

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 कैदी 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।

The opposite of poverty is not wealth

"You have the Great King Krishna as your childhood friend, why don't you seek his help"? Asked Sudama's wife. It was this moment, when Sudama, troubled by his material existence decided to visit his friend, Shri Krishna.

~~But~~ He was meted with a grand reception by the lord. Despite this, he couldn't ask for any favour from ~~the King~~ Shri Krishna. But just as he came back, he discovered his house was full of riches.

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So did he become rich? Yes for sure. But the more pertinent question is Was he ever poor? No. For he always had the almighty by his side!

Since the beginning of the civilisation, poverty is generally understood in terms of absence of wealth. Wealth and material resources are thought to be the panacea for all sorts of poverty. Yet, it is a very narrow view of poverty.

In this essay, we would explore the different dimensions of poverty. We would also delve on the role of wealth in eradication of poverty and its shortcomings and what further needs to be done to end poverty.

POVERTY: A MULTI DIMENSIONAL PHENOMENON

Poverty in all its forms and manifestations makes one's life less 'humane'. Therefore every society and state tries to lift its people out of poverty. There are 'n' number of poverty alleviation programmes going on around the world. Yet they have not yielded desired results because of lack of understanding of what it means to be poor?

One of the most visible forms of poverty is getting one's 'choices constrained'. Amartya Sen in his Book "Development as Freedom" has explored the link between poverty and absence of choices. He says that a poor person finds his freedom to make life choices → what to wear, what to study, where to work, how to

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participate in society, politics etc. getting constrained.

By this meaning of poverty, we find untouchables and women suffered from this form of poverty. owing to the rigid caste system, untouchables had no choice but to perform menial jobs (manual scavenging). There was a caste based division of labour which didn't accord occupational mobility to the lower castes. Similarly they were not allowed to mingle with other caste groups & found themselves ostracised.

Similarly, in extreme patriarchal set ups, women have faced this poverty as their choices related to education, marriage, mobility, employment etc. are severely restricted even to this date. Even the choice as to what

to near is not provided to many women around the world.

Another dimension of poverty is being 'prisoners of dogmas and superstitions'. dogmatic beliefs not just halt the progress of individuals but the society per se. For instance, there are many pockets around the world including South Asia, Middle East, Africa where people continue to believe in one dogma or the other and suffer from this ^{or} DOG M A T I C P O V E R T Y."

many people around the world ~~to~~ don't believe in the efficacy of medical science in treatment of ailments. They continue to believe that ~~magi~~ magical charms and 'TANTRAS' can provide better cure. For instance, a woman in Chattrigarh killed a ~~and~~ child in her neighbourhood

as a 'BALI' (Tribute) to God for having a baby boy!

Similarly during the peak of COVID-pandemic, some people defied the mask and vaccine mandates owing to the belief that these may eventually kill them! For centuries, people continued to believe that more number of children meant more earning hands and this eventually led to not just a population catastrophe but also a poverty catastrophe.

Yet, there is also one more significant dimension of poverty - the death of value system. A person is not just poor when he is devoid of wealth but also when he is devoid of moral values.

History is fraught with examples of this kind of poverty.

The deplorable conditions of slaves in the Greco-Roman times was because of impoverished moral compass of the so called "MASTERS" of the then society.

And then who can forget the dreadful 'holocaust' unleashed by the Nazi regime during the second world war. One man Adolf Hitler suffering from 'moral poverty' lacking basic ~~human~~ value of 'humanity' led to the most terrible ethnic genocide of the human history.

WEALTH AND POVERTY

Although being wealthy could mean many things - some may be materially rich, some may be spiritually and often some may be in a state of sublime bliss. Yet in its narrow dimension i.e. being materially accomplished, the role of wealth in overcoming poverty can't be nullified.

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for it is health that indirectly or sometimes directly provides for conditions to mitigate poverty.

For instance, Government is running schemes like MGNREGS, NPSA as only with 'meaningful work' and 'satiated stomach', a person can participate in the larger cause of society. Buddha once remarked, "Starvation can't lead to salvation".

Similarly schemes like ICDS, Mid Day Meal, Poshan Abhiyan, RTE PMJAY etc. aims at building a healthy and educated human resource which can overcome the clutches of multidimensional poverty.

