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Simrandeep Kaur

UPSC Roll no.- 3507500

Essay - Test -2.

Section-A

③ The hardest choices requires the strongest wills.

In 18th century, two small children aged 9 years & 7 years old were standing tall in the court of a tyrant ruler of Sirhind - Wazir Khan. The ruler wanted to convert the two innocents into his religion with intent of taking revenge of their rebel father. The children were

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given allurements of luxury, comfort & well-being in return. But the two didn't bow at any cost. The ruler attempted to frighten them with death sentence. Surprisingly, these two brave children had the strongest will to make the hardest choice of death over losing their faith.

These children are none other but two Sahibzadas of Guru Gobind Singh ji - Zorawar Singh & Fateh Singh. Their choice in such a tough time was reflecting their inner conscience & burning desire irrespective of their age.

It is not the wisdom or experience that puts a person to choose rightly & the hardest way. It is the will to conquer mountains, uncover hidden

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truths & resist all odds, that makes all the difference. We need to understand What are the hardest choices? How to & why the strongest wills are important? Are all choices right? let us explore.

It is commonly said - "Where there is will, there is a way". It means we have one or another ways to navigate through complexities of life. But in given number of ways, some are hard, some are harder & some are the hardest.

The level of the hardness of choices increase when the path is novel & unprecedented. For example, the discovery of exoplanets or origin of the universe are hard questions requiring strong wills for missions like James Webb space telescope.

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Secondly, the level of hardness increases when one has to do extreme sacrifices. For instance, Mohammed Ali, the great boxer, had to muster courage & stronger will power in his fight of the century with Joe Frazer.

Indeed it was harder & required stronger will. But his most difficult choice was not to support ~~in~~ America in Vietnam war, 1967. It was the hardest as he had to sacrifice his boxing titles, but he carried the strongest will to choose values over valuables.

Further, Along with sacrifice, the path becomes the hardest when you are alone & the stream of

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popular opinions is against you. It can be illustrated in case of Indian foreign policy. Yes, it is hard to carry strategic autonomy amongst the great powers.

Rudyard Kipling says,

'While walking among the kings, don't lose the common touch.'

But the recent walking out of SCO because of ommitting reference to Pahalgam terror attack, is one of the hardest choices made by India where it always cherishes multilateralism. It has demonstrated the strongest will to walk alone if you are not respected in a group.

It can be further elaborated how the strongest wills make all the difference. The strongest wills are the

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fuel that drives our actions & sustains their consistency. It is because Will provides us clarity & purpose. If one knows 'Why'? , he definitely discovers 'How'?

To illustrate, let us go to Jharkhand & listen to the story of Pratima Barwa. A tribal girl whose dream to play Hockey for India was shattered by an injury. But she never let her burning desire to douse off. She trained other tribal girls of the village with stones & sticks.

Indeed, it was the hardest choice ~~because~~ in den of ignorance. But Pratima trained Salima Tete, current Captain of Indian Hockey by saying,

"You need not be rich to wear Indian jersey, you need to be disciplined."

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Indeed, the strongest wills make the impossible possible. The choices which were the hardest earlier, becomes a new normal. But the question arises — Can hardness of the choice & the strength of our will can determine righteousness in our action?

Sometimes, they can be choices of narrow self-interest. And the will can also be rooted in corrupted power. The stance of America on Afro-Asian immigrants to violate their privacy & dignity is the hardest choice rooted in will to Make America Great Again. But it is antithetical to values of pluralism & co-existence, the values that shaped USA.

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Nevertheless, the actions taken ~~on~~
based on moral reasoning & ethics of
care, nurtures the strongest will power
for tricky terrains. Atticus Finch, character
of 'To Kill a Mockingbird' by Harper Lee,
navigated such terrain to choose justice &
fairness for Robinson when even his
family & friends were against him.

Further, though a single individual
is has enough will power to make
right & hard choices. But the strength
of collective will is unparalleled. The

case study of Pachgoan in Maharashtra
shows how a single person cannot
protect the forests. It was possible when
the whole community jointly managed
Bamboo trees overcoming extreme difficulties.

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As Victor Frankl rightly said,

'Between stimulus & response, we have our choices'

The hardness of the way can't be diluted, but strength of our collective conscia can be a powerful weapon to ~~can~~ overcome all obstacles. In many cases, you are ~~somehow~~ forced to go tougher without any free will or choice.

The climate change & global warming is one such tough circumstances where we either & collaborates our will power or perish alone, waiting for Dear Earth to loose its Goldilock zone.

So, even if nations have to forgoe their sovereignty to pool in global governance such as International solar

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Alliance, there is necessity of enlightened national interest to make global conscious hard choices.

At societal level, let us shed off the shallow choices of communalism & hatredness, it is required to make ~~the~~ hardest choices of Inclusive societies with strong will power of fraternity & integrity.

The challenges will come, they will become the hardest, but we will remain captain of our indomitable will power. W.E. Henly's lines will shed light on the inevitable strength of Resilient will :-

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" No matter how stout the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul."

Essay Edge by Farees Rahman

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Section - B

When no one is to blame, everyone is to blame.

