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ESSAY COMMENT SHEET

Name of Candidate	Harsh Parashar									
Medium Hindi/Eng.	English				Registration Number	214438				
Test Code	1253				Date					

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

Section A

1. As government expands, liberty contracts

In his well-known classic "1984", George Orwell presents a dystopian world, dominated by state control over human thought. This, as per the book, is done by "thought police", an elite force which is able to scan any individual and record his thoughts. The individual is then rewarded or punished, even before committing any crime, based solely on his thoughts. This reflects the extremum of encroachment of government on private human sphere, eroding any vestiges of liberty he is entitled to. Though hypothetical, this book raises several questions on the propriety and ethicality of state interference on liberty.

Orwellian liberty has been used in the restrictive sense of political thoughts and beliefs. However, Amartya Sen in "poverty and famines" expands this to the concept of "capability" or positive liberty, while negative liberty seeks to prevent encroachment, Sen's capability expands the horizons of a person's liberty to help him lead the best possible life for him. For example, health and education expand liberty, as they help a person create informed opinions on issues that concern him. In fact, one can add several dimensions to liberty such as ownership of property, dignity of life, meaningful occupation etc, all of which help a person become his best version.

Classical Enlightenment thinkers saw government as an essential prerequisite for liberty. Hobbes in his "Leviathan" considers man as incapable of cooperation and the state of nature as the "state of war of all against all". To ensure cooperation, all men ought to submit before a single authority, a monarch if possible. This would ensure security of life and property for all, which is essential for the development of mankind. This "Social Contract Theory" has often formed the basis of a government's claim to power.

Post-Modernist thinkers, however, not only disagree with this idea but vehemently oppose the structures of power that the social contract ends up creating. Michel Foucault posits that the government doesn't protect liberty, but rather captures "biopower", which is the control over life and liberty of all its subjects. Instead of the 'summum bonum', i.e. the highest good, the 'epistemes', which are pieces of technical knowledge come to control all aspects of life. From birth to death, government takes away liberty by say regulating abortion laws or compulsory sterilisation and euthanasia laws.

Other than epistemes, state erodes a person's liberty by symbolic and often physical violence. Norbert Elias in his "The Civilizing Process" claims that society moves towards a state of stricter control due to "state monopoly of violence". In any state, only the violence committed by the government is considered legitimate, while all competing claimants are termed as terrorists or miscreants. This dual control - of labels and physical violence, reduces a citizen to being an obedient follower of the state morality, reducing his independence of thought and action.

Gramsci, a neo-Marxist, in his "Prison Notebooks" takes a more nuanced view that state exercises control over individual liberty through "cultural Hegemony", where the structures of rewards and punishments, the propaganda tools and even the social stratification are ways through which government doesn't need to use the threat of violence. Thus, a person enrolling up for army might do it for courage, valour and patriotism, rather than the government's threat to punish him otherwise.

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A very subtle way in which government's expansion may manifest into erosion of liberty is by generating a reaction to its own actions. The failure of the early Indian state to provide basic health and education to the remote tribal villages of Bengal and Chattisgarh led to left wing Extremism (LWE). This reactionary movement has created vested interests in keeping the areas underdeveloped, to provide legitimacy to the movement itself. This, however, severely erodes the liberties of people of the region. Same is true for Islamic radicalism, North East Extremism etc. Such counter-governments sustain themselves by juxtaposing themselves against the government.

Technology, the great enabler for the 21st century, has also played a role in creating and sustaining governments and counter-governments that chip away at privacy. "Mass surveillance", a government programme to monitor all activities of its citizens non-discriminatory is at the core of this debate. The PRISM programme of US government, later leaked by WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange and Edward Snowden is one such glaring example. The irony is that USA posits itself as the champion of liberal democracy, and yet, the seduction of mass surveillance was too much to shed off.

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के लिए

Question No.

संख्या

All governments, by nature, seek to enforce a certain way of thought, speech and action, which forms the fountain head of its laws. While classical elite theorists like Pareto and Mosca believe all governments are a "tyranny of minority over majority", pluralist thinkers like Robert Dahl favour democracy over other forms of government. So, ~~in~~ This is because authoritarian regimes such as monarchy (absolute ones) and dictatorship don't even claim to ~~the~~ champion liberty for its citizens. Thus, this begs the question whether there is a reason to believe that as certain forms of government (here, democracy) expand, liberty might actually increase?

