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खण्ड–A / Section–A

Q.1 Reason has always existed, but not always in a reasonable form.
तर्क सदैव अस्तित्व में रहा है, परंतु हमेशा युक्तियुक्त रूप में नहीं।

Q.2 The opposite of poverty is not wealth.
गरीबी की विपरीत स्थिति केवल दौलत होना नहीं है।

Q.3 To forgive is to set a prisoner free and to discover that the prisoner was you.
क्षमा करने का अर्थ है अपने भीतर के एक क़ैदी को मुक्त करना और यह पता लगाना कि वो कैदी आप ही थे।

Q.4 A man who wants to lead the orchestra must turn his back on the crowd.
जो व्यक्ति ऑर्केस्ट्रा का नेतृत्व करना चाहता है उसे भीड़ से मुँह मोड़ लेना चाहिए।

Q1. Reason has always existed, but not always in a reasonable form.

The day, which all of populace of Athens was ~~eagerly~~ waiting for, had finally arrived. A unique kind of trial, talk of the whole town really, was awaiting!

The judge, finally, gave his verdict of death by drinking poison. A cup full of poison was

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brought. The man drank it. Walked deliriously for few steps and collapsed suddenly. Socrates was dead! And his only crime was 'corrupting the young minds of Athens with his ideas'.

This incident begs the question, what did Socrates do so wrong, that he had to be punished by death for it? Offcourse, the judge would have his ~~so~~ reasons, but were they reasonable?

In this essay, we would like to address this very question of what being reasonable amounts to? Has the world around us always been reasonable? Also, we will try to understand importance & reasons in life, challenges to it and way forward.

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Reason refers to the arguments and theories given, to answers the question of WHY? Why do we have nights & days? (Because of earth spinning around its own axis.). Why does it rain? (Because the cloud condense and water vapours ~~turn~~ transforms into water.)

Why is it that Papa goes to work & Mama cooks food & stays home? (Patriarchy will answer it as → Because it is Mama's duty to stay home, cook food & take care of you.)

So, basically, reasons are the causes and the action it leads to, as are the consequences.

But wait, can't these arguments and theories (reason) be wrong or biased or incorrect altogether?

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Yes, indeed! These reasons may or may not be correct in the first place. It depends on who is answering the question. ~~Since~~ Owing to the cognitive revolution (75,000 years ago) and comprehensive skills in homo sapiens, each of us has right to think, opine and express ourself. From this very fact, emerges the multiplicity of reasons for a single phenomenon.

Then how do we decide what is reasonable & what is not? The answer lies in weighing ~~that~~ reasons with yardstick of logic, critical-analysis, cost-benefit analysis, ethicality and other such objective criterions.

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Historically, women have been receiving shorter end of the stick. Evils such as ownership of wife (Sati), purdah system, child marriage, female infanticides, etc have plagued society. The reason that was propounded was that women are inferior - physically and mentally to men. Hence, all the ~~fanciful~~ roles of responsibility and power should belong to man.

How wrong were our reasons!

The marvels and insurmountable feats, women are achieving, after gender reforms post independence, truely tells us how un-reasonable we were. Examples like Chanda Zaveri (Actiogen & skinhelix), Kiran Bedi (1st female IPS), and Ritupasna Sinha (1st female amputee to climb Mt Everest in 2013) are testament to it", to name a few.

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Another such historical wrong of Varnashrama based caste system was in practice & promulgated through unreasonable justifications. Reasons like genetical inferiority (by birth), segregation made by god, incapability to perform other occupation, etc found to be false and baseless.

Hence, mere existence of reason does not ensure its reasonability. As Reasons which are false and baseless wouldn't lead to reasonable action. Moreover, it does not mean that reasons which are true and factual would lead to reasonable action.

The reasons that women are ~~genetically~~ physically weakly built and caste system provide occupational stability are true and factual. However, these

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reasons cannot justify their subjugation and ~~injust~~ discrimination.

Similarly, the ~~reason~~ phenomenon of Chinese humiliation in early 20th cent ury, through cutting of Chinese melon, Japanese invasion, etc is true and factual. But this cannot be said to be reasonable justification for aggressionist & expansionist policies it is undertaking now. Chinese excursion in Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh, South China Sea etc are all such examples.

Another important observation is the existence of logical & ethical reasons on opposite side (right side) of the spectrum. The side which represents justice, peaceful coexistence, freedom, societal and individual growth. The Chinese and British colonialist lies on

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the left end/side of this reason spectrum.

Natural question now is, what is stopping oneself to shift from left end to right end? Why is it that unreasonable form is chosen? Multiple factors are responsible really. Most dominant one, however, is self-interest & its preservation.

