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PROSE

The Adventure

—Jayant Narlikar



The Adventure is a story written by Jayant Narlikar. It is a story about Professor Gangadharpant Gaitonde who lives in his world. He decides to go to Bombay via train 'Jijamata Express'. On reaching Bombay, he finds things different. He finds that the East India Company was still ruling India and the Marathas had won the battle of Panipat. This confused him as he knew that the East India Company had fled away after the events of 1857 and the battle of Panipat was won by the Mughals.

Topic Notes

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Characters in Brief

Professor Gangadharpant Gaitonde– He is an eminent professor of history working in Pune. He has a catastrophic accident which causes him to transition to a parallel world for 60 hours.

Rajendra Deshpande– He is a mathematical and scientific expert who tries to rationalise Professor Gaitonde's experience by applying the Catastrophe theory and the lack of determinism in Quantum theory.



Chapter in Detail

Earlier Part of the Story (Not the Part of Text)

Professor Gangadharpant Gaitonde was a well-known historian and prominent member of Pune society. He had just completed his 999th occasion for presiding at a function. He had made the decision that his thousandth performance would go down in history. That moment would occur during a session on the Third Battle of Panipat two weeks later.

One day, while the professor was on his way to home, he was hit by a truck, knocking him unconscious. When he regained his consciousness, he was sent to a parallel world. He was hospitalized in the present time. When he was released from the hospital after making a full recovery, he made an effort to go home, but he discovered that it didn't exist in the parallel universe. Because his son was employed by a British company in Bombay, he made the decision to travel there. He travelled to Pune's train station and boarded a train to Bombay. The story starts from here.

Gaitonde's Journey to Bombay

Gaitonde was informed that Bombay was British territory and the rest of India was independent when he needed a permit to travel to Bombay. He shared a seat with Khan Sahib, who was travelling from Delhi to Peshawar in first class on the Jijamata Express. Then he understood that there had not been any partition of India (in this parallel universe). Only Lonavala, Karjat, and the border town of Sarhad were the places where the train stopped and the permits were examined. Instead of stopping at Kalyan, the train ended up in Bombay's Victoria Terminus. He noticed the British flag was painted on the local railways' compartments as Gaitonde passed through the suburbs of Bombay. This indicated that they were passing through British territory.



Character's Mood

→ *Observant*

Example 1. Extract Based:

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

"Greater Bombay Metropolitan Railway," explained Khan Sahib. "See the tiny Union Jack painted on each

carriage? A gentle reminder that we are in British territory." The train began to slow down beyond Dadar and stopped only at its destination, Victoria Terminus. The station looked remarkably neat and clean. The staff was mostly made up of Anglo-Indians and Parsees along with a handful of British officers.

- (A) In which language do you think Gangadharpant and Khan Sahib talked to each other?
- (B) The tone of the author in this given extract is:
 - (a) depressed
 - (b) astonished
 - (c) observant
 - (d) amazed
- (C) Who were ruling the territory at that time?
 - (a) French
 - (b) Portuguese
 - (c) British
 - (d) Americans
- (D) Complete the sentence appropriately.
Khan Sahib, here, refers to
- (E) Which part(s) of India was/were not a British territory?

Ans. (A) Gangadharpant and Khan Sahib would have talked in Hindi as Gangadharpant was a Maratha and Khan Sahib was Muslim. Hence, (a) is correct.

(B) (c) *observant*

Explanation: The author is observing the changes in the parallel world. So, his tone is observant. Hence, (c) is correct.

(C) (c) *British*

Explanation: The British were ruling the territory at that time. Hence, (c) is correct.

(D) The fellow traveller on the professor's train ride to Bombay.

(E) Only Bombay was a British territory. No other part of India was a British territory.

Gaitonde Fails to Find his Son

Gaitonde had prepared a schedule for his visit to Bombay. He intended to find his son and then visit a library to solve the mystery of his transition. Gaitonde noticed "East India House" as soon as he left the train station, indicating that the East India Company still existed in Bombay. He also discovered a number of

British companies and buildings on the road. He went to his son's office to greet him but was disappointed to know that he didn't work there. Gaitonde then understood that Rajendra Deshpande's prior explanation of the Catastrophe theory was correct. He had been successfully transitioned to a parallel universe.



