



# VISION IAS

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<b>SUBJECT:</b>	ESSAY	<b>Test Code:</b>					
<b>Name of Candidate</b>	PRAGATI						
<b>Medium Hindi/Eng.</b>	ENGLISH	<b>Registration Number</b>					
<b>Center</b>		<b>Date</b>					

INDEX TABLE				INSTRUCTIONS
Q. No.	Page No.	Maximum Marks	Marks Obtained	
				1. 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)।
				2. All questions are compulsory. सभी प्रश्न अनिवार्य हैं।
				3. The number of marks carried by a question/part is indicated against it. प्रत्येक प्रश्न/भाग के अंक उसके सामने दिए गए हैं।
				4. 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।
				5. Word limit in questions, if specified, should be adhered to. प्रश्नों में शब्द सीमा, जहाँ विनिर्दिष्ट है, का अनुसरण किया जाना चाहिए।
				6. 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।
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## 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**

2. Better a diamond with a flaw, than a pebble without. In the last few decades, there has been much discussion about the transformation of China from a low income nation to an \$18 trillion economy which is poised to be the next big global superpower. Many have lauded Chinese policies that have eliminated extreme poverty in the nation, stabilized population growth, and made it the 'world's factory'. However, unlike in India, critics have noted the stark absence of democratic structures and fundamental rights in Chinese society. Thus, <sup>even though</sup> ~~indeed~~ India has a smaller economy than China today, Indians enjoy liberty, freedom, and access to free press, protection from intrusive government surveillance, and a robust judicial framework to uphold constitutional ideals. Even with its "flaws", India is a diamond that shines brighter than China - a pebble.

In light of the above, this essay ~~also~~ explores the topic - better a diamond with a flaw, than a pebble without. This essay begins by examining various instances in which being a diamond with a flaw proved fruitful. Subsequently, the essay examines the lessons that India and Indians can learn from such instances to take the nation to new heights in the Amritkaal.

## Diamonds with Flaws

Indian history provides us with many examples of how being a diamond with a flaw is superior to being a pebble. When Emperor Ashoka of the Maurian dynasty witnessed the bloodshed caused by the Kalinga war, he realized the 'flaw' in his judgement. The remorse this 'flaw' made him feel, encouraged him to adopt the new policy of "Dhammaghosha" which involved persuasion and diplomacy instead of war and violence. By doing so, he transformed himself into a 'diamond with a flaw' <sup>who</sup> ~~that~~ was still far ahead of other rulers like Alexander the Great or Samudragupta who revelled in war.

Even ~~despite~~ the Indian freedom struggle against the colonial rule, included many 'flaws'. The growing divisiveness between Muslim leaders and members of the Indian National Congress, caused by the British policy of "Divida et Empera", was one such flaw. Further, ~~violence~~ ~~was~~ unlike the Gandhian ideal of ahinsa, many instances of violence like the Chauri Chaura incident of 1922 were also witnessed. However, ~~the~~ despite the flaws, the freedom struggle helped India attain independence in 1947. This was better than the 'pebbles' being offered to other colonized nations in the form of concessions or 'dominion status'.



Post independence, India's 'Green Revolution' policy is also often considered a diamond with a flaw. On the one hand, the agricultural revolution allowed India to become a food sufficient ~~in~~ nation ~~which~~ which today exports about \$50 billion worth of agricultural produce to <sup>more than</sup> 200 ~~nations~~. It drastically reduced famines, income inequality, and improved health outcomes. But, on the other hand, the revolution ~~has~~ also has its 'flaws' - in the form of environmental degradation and reduced groundwater level. While these flaws are being combatted actively in the present times, the ~~available~~ contribution of the Green Revolution to Indian food security has been invaluable, much like a diamond.

Another Indian policy decision which had raised eyebrows in the 1960s was India's pursuit of space exploration. Since the inception of ISRO in 1969, <sup>certain</sup> ~~many~~ 'flaws' have ~~been noted~~ ~~persisted~~. For instance, some expensive space programs have failed to meet their targets.

~~Further, compared to global standards, India~~ ~~remains~~. Nevertheless, Indian initiatives like the NaaVIC navigational satellite, and the recently launched Chandrayaan III have transformed the space sector. As Prime Minister Modi stated, ~~while~~ India's space exploration

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has taken the nation "from the Upanishads,  
to the Upagraha".

