

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.

All the Best

Secⁿ A

1. Data as a 'public good' in India
2. Indo-Pacific: one region, multiple interests
3. Time to revisit Popⁿ Policy in India
4. A health system to meet 21st cent. needs in India

Secⁿ B

1. An army of principles can penetrate where an army of soldiers can't
2. Being intolerant of ignorance but understanding of illiteracy
3. Inclusiveness & Equity: essential characteristics of a good public instⁿ
4. Gandhiji's Talisman: a compass for good Gov^{ce}

Q1. Indo-Pacific : One Region, Multiple interests

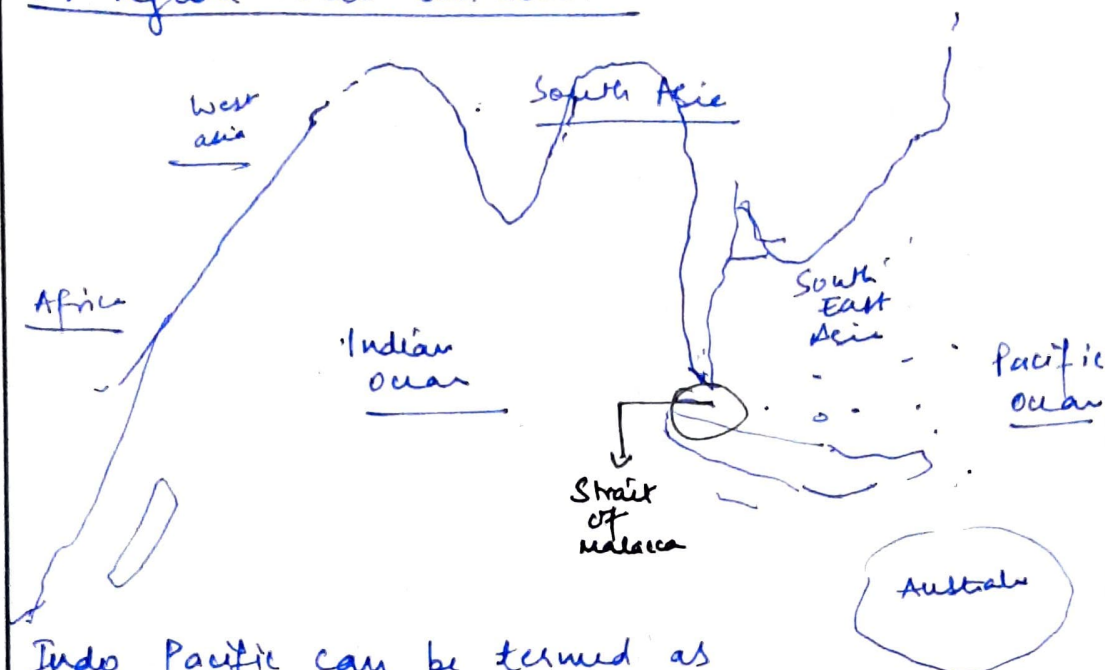
The foreign policy document of United States of America talked about the evidentiary switch of global circles of powers. Most importantly, it talked about emergence of Indo-Pacific as a strong contender for 'centre of global geo-politics'. This was reiterated by the ~~11th~~ President of the USA himself during his grand visit to India in February 2020.

Indo-Pacific region mainly includes the littorals of east Africa, circumventing the zones of south Asia all the way to the south^{East} Asian tigers and Australia. With a developed country like Australia and major emerging economies like India, and a major chunk of world population, the region is surely a promising centre of power, diplomacy, culture, interactions and future outlook.

As rightly argued by scholars like C. Raja Mohan and Harsh V. Pant, Indo-Pacific is the new area of significant political interests. There is a need to understand the dynamics, ~~and~~ variety of socio-cultural and economic demographics and multiple interests of the

countries. Understanding different threads of this promising fabric is a must.

A Region Well Connected



Indo Pacific can be termed as a contiguous zone, mainly concerning the waters of Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean, along with their littorals. The connectedness of the area is facilitated by numerous straits and water bodies. The Strait of Malacca is termed as 'the lifeline of trade' in the region. The region has seen multiple events in the past like voyages and trade of materials, philosophy and culture, which was not possible without this level of connection.