Character's Mood

↪ *Curious*

Gaitonde Finds the Information He Needed

He went to the Asiatic Society library, which was located in the Town Hall building. Fortunately for him, it was also present in the parallel universe. He also discovered the five books he had written on Indian history in the library. After reading the fifth volume, he discovered that the outcome of the third battle of Panipat in 1761 was written differently from what he knew. He was the author of this book in the parallel world.

It stated that the Marathas had won the conflict. The history of India shifted after this point, which explained what Gaitonde had been experiencing since the last few hours.

He found confirmation in a Marathi Journal about how exactly the Marathas had won the battle. According to the Marathi newspaper, the Marathas' leader, Vishwasrao, was just slightly wounded by a bullet that was fired by the Afghans during the battle. Gaitonde in the actual world had claimed in his fifth volume that Vishwasrao had been killed by a cannon shell during the war and that the Marathas had lost their morale and the battle. In the parallel universe, Vishwasrao won the battle rallied his warriors and survived.



Character's Mood

↪ *Shocked*

India's Remaining History in the Parallel World

The remaining history of India, as recounted in the fifth volume that Gaitonde was reading, can be summarised by saying that India never went under British rule. The Marathas did not allow the East India Company to expand its influence in India. In fact, its influence was limited to a few places like Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. India gradually became a democracy but allowed the British to carry on certain activities in Bombay on a lease for commercial reasons. The lease was due to expire in the year 2001, 15 years after the time of this story.

Gaitonde Returns to the Real World

Gaitonde left the library after it closed for the day, telling the librarian that he would return the next morning. He ate his dinner and then strolled over to Azad Maidan. A lecture was happening over there. Gaitonde walked and sat in the empty presidential chair on the stage, assuming it was for him because he had been invited to the seminar in the real world. In response, there was a loud outcry from the audience against Gaitonde sitting on the presidential chair.

The explanation is that individuals in this world had become tired of hearing lengthy introductions. They had long abandoned the practice of having a chairman because they were solely interested in what the speaker had to say. The chair kept on the platform was only for representation.

Gaitonde stood up to speak, but the crowd attacked him with tomatoes, eggs, and other things because they didn't want him to say anything. Gaitonde continued to speak, so the people flocked to the stage to remove him. Gaitonde vanished amid the uproar. He had suffered another catastrophe by being knocked unconscious by the mob, and he returned to the real world.



Character's Mood

↪ *Confused*

Rajendra Deshpande Explains What Happened to Gaitonde

Gaitonde told Rajendra Deshpande, about his adventure. Rajendra made an attempt to explain what had happened by explaining how the Catastrophe theory and the absence of determinism in quantum theory applied to his experience.

When Rajendra felt that Gaitonde had imagined things because he may have been thinking about the third battle of Panipat at the time the truck hit him, Gaitonde showed Rajendra the torn-off page of the history book from the other world, about Vishwasrao escaping death. In the book in the real world, the account was given as Vishwasrao being hit by a bullet and dying. So in the real world, the Marathas had not won, the East India Company had flourished and so on.

Rajendra was initially baffled by this new information. But after a long discussion with Gaitonde, Rajendra claimed that he had arrived to the conclusion that there might be many "different worlds existing at different points in time". Professor Gaitonde had visited another parallel universe that shared a complete different history.



Character's Mood

↪ *Perplexed*

Gaitonde Refuses to Chair any more Seminars

When Rajendra recommended Gaitonde to share his experience at the thousandth seminar, Gaitonde told

Rajendra that he had declined the offer since he did not want to chair any more seminars. He most likely recalled how the audience had treated him when he had attempted to chair a seminar in the parallel universe.



Significant Morals

- (1) The explanation of time travel.
- (2) The blend of history and science.
- (3) The events of other worlds can be seen and felt through one's senses only; it cannot be explained by anyone in detail.
- (4) There may be alternate realities other than the one we perceive, and while they may appear realistic, they are all in our heads and a result of our thoughts.



