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Ashi Sharma

Nex IAS Roll no : NIS202366136

Test Code : TC-061

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Mode : Online

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feedback Essay- 1



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Feedback Essay 2

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Section A

Q4. The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience but where he stands at times of challenge & controversy.

When you look around a typical urban skyline, what do you see? A cluster of unimpressive cuboidal towers would be the most common answer. Most architects today relish the ease of standardised construction. But there was one who rejected the convenience of orthogonality, Zaha Hadid. She came up with an entirely new visual vocabulary of parametric architecture, challenging the right angles with fluid curves. Her audacity won her the coveted Pritzker Prize.

She could have conformed to the mainstream, but she challenged it facing even controversy for her eccentric style. This was because to her "If it was

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easy, everybody would it" and this courage was her true & ultimate measure as a woman & architect.

Comfort & Convenience offer us peace. Challenge & controversy on the other hand question are very being. While the former soothe us, the later threaten us. But both present to us the unglue ways in which people choose to deal with these situations.

In this essay we shall explore why comfortable & convenient situations are not the best judge of character, why challenges & controversy are a better indicator. Why some people fail to even thrive in comfort and how to ensure we are able to withstand challenges.

Comfort & Convenience: A faulty metric

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Comfort & Convenience breed surplus. In such situations one has no dearth of resources, guidance & support from others.

The environment is highly conducive and enabling. The stage is basically set for sure shot success. India's colonial ~~go~~ conquest by the British is an excellent example.

Colonialism was made possible by fall of mughals, infighting amongst rulers, deep divisions in the society, and the impetus offered by industrial revolution in Britain.

Comfort & Convenience thus don't leave much for speculation, limiting their ability in assessing a person. Another issue with them is their exclusive access.

Not all of us are born with a silver spoon in our mouth. In India, the top 1%

of people corner 40% of the wealth, clearly the bottom 99% do not enjoy the same comforts as the bourgeois. This discrepancy erodes credibility of comfort & convenience to

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Judge people who don't even have access to them.

Challenges & Controversies: The real battle

Challenges & Controversies requires us to overcome obstacles. Often these obstacles are designed to retard our progress and stifle our spirit. It takes immense courage to tear down these obstacles, which is representative of a strong character. Malala Yousafzai overcame Taliban's threats against her life and fought for education for women. her bravery even earned her a Nobel Peace Prize.

Challenges & Controversies represent a scarcity situation. In the absence of requisite resources, people are forced to work under highly stressful situations. And those who withstand such adverse conditions emerge as true winners. In 1991 India was burdened with the triple deficit problem. The Govt's novel LPG reforms

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not only saved our economy but paved way for us to become the 5th largest economy globally in three decades.

Challenges are ruthless, they spare no one. Often times these challenges are posed by our loved ones making ~~the~~ matters even worse. But those ~~that~~ who are able to morally defend themselves even against their family & loved ones are truly remarkable beings. In Ramayana, Vibhishan tries to reason with Ravana, but when his brother refuses to ~~see~~ the light, he bravely holds his ground and instead sides with Lord Rama.

Controversies have inherent latent costs. They cost people their respect, a value that is built over a time. Controversies attack directly at one's credibility, causing us moral discomfort. Those bravehearts that are able to dismiss controversies through their willpower and



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effort are able to escape redeem themselves and show their true value as a person.

Cricketer Hardik Pandya faced many controversies during IPL 2024, but through his hardwork was not only able to gain back his respect & support from fans, but also enabled India to lift the T20 world cup after 14 years.

Challenges create a restrictive environment. One where people don't have faith in your abilities, they don't trust you, they discredit & dismiss you and they even deny you an opportunity to prove them wrong. But despite such odds, when a person is able to thrive & succeed, it speaks volumes about his character. famous industrialist, Mr Sreekant Bhole, a co-founder of Belant Industries faced such hardships due to his visual impairment and yet succeeded, making him truly an inspiration.

Challenges & controversies in addition to being restrictive also create situations wherein help is available.

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Choice is without vic. There is no clear cut right solution, and a choice has to be made between lesser of the two evils. Developing countries today are forced to choose between development and environmental conservation. And yet when countries like India emerge as top performers ~~in~~ amongst G20 cohort in the Climate Performance Index it is truly remarkable.

