



Chanakya Mandal Pariwar

1st July 2023

Student's Name : Aniket Dnyaneshwar Hirde

Main Exam Roll Number : 6701477 Mobile No. : _____

UPSC Mains 2023 Test Series

ESSAY - 1

Time : 3 Hrs. & Marks : 250

Question Paper specific instructions

(Please read each of the following instructions carefully before attempting the questions)

- The essay 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 written in medium other than the authorized one.
- Word Limit, as specified, should be adhered to.
- Any page or portion of the page left blank in Question-cum-Answer Booklet must be clearly struck off.
- Write two essays, choosing one topic from each of the following Sections A and B, in about 1000-1200 words each. **125 x 2 = 250**

Section A

What is needed today is mindful & deliberate utilization, instead of mindless & destructive consumption

✓ World Resource Institute's Global Forest Watch report estimates loss of 4.1 million hectares of primary forest in 2023. This equals to 11 football fields lost per minute! It further states that primary tropical forest being a hotspot for biodiversity can never be completely recovered.

✓ But, it wasn't long ago in history that humans co-existed with nature. Vedic people worshipped trees. Communities like Bishnoi sacrificed themselves for forest conservation. Even globally, the mindless race to destroy forests was not prevalent.

25/9
Then, when did we shift from this mindful & deliberate utilisation to mindless & destructive consumption? What were the factors for this shift? Where do we stand today? And, is there even a way forward for humans?

Shift in Consumption : A Journey into the Past

Humans have been utilizing earth's resources since long now. Tools were discovered in paleolithic age leading to hunting of animals. It was followed by animal rearing in mesolithic age & eventually by agriculture in later stages. Although forests were cleared even then, it was still in balance with nature.

is this food / requirements

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The balance worked well till two things happened — increase in population and increase in man's greed even more than population. As human life became increasingly settled, the population grew at unprecedented levels between 15th AD to 21st AD. Low life expectancy, high child mortality only added to the problem.

Industrial Revolution — However, it was the advent of capitalism that led to a bigger problem.

The desire to produce more, sell more, earn more, consume more started the mindless exploitation of nature. Industrial Revolution in 17th century further added fuel to the fire by providing cheaper, faster ways of manufacturing.

1750 → 18th

Hence, in the next 200 years, owing to mercantilist approach, countries were colonized, slums came up in Europe, air was almost unbreathable, fishes were suffocating in water and the world was in crisis. But, has it improved today given the scientific advances?

The More, The Merrier : Human's Motto Today

The quest to acquire more & consume more has only increased today. This is again, partly driven by population and partly, by wealth representing social status of a person.

In India, buying a car is considered as positive social mobility. But, have we ever thought that do we even have roads to drive them? How

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much fuel we waste in traffic? Isn't it better to just take a metro?

Similarly, Swiggy, Zomato, Amazon has eased our lives with home delivery.

But today, packaging waste is one of the most pressing global challenge. It is landing up in sea with estimated \$40 billion to clean it.

plastic

Sea is the new target of mindless consumption. Nauru recently applied for deep sea mining license followed by flurry of other countries. This has potential to disrupt sea-bed, smother corals,

leak green-house gases in the oceans

individual responsibility
Humans have not left

mountains either. The deluge in Mimachal is a sign of what we have done to

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nature. Irresponsible felling of trees, construction of houses, building of roads has tested limits of nature.

Today, we have lost the mindful thinking in simple things. Continuous use of ACs, unrestricted use of water (60% reduction in groundwater last decade - CGWB), indiscriminate use of fertilizers leading to soil salinity in Kerala stand testimony to the fact. But, where has all this led us to?

Alarm Bells are Ringing


As Gandhiji eloquently stated, "Earth has enough for everyone's needs but not for everyone's greed", there is a limited capacity that nature can offer.

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These limitations of nature create scarcity & competition. Owing to this scarcity, nations are attacking each other. Russia wanted Crimea to control the  Strategic Black sea. China is using Belt & Road Initiative to access resources of Pakistan, Sri-Lanka, etc.

The competition is not only among nations but also between individuals. Today, bottom 50% of earth hold 2% of wealth while top 10% own 75% of wealth (World Inequality Report, 2023). This has inhibited social justice where in we have indoor pool bungalows in Florida while children dying due to water scarcity in Africa.