Dictionary

words	meanings	synonyms	antonyms
<i>Blow</i>	setback	shock	calm
<i>Astute</i>	marked by practical intelligence	clever	foolish
<i>Shahenshah</i>	ruler	monarch	slave
<i>Throng</i>	crowd	horde	single
<i>Smugly</i>	with a self-satisfied look	pompously	humbly
<i>Speculating</i>	guessing	wondering	validating
<i>Rubber-stamp</i>	formally approve	accept	disapprove
<i>Pandal</i>	temporary structure	tent	building
<i>Baliantly</i>	courageously	fearlessly	cowardly
<i>Dumbfounded</i>	greatly surprised	amazed	aware
<i>Proceeded</i>	carried on	advance	cease
<i>Ignoramus</i>	ignorant	blockhead	brain
<i>Definitively</i>	finally with authority	decisively	vaguely
<i>Pacing</i>	walking to and fro	triding	halting
<i>Catastrophic</i>	sudden happening causing damage and/or suffering	disastrous	blessed

OBJECTIVE Type Questions

[1 mark]

Multiple Choice Questions

1. What language did Gangadharpanth use when conversing with the receptionist?
- (a) Hindi (b) Marathi
(c) English (d) Urdu

Ans. (c) English

Explanation: Gangadharpanth was an educated man and a great historian. As the receptionist was English, Gangadharpanth must have talked to her in English. Hence, (c) is correct.

2. Why did Professor Rajendra say that the incidents narrated by Gaitonde were not real?

- (a) As he was in coma for two days.
- (b) As he was not well.
- (c) As his mental state was not good.
- (d) As Rajendra wanted to believe in facts.

Ans. (a) As he was in coma for two days.

Explanation: Rajendra says that the incidents narrated by Gaitonde were not real because the latter was in the coma for two days and Rajendra thought that Gaitonde was imagining things.

3. Which of the following quotes captures and justifies the title of the story?

- (a) The biggest adventure you can ever take is face the unexpected.
- (b) Life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all.
- (c) Jobs fill your pockets but adventures fill your soul.
- (d) Then one day, when you least expect something, the great adventure finds you.

Ans. (d) Then one day, when you least expect something, the great adventure finds you.

Explanation: The title of the story "The adventure" talks about the adventures that the professor had unknowingly. He didn't plan anything but it just happened to him. Hence, (d) is correct.

4. Choose a word that DOES NOT mean doctored:

- (a) altered
- (b) legitimate
- (c) tampered
- (d) adulterated

Ans. (b) legitimate

Explanation: The meaning of the word 'doctored' is to change something or falsify something. Option (a), (c), and (d) are the synonyms of doctored. Option (b) legitimate has an opposite meaning. Hence, (b) is correct.

5. Why did the professor start liking the new India that he was reading about?

- (a) This country knew how to stand on its feet.
- (b) It was different from the one he knew.
- (c) In this form, India was a wealthy nation.
- (d) He liked the ruler of this new country.

Ans. (a) This country knew how to stand on its feet.

Explanation: After reading this new history, Gangadhar Pant was pleased at the India he had seen. It was a country that had not been subjected to slavery of the White man. It had learnt to stand on its feet, and knew what self-respect was. Hence, (a) is correct.

Extract Based Questions

6. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

Rajendra motioned him to silence and started pacing the room, obviously under great mental strain. Finally, he turned around and said, "Professor Gaitonde, I will try to rationalise your experience on the basis of two scientific theories as known today. Whether I succeed or not in convincing you of the facts, only you can judge — for you have indeed passed through a fantastic experience: or, more correctly, a catastrophic experience!"

(A) Which of the following statements can be inferred from the above extract?

- (a) Rajendra didn't believe Professor Gaitonde.
- (b) Gaitonde believed and regarded Rajendra as a knowledgeable person.
- (c) Gaitonde considered Rajendra as his best friend.
- (d) None of the above.

(B) Which two scientific theories are being referred by Professor Rajendra?

(C) Complete the sentence appropriately.
The catastrophic experience mentioned in the above extract is

Ans. (A) (b) Gaitonde believed and regarded Rajendra as a knowledgeable person.

Explanation: One can infer that Gaitonde believed and regarded Rajendra as a knowledgeable person. Hence, (b) is correct.

(B) Rajendra Deshpande is the second central character in the story. Using the Catastrophe theory and lack of determinism in Quantum theory, he explains what happened to Professor Gaitonde.

(C) the experience of Gaitonde of Marathas winning the Battle of Panipat as the bullet missed Vishwasrao.

7. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

The Maratha army was facing Abdali's troops on the field of Panipat. There was no great disparity between the latter's troops and the opposing forces. Their armour was comparable. So, a lot depended on the leadership and the morale of the troops. The juncture at which Vishwasrao, the son of and heir to the Peshwa, was killed proved to be the turning point. As history has it, his uncle, Bhausaheb, rushed into the melee and was never seen again. Whether he was killed in battle or survived is not known.