Even the PBT schemes like PM KISAN and Ujjawale Yojana have a positive impact on bettering the situation of our farmers and

women. With more disposable income, provides for more freedom in making life choices.

Definitely, wealth creates more opportunities for the people, but owing to the multidimensionality of poverty, it still falls short of eradicating it. Since it can directly target the material aspects of poverty but more needs to be done for tackling its 'constraint of choices', 'dogmatic' and 'moral dimensions'.

How TO END POVERTY?

Apart, from the ~~app~~ wealth approach to deal with poverty, certainly more needs to be done. One way to do away with poverty is enhancing the life choices for the people.

It entails providing everyone with equal opportunities to develop their ¹⁵ potentials. This

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could only be brought about one each person's personality is treated as 'sacred' & 'inviolable'. In other words, it entails making human dignity as a 'categorical imperative' (Kant) for all human actions and treating every person as an end in itself.

Thus this would entail all practices curbing human dignity be it caste based oppressions, gender based discriminations etc.. Thus choices available to individuals would only increase, if we make our societies more equitable.

Another major step would be ~~making~~ ending the dogmatic belief systems in individuals and groups. This could only happen if we lay emphasis on developing scientific temper (one of our

fundamental duties). Currier Rabindra Nath Tagore had this dream of having our country wake up where there are no dreary deserts of dead "dogmas & beliefs".

Moreover, we need an ethically enriched human resource, which can not only cater to the needs of ~~soci~~ themselves but also the societies and nations at large. This value-based enrichment should pervade our schools, society, political institutions and workplaces. Only then we can end the moral poverty?

~~In the end,~~ In the above paragraphs, we saw that poverty isn't just death of wealth and money but it has different dimensions. Money has its role in dealing

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with poverty, yet to tackle the leviathan of poverty, capabilities, scientific temper and ethical competence of ~~so~~ individual & societies need to be enhanced.

If we see the example of Bhutan, a country which is not wealthy in terms of GDP and high income, yet certainly not poor, as it being having riches of happiness. Similarly people can be poor even with humongous bank balances as it is said:

“Some people are so poor ~~as all~~ since all they have is money”

Indeed, opposite of poverty is not always wealth!

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।

There is more to life than simply increasing its speed

vinek, a techie based in Bengaluru just finished with his day at 11'o clock. Returned home and opened his laptop again for a presentation he has to make tomorrow. The Sunday (only holiday) is still far, though he isn't waiting for it too eagerly since he has his course classes for AI/ML.

But his coffers in the bank are increasing and he is also planning to buy a new flat. Yet at times, he feels depressingly isolated and stressed. Sometimes in his deep thoughts, asks himself,

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is there more to life? than this mad rush!

In modern day life, we all witness this type of rush. Be it personal, professional lives; we continuously try to outpace our own previous selves despite none of us knowing what are we running for!

In this essay, we would try to explore what a decent life should feel like i.e. what is 'more to life'. we would also delve into the reasons for the increasing pace of life and the perils of it along with looking for ways to balance our lives in the current times.

LIFE'S GOOD: WHAT'S MORE TO IT?

Life itself is regarded as the most beautiful gift bestowed upon the almighty. Life especially the human life, is said, comes to a

person after 84 lakh births! according to Hindu mythology.

Human beings have made tremendous progress in the past thousands of years and have emerged as 'the species' of the earth. with all the basic amenities, livelihood opportunities, technology, transportation and communication humans have created conditions for a beautiful life.

Yet, with all the scientific and technological advancements, still humans continue to suffer from stress, isolation, depression, lifestyle disease and at times nothing more than commodities. The simple reason is the missing of much needed balance in life."

one thing that is an ingredient of a good life is social interaction. Man is said to be a social animal and any isolation from family, friends

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and society only harms its inner peace. For emotional support, family and friends are the first requirements. It was the desire to be with the family, that ^{former} New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern resigned from her office, this shows the importance of spending time with family for a good life.

