

EVALUATION INDICATORS

1. Contextual Competence
2. Content Competence
3. Language Competence
4. Introduction Competence
5. Structure - Presentation Competence
6. Conclusion Competence

Overall Macro Comments / feedback / suggestions on Answer Booklet:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Section A

2. Information is the currency of democracy.

Winston Churchill once said that the truest tests of democracy is a brief conversation with a common man. The essence of this statement was to prove that democracy becomes futile if the citizen is not well informed.

Democracy is a representative form of government where citizens of a state elect their representatives and choose people responsible to govern.

Today most of the countries of the world are democracies as it has proved to be the most accountable, fruitful form of government.

However the only merit of democracy is not its representative form where maximum number of people have access to political power and decision-making.

Democracy also aims to create well-sounded citizens capable of self-fulfilment and having the ability to achieve their full potential.

Citizen or an individual of a state is the most fundamental and functional unit of democracy. A democratic society begins from the citizen.

If this citizen is not equipped with information, political and situational awareness then democracy becomes redundant.

As this citizen is responsible for laying down robust foundation of democracy. Citizens exercise several functions from choosing representatives in a balanced,

informed manner, ensuring that such representative act upon their promises and work towards benefit of the citizens and finally deciding and evaluating the performance of each government.

Hence at every step of a citizen's democratic life, they must be armed with sufficient and fair information. This prevents them from making decisions based on populist grounds or in favour of their social and religious leanings.

A well-informed citizen is also one who can truly achieve the goal of democracy of self-attainment & fulfilment. Information helps the citizen gain self-confidence and form opinions based on facts and their holistic interests.

Therefore, information becomes the currency of a democratic society. This information is imparted through various means of newspapers, television and more recently, through internet and social media.

It is for this reason that press and media is called the fourth pillar of democracy. It is through this medium that information reaches the multitude of citizens in any democracy.

Before we talk about the vehicle of imparting information, it is crucial that we define what information truly entails.

Information should be presentation of facts and transparent disclosure of all circumstances involved. Information cannot mean mere

opinions and propaganda. Purpose of information should not be to further narratives by tweaking and curtain dressing facts.

Hence, information should be comprehensive, adequate to form a balanced opinion about any issue.

With this definition of information should be assess the working of fourth pillar - media. With digital revolution, definition of media too has undergone a sea of change.

Today, social media apps like facebook, instagram have become pioneers of dissemination of information. New internet websites for news which are often crowd funded and give free access to content and articles are on the rise.

With these, problem of "fake news" has become a global phenomena.

"Whatsapp forwards" about matters ranging from false information about personal lives of public figures to false information about achievements ~~abuse~~ of the govt have become a common scene.

Recently, Facebook's owner Mark Zuckerberg was summoned to US senate for enquiry into "targetted advertisements" by Facebook to manipulate and influence people's voting behaviour based on misuse of their personal information.

Likewise Google was slammed with a massive penalty of 300 bill dollars by European Commission for tweaking search results and promoting advertisements by manipulating

algorithms.

In light of such incidents, it becomes amply evident that democracies across the globe are grappling with problem of dissemination of free, unbiased and untainted information.

In India too several legislations have either been passed or are in draft stage to regulate social media and global pandemic of fake news. These include the Social Media Code which mandates that any social media platform with more than 50 lakh subscribers will have to maintain standards of filtering, regulating and controlling content of their platforms.

Problem of "fake news" takes a grave and insidious form when same is utilized to promote

communal hatred and violence.
It has unfortunately become a
common practise of sharing content
which promotes hatred, incites
violence and polarizes communities
further.

Same is witnessed through mob
lynchings based on false information
about beef consumption, the
Muzzayarnagar riots etc.

Therefore, while not discrediting
the boom that internet and
digital revolution has been to
promote greater accessibility to
information for all, cutting across
boundaries of class, caste, gender etc.
We cannot help but be wary of
the flipside to this.

Here the role of State and
governments becomes even more
significant for ensuring that

citizens have access to unbiased,
free, fact-checked information in
order to exercise their rights in
a true democracy.

First step of the State in this
direction can be formation of
institutions which function
independently and autonomously
to regulate access to information.

Supreme Court of India upheld
that Right to Information forms
the basic unit of fundamental
right to freedom of speech and
expression.

This led to passing of Right to
Information Act, 2005 which
provides citizens the right to
demand information about any
" public authority " as defined
by the Act.

Government of India also disseminates information through press reports and briefs about policies through PR and through live telecasting of parliamentary proceedings.

These measures accompanied with regulations to control misuse of internet and social media can

Go a long way in ensuring that currency of democracy i.e.

information reaches people and equips them to form their own opinions and identities. Information which further narratives, propogandas and hatred cannot be the currency for democracy.

In a situation of inundation of information with overwhelming fake news, democracy is gravely threatened. When a citizen is

permeated with misinformation, the currency of democracy turns against itself.

In such a situation, democracy is dismantled and runs a risk of descending into mob-rule.

When misinformation is the currency of society, mobilization of people on unethical grounds of religion, race, caste etc. becomes a possibility.

When a few have control of sources of information like in present situation, big giants like Facebook, Whatsapp and Instagram controlled by a single person, democracy becomes a tool in the hands of capitalists as had been warned by Karl Marx.