Despite this connection, what intrigues the scholars is the multiple interests & nuances in each stakeholder in the region.

Multiple Interests

The diversity at all levels can be understood by going down the historical upbringing, politics, geographical eliminations, looking at other facets like economy, military, diplomacy and some other important aspects. ~~like~~

Historically, the countries were colonies of different European powers. Though there were similarities in kind of hardships of 'subjects', but there were differences too. This was mainly because of different demographics and culture prevalent in these areas. For a brief understanding of this, one needs to go back thousands of years to get a glimpse of transmission of culture. Ashoka from India, sent missions for spreading Buddhism. There were relations between Chola King Rajendra and Sri Vijaya of Cambodia. This ~~coupled~~ led to manifestations of different cultures in different countries of Indo Pacific eventually. This was coupled with geographical needs and customs, resulting in variation in people of these areas. This further elicited a wide ranging response by colonising powers. The strong men were made slaves, for example. After going through varying decolonisation process, the decolonisation per se was quite different. The British decolonisation turned out to be more colony-friendly, as compared to French. This was quite evident in spillover

problems in countries like Malaysia, Laos, Vietnam.

Different institutions of governance have emerged in the Indo-Pacific. We can observe a full fledged democracy like India and a constitutional monarchy like Thailand, to start with. A part of this can be seen as manifestation of historical inheritance from ^{and} cultural colonisation, whereas rest can be understood by the contemporary events and relations. The diplomatic dynamics also vary depending on needs of the countries. With the advent of globalisation, there is a rise of countries capitalizing on their core competencies and trading them for the things they lack in.

During the Cold War, most of these countries were a part of Non-Alignment Movement envisaged by countries like India. Still the 'principled-distance' approach was prevalent and countries used to forge allegiances depending on their interests. There have been instances when countries like Indonesia have refused support to India during ~~their~~^{its} challenges.

Some countries have more problems than others. The islands of Melanesia, Polynesia, Madagascar, Seychelles and others face problems of being used as defence bases by other powers.

Others like Diego Garcia region are fighting for sovereignty in courts against countries

like UK and USA. Bougainville recently declared independence from Papua New Guinea. With the emergence of new leaders and change in socio-political needs these disruptions are more likely to happen, than not.

There was a time when countries like Laos and Vietnam embraced Communism and were supporters of China. But today, most of the countries also view China as an adversary, for their own interests of socio-economic interests and issues of maritime sovereignty. Recent military/strategic encroachments by China in Indian Ocean also expedite tensions between China and India, more than any other bilateral dynamic. Be it the Kambantota Port in Sri Lanka or Gwadar in Pakistan, China's strategy of 'String of Pearls' to encircle India has seen strong response from India and its allies. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar has promised of a different diplomatic outlook by India in view of a changing Indo Pacific.

The geographical and economic aspects have a compounding effect on the aforementioned geo-political complexities in Indo-Pacific. The regions are vested with resources and competencies of varying degrees and types. While Australia has one of the largest reserves

of energy minerals like coal and Uranium, tropical countries like Malaysia are competent in products like Palm Oil. India, on the other hand, is a major hub for services, unlike others. The requirements also vary depending on geographies. Indonesia needs robust rehabilitation measures, keeping in mind the large number of volcanic eruptions. It also has recently decided to move capital from Jakarta to East Kalimantan. There is a scope for cooperation, but the road is not easy, considering the difference in priorities and dynamics. This can be seen in failure of agreements like Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) of ~~Asian~~ ASEAN plus other countries. But we never know if there's some bigger opportunity waiting for Indo-Pacific on lines of more effective and efficient economic disruption.