In Middle East, there is grave humanitarian crisis where nations are fighting violent wars with no concern for human rights, be it in Gaza, Syria or Iran. Who is responsible for it?
Is it Iran who have been using proxy terrorists and hiding his Nuclear

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Cards from the world? Or ~~are~~ do we blame Israel for his hyper-nationalist offensive defence? Wait, can we blame America for its skewed interventions in Iraq, Afghanistan & now in Iran?

No one is to be blamed, everyone is to be blamed in Middle East.

Situations like this with multiple ~~actors~~ stakeholders are not rare but the reality of our multifaceted world. In this essay, let us explore the nuances of responsibility of crisis.

More than blaming anybody, our focus should be on learning & recreating our realities. But this journey begins with who will take responsibility?

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The Original Position :- Who is culprit?

It is difficult to figure out who is solely responsible for a given problem. Some errors emerged out of systemic structures. It is ignorance to blame upper castes, whites & males solely for untouchability, racism & patriarchy respectively.

These systemic errors are reinforced when whole societies fail to critically examine the wrong traditions. Peter ~~Bourdieu~~ Bourdieu, the sociologists, blames 'the Doxas', - unexamined social structures for hierarchical inequalities in societies across the world.

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Our search for the original perpetrator becomes futile in multifaceted crisis. Such as Ahmedabad ~~crisis~~ Airplane Crash points fingers towards Air India, Boeing & authorities of US, Bench, India. In such cases, all have to be accountable.

In addition, the traditional sense of justice contains error when it attempts to put complete blame on one person. It is the biggest lacunae in cultural policing such as Khap Panchayats.

Recently, a social media influencer Kamal Kaur from a lower caste has been brutally murdered for her immoral content as Moral Cleansing drive. Can we

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blame only content creators for socially unacceptable behaviour. Isn't it the algorithm that favours the sensational content ~~to be rewarded~~ for rewards & pushes the people to cross their boundaries? So who will take responsibility?

Everyone is to blame, No one is responsible

There emerges a dilemma if all are culprits, then who will take responsibility & course-correct the problem. Aristotle famously remarked that "Everyone's property, nobody's responsibility".

It can be illustrated how the promise of collective security of

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United Nations is becoming a sham with incessant wars, crimes & terror rising in the world. For issues like terrorism, many players are responsible especially those who sponsor it. But with no single naming & shaming, this problem will never cease.

It necessitates the need of transparency & accountability to discover the original cause of crisis. It is not the matter of belittling others, but rising better together. For example, during Cold War, Non-aligned ~~to~~ Afro-Asian nations demonstrated the wrong power-blocs of both US & USSR. Their naming & shaming made the nuclear weapons a taboo.

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Additionally, whenever responsibility is diluted it becomes an escape mechanism for the real culprit. ~~Also~~ And the innocent people becomes scapegoat. The ethnic crisis of Africa today, ~~a~~ for instance, is rooted in colonial African Scramble who rarely takes responsibility for this humanitarian crisis.

Retributive Justice :- The Course Correction

We should not limit our endeavours to blame one or other, our emphasis should be on how to overcome the crisis in ^{the} short term & Never to repeat in the long term.

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As we ^{have} discussed earlier, it is not important who is responsible originally in systemic crisis; such as Caste based historical injustices. In contemporary times, still Indian society is deeply divided on Caste despite decades of reservation.

The problem has increased manifold when ~~pol~~ reservation as a ~~pol~~ matter of policy has become a matter of right. There is need of course correction with

Caste-based Censur for tackling political expediency & incessant demands for quotas.

The empirical based policies & social justice are more likely to

When one & everyone is responsible.

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Similarly, at global level, every nation is responsible for reforming multilateralism. The Democratic Deficit in UN can only be eradicated if ~~are~~ narrow interests & not collective interests are diluted. It is important to recognize Common but differentiated responsibilities for climate, poverty & wars.

In these global crisis, if no one can be punished or protected, it becomes an indivisible security. Like in South Asia, India has more responsibility in Indo-Pacific to act as Net security provider. In threats such as piracy, cyclones, if no one is to blame, then one can be a saviour who has Competence & will.

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Moreover, the act of blaming reduces the scope of negotiation & conciliation. The recently released Netflix series 'The Adolescence' also portrays the futility in blaming, there is need of open debates for responsible & ethical social media engagements.

Further, there is need to transcend beyond binary justices where one is victim & other is the accused. The Alternative Dispute Resolutions (ADR) are welcome step to ensure no one is responsible, every one is involved.

To resolve crisis in Middle East, we also need conference rooms

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and not battlefields for truly
understanding each other's grievances.

Every actor has their own side of
story, demanding complete justice from
all the stakeholders.

It is unjust to put improportionate
burden of onus on one actor. It
is equally unjust to dilute the
accountability in open space. Let us be
responsible for our own small roles
and be empathetic to grievances of
others.

When individuals take responsibility,
societies become resilient.

When societies are resilient,
the nations rises high.

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The rising nations make the world
'Vasudaiva Kutumbkum'."

In this one earth, one family,
the stream of justice & wisdom
flows.

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