- (A) Fill in the blank with an appropriate answer.
The word 'armour' in the given extract means
- (B) Which of the following is the incorrect meaning of the phrase 'opposing forces'?
- To counter
 - To resist
 - To be hostile
 - In accordance with
- (C) What happened to Vishwasrao in the parallel world?

Ans. (A) ammunition

Explanation: Armour in the given extract is the ammunition possessed by the Marathas.

(B) (d) In accordance with

Explanation: An opposing force is a military unit tasked with representing an enemy, usually for training purposes in war scenarios. Hence, (d) is correct.

(C) In the parallel universe, where professor Gaitonde had been, the Marathas won that battle, and Vishwasrao narrowly escaped being shot.

SHORT ANSWER Type Questions (SA)

[2 marks]

Answer the following questions in about 40 - 50 words:

8. Explain the lack of determinism in a quantum theory.

Ans. According to the quantum theory of light, when an electron is fired from the source, it is not known where it could be. Only a rough estimate of its location can be made. This is what is said to be the lack of determinism in a quantum theory.

9. Comment on the statement- "Assuming that in this world there existed someone called Rajendra Deshpande".

Ans. Professor Gaitonde had gone through a very strange experience. He was transported to a different world altogether. History had altered its course, where the battle of Panipat was won by the Marathas and India was a country that was not subjected to slavery. It had learnt to stand on its feet and knew what self-respect was. But, in the real world, he wanted to return to Pune and talk to Rajendra Deshpande to help him understand what had happened. After the strange happening, he was unsure about the reality and wondered if Rajendra Deshpande existed.

10. Elucidate the things noticed by Professor Gaitonde as the train entered the British Raj territory.

Ans. A uniformed Anglo-Indian man named Sarhad, checked permits as the train stopped outside the station's long tunnel. The initials GBMR were painted on the sides of the train's blue carriages. Each waggon had a little Union Jack put on it as a gentle reminder that they

were in British territory. The Victoria Terminus station, the train's final stop, was exceptionally neat and well-kept. The majority of the staff members were Anglo-Indians and Parsees, along with a few British officers.

11. Where was Khan Sahib going and how did he intend to reach there?

Ans. Khan Sahib was going to Peshawar. After the train had reached Victoria terminus, he planned to take a Frontier Mail from Bombay central the same night and go to Delhi. Then to Lahore and then Peshawar. It would be a long journey and it would take him two days to reach Peshawar.

12. What completely surprised Professor Gaitonde when he entered the Forbes building?

Ans. Professor Gaitonde was shocked to see the East India Company flourishing. When he entered the Forbes building, he got to know something totally unexpected. He asked for his son, Mr. Vinay Gaitonde, and the English receptionist searched through the telephone list, the staff list and through the directory of the employees of all the branches of the firm but was not able to find anyone of that name.

13. What did the Professor decide to do when he realized that the world around him has suddenly become strange?

Ans. Professor Gaitonde was full of surprises as soon as he had stepped out of the train. Firstly, he saw the East India Company flourishing. And then he was surprised when he did not find the name of his son in the Forbes. He was so baffled that he decided to go to the library of the Asiatic Society to solve the puzzle of history. So, he made his way to the Town Hall.

14. What did professor discover through the books in the library?

Ans. Professor visited the Asiatic Society's Town Hall library. The list of history books, including his own, was requested by him. He cited four of his writings, but the history remained unchanged. The Battle of Panipat, however, had caused the fifth volume of history to take a new path. According to the book, the Marathas prevailed in the conflict, and Abdali was routed before being pursued by the Maratha army under the command of Sadashivrao Bhau and his young nephew, Vishwasrao.

15. Critically examine the way the victory of the Peshwas helped them.

Ans. The victory of the Peshwas was not only a great morale booster but it also established their supremacy in Northern India. The East India Company temporarily cancelled its plans to spread out further. For the Peshwas, the immediate result was the influence of Bhausaheb and Vishwasrao, who succeeded his father in 1780 A.D. The trouble-maker, Dadasaheb had to retire from state politics.

16. "Gangadharpant began to appreciate the India he had seen." Explain.