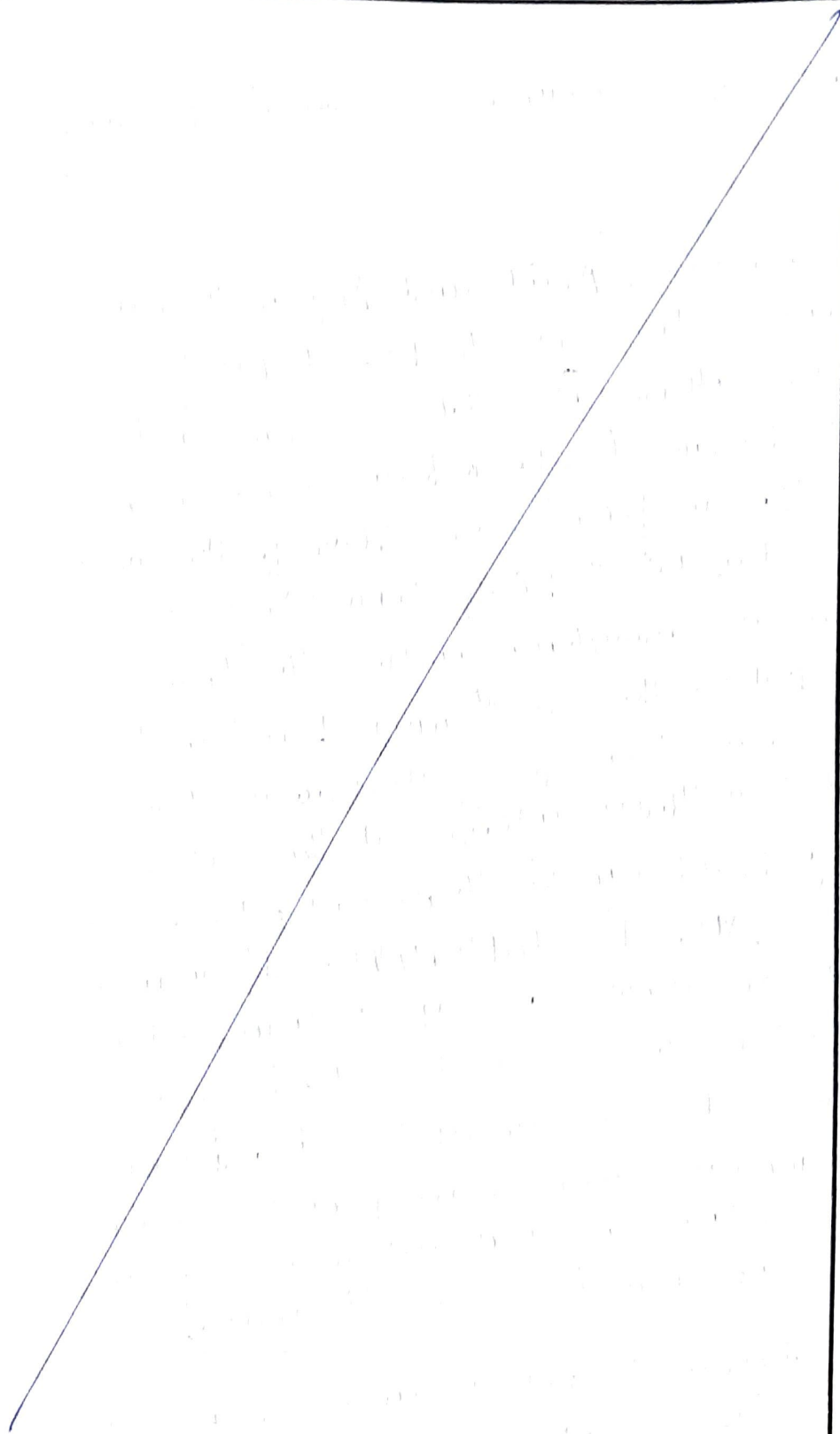
Apart from the diplomatic, security-related and economic facets discussed, there are certain environmental and contemporary levers, without which, the outlook of Indo Pacific is incomplete. As far as environmental aspect is concerned, the countries most vulnerable to climate change are the island countries in Indo Pacific. A large number of littorals and

coastal zones are under threat of getting submerged, with rising sea levels, according to reports by IPCC. The fact more worrying is that a large number of species are endemic to the region, which can be on verge of extinction. Corals, the rainforests of the ocean are quite prevalent in the region, with Coral triangle comprising of South East Asian countries. Recent developments like the Australian Bushfires add to this problem. As evident from the diverse geographies, the environmental needs of these countries are quite different.

