



VISION IAS

www.visionias.in

ESSAY COMMENT SHEET

Name of Candidate	Rohit Kumar									
Medium Hindi/Eng.	English				Registration Number	972717				
Test Code	1754				Date					

INDEX TABLE				INSTRUCTIONS						
Q. No.	Page No.	Maximum Marks	Marks Obtained	- Do furnish the appropriate details in the answer sheet (viz. Name, Registration Number and Test Code). उत्तर पुस्तिका में सूचनाएं भरना आवश्यक है (नाम, प्रश्न-पत्र कोड, विद्यार्थी क्रमांक आदि)। - All questions are compulsory. सभी प्रश्न अनिवार्य हैं। - The number of marks carried by a question/part is indicated against it. प्रत्येक प्रश्न/भाग के अंक उसके सामने दिए गए हैं। - Answers must be written in the medium authorized in the Admission Certificate, which must be stated clearly on the cover of this Question-Cum-Answer (QCA) Booklet in the space provided. No marks will be given for answers written in medium other than the authorized one. प्रश्नों के उत्तर उसी माध्यम में लिखे जाने चाहिए जिसका उल्लेख आपके प्रवेश पत्र में किया गया है और उस माध्यम का स्पष्ट उल्लेख प्रश्न-सह-उत्तर (क्यूसीए) पुस्तिका के मुख्य पृष्ठ पर अंकित निर्दिष्ट स्थान पर किया जाना चाहिए। उल्लिखित माध्यम के अतिरिक्त अन्य किसी माध्यम में लिए गए उत्तर पर कोई अंक नहीं मिलेंगे। - Word limit in questions, if specified, should be adhered to. प्रश्नों में शब्द सीमा, जहाँ विनिर्दिष्ट है, का अनुसरण किया जाना चाहिए। - Any page or portion of the page left blank in the Question-Cum-Answer Booklet must be clearly struck off. उत्तर पुस्तिका में खाली छोड़ा हुआ पृष्ठ या उसके अंश को स्पष्ट रूप से काटा जाना चाहिए।						
Total Marks Obtained:										
Remarks :										

16-B, 2nd Floor, Above National Trust Building, Bada Bazar Marg, Old Rajinder Nagar, Delhi-110060

Plot No. 857, 1st Floor, Banda Bahadur Marg (Opp. Punjab & Sindh Bank), Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi- 110009

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

We live in the best of all possible worlds.

Thomas Hobbes, in his celebrated work, Leviathan, advocates that the present state we live in, despite all its shortcomings, is the best possibility. He compared this world with the ^{we have} primitive world (state of nature).

Our present civilisation, characterised by a sophisticated and 'superior' quality of living, with all the comforts available with few clicks, is deemed more favourable ~~as~~ than the other imagined possibilities.

Our ancient civilisations, starting from around 3000 BC have undergone evolution over time. Neolithic period was characterised by the first settled agricultural life, with the greatest invention of the time being plain pottery. It was later superseded by other 'janapada' whose territories became prominent. A great portion of our civilisation is still unknown because of the absence of scripts and written language.

Ancient and medieval worlds were characterised by authoritative regimes, frequent wars, rise of several religious ideologies and an ~~open~~ ^{closed} society in terms of movement of people, and goods. The era of industrial, agricultural and information technology revolution has changed our worlds for the better.

is
Why our current world the best?

A significant proportion of our 7 billion + population lives ~~is~~ under democratic regimes. Democracy has guaranteed the rule of the, for the and by the people. It ensures restrictions on arbitrary powers of states and freedom in the choice exercised by a common man. The magnificence of the Lok Sabha elections highlights that the ultimate power lies with the people.

Our present society is characterised by rule of law, codification of laws, fundamental rights as unalienable rights and transparency in governance. People have transitioned from being a beneficiary to an active participant in governing themselves. Citizen charter, social audit, initiatives like Jan sunwai Kendra, etc. are few examples. RTI movement which started in Europe has spread all across the globe.

The rise of nation states has also witnessed an increasing global cooperation. Institutions like United Nations, WTO, WHO, and UNCLOS have ensured a global rules-based order. There is rising collaboration to fight the menace of cross-border terrorism, money laundering, climate change and biodiversity loss.

The era of social media, digital communication and literacy has ushered in a new paradigm - a shrinking global village. Alvin Toffler in his work, 'The Third Wave' highlights the benefits that IT revolution is capable of producing. The recent pandemic showed us the importance of 4G communication and social media platforms to stay in touch with our loved ones in difficult times.

What could have been other possibilities?

A world, completely dependent on chance, ^{-based evolution} could have ended up completely different. Moreover, the absence of dynamism and change might have led to a life one could imagine in ancient and medieval ages.