Ans. Professor Gaitonde began to appreciate the India he had seen as it was a country that had not been subjected to the slavery of the British. It was a self-reliant country and knew what self-respect was. From a position of strength and for commercial reasons, it had allowed the Britishers to set Bombay as the sole outpost.

17. Professor Gaitonde had a vital piece of evidence. Validate its importance.

Ans. Gaitonde put some notes in his pocket and walked out of the library. He also kept the 'Bakhar' into his left pocket carelessly. The notes and the book made the professor sound convincing that he didn't imagine the story. It was a significant piece of proof for him.

18. Justify the statement—"The victory of Peshwas affected the East India company."

Ans. The East India Company met its match in the new Maratha ruler, Vishwasrao and his brother Madhavrao. They expanded their influence all over India. The East India Company became limited to the areas near Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. As the Marathas set up their own centres for science and technology, the East India Company extended their help and offered aids and experts. But, they were accepted only to make the local centres self-sufficient.

19. Comment on the statement. "The twentieth century brought many changes inspired by the West."

Ans. In the twentieth century, India moved towards democracy. The Peshwas had lost their enterprise by then. They were gradually replaced by democratically elected bodies. The sultanate of Delhi even survived this change as it held no real influence. The king of Delhi was seen nothing more than a rubber stamp for the recommendations made by the central parliament.

20. How did the Marathas win the battle?

Ans. Professor Gangadharpant wanted to find the answer to his investigation of how the Marathas had won the battle. He went through the books and journals and found a clue to his question. It was Bhausahebanchi Bakhar. He found a three line account of how close Vishwasrao had come to being killed. But, God was merciful. A bullet shot brushed past his ear and he was saved by inches.

21. What happened in the Azad Maidan?

Ans. When the professor saw that the presidential chair was unoccupied, he went to occupy the chair but the audience protested loudly. According to them, the lecture series had no chairperson and the chair was symbolic. However, he kept on talking but the audience was in no mood to listen. Soon the tomatoes, eggs and other things began to rain down on him. Finally, the audience rushed to throw him out but he was seen nowhere.

LONG ANSWER Type Questions (LA)

[5 marks]

Answer the following questions in about 120 - 150 words:

22. "You neither travelled to the past nor the future. You were in the present experiencing a different World". Explain.

Ans. Professor Gaitonde had to deliver his one-thousandth presidential speech. Unfortunately, he met with an accident. During the collision, he became unconscious and started experiencing a different world. In this world, the Marathas ruled the country and India never fell prey to

the British. When he tried to take the seat of the president in a lecture going in the new world, he was physically thrown out of the meeting. When he regained his consciousness, he came back to the world he knew better. He went to Rajendra, who was a physicist to find answers to his questions. He told Gaitonde that he transitioned from one world to another and back again. He was able to experience two worlds although one at a time. He neither travelled to the past nor the future, he was in the present experiencing a different world.

23. Professor Gaitonde had passed through a fantastic experience or more correctly, a catastrophic experience. Discuss.

Ans. The professor had passed through a strange experience of living in two worlds. One in which he lived in present, and the other, where he had spent two days. Thus, Rajendra Deshpande stated that he had passed through a fantastic experience or more correctly, a catastrophic experience. In fact, Rajendra was quite right in his supposition. He related quantum theory to this incident. He said that the professor needed some sort of stimulus to go through this transition. In the present world, the stimulus was provided by his collision with the truck, while in the world where he stayed for two days, this stimulus was provided by the mob, who threw him out of the meeting.

24. Gangadharpant could not help comparing the country he knew with what he was witnessing around him. Explain.

Ans. Gangadharpant knew India which had seen the decline of Peshwas and also experienced the rule of the British. But the India, which he had seen in two days, was completely different. It was not a slave of the British. It knew what self-respect was. From a position of strength and for commercial reasons, it had allowed the British to set Bombay as the sole outpost. However, this India never fell prey to the foreign rule. The British were never able to exploit the resources of the country. As a result, India was able to become a self-reliant country. The East India Company, which gained supremacy in this world, had to rely on the conditions of Marathas to do business.

25. "You need some interaction to cause a transition." Who said this and why?

Ans. This statement is made by Rajendra Deshpande in response to Professor Gaitonde's question of why he made the transition to the other world. This interaction was provided by the collision with the truck.

