

EVALUATION INDICATORS

1. Alignment Competence
2. Context Competence
3. Content Competence
4. Language Competence
5. Introduction Competence
6. Structure - Presentation Competence
7. Conclusion Competence

Overall Macro Comments / feedback / suggestions on Answer Booklet:

1.

2.

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5.

6.

All the Best

Information is ultimate power in the digital universe of 21st century democracies

~~** Demo~~

"Information is the currency of democracy".

- John F. Kennedy

Knowledge about various events, phenomena, happenings around oneself and the ability to analyse them is information. In the modern world driven by ideas more than physical capabilities, information holds primal position. The need for adaptability to cater to dynamic situation of new world, technology growth, digitalisation, all make information the ultimate power. Hence, information forms the source, means and ends of today's development.

Historical Perspective:

Humans came into this world like any other living being. They have some limited physical capabilities, fundamental aims and natural cravings. But it was their superior brain and ability to crunch information that helped them climb the ladder in animal kingdom. Knowledge of fire helped them overcome fears of other animals, information about wheel their walking capability. All these changes led from one to another and today we hold centuries of wisdom that now helps us in our development.

The pace of development in 21st century has reached new heights and so has the importance of information. A world in which a new thing is being

developed everyday, information gives one the ultimate edge in competition.

Information in today's world is synonymous with capability. A country can have all the natural resources of the world, but if it does not have the knowhow to utilise them, they are bound to fall back in competition. The best example of this is a comparison between Japan and continent of Africa. How Africa with all its natural wealth has been reduced to a rudimentary economy and how Japan has developed itself through technological knowhow.

Internet as a phenomena has taken the world by a storm. The pace of digitalisation induced by it further reduces the importance of physical capabilities in comparison to information.

The first entrant advantage and grip over developments in internet has helped us maintain its control over it. The result has been that not only are the American companies benefiting from it, the status of USA as a global softpower hegemon is further strengthened. Big American companies like Google, Facebook, Apple have made data the most powerful asset ^{through Big Data}. People's choice, lifestyles, daily activities can be easily monitored and products tailored to their choice can be presented. It is its global network that Facebook is driving out conventional news agencies since it can present a personalised news feed to its users.

Not only the lifestyle can be analysed, it can be conveniently modified using information. Behavioural economics, infometrics provide large samples of data on how people's behaviour are modelled. This is helping western countries keep a dominance over cultural expansion helping spread its "jeans culture" to every part of the world.

Today's economic space is also information driven. If you cannot innovate, you are driven out. The famous example being that of Nokia, despite its traditional dominance, it collapsed since it could not stay in sync with people's demands. The financial world is driven by data. Nowadays, analysts and mathematical modelling people are the best paid people in the world.

The realtion of modern day warfare is also ~~domination~~ dominated by one's information prowess. No more do brave soldiers win wars, smart actions do. Cutting edge intelligences, first move planning are things that decide ftk in war. Modern defence equipment like fighter jets require continuous upgradation and hence the country with best research does the best. Cyberwarfare has taken this into whole new level. Why travel to someone's homeland when you can completely obliterate them sitting on your couch. Cyber attack on Sony, Stuxnet attack on Iran, show the importance of information over ammunition in today's world.

It is occasionally said that real power

lies not with one who fights but one who commands. Today's politics is also completely influenced by today's changes and not untouched by information revolution. A political system where the ultimate deciding power is with the people, information helps one shape opinions and gauge opinion which can ultimately help one win opinion. How a small information like Hillary Clinton using private server affected her election campaign is a testimony to this.

Finally, the fact that every economy as it grows tends more towards the service sector indicates the prime position of information in development ladder and its role as ultimate power.

It may strengthen the powerful but it weakens the weak

The primal role of information ~~had~~ has made it a weapon for the powerful but a weakness of the weak. This is visibly evident in race for data access. Today's companies go to huge extents to collect data from the people. Internet has facilitated this collection where most people knowingly and unknowingly share their personal details.

Such a data collection can have many consequences. Not only is peeping into one's life unethical, it also gives one immense power to blackmail the other. The websites one visits, the data they store can be misused to extort money from them. Nowadays news is filled with incidents of people asking for ransom to not leak one's personal data.

This threat is further enlarged when it is found that even governments engage in mass surveillance. The Snowden revelation brought out the black fact that the US government was not only monitoring several countries but its own citizens too. This places unsymmetrically large power in the hands of few.

The next issue that an information driven world poses is the historical inequality between the developed and developing. Not only do developed countries have the existing information infrastructure with them, they also lead in research and development which ensures their continued dominance. The developing countries lack the capital and capability in terms of manpower and hence depend on west for information in various regards which it is

mostly unwilling to share without money.

