, thus humanity will reform over time and through bad practices, bad times, a bright future will emerge.

The need of the hour

To reform our present, a multidimensional approach is required. People as pointed by Hannah Arendt, need to participate in political affairs and hold government accountable to prevent humanity from darkness of Totalitarianism regimes.

Speaking out against

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social injustices starting from home to university to offices will remove the evils of gender, racial and caste discrimination.

From masking water and electricity we need to make people aware to prevent catastrophe of climate change which threatens whole humanity. From being materialistic and hedonistic our values should be based on welfare of society to save humanity.

To sum up we saw that how humanity can seem depressing when we just look for evils around us. However as examples of

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Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela, Begnada Wilson and others show a single person is enough to destruct the prevailing societal evils.

This optimism as shown by 'Kailash Satyarthi' should be imbibed in each one of us. These lines by 'Edward Hale' shows importance of realising our potential as human being

'I AM ONLY ONE,
But still I am One
I cannot do everything
But I can do something
And because I cannot do everything
I will not refuse to ~~not~~ do
Something I can Do'