30% food wastage —

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This incessant greed has changed our consumption. For example, the focus is on processed junk food today. But we fail to understand how it is affecting our body (increased NCDs) & soul - not being able to control greed.

On the other hand, nature has started showing its wrath. Europe's ~40,000 Ha of forest was up in flames in 2022. Australia witnessed a Black Summer with estimated 3 billion animals killed in 2019.

In India, Joshimath land subsidence led to 600 families losing their home. Increased heat waves will lead to loss of 34 million jobs by 2030 (World Bank). Mumbai & many other



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Coastal cities are on the verge of sinking as per IPCC Assessment Report 6. ✓

With nature ringing such shrill alarm bells, are we waiting for the day when masks become a necessity, our skin burns in sunlight, we go to sleep in the fear of getting wiped out by some or the other disaster tomorrow? ✓

Collective Action or Collective Suicide?

The shift from mindless & destructive consumption to mindful & deliberate utilisation will have to start now. ✓ It has to be across levels - from individuals to societies to nations to globe.

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E
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First & foremost, man will have to control his greed. Gandhiji's model of 'Each according to work to each according to need' can be the guiding mantra. We should consume ~~as~~ only as much to live a comfortable life.

3
R
S
Mission LIFE which promotes simple energy saving activities should be inculcated. Although, online ordering is indispensable today, the boxes can be recycled. Use of public transportation, cycling for shorter distance can go a long way. Focus should also be on organic consumption rather than processed.

Societies can further amplify individual efforts. Hiwre Bazaar shows how we can grow with nature. Organizing

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recycling events, establishing Rain Water Harvesting, biogas plants, etc. can go a long way.

Businesses too have to adopt Compassionate Capitalism, focusing on Planet, People, Profit, simultaneously. Investing in green technologies, sustainable exploration can be adopted. Example, BEE-UNIDO project invested 160 Cr in MSMEs leading to 80 cr savings annually with decreased emissions.

Government of India has taken many steps for mindful utilisation. Net zero goal of 2070, ban on single use plastic, Extended Producer Responsibility are case in point. Further, the need is to

ISA

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Venture into new technologies like hydrogen Storage, nuclear fusion, aeromines, circular economy, etc. This will ensure India as economically & environmentally developed country by 2047.

Lastly, the problem is global. International cooperation in the form of Loss & Damage fund, disaster resilient infrastructure, etc. is needed. The need is to stop blame game & ensure climate justice across globe.

SDGs

To conclude, man has the potential to exist peacefully with nature.

The traditions like sacred grove, considering nature as wealth needs to be revived.

Infact, with growth of internet, AI, this



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knowledge can be even more easily disseminated.

The nature has given us enough chances, enough warnings. Our consumption has increased to the level that we need more than one earth for our needs today. We need to think, if we consume so mindlessly today, what are we leaving for our children?

In Brihadnayaka Upanishad, Maitreyi, wife of scholar Yajnavalkya asks him, "IF we give all the wealth in this world to one person, will he be immortal?" Yajnavalkya replies, "No, for there is a difference between what one can achieve & what one can enjoy." Now if there is an inherent limit on our utilization, what are we being mindless for?

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Section B

There was never a bad peace or good war.

The period of 1939-45 was full of chaos. Germany broke Ribbentrop pact & attacked Russia. Japan mounted surprise Pearl Harbour attack. Countries justified it based on national security, historical injustices, embargos, etc. But nevertheless, this period saw ~ 60 million deaths.

On the contrary, 50 years following 1945 were relatively relatively peaceful. Although, it saw space race, arms race, decolonisation, world restrained from nuclear bombings & mass killings. These stark contrasts in first & second half of 20th century show how there

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never was a bad peace or good war.

The Inherent Goodness of Peace

Peace is a situation of mental satisfaction. When one is contented, doesn't go out seeking more & more. This leads to justice, respect & fairness in the world.

Albar's time was relatively peaceful. It is because contrary to his predecessors like Sultans, he respected all religions. Abolition of jizya, jimmi tradition are case in point. Although, the kingdom saw 2nd battle of Panipat, the people loved their emperor which resulted in peace.

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Historically, humans were also at peace with nature. Water was conserved through traditional rain water harvesting structures like Phad, Ahar Pynes. Minimalistic lifestyle ensured ecological balance. It ensured growth with stability.

