

## खण्ड-B / Section-B

उम्मीदवारों को  
इस भाग में  
लिखना पना है।  
Candidates  
must not  
write on  
this margin

- 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।

It is not that we use  
technology, we live technology

Ten years ago we did not have a phone in our hands, twenty years ago we didn't have a PC in our houses.... And today these have become integral parts of our lives.

From spending 5-6 hours on our phones on an average, to using internet for every mundane task, we've definitely come a long way. And the march of technology is nowhere speeding down.

But how did we get here? And where are we heading towards?

In this essay, we will analyse as to how technology has come to affect our lives in more ways than imaginable. We will look at the reasons why we have come to 'live' technology. Finally, we will also discuss the consequences of this ubiquitous march of technology on humans.

But before we dive deeper into the nuances, it's imperative to define technology first. Technology, quite simply, refers to the use of natural laws for a particular purpose.

While science finds these laws via research, technology puts them to 'use' via innovations.

Thus, technology has been with humans since

times immemorial. It would not be an

exaggeration to say that the history of humans

is the history of technological advancements.

Let us look at, how humans have come to live technology?. Technology is everywhere and it's more impactful than we sometimes realise. Even in the most remotest of villages, technology has left its footprint. From the clothes we wear to the spectacles we are wearing, all are marvels of technology!

Ever since, the australo-pithecines emerged, the seeds of technology were born. The osteo-donto-keratic culture which used bone tools was the first technology we ever made. And since then, we've not looked back. Yuval Noah Harari in "Sapiens" highlights evolution of humans involved 4 technological revolutions - the cognitive <sup>21</sup> revolution, the agriculture revolution, the industrial revolution and the information revolution.

Thus it's not that we've been using technology for specific purposes, but we 'are technology'! Sadhguru calls the human body as the most sophisticated machine on the planet. And this machine needs a lot of technology to run. From clothes to protect us from cold, to comprise heart and kidney pacemakers, technology is like our 'extended body'.

The advent of biotechnology brought body implants, phantom limbs etc. to aid the disabled. The case of Stephen Hawking is, just one example of how technology is being 'lived' by humans of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

And, not just in biology,  
the new and emerging technologies like Artificial intelligence and Big Data Analytics;

and AR/VR tech etc. has been shaping the way we live lives profoundly. With support of governments, kids in rural India are now learning via smart classes, VR models and the like increasing learning outcomes.

All this in turn increases the "ease of living"!

From the above examples, the question arises that why are we so dependent on technology and how did we reach here?

For answer we will again have to look back into the history pages. Early sapiens were weak and insignificant animals who had to survive the vagaries of nature. To aid this process they used to make primitive tools, clothing etc. Those who made better tools survived and were "Naturally selected" (if we use darwinian terminology<sup>23</sup>). This is the story of bio-cultural evolution of humans

Since those who were technologically superior lived; technology became the criteria for survival. Hence from discovery of fire control, to the invention of wheel humans started living technology through and through.

Moreover, now we've come at a stage that we can't survive without technology even if we want to. From the 'need' to get cooked food; to survival in cold climates, technology is like the cultural adaptation of life.

And since the agricultural revolution, technology has also been a tool of power. The Indus Valley people were segregated between the citadel and the lower town not by force of strength, but by the possession of technological goods. The citadel had tools and possessions from faraway lands which served as legitimate reason for being 'elite'.

Coming to the times of the Industrial revolution, technology became a 'means of global colonization'. The one who had better navy, guns etc. became the master of the world. It has been rightly called 'An era of darkness' by Shashi Tharoor.

In the modern world, technology has been fast progressing thanks to the 'spirit of capitalism', IPR regimes and global information flows post globalization. This all pervasive march of technological progress has made us even more dependent on technology even for the smallest of tasks. We often hear our grandparents say, that in their generation they could remember entire telephone directories, cycled for kilometers and lived much more independent of technology than us.

Having seen, why technology is so ubiquitous and how world came to be this way, the natural corollary is to look at the consequences this has had on us.

While it's widely believed that technology has been very negative; let us look at the positives for a moment. Now we can make phone calls around the world; to connect with loved ones. This has made earth a 'global village'. Bill gates says 'Internet is the new times square'.

Similarly, from disease cures via marvellous technologies like re-combinant DNA tech to vaccine development it has increased our life expectancy manifold. And the agricultural technologies like the green revolution helped us escape the malthusian trap.

While the positives are many and the list is long, the negatives are just as many!

Despite Technology making our standards of living higher than even the kings of past, yet we see rising number of cases of mental health issues and depression in the world. This is because humans need social support and a purpose to remain happy. While technology keeps us 'busy' we are seldom doing anything 'meaningful'.

Moreover the social media generation values virtual likes more than family connections. The process of socialization itself is being outsourced to technology. From reddit communities to instagram influencers the youth sets the wrong role models for themselves.

"Technology has far outpaced culture. We have guided <sup>27</sup>missiles but misguided men" - Martin Luther King Jr

Moreover the 'hyper automation' drives prevalent throughout the globe poses the risk of massive job losses. On a global scale, wars are being fought over critical minerals to harness new and emerging technologies. The 'blood batteries' of Congo's cobalt mines are just one of the many dark faces of technology.

But all hope is not lost. It is upto us to build a world of technology with a 'humane face'. At the individual levels, we must build new habits like 'digital detoxes'; meditation, reading books and exercising to keep our mental health fine. Moreover we should follow Buddha's teachings to suppress our desires. This may put <sup>28</sup> an end to consumerism, obesity and purposelessness.

As now, "Offline is the new luxury".

At the societal level,  
we must value our traditional knowledge systems  
and culture. "Civilization is what we have but  
culture is what we are."

While at the national levels  
technologies must be regulated to cause minimum  
harm. Skilling the population to prevent job losses,  
and harness the demographic dividend. The panch  
prana to make India a Viksit Bharat talk about  
being proud of our heritage. As a nation, we  
must stay true to our roots while modernizing.

And lastly at the global  
levels, proper dialogue and diplomacy is  
needed to solve the global problems. Hanan in  
'21 lessons for 21<sup>st</sup> century' highlights the global

nature of technology leading to global problems  
like climate change and the refugee crisis. A

new and reformed spirit of multilateralism is needed  
to make global technologies more equitable and just.

To conclude, in this essay  
we looked at the entire history and evolution  
of technology to find out why we came to live it.  
Now, we must focus on the future of technology  
and build strong ethical ecosystems within, and  
regulations from without. Technology is always  
value neutral and it's our duty to 'live  
technology' for the common good driven by the  
spirit of Antyodaya.

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DM SHANTI!