These differences provide an opportunity for the world of geo-politics to make valuable studies and interventions to strengthen the institutions, and help in bringing Indo-Pacific as a robust centre of power. The reasons can be different for different actors. It might be containing China for USA, whereas it might be gaining hegemony in Indian Ocean for India. But one thing can't be argued with, which is the need for a better understanding of the Indo-Pacific, for a conducive future when it comes to international relations, on all frontiers including social relations,

economic partnerships, culture and security. Even with the advent of Covid-19 pandemic, as most of the countries turn inward looking, focussing more on protecting domestic interests, scholars argue that world will soon be on track of constant collaboration and intervention. C. Raja Mohan argues that 'solidarity is an attractive business'.

There is a need of a new international order with Indo-Pacific at the centre. This was envisaged in the 1973 Algiers summit of NAM, and is well reiterated in the latest book by Shashi Tharoor and Shyam Saran. By understanding the multi-faceted differences, requirements & dynamic capital, the well-connected and promising Indo-Pacific will go a long way in shaping a prosperous world order.



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Gandhi ji's Talisman : a Compass for Good Governance

Two friends, Amit and Anurag, recently attended the Swachh Bharat Panel Talk, hosting illuminaries like Dr. Tyer and other bureaucrats who ~~as~~ have created inroads in effective public service delivery. The event was the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the father of our nation. The two friends, being in their last years of college, were unaware of a number of things displayed at the program. A big board caught their eyes. The board read, GANDHI'S TALISMAN - "If you ever want to know that any of your action is right or wrong, good or bad, just think of the most underprivileged and sad face you can imagine, the poorest and most downtrodden. If your action is going to help them, then it is a right action."

The talisman is not a rocket science, as would appear to young birds like Amit and Anurag. But it is of unbelievable importance

and ^{as} an impeccable desire, when we see around and find the ^{poor} level of governance being effectuated around. There is a need to understand what can bring good governance, and how Gandhiji's Talisman, can act as a cornerstone for such initiatives.

There have been multiple initiatives by organisations like World Bank and International Labour Organisation (ILO) to devise the essentials of good governance and enable different regimes or governments to assess their performances. If one looks at the essentials of good governance, they can broadly be read as ~~indeed~~ inter alia, inclusiveness, equity, public interest, transparency, accountability, reasonableness, speedy and effective public service delivery and healthy replicable practices.

Different governments and political systems deal with different popular desires, but one common thing is diversity of population, differing only in the extent. With diverse populations come natural stratification of societies on lines of caste, class, gender, income and other parameters. While some sections of society are capable enough to

look after their interests, a large section is rendered incapable. In fact, the idea of 'governance' has an aim of serving those incapable to do so by their own, among its foremost priorities.

Kautilya argued that 'in the interests of subjects, lies the happiness of the king'.

In order to serve the downtrodden, a principled approach is often required. An approach which doesn't envisage ^{strict} equality, but 'equity', even if it requires positive discrimination in for of reasonable affirmative action in interests of underprivileged.

Equity is basically a broader concept which believes that all people are not equally capable of harnessing an 'equal opportunity'.

Prof. Amartya Sen also argues that 'capacity building' is a bulwark of good governance.

Such an equity-based, inclusive approach to governance and policies will cover the interests of all people in the society, and will emerge as an example of exemplary governance.

There have been several ~~interests~~ ^{instances} in the past where governments have been questioned because of their ineffectiveness to work in public interest. In fact, quite often we

have observed the policymakers having narrowed vested interests, overlooking the public requirements. An example of this can be seen in Arab Spring, which erupted out of incident involving Bouzizi self emulating himself, in wake of lack of unemployment and rampant misgovernance. Such events are often a 'last nail in the coffin', but what one needs to understand is the deep seated ~~near~~ necessity of a sound governance, which adheres to the needs of people. Rightly complying with Gandhiji's Talisman, the governance (action) is a good governance, when done in larger public interest, and most importantly to utmost incorporation of interests of the underprivileged.