Finally, the Panchayati Raj and Urban Local  
body set up introduced via the 73rd and  
74th constitutional amendment acts, 1992 ~~have~~ <sup>are</sup>  
also like diamonds, albeit with their faults.  
Noted economist, Ashok Gulati has highlighted  
the "underfunded and understaffed" nature of  
local bodies. However, despite such flaws,  
the 250,000 panchayats and municipalities  
operating across the nation have ushered in  
democratic decentralization. While local bodies  
in Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh have ensured  
water supply for residents, others like  
Mardurgi in Maharashtra extend micro-credit  
loans to women. ~~Thus~~ <sup>Thus</sup> local bodies, ~~could~~  
~~overcome their weaknesses~~ despite their flaws,  
are still preferred over the 'flawless-pebble' of  
top down decision making.

With these ~~lessons~~ <sup>ideas</sup> in mind, what lessons can  
we learn to ensure ~~that~~ continued success  
for India in the upcoming decades?

## India's Future - As Bright as a Diamond

The primary lesson to learn <sup>from this essay</sup> is that challenges and obstacles <sup>are flaws that</sup> ~~can~~ <sup>can</sup> never be eliminated.

Yet, these flaws should not stop India from upholding constitutional ideals and pursuing its various socio-economic goals.

For instance, despite instances of religious <sup>and</sup> tribal tensions in India, as seen by the ongoing Kuki-Meitei dispute, secularism and fraternity continue to remain cherished democratic values that must be protected. Similarly, while inclusive growth is tougher to pursue than mere economic growth, the Gandhian ideal of "Sarvodaya through Antodaya" must be ~~to~~ upheld. Hence, initiatives like MGNREGA, despite their flaws, are preferred over apathy towards the needs of the most vulnerable Indians.

Similarly, India's decision to continue the <sup>usage</sup> ~~provision~~ of coal <sup>in energy generation</sup> ~~to generate~~, despite its polluting ~~prejudicial~~ nature and the opposition from the World Trade Organization developed West has depicted the need to not be afraid of the 'flaws' in our decisions if larger public interest is at stake.



India should also continue to embrace the 'flaws' that accompany the process of innovation and the spirit of entrepreneurship. This is so because while many new initiatives fail, many succeed too. The 100 plus unicorn companies are a testament to the need to in India

not worry about challenges or potential flaws. Success of homegrown startups like Zerodha and Unacademy have shown that a vibrant entrepreneurial culture, despite its flaws, is preferred over a flawless, yet dull, society.

Finally, young Indians need to be educated about the need to pursue our goals and democratic principles despite the accompanying challenges or flaws. This spirit can be inculcated in them through the New Education Policy 2020. Such citizens will actively contribute to nation building by jān bhagidaan.



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Hence, by being a diamond with a flaw rather than a pebble without, India will also set an example for other nations and act as a Vishwa Guru. Nations of the Global South, particularly, will look up to the Indian model of development; which despite its flaws, has created a sovereign, secular, democratic state where human life is celebrated and human rights are upheld.

Thus, even with its meteoric growth, China ~~is~~ continues to be a pebble, while India is poised to reach new heights ~~in the Amritkaal~~. ~~By being a flawed diamond~~, India ~~is~~ with its work ~~making~~ towards its Panchpran goals and inclusive development is bound to shine as bright as a diamond in the Amritkaal.

5.

Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.

In the year 2022, out of every hundred ~~global~~ digital transactions in the world, 46 took place in India. Previously, critics had pointed to lack of universal education in India and incomplete financial inclusion to ~~demonstrate~~ predict that it would take decades for India to catch up to its Western counterparts in financial technology. However, instead of pursuing the path set by others, India took a new direction when it launched the UPI payment system in 2016. The phenomenal success of UPI is not just limited to India, but is now spreading to other nations like Singapore and the UAE. The trail left behind by India by following its own path, rather than walking ~~on someone's heels~~, ~~is a~~ ~~less~~ towards wherever the path leads, is an example for many.

This essay explores the need to pursue our own journey ~~and rather than~~ even when the path is new and unexplored. ~~The essay~~ ~~high~~ First, the essay ~~describes~~ narrates instances where following an unexplored path led to positive results. ~~So~~ Then, we see how India can adopt this strategy to navigate through various challenges.