Another ethical issue in this regard is that the information driven society suppressed individuality and reduces people to numbers. People are no more than sample data or experiment subjects. This reduces their physical existence in the world.

Also, in a world where a true information has immense potential to do good, a false information can do equal amount of damage. In today's digitalised world, information travels very fast. Any false fact due to yellow page journalism or ~~rumours~~ rumours can snowball into a controversy. A small rumour about Israel almost brought Defence minister of Pakistan into attacking

Israel with nuclear weapon.

Way Forward

Hence the need of the time is to introduce reforms so that some symmetry in today's information architecture can be brought. Reform of internet controlling bodies like ICANN needs to be done since presently they are under dominance of west.

Also, the developing countries like India need to start building local data centres to protect data from leaving the country.

Also awareness regarding privacy practices, international rules to govern privacy need to be developed so that atleast a price is put on people's information asset and that ultimately it is governed.

Also, a mechanism to transfer information

from developed to developing countries to bridge the information gap needs to be diversified.

Ultimately, we have to realise that
"with great power comes great responsibility"

Information today provides us with immense opportunities for welfare but equal number of methods of destruction. It is for the human race to evolve its course of development so that information remains a asset rather than a ticking bomb.

Sports: potential facilitator of peace in
the battleground of global powers or
a potential battleground for global
powers

"I once brought two people to a field
They had been enemies for long,
A flick, a pass and a hug at the end,
The teammates could never again do each other
any wrong."

Sports since ancient times has been used as
the medium for building relations. The
Romans and the Spartans used to do it.
In southern India, events like Jallikattu
used to bring people from diverse
backgrounds together. No one can forget
how the sportsmanship of Jesse Owens

prevailed over Hitler's hatred during the IInd world war Berlin Olympics. But in the recent times, amidst all the fame, glory and competition of the modern, the theme of sports seems to have been lost in the game.

Sports and Global Powers

Today's world is filled with strain of global powers competing with each other in fields ranging from economy, defence to what not. Not only does this introduce a lot of friction in modern world, it leaves humanity as a divided race too.

Sports in such a scenario can act as a very good binder and facilitator of peace. Global sports like football, hockey are

played by many nations around the world. Not only do they interest people in support for their own team, people usually pick their favourites from other country's teams also. It is no uncommon thing to witness Chinese fans being loaded with fans on Saturdays to watch their favourite English Premier League team play.

Such interactions bring people from different countries together. It leads to development of understanding for culture and habits of other country and its people. And as it is said, understanding one another can diffuse half of the tension. This interaction greatly helps reduce tension between two nations.

Sports is also used as a common mode of diplomacy. In the past India-Pakistan have utilised cricket matches as a great diffuser in rough times between the 2 countries. Although the two teams compete on the field, the hope for a good match makes every fan wish that both play a good game, just that their team does a little more!

Sports has also acted as a common hobby between leaders of 2 nations. A little sports discussion has brought healthy results in fields of diplomacy. It is very well known that after Russia and Turkey were going through tough times due to plane shooting, discussion about football acted as icebreakers between President Putin of Russia and President Erdogan during a meet. Similarly, the images of G7

leaders watching a Wimbledon match during the summit bring humour and lightness to these meetings.

while bilateral tournaments and matches help build relations between two countries, global tournaments like Olympics and FIFA World Cup bring the humanity together. The fact that the US and Soviet team could participate together in Olympics even when held in each other's lands show the big hearted approach towards sports. Similarly, during the Munich Olympics, attack on the Israeli team brought the whole world in solidarity with them.

Sportstars with their global appeals act as global ambassadors of peace. During

the recent China-India Doklam row, a very big hearted gesture from Indian boxer Vijendra Kumar to return the medal he had won in return of peace between the 2 countries showed how deeply people wanted peace.

Similarly, Chinese superstar Yao Ming playing in US basketball league, Maria Sharapova of Russian origin being loved in US show how sports transcends boundaries.

Sportsmen like David Beckham, Tom Brady has associated themselves with global missions like UNICEF, UNESCO to campaign for ~~peace~~ peace and development everywhere.

Similarly, countries holding tournaments together also helps improve relations. The 1987 world cup in cricket was hosted by

Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh together, 4 countries who have had some problem with one another at some point or other.

Sports through charity matches and cause tournaments also act as platform for people from various countries to come together. Matches played to raise money for tsunami victims of South Asia or victims in Haiti are examples of this.

Does it provide a aura for global powers

But the above analysis only touches upon the pretty traits of modern sports. Sports in today's world are hardly this clean and considering them so would be premature.