To deal with challenges & controversies requires great courage for it often involves trying to change a deep rooted status quo. People in order to protect status quo, go to great lengths in destroying even noble attempts towards reformation. Raja Ram Mohan Roy dared to challenge the social evils facing backlash from traditionalists. His zeal for reformation despite challenges ~~to~~ immortalised his persona.

Thus challenges & controversies and not comfort & convenience are the ultimate measure of a man. But interestingly,

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Sometimes some people are not able to thrive even in the most comfortable situations. Consider Midas, a wealthy king who was bestowed with the golden touch. Instead of prosperity, Midas doomed owing to his greed. &

In other situations people start taking comfort & convenience for granted. The meteoric rise & fall of Kingfisher under Vijay Malaya is cautionary tale against extravagance & overindulgence.

Challenge & Controversy Proofing

Comforts & Convergences may be exclusionary but challenges & controversies are highly inclusive. They trouble everybody Rich/poor, young/old everybody has to face challenges & controversies at least once in their life. So it is imperative that we build the ability to not only withstand challenges but also thrive ~~the~~ against them.

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To ensure we are not carried away by the winds of challenges, we must have a strong moral foundation to anchor us firmly. The New Education Policy (2020) thrust on value based education is a step in the right direction to nurture kids who will become ethical adults later.

To deal with challenges we must resist negativity & failure biases. Instead of catastrophising the situation we should focus on finding solutions by developing a positive mindset. An inspiration in this regard is JK Rowling who did not give up when 12 publishers turned down her Harry Potter manuscripts.

Challenges & Contraversies are confusing. ~~to~~ To solve these mysteries we need to develop creative out of the box thinking abilities. When the world came to a halt during the lockdown,



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businesses devised the Work from home model to deal with the crisis.

Therefore in life the true measure of a person is not gauged by how well he enjoys his comfort & conveniences. Almost everybody, if given the chance could do that. But, it is measured by how well a person is able to withstand challenges & controversies and emerge unscathed & Victorious.

Just like the true measure of Ajuna was not how he reigned in peace, ~~but~~ but how he sided with dharma in the battlefield. We too should be inspired to quash any challenges which come our way and be the best versions of our-selves.

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Section B

Q6.

A single drop never feels responsible for the flood.

~~Yes~~ What is common between Aurangzeb & Mohammad Bin Tulagh? Yes, both were grand rulers over the Indian Subcontinent in the medieval era. Both belonged to great dynasties Mughals & Delhi Sultanate respectively. But interestingly both were also responsible for the downfall of these mighty dynasties owing to their problematic policies. Their hubris however denied this reality. After all when has a single drop felt responsible for causing a flood?

When problems strike, panic and distress escalates. In this mayhem it is a common tendency to blame the circumstances, people seldom take responsibility for their own actions in the mess.

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But why do these single drops shirk responsibilities? What problems are created by this apathy? ~~Should~~ Is there hope for single drops to turn the tide? And how do we enable this courage in people. Let us uncover the answers to these questions one by one.

When in doubt, blame others

Times of a crisis are emotionally & physically challenging. They take a massive toll on an individual. To protect one's own skin, a common response is often denial. To bury one's head in the sand like an ostrich helps avoid facing the situation. China did something similar when the world was raising questions regarding its role in the spread of Corona virus. Denial was easier than justifying.

Another problematic reaction in a crisis is to save oneself first and ignore the collective suffering of

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Others. To not acknowledge ~~that~~ ^{the} one's actions the distress caused by one's actions upon others is easier than taking responsibility and working to relieve their suffering. It was easy for Mary Antoniette to ask the poor to eat cake, if they can't afford bread, than to acknowledge her role in their suffering.

But why is not owning the responsibility in a crisis a natural reaction? Sometimes individuals feel insignificant. A single person cannot move mountains is the accepted notion. Another perception is regarding the power in numbers. If everybody is doing it, it must be right? is what most people believe.

Additionally there is also a fear of criticism when individuals do try to take responsibility. In a crisis, even well intentioned actions may backfire,

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attracting massive criticism and ridicule. People tend to avoid such ~~conform~~ uncomfortable situations. The collective apathy of European countries in taking ownership of their actions during the colonial era is representative of this issue.