Therefore, democracy to function according to its objectives needs well-informed citizens. Well-informed citizens, in turn require ethical media practises and ethical government conduct.

It is only through these institutions functioning on ethical grounds can information truly be accessible and capable of arming citizens with knowledge. It is only then in a situation of free flow of fair, unbiased, accessible, comprehensive information can democracy flourish.

Section B

6. A self that goes on changing is a self that goes on living.

Charles Darwin with his revolutionary theory of evolution propounded and proved the ever-changing and evolving nature of our world. Each organism undergoes change for survival.

Buddha gave this idea centuries ago about change being the only constant. According to the Buddhist philosophy, the world around us is in constant flux and even our souls undergo constant changes due to our changing desires, wants and perceptions.

Change therefore sustains the universe and a self that goes on

changing is a sey that goes on living. We have to inculcate this reality within us consciously to ensure that we can face various challenges that life has to offer.

We can learn about change and its enduring feature from everything around us and through historical evolutions of not only physical environments but also intangle cultures and traditions.

Ever since the beginning of time, universe has been going through constant changes. It is because of these changes that Earth came into existence, 4 million years ago.

Ever since, Earth too has undergone innumerable changes in its environment beginning with unfathomable chemical

reactions between various gases, degassing of Earth subsequently which led to formation of moisture followed by rainfall and presence of water on Earth.

These changes made life possible on Earth. From archaic microscopic organisms that still exist, life evolved slowly but gradually into innumerable plants and animals based on their needs and urge for survival.

It is this urge for survival that made evolution possible and those species which did not adapt to changes kept on perishing. Homo Sapiens are a result of this evolution as they kept changing from apes to neandertals to early homo erectus to finally the present human form.

likewise, human civilizations also underwent immense changes and kept moulding to meet changing needs of societies. human cultures, traditions and religions have all undergone significant changes.

Civilizations ~~have~~ evolved from nomadic hunting tribes to settled agriculturists. collective living made man a social animal. humans kept on changing the nature of their interactions and means of livelihood. From production of food for survival we gradually started producing and manufacturing more and more utilities.

As it is said, necessity is the mother of invention, several discoveries and inventions were made to make life more comfortable; changes that kept

us living.

Cultures and religions too have had to undergo this change for survival. Christianity as we know it today evolved from Judaism; marking change from Old Testament to New Testament and greater autonomy & flexibility of religious rules.

Similarly, Hinduism began from the Vedic Era, finding roots in 6th CE BCE. Since then, Hinduism has evolved constantly to survive through centuries. Gods and deities worshipped have changed from Vedic deities Indra and Agni to more than 16,000 gods and deities existing today.

Each and every religion be it Islam, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism has had to undergo change to ensure survival.

likewise, cultures and traditions emanating from these religions have also undergone significant changes. Positions of the vulnerable, oppressed sections have also changed therein..

Racism and casteism led to several clashes between people and this led to change in how people from marginalized communities who had face historic injustices, were perceived.

Women and patriarchy have had an evolving relationship wherein norms of patriarchy keep changing for it to survive till today. Women's condition and their oppression has been an all pervasive phenomena & only when women collectively change their standing in society and how they are treated can they

ensure equality of existence with their counterparts.

Traditions and customary view of transgenders, LGBTQ community has also evolved to allow social inclusion of such communities which have been the most marginalized & shunned from society altogether.

Therefore social structures & traditions to survive have to keep evolving lest they get completely discarded.

The essence of such orthodox, and age old traditions as we know them today has also bee change. Without changing with changing times, cultures cannot survive.

Therefore, practises which become archaic and in contravention with

changing needs of society become discarded.

This change has also been the essence of nations and geopolitical world order. From monarchies to democracies, countries of the world have come a long way.

Nature of sovereign and power yielded by it keeps changing in order to sustain the principle of sovereignty itself. Austin and Boden defined sovereign in absolute and indivisible terms encouraged by monarchies of ancient era.

This definition of absolute and indivisible sovereign power and the relation it shares with citizens has changed. Specially, in current global order with

globalization, multipolar world
and digital revolution.

How sovereignty sustains itself
under such circumstances is the
spectacle of our current world.

How countries interact with each
other and change their standings
in order to survive.

Hence, only the country whose
essence is grounded in change &
adapting to change can face the
trials of our current age.

This became amply clear in wake
of the Covid 19 pandemic where
nations had to move swiftly to
contain spread of the virus.

The pandemic also brought our
attention to how rapidly science
and technology has evolved to
keep our world going on living.

Today, various scientific developments have made the unimaginable possible. Inventions in biotechnology and biology have allowed us to improve our chances of survival immensely.

We are in a position to fight the deadliest viruses this world encountered leading to a pandemic. We can also fight genetic illnesses by technologies like CRISPR, SDN and genetic treatments have assisted humans to become more equipped in face of challenges to survival.

Therefore, a self that goes on changing is a self that goes on living is a principle that ~~every~~ has sustained this world so far and can help every individual sustain through life and its various trials and

tribulations.

Learning from everything around
us and internalizing the ability to
change in face of any difficulty,
adversity or disaster can help
an individual go on living.