It is very well known how some countries have started looking at sports as new arena for displaying their power. China since its growth phase has started venturing into sports and it is a structured venture not just to play but to win. During the Beijing Olympics, China took it to new level as news came of athletes being pushed beyond limits to come on the top. China is now doing a similar thing in football with huge amounts of cash being spent to provide that extra impetus to Chinese football and team.

Sports are not always as a medium for sports diplomacy. Sometimes, they become a form of protest too. India has for quite sometime kept India-Pakistan bilateral series into suspension to protest against Pakistan's state sponsored terrorism.

Hosting tournaments has become a display of wealth. Countries are spending huge amounts of money to make the sporting event grander than previous one. This unhealthy competition now has reached levels where countries are being accused of paying bribes to get hosting rights. The latest scandal in this regard being FIFA Bribe scandal involving Russia and Qatar.

Many unethical practices such as doping seem to be strengthening in sports. The Russian sports federation was in fact accused of involving in mass doping before 2016 olympics to gain advantage for their teams.

Finally, the fact that high stakes are played on sports matches between rival countries make these matches more of a war than sports events. Recent India Pakistan matches have been incidents of mass abuse between supporters of both countries online, sometimes the players are under so much pressure that they fear for their lives after a loss. The competition sometimes turns into fan fights as seen once during England - Argentina football match.

Such events and unhealthy competition drive out sportsmanship from the sports and make us wonder if sports are indeed the means to good or arenas for fight.

A healthy change in perception of people towards sports, encouraging fair play

rules becomes the need of the times.

Further, organising multi-team matches where countries play together as teams helps diffuse the bilateral enmity.

A big contribution to intercountry competition is reduced by club culture.

People of different countries playing together as one team helps build understanding between them. Hence promotion to club competition should be undertaken:

Finally, people leaders need to remember that "In a sports, it is one's goal town,
but it is the goal that is more
important and not the winning".

Teams should play competitive matches trying their best to win but while respecting feelings of fairness, competition, discipline and sportsmanship. Persevering one towards wrong practices for winning should be eschewed. It is only when the global powers realise this idea behind sports can sports act as field for peace rather than arena for competition.

I once brought 2 ~~exercises~~ ^{people} to a field, They had been staunch enemies for long, A flick, a pass, and a hug at the end of ~~the game~~ ^{for a game}, They ~~could~~ ^{never} do each other any wrong. The teammates could

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- Sports - a commanding factor, historically has been seen as facilitator of peace. Right from the Berlin Olympics days it has tried to establish peace, but somewhere in the ultra competitiveness of modern sports, the sports is getting lost in the game.

Body: Today's world filled with strain and competition. In global powers - Countries like China, US, India compete in fields ranging from economy to education. In such a scenario - sports - binding factor.

- Sports - builds team spirit, sportsmanship, Discipline, ~~Teamwork~~ ^{Putin-Erdogan} hobby, A form of people-to-people diplomacy, bilateral tournaments, ~~India Pak PM~~ ^{is good sign}, Dumb Cold war - Soviet and US teams used to play showing possibility

- Munich Olympics - world into solidarity.
- Relaxes mind - a lot of tensions defused.
- See the human side of others people.

USA needing for Bolt.

Against:

Countries going to new levels - winning ring, China wants to win everything - not only induces unhealthy competition but domestic burden too, Sports as form of protest - India Pak, High stakes on matches - Argentina Britain, Russia mass doping, Holding tournaments - competition - bribery FIFA World - Display of wealth.

Information - % Start: currency quote, then modern world - ideas matter more than physical abilities have info is paramount - adaptability, technology, digitalisation - Many any development needs info.

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Class body:

- Historically humans started off as equal, info gave them push, knowledge of fire - , knowledge of wheels tools. This started human growth.
- info industrial - British.
- The historical growth leads to 21st - development everyday here - nothing.
- Every info is the supreme capability.
- Information - capability, resource rich but poor, Japan superior,
- Economy - dependent on it - innovation needed everywhere,
- changing needs, demands, hence have to change so info needed
- Soft hegemony - US dominates internet so dominates everything, lifestyle.
- Hard hegemony (power) - high tech weapons replaced conventional.
- Artificial intelligence - (automation), Politics (grassroot - but now data based) so snooping.

Issues:

- Hunger for info - data mining, snooping, ethical issues, threat of privacy loss, Stalkmail.
- Historical inequality (lack of Capital for research),
- lack of individuality, artificial opinion building, impact of false media quote.
- relating to us.
- info in post truth world order (fake journalism), leading to unintended consequences like job cuts: - - - -

Solution:

- Internet - ICANN - data protection, ethical standards, Technology and info transfer to bridge inequality.

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