Floods to flash floods

But when individuals escape their responsibility they end up making matters even worse. It is often said that "one rotten apple ruins the entire basket" because one person shys away from his responsibility it triggers a domino effect which slowly spreads across the entire society.

An individual might feel that him bribing an officer with some speed money is harmless. But this sets a dangerous precedent for others to follow. The result is that India ranks 893 among 180 countries in the Corruption

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Perception Index by Transparency International.

The full force & angst of such apathy is often faced by the marginalised much more than other sections of the society. When men deny their responsibility in perpetuating patriarchy, it leads to issues of female infanticide, dowry violence, rape, sexual harassment at work etc lowering the dignity of women.

Sometimes the denial of responsibility makes the problem so worse that it threatens the entire humanity. Lack of acknowledgement & action in humanity closer to a point of no return. Global temperatures have risen over 1.1°C (UNEP). IPCC has highlighted code red for humanity but developed countries continue to ignore their historic responsibility in creating the menace of climate change. Such apathy endangers humanity.

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The Black Swans

Thus we have seen that there is a general tendency towards escapism in a crisis. Both due to a lack of will and due to the fear of consequences. But throughout our human history, we've had some bravehearts who've risen to the occasion.

Edward Snowden, former NSA employee blew the whistle on massive state surveillance, taking responsibility for his part in the problem. And making active efforts towards advocacy of privacy rights.

After a massive rail accident, the then Rail Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri took complete responsibility for the loss of lives and promptly resigned.

But motivates such people to do what most people are too scared to even try? A desire to drive positive change. Mother Teresa had once famously

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remarked that "If you can't feed a thousand people, feed just one". Being a part of the solution is far more emotionally fulfilling than being part of the problem. It soothes our anxiety and calms our spirit. King Ashoka was severely distressed after the Kalinga war, but once he adopted the path of dhamma, his problems melted away.

~~Thus~~ Just like inaction breeds inaction, action also breeds action. When one individual takes charge, it motivates numerous others to follow, helping to manage catastrophes. When Prashant Nayan, a Dinkerala took it upon himself to clean a lake, locals promptly joined his noble endeavour.

Empowering Change Makers

But much to our disappointment as the name goes, these "black swans" are very ~~rare~~ rare. Given the complexities

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and challenges of our times the need of the hour to encourage more & more people to acknowledge their responsibilities, admit their mistakes and work towards solving the problems created.

This can be done by emphasising the virtues of self reflection & introspection. Socrates had said "an unexamined life" is not worth living". We must look deep within and come to terms with our flaws only then can we hope to change our reality and fate of humanity.

We can also seek guidance outside. The Bhagvad Gita empowers us to do our Nikshay Karma even in the face of adversity and even without consideration for the consequences of our actions.

Responsibility can also be enforced externally through laws, rules & regulations etc. for example the aforementioned collective apathy towards corruption can be

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addressed by enforcing laws like Prevention of corruption act in letter & spirit.

In times of a crisis it is easier to escape responsibility, save our own skin and pass the buck onto others. But it takes true courage and strength of character to admit one's wrongdoings and to work solving the problem rather than being a part of it. We should call things to "be the change we wish to see" in today's world where there many floods around us.

Climate change, inequality, gender discrimination, environmental degradation, terrorism, war etc are only some of the demons we need to fight today. ~~Thus~~ Such a challenge calls for individual action. We must therefore always remember the immedial

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words of Robert Frost,

"Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference..."

to tide over any challenge that comes
our way.

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Separation of executive & Judiciary

⑤ MPs/MLAs are barred from holding
office of profits,

Checks & Balances

① The executive is collective responsible
(Article 75) to the legislature in a
parliamentary democracy.

② Parliamentary devices like question
hour, adjournment motion etc ensure
accountability from executive.

③ Judicial review ensures legislature
does not undermine the constitution.

④ 4th Judges case → 99 CAA as void

⑤ 97 electoral bond scheme → null & void

The doctrine of separation of powers
is pivotal in ensuring constitutionalism
and is therefore part of basis structure
of the constitution.