After the Korean war, the ^{North} and South Korea took different ways to development - communism and capitalism respectively, modelled after the cold war rivals - USSR and US respectively. While South Korea ranks highest on EW's Democracy Index, UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI) and SDSN's Global Happiness Index, the opposite is true for North Korea. Thus, there is indeed some case to argue for democracy, but not all democracies are liberal. Hungary, under Victor Orban, has declared itself "illiberal democracy" which means, it doesn't consider itself as accountable to people's freedom, despite being a democracy.

Democratic governments are troublesome for another reason. All democratic governments promote the idea of "welfare state" where the state is *paterfamilias* (father of the unfathered) for all destitutes. To provide such essential human needs, the state hugely expands its bureaucratic machinery, such as in India. The bureaucrats often end up ruling the served, rather than serving the ruled. Further, such a top-down welfareism creates a "dependency culture" which Oscar Lewis calls "culture of poverty". On the flip side, to fund such welfare programmes, the government imposes hefty taxes, especially on the wealth-creators which Monetarist thinkers such as Milton Friedman see as "state-sponsored theft".

Such structures aren't exclusive to democracies only. China, the economic power-house, has presented a model of "government-liberty tradeoff". It promotes heavy surveillance including facial recognition and profiling, in return for promises of technology-led development and state doles. The alternatives of such top-down structures are bottom-up structures something which Gandhi espoused in his "Gram Swaraj Model". Here, village republics will be the true drivers of welfareism. Unfortunately, this hasn't been tried on a large scale and on small scales, such as Kibbutz farms of Israel, it has not yielded successful results.

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The difference between the top-down and bottoms-up models lies more in the decentralization of power than in the scale on which power is exercised. In other words, as the world progresses, having more powerful states is perhaps unavoidable. What we rather ought to do is to decentralize it to state structures, which can provide the Montesquieu "checks and balances" to those exercising these powers.

The horizontal separation of power, must be complemented with a vertical separation, such as local self government to ensure the little man his say in his governance. This will ensure he feels secure in his skin, free in his thoughts and empowered in his actions, vis-a-vis the big state who has monopoly over them. This belief that one day we will see such an order of things is captured by Tagore in his immortal quote

"where the mind is without fear and the head is held high,

Into that heaven of freedom, Father. Let my country awake."

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Section B

Nearly all men can withstand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power

"Power corrupts and Absolute power corrupts absolutely".

These words of Lord Acton, a British parliamentarian and statesman succinctly captures the abuse of power and its effect on a man's character. If there is one person who has lived this quote, it is Adolf Hitler. Hitler in his "Mein Kampf" narrates how he progressed from a foot soldier to a decorated war hero, only to see Germany lose world war I. How he survived the ignominy of defeat, how he captured power of the Weimar Republic and orchestrated the worst humanitarian crisis of 20th century, if not all history - the Holocaust.

Hitler's example raises several important points.

The real test of a man's character is his "social action", that is, his action oriented towards others. Hitler, in his personal life, was very disciplined and had no apparent vices and yet, in his publicly oriented actions, he was driven by hatred, violence and lust for more power. Further, ~~the~~ ^{man's} character is often subtle and not apparent under public gaze. In the age-old parable, your character is what you do when nobody is watching.

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Different philosophers and thinkers hold man's inherent character in different regards. Aristotle's naturalist view is that man, by nature, is good and wants to do good. Hobbes in "Leviathan" holds a contrasting view that man is an abominable creature, incapable of cooperation and goodness and needs an external agent to force him to do good. Rousseau holds the midground that both modern man and first man were decadent, while the stage in between, of "noble savages" was the best of all possible human innate characters.