## Not Going where the Path Leads

Many thinkers during the Indian renaissance in the 19th century ~~preferred~~ chose to not go where the path led. While Indian society was plagued by societal evils like patriarchy, caste discrimination and religious disharmony these thinkers adopted a new mindset which envisioned an equitable society. Thus, while Raja Ram Mohan Roy spoke against sati, and Jyotiba Phule waged a war against casteism, Swami Vivekananda espoused the idea of 'One God' and encouraged tolerance. By doing so, these leaders created a new path whose trail ~~was~~ then <sup>inspired</sup> ~~followed~~ future Indian leaders and even the Indian constitution.

Similarly, in the 20th century, the work of South African anti-apartheid leader, Nelson Mandela swayed from the standard path. While most activists fighting with him gave up after brutal colonial repression, Mandela continued to pursue his path of freedom even when imprisoned for 27 years at the Robben Island. By doing so, he inspired generations of South Africans to follow his trail and rise against the racist British rule.



India's recent decision to not follow the standard path by continuing to purchase oil from Russia after the Ukraine war is an example of the same. Due to Western pressure and vested interests many nations followed the path built for them by the US and its European allies. However, India chartered its own path by asserting the need to ~~protect~~ prioritize the well being of its citizens and in the process inspired other nations of the Global South to assert their sovereignty.

This is similar to India's stand ~~is~~ with respect to the need for "common but differentiated responsibility" when combatting the climate crisis. ~~Despite~~ Resisting pressure, India has advocated against a carbon tax, highlighted the need for a "loss and damage fund" and criticized the discriminatory 'Fisheries Agreement' that is being discussed in the WTO. By doing so, India has diverted from the path where the path leads to and has taken control of its own journey.



Charting out a new path has been witnessed in the journey of the Indian state of Sikkim as well. Over two decades back, Sikkim was an impoverished state combatting many Socio-economic challenges. However, in the 2000s, Sikkim adopted the novel strategy of pursuing organic farming on a large scale. The result is that today, ~~India~~ Sikkim has the second highest per capita income in India and is an export powerhouse with many global organic food brands tracing their origin to Sikkim. By following this new route, Sikkim has left behind a trail that is now being followed by others, including Sri Lanka.

Finally, local Indian communities have often swayed from the set path and inspired others to do so. For instance, the resistance of locals to deforestation in Garhwal led to the Chipko movement. Similarly, tribal of Dongria Kondh, Orissa fought back against mining on their land, thus inspiring other tribal communities to do so too.

With these examples in mind, how can India continue to chart its own path?

## [India Building its own Path]

India has time and again not been afraid to not go where the path leads.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, India set the right example by providing Vaccine Maitrei to more than a hundred nations.

This was in sharp contrast to other nations ~~there~~ that hoarded vaccine supplies. Similarly, during the Pakistan Floods of 2022, India offered humanitarian aid to the nation despite ongoing political tensions. Such

initiatives show that even in a world that is experiencing rising ~~the~~ conflicts between nations, India is not afraid to follow its own unique path, driven by the Mundaka Upanishad's adage of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam"

India ~~should~~ <sup>has</sup> also extended this mindset of not following other's paths by pursuing the Non-Alignment Movement and refusing to sign the Nuclear non proliferation Treaty and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty due to their discriminatory nature, despite most nations being ~~their~~ signatories.

In the domestic sphere, India is attempting to transform its economy with the same approach. Breaking away from the usual trend, this year's budget has an all time high capital expenditure that amounts to Rs. 10 lakh crore. Further, with reforms like GST and demonetization there has been a focus on charting out a new path that leads to fiscal prudence and financial stability in the nation. With <sup>a</sup>the fiscal deficit of 6.4%, currently, our economy should continue down this new path.

To further enhance the nation's ability to pursue new and daring ideas, there's a need to enhance the expenditure on R&D from the current 0.7% of GDP. This will provide a new ~~impetus~~ <sup>impetus</sup> to the development of ~~digitized~~ technologies and innovative processes which will accelerate growth towards a \$5 trillion economy.

Finally, citizens should be encouraged to build their own path. ~~For instance~~ - By doing so, many everyday challenges like garbage disposal, traffic congestion, etc can be solved through the innovative ideas that emerge from people who have explored a new path.

All these efforts together will create a New India that not only chooses its own path, but also determines its own ~~path~~ fate.

This India will overcome social challenges like poverty and attain ~~reach~~ its ambitious goals in space, defense, environment, trade, and other domains. By doing so, the trail India leaves behind will not only help other nations, but will also continue to amaze critics like those who ~~had~~ had once denounced the UPI.