The story, however doesn't end here. There are several other structural factors compounding the functioning of government institutions. Several developments like AV Dicey's 'Rule of Law' to Montesquieu's 'Separation of Powers' has led to institutionalisation of different avenues of governance. These institutions, like the executive, legislature and judiciary, have in most cases, defined functionaries and set accountabilities.

considering India's case, legislators are directly responsible to the people, whereas executives (the permanent executives like civil servants) are indirectly responsible to the people. This principle of 'checks and balances' in form of accountable institutions conceptualises a robust system of governance in public interest. There have been instances of lack of accountability and use of loopholes (like secret expenditure in case of financial accountability to CAG) in the past along with continuous efforts to strengthen the same, by identifying lacunas. Number of interventions have been made including inclusion of Ombudsman in different countries ~~like~~, inspired from Sweden. But actual on ground implementation is required so that executives in particular and government in general, are accountable for their actions, in order to effectuate healthy democratic competition for power and viable interest aggregation of larger public.

Transparency is another aspect, which is of utmost importance, when it comes to good governance. Transparency and accountability go hand in hand on multiple

occasions. Accountability can't be ensured if the institution is not transparent. There is very less use of a Citizen's Charter if people are not well informed about the actual functioning of the government or body of governance. It is to be emphasised that governance is not just actions of government, but also of other stakeholders like civil society and industries. ~~area~~

While the work in interests of downtrodden can be argued to be mostly the task of the government, it can't be restricted to it. Even in continuously capitalising society, several initiatives have been taken to bring private sector into fold of governance, like Corporate Social Responsibility.

Having said that, it is important to understand that all such institutions have aforementioned task of ensuring accountability, and transparent functioning helps in that. Transparent governance also leads to a feeling of involvement in the people and can be more effective overall. There have been initiatives in this regard in almost all countries across globe. Indian example of Right to Information Act 2005 and bodies like Central Information Commission

have been effectuated to bring more transparency in governance. However, poor ranking of countries like India on Good Governance Index and other reports present a case of lack of transparent governance despite the glamour of institutionalising the need. The institutions of governance often face the ethical conflict ^{between} of sticking to norms of secrecy and being transparent. A manifestation of this was witnessed in a classic case of CIA vs. Apple, in which details of a criminal was enquired for.

It can be rightly argued that speedy delivery ~~is often~~, when coupled with other essentials of good governance, can be the future of good effective public service. A large number of underprivileged are often devoid of effective service. For example, in India, a truckload of judicial cases are pending, even with interventions in form of Public Interest Litigations and alternative methods of dispute resolution.

It is, therefore, necessary to adopt measures for complimenting public oriented, reasonable, accountable and transparent governance practices with on ground speedy implementation.

in order to effectuate public service delivery on a war footing.

Several ~~month~~ months later, the two friends Anit and Anurag meet, wearing masks, after the easing of covid-19 lockdown. Both have started preparing for their upcoming examinations. Anit talks about how New Zealand has set an exemplary example of fighting a disastrous pandemic, unlike many other countries. Anurag shows multiple governance reports to Anit and ~~says~~ tells him about how few nations like New Zealand and Nordic Countries have set a benchmark for good governance in all spheres of life. They ponder over discussions ranging from how some governance institutions just focus on fulfilling their ulterior motives, even in times of a pandemic, ~~and~~ ^{to} how some actually work for the public in letter and spirit.

Anit takes out the pamphlet they got from the program they attended on Gandhiji's 150th anniversary, and loudly reads out Gandhiji's Talisman. Anurag tells him ~~how~~ that now they understand the

gravity of good governance, and the importance of the Talisman in achieving it, especially in contemporary scenario of ever growing needs & limited resources. Amit Shukla and ~~excludes~~ quotes Gandhi Ji, "there surely is for everyone's need, but not for everyone's greed."