Life in earlier civilisations ^{was} ~~were~~ built on religious dogma rather than science and rationality.

Religious dogma, a key feature of Dark Age, leads to rising superstitions, wrong beliefs and rigidity in culture. Europe had been a victim of dogma which had curbed people's innovation and imagination.

Hobbes' Another alternative could have been a primitive, isolated agrarian life characterised by sedentary and subsistence lifestyles. Predominance of environmental determinism — where crops depend on God's mercy. It would have been a world of hungry stomachs and failed aspirations.

Hobbes' imagined world, 'state of nature' is even worse. It is led by brutish, nasty and selfish men leading to an orderless society with no moral benchmark. Frequent wars, conflicts, rapes, barbarism and corruption would have made a normal day in Hobbes' state of nature.

Is this world perfect?

Though deemed better than other possibilities, the present society is also plagued by ills like prejudice, racism and discrimination. Maya Angelou in her book 'Why does the caged bird sing' ~~the~~ beautifully illustrated the day-to-day racial abuse she faced and the associated challenges.

The governance in administration and corporates is swollen with corruption — something which Kant predicted. Coalgate scam, Volkswagen emissiongate, rampant corruption in Afghan government, etc. are some of the highlights.

The society is also seeing a decline in moral values. There is a loss of compassion, tolerance and empathy ~~are~~ resulting in rising conflicts, differences and riots along communal, ~~sub~~lingual and other rift lines.

The ~~current society~~ global order is plagued by ethnic conflicts in Tigray region, rise of ISIS' wings in Bahel region, communal conflicts in Palestine and refugee crisis in South Asia.

Capitalism and neo-imperialism has exacerbated the existing inequality between 'haves' and 'have not'. Gini coefficient shows that 1% of the population today holds 40% of the wealth. To top it off, the pandemic and climate change has made matter worse. While e-commerce and other Big Tech flourished, millions across the globe working as casual migrant workers lost their jobs.

Alvin Toffler's another masterpiece 'Future shock' illustrates the challenges men will face in the era of rapidly changing technology. AI driven predator drones, crypto based money laundering, cyber terrorism, state surveillance, dark.

web, etc is the tip of the iceberg. There is a need to introspect to reverse the current trend. As B.R. Kalam said, 'Adversity provides opportunity for introspection'.

The road to better our 'best' world.

Consequentialism must give way to deontological principles. We must work towards treating means as ends (as Kant proposed). This will help us move towards a less corrupt ~~and~~ society. This will help in building social capital and trust between different social groups.

Materialism and consumerism should be superseded by a quest for virtuous life. Materialistic pleasures creates a delusion of happiness. True happiness requires wisdom which can only be generated from within; ^{As} ~~As~~ advocated by JK Rowling, 'Happiness can be found in the darkest of rooms, if we remember to switch on the lights'.

On the global fronts, we need greater cooperation between governments, academia and industries.

We need to abandon ideals like 'national interest dominates all' as propounded by Realpolitik. There is a need to strengthen values like fraternity and respect for other cultures to realise the ideals of 'Vasudeva Kutumbakam'.

There is a great scope for bettering our present world. History has shown that we had progressed in the past and we can ^{also} do it now, in an attempt towards the utopian world 'sarvodaya' propounded by Gandhi.

Health is a smart investment.

World Bank's Human Capital Index (HCI) report states that global mean HCI is merely 56%, implying that an average 18-year old is only able to perform at half of his maximum potential. This under-utilisation is accrued majorly to poor focus on society's health.

A nation's efforts to improve its demographic attributes like nutrition, nourishment, preventive and curative health care is today considered an optimised utilisation of its scarce resources for long term sustainable growth.

India, plagued by 200-years of colonialism, did not have the luxury to focus on its people's well-being. Colon Imperialism, as Naisoji highlighted, was only concerned about filling Britain's pockets out of our misery. Churchill's policy to divert foodgrains to

the army in Europe despite reports of crop failure in Bengal (1943). clearly highlighted their priorities. Priorities were pretty clear during Mughal period ~~to~~ also. Despite being one of the largest economies of its time, Farukhsiyar, a later Mughal prince, had to seek British help for his life long illness cure.

Conventional view on investment

Growth, as a concept, has since time immemorial, focused ~~on~~ more on land and capital for improving the factors of production.

Industrial revolution in eighteenth century revolved around steam engines, spinning jenny, infrastructural development like roads, railways, etc. Green revolution in India focused on canal irrigation, better inputs and post harvest infrastructure to attain food security.

Investments in modern day nation-states have revolved around building military assets, heavy engineering industries, power, and communication networks.