However, most thinkers, especially scientists hold man's "survival instinct" as something even more primal, and quite divorced from character. Man's instinctive disposition to the Darwinian "survival of the fittest" is best exemplified in the classic novel "Robinson Crusoe". Yuval Noah Harari in "Sapiens" writes that it was only man's survival instinct that helped him fight the adversities of and survive in the polar areas permafrost, without the natural adaptation like a polar bear's fur coat and a seal's blubber.

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There is a third innate human instinct, which Nietzsche calls the "will to power", which means that all the struggle in the world is to capture more power - whether over nature, other animals or fellow human beings. The interplay of these three factors - his struggle for survival, his instincts to be good and his endeavour will to power, are a man's biography. The Hindu philosophical school "Nyaya", espoused by Akshapada Gautam labels this as three aspects of purusha - Rajasik (रजसिक), Tamasic (तमसिक) and sattvik (सत्त्विक).

The relative dominance of one over the other in a man's persona is dominated, both by his "nature and nurture". Mead in his "Mind, self and society" labels this as the process of creation of self. Hence, a man might retain his good character while fighting off adversities and struggling for power given the right nurture from his parents and teachers. The same holds if the man fails to retain his good character.

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To understand the effects of power, let us first understand what power people really can acquire. Max Weber defines power as the ability of a person to pursue his own will, without while resisting pressure from others. Compared to his inward-looking definition, French and Raven stipulated that power is the ability to influence others. This can be done by holding the right to reward or punish others, to motivate someone else by charisma, by black-mailing someone using secret knowledge etc. In all such cases, power is derived from the obedience of the person on whom the power is exercised. If the person refuses to acknowledge and obey, there will be no power in the hands of the holder. This is why, Weber believes that power is a "zero sum game".

Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis, believes that man is "bioprogrammed" to pursue more power due to his own inherent insecurities, lying deep within his psyche. This, he analyses with the three instruments of Id, super-ego and Ego. According to him, Id which is the incoherent instinct is driven towards power, and is held back only by super-ego, which is the internalized form of social morality. Thus, the struggle for power can manifest as expression of his deep conscience and character.

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A related aspect of power is the unwillingness of those who hold it to let go. In other words, power structures tend to be status-quoist and self-reinforcing. Machiavelli in "prince" not only defends it, but advocates it for all kings and rulers. For him, lying, deceit, cruelty and fear are all necessary for a man, especially a politician to hold power; even though he should put an idealistic face. Similar advice is given by Chanakya in 'Arthashastra' and Sun Tzu in 'The Art of War'. Thus, these political philosophers see a tradeoff in the ability to compromise one's character and the ability to hold power in public life.

character ^{power}
~~power~~ resonates not only with ~~character~~, but adversities too. In fact, adversities are a major test of a man's character, for example, Gandhi, when boarded & thrown off the 1st class railway carriage at Pietermaritzburg railway station in South Africa, chose passive resistance, which became his lifelong song. He went on to lead the South African Indians under Natal Indian Congress. This epitomizes a man who under the face of adversity went on to acquire leadership powers, especially due to his strength of character, of the values of perseverance and fortitude, and his ability to stick to his principles.

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Thus, The differentiating factor between a person of principles and one with compromised principles is how he chooses to respond to adversities. While the latter follow Machiavellian principles, the former stick to the standards of "Caesar's wife". In other words, they tend to hold themselves to even higher standards of public conduct and propriety than a common man. This is the idea espoused by Merwyn Frost in "The Normative Theory of Ethics". He further substantiates this by saying that failing to hold to higher standards by high functionaries, leads to corruption in lower levels of government too. Thus, with great power comes great responsibility.

Gandhi believed in this idea of responsible power. He stated that "It is impossible to be good in one part of life and bad in another. Life is an indivisible whole". Hence, not only one ought to hold himself to proper conduct in public life, but also in private life and that, the two cannot be separated. This goodness is not enforced outwardly as Machiavelli prescribes, but comes from within - through right speech, thought and conduct (शरीर, वचन, धर्म).

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The idea of power has to be replaced with ~~an~~ that of "Ethical power" or the "power with principles". The narrative that one ought to 'compromise with principles to gain power' has to be replaced with strengthen the principles to gain power. As Thomas Jefferson said

"In matters of style, float like water. In matters of principle, stand like a rock."