Today, we can at least sleep without fear of getting bombed. That is because mechanisms like United Nations, World Trade Organisation, UNFCCC ensure deliberation among countries. These discussions ensure justice. Example is Common But Differentiated Responsibility (CBDR) for climate change, Special Safeguard Mechanism under WTO, etc. However, not all is good.

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The Harmful Wars

War by the very definition means conflict. These conflicts arise due to greed, ego, etc. One might justify satisfying these but it always has a negative impact. "Lust, greed, anger are three doors to hell" — Bhagavad Gita.

An individual faces inner war when he loses peace. A DRDO scientist from Pune lost his satisfaction & got honey-trapped by Pakistan in June. Today, he is behind bars after compromising national security. relevance?

While the society knew how to live with nature historically, today we have gone on all out war with nature.

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Indiscriminate deforestation in Amazon, mining in tectonically active regions, mindless consumption, etc. have challenged nature.

The nature is retaliating with cyclone Katrina; floods in Himachal, Delhi; heat waves leading to wheat shrivelling (March 2022), among others. ✓

The wars have expanded their domain. Today, China devalues its currency to boost its export. But this leads to reduced exports from neighbouring countries leading to 'Beggars Thy Neighbour' scenario. ✓

Artificial intelligence, quantum computing, once touted as revolution for humans have turned into a war. US



imposed regulation on chip export to China.
In retaliation, China imposed restriction on export of Gallium & Germanium needed for producing semi-conductor. As a result, the world is suffering with semi-conductor shortage impacting healthcare, employment, education, adversely.

However, the inherentness of peace & war is not so black & white. Although, assumed as positive, peace can take negative conotation and then war becomes necessary.

Good War to Vanquish Bad Peace

Drug addiction is an increasing issue in today's youth. It is argued that in times of peer pressure, job performance

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pressure, hectic travels, drugs provide the much needed 'mental peace'. But the adverse impact are well known. Hence, one has to fight a good war against addiction.

Similarly, the society was largely at peace in 1800s. But the evils of sati, women illiteracy, infanticide prevailed.

It was only through wars of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Mahadeo. Govind Ranade that women could uplift their status.

Even today, the war against caste discrimination, gender inequality, etc. continues. So, it cannot be concretely said that peace is always good or war is always



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bad. But then, how do we differentiate between bad peace, good war vis-a-vis good peace, bad war?

Peace OR war?

First condition for peace is that it cannot be imposed externally, it has to be from within. King Louis XVI imposed harsh conditions on the third estate for peace of his kingdom. But, eventually it fell. WWI

Secondly, the peace has to be just. Today, ~~we are~~ developed countries are forcing net zero targets on every country. Even funds are being promised through Global Carbon Facility, Just Energy Transition Partnership. But in

reality, it is a green debt hindering socio-economic progress of developing nations.

Thirdly, the peace should lead to mental satisfaction. Had the countries been satisfied, we would not have witnessed Russia-Ukraine, China-Taiwan, NATO, etc.

However, even if peace is not on the side of the good, one should always follow good war to achieve it.

The good war entails achieving mental peace. This can be done by meditation, developing emotional intelligence, etc. Imbibing values of

go deeper



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love, respect, tolerance should be the aim of parents, school. This will help tomorrow's youth counter negative attitude like jealousy, anger, etc.

Secondly, good war entails no use of weapons. Humans have been blessed with an argumentative art. We can put our points forward in global platforms, parliament, etc. If naxalites want development, why not join politics & change system from within?

Thirdly, the good war should ensure progress of all stakeholders. Be it marginalized section, women, tribals, environment, citizen of developing



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nations, flora - fauna, all the life - forms are equally important.

No war which has had disproportionate gains was ever successful.

Eg:- Germany's comeback after humiliating ~~War~~ Treaty of Versailles.

In such cases, no war can be called good completely.

To conclude, peace & war are just two-time frames which can change according to the situation. While one can become good, the other can become bad.

Humans today have acquired a higher state in animal kingdom. They are capable of maintaining peace as

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well as starting a war. While we have developed all the external mechanisms like Geneva Convention, UNSC, etc. it is time to achieve internal peace going ahead. Because, "peace begins when expectations end" - Bhagavad Gita.

With coming up of new technologies like cryptocurrency, Artificial Intelligence, etc, tomorrow is going to be a new war. Example, regulating these technologies; inhibiting terrorist use, etc. On the other hand, wars of inequality, environment, social justice will continue.

Through global coordination, upholding human values & respecting all stakeholders, we can ensure that

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