This ideology has ^{recently} been seen as a paradigm shift — focus has shifted on building human capital. Literacy, health and skill development have emerged as the three drivers of sustainable growth. NITI Aayog highlights that \$1 investment in healthcare can generate an additional revenue of \$0.7 dollars.

What makes health a 'smart' investment?

Poor health based demographic attributes like crude death ^{rate} ~~cost~~ and life expectancy (first stage of demographic transition theory) has direct correlation with poverty. Nigeria with TFR of 6 and extremely high infant mortality rate of 80/1000 is one of the poorest states. The.

story is similar for other states in Sahel region.

An improvement in basic healthcare facilities leads to higher productivity and efficiency. This is the reason behind Nordic States' growth trajectory.

Government's expenditure on providing cheap curative healthcare services leads to a decrease in out of pocket expenditure (OOP), resulting in higher savings and private investment. India's mean OOP is $\sim 60\%$, as compared to western economies ($< 20\%$).

Focus on providing better nutrition and immunisation services has been the 'silent' factor behind China's competitiveness in labor cost. Low labor cost with high productivity has attracted billions of FDI from top MNCs, looking to exploit the labor arbitrage.

Success stories of scandinavian countries highlight that the long term cost of geriatric care can be minimised if through better universal immunisation and maternity benefits. Sweden has become the first nation to guarantee menstrual needs as a legal right.

What has the pandemic crisis taught us?

Poor healthcare infrastructure like primary and community health centres led to ~40% excess deaths in South Asia, Brazil and ASEAN.

The horrifying scenes in India's capital during the second wave ^{sends down chills through the spines} still haunts us. WHO reports that countries with a higher % expenditure of GDP on health have witnessed milder economic shocks (with some exceptions like US).

China, the only major economy to register a net positive growth in 2020 owes its success to early identification, tracking, isolation coupled with faster construction of COVID wards.

Low out of pocket expenditure, government's subsidy on curative healthcare, high domestic capacity for oxygen cylinder manufacturing, more beds per 1000 population, more doctors, frontline workers, etc has essentially been the differentiating factor.

India at the crossroads

India has shown remarkable progress since independence: With a life expectancy of 21 years in 1921, the numbers have improved to 69 today. NFHS-5 survey highlights that infant mortality rate has reduced to less than 40/1000. Institutional delivery has been around 90%, immunisation numbers

have improved in all states. Total fertility rate has decreased to 2.0 with a healthy sex ratio.

However, much needs to be done. Global Hunger Index ranks India at 101/116 nations, highlighting India abysmal nutrition levels. This can be accrued to poor performance in wasting, undernourishment and stunting categories — where we find our status comparable to African states plagued by conflicts. This shows that despite achieving food security in 1990s, we still lag behind in nutritional security.

India's healthcare infrastructure requires a boost — increase in beds, healthcare personnel, nurses, educational and ~~research~~ institutions and R&D centres. This ~~needs to~~.

Lastly, healthcare status in India is a consequence of patriarchal set up. As per NFHS-5, 57% of women are anemic. Child sex ratio, as per Censuses, has shown a paradoxical declining trend — 914 (2011) and 927 (2001). Rising gender disparities in healthcare sector has therefore been a key characteristic in Indian context.

• The road ahead

NITI Aayog highlights that the vision of \$5 trillion economy requires strong focus on SDG 2 (removing hunger) and SDG 3 (health). The need of the hour is to develop collaborations with industry and academia.

Centre's fiscal space needs to be rationalised to increase % of GDP expenditure to at least 7%. Being a 'State' subject, majority of expenditure is borne by States today.

PM Modi has advocated a transition to nutritional security with a second Green Revolution. This ^{also} requires strengthening existing programmes like Poshan Abhiyaan, fortification schemes ^{and} PM Matru Vandana yojana. This needs to be coupled with better services in rural areas like sanitation, drinking water and cooking fuel. This ^{necessitating} requires convergence with other programmes, like Aspirational Districts programme, MNRGA and Integrated Rural Development Programme.

Moreover, the focus should also shift to consumer awareness programmes like FSSAI Eat Right movement, awareness on trans fat, adulteration and standardisation. This requires deploying ICE for information dissemination — a multistakeholder approach.

Arsene Dumont's social capillarity theory advocates for providing a dignified ~~livable~~ life to every individual as it creates an aspiration for further progress and vertical mobility. Pandemic has taught us an important lesson — ~~our~~ people are our biggest assets. In the words of Mahbub ul Haq, 'Invest in your people, that's the first step towards a nation's path to success'. Therefore, healthcare can be deemed as a smart investment for economic growth.