Similarly, equally important is to maintain one's physical health. As it is our body only which would serve as the vehicle to lead a decent life. Many a times we find owing to our 'busy schedule' we miss upon the time required for keeping our body fit. Yet, people like our Hon'ble PM still finds time to exercise yoga daily in his morning routine.

Moreover, along with physical health our spiritual & mental

Aspects are equally important for ~~for~~ living a decent life. Our Yogic philosophy mentions that a decent life is one when there is complete harmony between mind, body and soul. It was for this very reason, Steve Jobs at the echelon of his professional career came to India to rejuvenate his spiritual self.

THE INCESSANT DESIRE TO RUSH

Since the advent of industrial revolution and the modern fast faced machines taking over the world, the pace of life has certainly increased. In the capitalist economy, everything is determined by mass production and quick production.

The conception of a decent life has thus been reduced to having material wealth.

Herbert Marcuse in his book "The one dimensional man" has portrayed the phenomenon that man has been reduced merely as a consumer and to consumer more one needs to earn more. The only way to earn is to work endlessly and efficiently i.e. by increasing the speed of life.

Moreover, with the advanced means of transports - high speed trains, air crafts and communication tools - internet, mobile phones, social media; the natural speed of life has inherently increased. ~~Just~~ to witness this phenomenon, one needs to stand on a foot over bridge of a city like Mumbai for five minutes. One would only see speed! speed! & speed!

Again, this desire to rush is further reinforced by the image of an ideal²⁴ employee -

who is efficient, sits till late, doesn't bother about work-life balance, committed to sacrifice his weekends for work. Thus, a person more quick than the other is treated as an ideal type, further reinforcing the need for increasing pace in one's life.

For speed, has its ~~own~~ share of benefits. It helps in quicker delivery of services to the people at large. All the progress, we see around is somewhere the result to enhanced pace. Yet it comes with its ^{own} set of perils.

Today, half of the adult population suffers from some kind of mental ailment. The rates of suicides of increased in ⁶⁰ so called cities that "don't sleep". For instance, there were 43 suicides reported in Coimbatore alone in 2021!

The Breaking of family

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bonds, distant behaviour of children as their parents have no time for them etc. are the direct consequences of the ultra busy lifestyles. For example, in India, the rate of divorce has increased 3 times vis-à-vis the beginning of the 21st century.

Moreover, with no time to rest, play, leisure around with friends, going for spiritual pursuits, community service etc., man has only closed his gates to explore the more to life.

21st century and the much needed balance

with the technological advancements at their all time peak - AI, ML, robots etc., going back to the pre-industrial times isn't possible. We need to accept this reality that the speed of life can't be halted altogether to explore

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the more of life, yet it certainly can be moderated.

First, there should be a mandatory provision of "wellness leaves" in every organisation. These leaves should be compulsory for every employee and could be availed for trekking, yoga, meditation camps etc. This would rejuvenate a person's mind & body. Recently RBI has come up with a 10 days wellness leave scheme which may be replicated in other organisations as well.

Second, rather than vouching for 6 days week, there should be a discussion on a 4 day week so that person has enough time for his family and social obligations. In Japan, it was found that the firms which had a 4-day week work policy witnessed greater retention of

workforce, along with motivated employees and enhanced work productivity.

Even the tennis legend, Novak Djokovic when winning tournament after the other chose to take a two weeks off before the Wimbledon 2021 to spend time with his family and leisure. The result, he thumpingly won the grand slam!

Another important thing that could be done is to enhance the culture of sports, yoga, physical fitness in daily lives. Many European countries are now focussing on building more public parks so that people can come out and devote time to their bodies. This not has the potential to keep our bodies healthy but also our minds free of any type

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of stress and depression.

To sum up, we could say though speed has its own advantages yet the very fulfillment of life can't come with speed alone. Human beings are multi-dimensional with multifarious needs. So sometimes it's better to sit back, relax and see the other sides & shades of life to discover life's real beauty.

The goodness of life lies in balance and harmony as one of the characters in the Avengers movie says, "perfectly balanced, as all things in life should be". For millions of vines across the planet and all of us the path to a good life should be of the Buddha's ASHTANGIKA MARGA (The middle path)

and the Aristotle's GOLDEN MEAN!

True, there is more to life than just simply increasing its speed.

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