The Brahmins & ~~Khata~~ Kshatriyas is needed slaves, taxpayers, people to show dominance to; the men seek authority, respect and ego-satisfaction from women; the Britishers seek raw materials, money, strategic stronghold from India; and the Chinese want global dominance on resources militarily, trade balances & and become world power.

This self-interest transforms into greed, ego, rage, lust and attachment or 5 thieves, as

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propounded by Guru Nanak.

Other major contributing factor is sheer ignorance or lack of knowledge. In his theory of moral intellectualism, Socrates tells that noone is inherently bad but it's just his/her lack of ignorance towards knowledge.

An example where societal ignorance is clearly visible is the still believed and followed myriad numbes of superstitions. Don't cut hair on Saturdays & nail in the night; Don't cross the road if black cat has passed by; wear black tilak to protect oneself from external black energy; exemplifies the rigid and weak belief system.

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all was not gloomy, either! Reasons (both left end or right ends of spectrum, factually correct or not) have also contributed & manifested into reasonable forms.

Dharma philosophy in Hinduism, nudges one to perform ethical/good actions (punya) and avoid bad/unethical actions (paap). The reason for said philosophy is to get rebirth as human in next life. Now, this reason of existence of rebirth-birth cycle is on shaky grounds. Yet it leads to reasonable form of promoting ethical actions.

On similar lines, when Dan Harris says that meditation makes him 10% happier, this reason alone justifies reasonability of meditation action. Irrespective of whether it will lead to escape

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from birth - rebirth cycle.

Sometimes, the reasonability of an action is judged purely based on instincts, un-conscienceness & emotional response. While saving a the lady struck between Mumbai local & platform, the policemen, I doubt, had time to think of a reason for his action. He instinctively reacted to save the lady. That action, without certainly, was of reasonable form.

Thus it is evident that for a just, equal and ethical individual, society and nation & world, reason backed by logic, critical thinking and morality is quintessential. Such reasons can be cultivated through acquiring of skills of scientific temperf rationality. National Education Policy 2020 emphasises on holistic and scientific development in students right from young age of 3. Parents & teacher's role is crucial to

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let curiosity develop in their minds. Additionally, societal level changes, reforming conservative practices and unreasonable laws repealing must be done. Starting with criminalizing marital rape (Sec 375 IPC) would go miles in this regard.

Need is to understand the old sanskrit shlok

" Tamaso ma Jyotirgamaya "

meaning from ignorance to knowledge. Only awake and wise individuals can lead to manifestation of reasonable actions and consequences.

We can take a leaf out from the pages of Olympia-de-Gouge's, Rights of Declaration for women written around 1791 and apply it for all individuals and marginalized ones.

" Arise, awaken, for the tocsin of reason is calling you."

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खण्ड–B / Section–B

Q.5 International Trade is a good indicator of National Security.
अंतर्राष्ट्रीय व्यापार राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा का एक अच्छा सूचक है।

Q.6 It is not that we use technology, we live technology.
ऐसा नहीं है कि हम प्रौद्योगिकी का उपयोग करते हैं, हम प्रौद्योगिकी को जीते हैं।

Q.7 There is more to life than simply increasing its speed.
जीवन में केवल अपनी गति बढ़ाने के अलावा और भी बहुत कुछ है।

Q.8 Nature is neither a servant nor a master, but a necessary partner.
प्रकृति न तो सेवक है और न ही स्वामी, बल्कि एक आवश्यक सहभागी है।

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7. There is more to life than simply increasing its speed.

The stories of China and India, of their uphill journey towards development, towards reducing & diminating poverty and towards becoming self-sufficient, is one of great fascination! Though started from relatively similar socio-economic starting-point, the story is full of contrast, contradiction and similarities.

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China's Mao Zedong's and Deng Xiaping's reforms ushered in agricultural mechanization coupled with robust small scale industries sector truely boosted its economy. This fast paced development had made China - a global power with ambitions to take over USA.

Albiet slowly but steadily, India is striving towards China. With one of largest democratic structure, ensuring rights of freedom & liberty to each individual and committed judiciary; India has definitely cemented its place in one of the safest and just societies to live in, contrary to china!

Given the lack of freedom, liberty and one-party dictatorial regime in China (all of which are now well accepted facts); One may question, which model of development is the best one?

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This essay is an humble attempt to understand meaning of increasing speed of life, what it entails? Is it the only thing to life or are there other important things that take precedence over speed? Disadvantages of focussing only on speed. Lastly we will try to discern what should be prioritised in life.

In the movie, Yeh Jawaani hai Deewani, the protagonist Ranbir Kapoor says, 'Mein daudna chahta hun, mein udna chahta hun, mein bus rukna nahi chahta!' meaning he wants to run, fly but didn't want to stop. He then travels world, visits places, meet new people and follows his dream. This clearly reflects the importance Ranbir gives to increasing speed of his life and do things as quickly as possible.