Gaitonde was preparing for his thousandth address in a seminar. After the collision, he reached the other world where the situation was entirely different from that in the world he was living. According to this new world, India had never become a colony to the British. Rather the Peshawas became strong enough that the East India Company dared not to attack India.

26. What did Professor Gaitonde see in the Azad Maldan? What happened when he went to occupy the chair on the dais?

Ans. In the Azad Maldan, Gaitonde found people moving towards a pandal to listen to a lecture. Although the lecture was in progress, people kept coming and going but the professor stared at the platform where the presidential chair was unoccupied. Like a piece of iron gets attracted towards a magnet, he swiftly moved towards the chair and occupied it.

When the professor went to occupy the chair, the audience protested loudly. According to them, the lecture series had no chairperson and the chair was symbolic. However, he kept on talking but the audience was in no mood to listen. He soon became a target for a shower of tomatoes, eggs and other objects. Finally, the audience rushed to throw him out but he was seen nowhere.

27. How did Rajendra explained the 'reality' to the professor? How did he relate the lack of determination in quantum theory to the professor's experience?

Ans. Rajendra explained to the professor that reality was what we experience directly with our senses. It might not be unique as it was found from experiments on atoms and their constituent particles. The physicist discovered that the behaviour of these systems cannot be predicted even if all the physical laws that govern those systems are known.

Rajendra related the lack of determination to the quantum theory as he said that the path of an electron fired from a source cannot be determined as the electron can be found anywhere in different locations in different worlds. Once the observer finds where it is, we know which world are we talking about. But these alternative worlds could exist just the same. The catastrophic situations offer radically different alternatives for the world to proceed. It seems that so far as reality is concerned all alternatives are existing but the observer can experience only one of them at a time.

28. Write a detailed account of the different history that Professor Gaitonde read in the fifth volume of the book in the library.

Ans. The fifth volume of the book mentioned that the Marathas won the Battle of Panipat. Abdali was routed and chased back to Kabul by the Maratha army led by Sadashivrao Bhau and his nephew, the young Vishwasrao. The victory of the Marathas in the battle was not only a morale booster to the Marathas but it also established their power in Northern India. The East India Company temporarily postponed its expansion programmes. This increased the influence of Bhausaheb and Vishwasrao who succeeded his father in 1750 A.D. The troublemaker Dadasaheb ultimately left the state politics. Vishwasrao and his brother, Madhavrao's political insight expanded their influence all over India. The company's influence was limited only to areas near Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. For political reasons, the Peshwas kept the puppet Mughal regime alive in Delhi. In the nineteenth century, the Peshwas realised the importance of a technological age and set up their own centres for science and technology. In the twentieth century, India moved towards democracy. The Peshwas had lost their enterprise and democratically elected bodies replaced them gradually. The sultanate at Delhi was just a recommendation made by the centre parliament.

29. What happened when the train entered Sarhad? Who was Khan Sahib and where was he going?

Ans. The train stopped beyond the long tunnel of a small station called Sarhad. Professor Gaitonde noticed an Anglo-Indian in uniform. He was checking permits. The blue carriages of the train carried the letters GBMR on the side. There were tiny Union Jack painted on each carriage which was the gentle reminder that they were in British territory. As the train stopped at its destination, Victoria Terminus, the station looked very neat and clean. The staff was mostly Anglo-Indians and Parsees along with a few British officers.

Khan Sahib was a fellow traveler on the train who was going to Peshawar. He spoke a lot about his business and the professor listened to him willingly. After the train reached Victoria terminus, he would take a Frontier Mail from Bombay central the same night and go to Delhi. Then to Lahore and then Peshawar. It would be a long journey and it would take two days to reach Peshawar.

30. What historical information was presented in the last volume?

Ans. In this different world, Professor Gaitonde was very confused. He wanted to solve the riddle of history.

As soon as he entered the reading room of the library, he asked for a list of history books including his own. The last volume revealed that the Battle of Panipat was won by the Marathas. The Maratha army chased back Abdali back to Kabul by Sadashivrao Bhau and his nephew, the young Vishwasrao. He was surprised to read his work for the first time. He read that after the victory, the Marathas gained a great deal of confidence and they established their supremacy in northern India. The East India Company temporarily postponed its expansion programme. This increased the influence of Bhausaheb and Vishwasrao, who succeeded his father in 1780 A.D. Dadasaheb, who was a trouble-maker was pushed to the background and thus he left the state politics. Vishwasrao and his brother Madhavrao expanded their influence all over India. The Peshwas kept the puppet Mughal regime alive for the political reasons. In the nineteenth century, the Peshwas realised the importance of a technological age and set up their own centres for science and technology. In the twentieth century, India moved towards democracy. The Peshwas had lost their enterprise and democratically elected bodies replaced them gradually. The sultanate at Delhi was just a recommendation made by the centre parliament.