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In the contemporary world, surrounded with technology and social media, we already have our goals, targets and objectives fixed (however shallow they may be). Issues arises when we don't have enough patience and acceptance to required due dilengence to achieve that objective.

We watch Virat Kohli on TV & want to play like him in a month; we seek shortcuts & loopholes to make more money quicker (Harshad Mehta); Instead of working on your muscle day by day, we consume steroids and muscle enhancing drugs; Instead of harvesting water day-by-day, we dig huge wells to find water; All of these instances illustrate how our life is simply revolving around increasing its speed.

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So, increasing the speed in life implies fastening the process that leads up to our cherished & desired goals. For example to end the World War II and fasten that process, USA dropped Nuclear bomb on Japan.

Clearly, increasing speed has negative connotation to it. It is often associated with taking short-cuts, utilizing of loopholes and following unjust means to achieve the objective. Kantian Philosophy of Deontology also argues against it. As ends can never justify means, increasing speed using these unfair methods is non-justiciable.

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One may then wonder, why do people seek of the increasing speed has in first place? The answer is achieve success quickly. The unhealthy competition with peers & neighbours; ego taking over ones mental fortitude; greed that blurs the distinction between right & wrong and lust for power & prestige are few such reasons.

It was Hitler's ego, pride and lack of emotional intelligence that transformed into Jewish massacre. The resort to hastened approach of killing Jews in Gas Chamber instead of Dialogue, deliberation, debate and agreement, was main reason of that historical wrong.

This is when one starts to think beyond just increasing the speed,

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and wonder what else is important in life? The famous dialogue from film Deewar, 'Mere paas gadi hai, bunglow hai, bank balance hai. Tumhare paas kya hai?' 'Mere paas maa hai.' (I have car, bunglow, bank balance. What do you have? I have mother.) resonates with the idea of life meaning much more.

Happiness and contentment, many have argued, to be true purpose of life. While others believe that happiness is not to be attained but experienced throughout whole journey to happiness.

Socrates & Plato propounds a virtuous life is a happy life. Hence by inculcating virtues like humility, honesty, kindness, magnani-

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nity, mutual respect, etc one leads a happy a content life. Nelson Mandela after spending 26 years in jail under Apartheid regime, could have chosen quick route to criticize Whites and organise mass protests. But instead he showed benevolence, fortitude for forgiveness and magnanimity. Through deliberation & reconciliation he build the new South Africa.

Another important factor in life than increasing speed is joy found in perseverance. which cannot be felt or experienced by taking shortcuts or skipping steps. George Leonard, defined mastery, as a process which at first seems very difficult but with practice becomes more pleasurable and less difficult. Clearly, perseverance is

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following the process of mastery and deriving joy out of it. He further goes on to define success as goalless pursuit of mastery.

The story of Arunima Sinha, 1st female amputee to climb Mt Everest is one of perseverance and mastery. After being thrown out of train by robbers, she mustered courage and trained herself day-by-day. The only intention being — 'Be best version of yourself.'

Hence, 'striving to be better than yesterday' is another aspect of life, which is very different from mere increasing one's speed. To become a better version, you need to critically self-analyze and work on

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the issues & problems ~~do~~ bit-by-bit. There is not shortcut to such self-improvement. It is a steady & gradual ~~and~~ but long-lasting effect. The ability to self critic and self-evaluate is crucial to human existence.

However, to evaluate oneself one must become self-aware and need to undergo self-realization and self-discovery. Ancient Indian tools of meditation and yoga are crucial in developing these skills. It makes one mindful - respond & not react & enhances emotional intelligence - understand others emotions. (EI)

~~Since~~ life is full of prioritization of goals & methods one undertakes for it. Mindfulness & EI will certainly help us sway against

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taking hasty and easy-cut-routes to success.

Thus at the end it is one's call whether to opt for the easy-quick approach of increasing speed or to opt for harder-tedious but meaningful route.

However, there certainly are instances of objectives under which increasing speed may be more important than other aspects of life. Disaster mang management - rehabilitation & restoration, reducing hunger & malnutrition in country, unfavourable circumstances, unpredictable shocks & uncertainties, etc are highlight few such cases.

To sum up, hastening the process of attaining success is not the only thing in life. Life

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is much more than that. Happiness, family, mental fortitude, joy in perseverance among others are few such important aspects in life. If our motivational sources are internal & ~~valtage~~ noble then this journey becomes much more attainable & pleasurable.

As T Krishnamurthi has said, "Truth is a pathless land" similarly, to find true meaning of life & what it has to offer we must wander with perseverance & joy. Simply increasing speed in life won't get you to understand life to its fullest.

The famous Rajesh Khanna dialogue,

"Babu Moshai, zindagi badi honi chahiye, lambi nahi!"

(Babu Moshai, life should be big & not long.)

reverberates the essence of essay precisely.

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