31. Why did Rajendra Deshpande call the professor's experience a 'catastrophic experience'?

Ans. Rajendra Deshpande called the professor's experience a 'catastrophic experience' because in a catastrophic situation, different alternatives can exist but the observer can experience only one reality at a time. When the professor made a transition and experienced two worlds, one at a time; one world in which he lives and the other where he had spent his two days, both the worlds had a history of their own. The world in which he is living has the history which he knows and the other world has its own different facts. The professor didn't travel past or future but he was in the present and experiencing different worlds. The transition could be because of the collision which he had with the truck. At the time of the collision, the professor was thinking about catastrophe theory and its role in the war. The neurons in his brain acted as a trigger and made the transition.

32. How did Rajendra Deshpande apply his theory of Catastrophic experience regarding the Battle of Panipat? [Delhi Gov. QB 2022]

Ans. Gangadherpant narrated to Rajendra his experience at the Azad Maidan meeting. For two days, he was in coma. He had met with an accident. He asked Rajendra Prasad to explain where he had spent those days. Professor Gaitonde's experience was initially explained by Rajendra Deshpande using two ideas he was familiar with: the catastrophe theory and the absence of determinism in quantum theory. Due to the possibility that the professor was contemplating the Battle of Panipat at the time of the truck collision, Rajendra believed that the professor had imagined the events. Gaitonde, whose adventure was too real to be made up, was not persuaded by this explanation. The description of the Third Battle of Panipat on the torn-off page of the Bhausahebanchi Bakhar differed from what he had actually written, and he showed it to Rajendra.

33. Justify the statement — "Rajendra Deshpande explained the concept of reality with the example of movement of an electron."

Ans. Rajendra Deshpande tried to rationalise the professor's experience on the basis of two scientific theories. Gangadharpant had passed through a strange catastrophic experience. The juncture at which Vishwasrao was killed in the Battle proved to be a turning point. The Marathas lost their morale and lost the battle. Rajendra then moved to his second explanation. Reality is not exactly what we experience directly with our senses. It can also have other manifestations. For example, the electron does not follow the laws of science. It is called lack of determinism in quantum theory. It can be found in different places and each is real. Professor also experienced two worlds, one that was present, and other that was his imagination.

34. A character sketch simply depicts the key personality traits, behaviour, background and nature of a specific character.

In the light of the above information, write the character sketch of professor Rajendra.

Ans. Rajendra Deshpande was a mathematical and scientific expert who tried to rationalise professor Gaitonde's experience by applying the catastrophe theory and the lack of determinism in Quantum theory. He understood both the theories well and was able to apply them to Gaitonde's adventure. This shows his knowledge and expertise in his field of work. In addition, he displayed an attitude of loyalty to his friend, professor Gaitonde as he did not judge him and believed his story completely, despite it being totally bizarre. He displayed analytical power by initially analysing the story as a figment of Gaitonde's imagination. But when Gaitonde showed evidence of the parallel world, Rajendra displayed flexibility by changing his explanation based on his mathematical and scientific knowledge.

35. The story is called 'The Adventure'. Compare it with the adventure described in 'We're Not Afraid to Die..... if we all can be together'

Ans. The underlying theme of both the stories, 'The Adventure' and 'We Are Not Afraid to Die... if we all can be together' is the same. However, the application of the theme to events is different in both. One deals with the adventure in a real life situation and the other one is about the adventure that was mentally experienced. In the story, 'We're Not Afraid to Die... if we all can be together', the characters take a hazardous sea voyage, overcome the odds and survive. Whatever the dangers were, they were very real and could have far more dangerous consequences. On the other hand, in the story, 'The Adventure', the protagonist, Gaitonde, does not embark upon any adventurous journey but what he experienced was adventurous. His car collided with a truck which triggered his mind and he travelled to a world which was different from the world that he lived in. His adventure was bizarre and hard to believe that it was real.

