



Chanakya
Mandal
Pariwar

1st July 2023

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Main Exam Roll Number : 0324342 Mobile No. : XYZLMNOPQ

UPSC Mains 2023 Test Series

ESSAY - 1

Time : 3 Hrs. & Marks : 250

Question Paper specific instructions

(Please read each of the following instructions carefully before attempting the questions)

- The essay 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 written in medium other than the authorized one.
- Word Limit, as specified, should be adhered to.
- Any page or portion of the page left blank in Question-cum-Answer Booklet must be clearly struck off.
- Write two essays, choosing one topic from each of the following Sections A and B, in about 1000-1200 words each. 125 x 2 = 250

SECTION : A

- 1) "What is needed today is mindful and deliberate utilization, instead of mindless and destructive consumption." ✓
- 2) "The one who plants trees, knowing that he will never sit in their shade, has at least started to understand the meaning of life." ✓
- 3) "We must raise both the ceiling and the floor." ✓
- 4) The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing. ✓

We must raise both the ceiling
and the floor

In Harper Lee's magnum opus, "To kill a Mocking Bird", Atticus Finch warns "You may shoot all the bluejays if you can get 'em, but remember it's a sin to kill a mocking bird". The ceiling here was society's incredulity at damning a black man and the floor was racial equality.

Religious scriptures in all languages bemoan the lack of virtues in humanity as they enunciate what may qualify, so that mankind may seek deliverance. One that can only be accompanied by raising the floor of tolerance and the ceiling of excellence

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Q.) continued ...

Through the expositions in this article, it is my intent to establish why humanity's very survival hinges on expanding the two extremes, while also surveying where such bounds may serve as protective confines.

Not a Zero Sum Game

Human capabilities have expanded to allow such upgradation of the skeletal structures of any grand edifice, permitting elevation and demolition as the wielder of the pen may seem fit. This ability to reshape canvasses is what may be relied on to change the dimensions of our existence.

Poverty, since time immemorial has been mankind's greatest affliction. At any period of time, those that dwell in extreme poverty have always been the largest share of the population. Through devices of societal make, it is now conceivable to uplift large sections from this malignant malady.

If the floor of what means to be poor is elevated, the roof can be shifted up as

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Q) continued ...

well. The rich may get richer but as long as the poor are emancipated, justice is seen to be done.

Poverty in absolute numbers will dwindle and the Indian example of doing so through subsidies or the Chinese instance of increasing minimum wages are guiding in this light. The fallout of such a phenomenon may be that the ceiling gets much higher and the rich get relatively poorer but that may be a worthy trade-off. But the question that begs asking is whether movement of the floor must always lead to movement of the ceiling?

The revisiting of women's rights in the last few years and reconceptualisation of what it means to be a woman are facets of this shift of substructures. The modern woman is no longer an adjunct of another. She is not seen as a man's wife, a child's mother or someone's daughter. She is recognised in and of herself and in doing so her ~~id~~ dignity is lifted. And when she wields this new found

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liberty to excel, she pushes the roof herself. The last of India's contingent to the Olympics featured more men, but the podium was occupied by many more women. Begs the question asking, is it sufficient to move just the floor, which will inevitably empower its inhabitants to move the ceiling themselves?

Such capacity for greater acceptance was demonstrated in India's bonhomie with the USA, following the PM's recent visit to far shores of the New World.

The Floor cannot be dropped

When the PM's gestures at goodwill were met equally earnestly by the President of USA through sale of military weaponry, India matched the USA's challenge of raising the floor. Having witnessed turbulent times, not many decades back with Nixon's sending of the 3rd fleet during the Bangladesh

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Liberation War, the current day exchanges promise plenty. The floor of correspondence and person to person bonhomie has been heightened and in due time the ceiling of possibilities will rise as well; for both countries have displayed capacity to see it through.

Begs, the question asking, what may become of the future if the floor that has been laboriously pushed up were to one day collapse? Can the floor ever be securely held in place?

When the giants of science rise

The world of science has been synonymous with lifting the roof up and expanding mankind's horizons. Yet the floor has remained an area of particular concern. Science has expanded upwards at the cost of lowering its floor downwards.

When lab rats are tested indiscriminately before products are released onto the market,

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floor is pummelled down. Everytime experimental drugs are released only to be recalled after serious adverse events, science has failed itself.

But with the advent of tissue cultures and cellular chips, science can perhaps raise the floor while it also raises the roof. With greater protections and scrutiny, science can be made more accountable to itself. Begs the question asking, can advancements in technology and the wizardry of modernity, raise the floor by themselves?

The body : Man's ultimate resolve

Michael Phelps shattered records in 2004 that weren't breached since Usain Bolt reset the limits of human endurance. Year on year, records were broken only to be broken once more. Every such occasion the floor is heightened and the roof is pushed upwards and away.

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To use the allegory of an aircraft when both the floor and the roof are lifted at once, surely it must mean there's lift-off. Mankind flies ever higher with every breach of sporting record. But begs the question asking, what make of limits to such heights?

The ceiling is meant to seal

As an analogy for tolerance, while it is desirable to see human capacity see ever greater heights, perhaps history has a lesson in wait for fixing the ceiling.

Where sins of an abominable order such as human trafficking and bestiality are allowed to flourish, surely there must be a limit to such tolerance? An uninhibited man may despair in savagery and rewrite the history books in despotism. The floor must be limited too, lest what separates man and

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beast be reduced to a trifle.

We may fix the ceiling while throwing caution at environmental harm so that humanity may not doom the planet and its other residents. We must fix the ceiling when it concerns potential for abusing liberty to mean assaulting another man. The idea of liberty enshrined in humanity must be limited, for humanity to continue as it were. But begs the question asking, must the ceiling ever be forcefully lowered?

Where the ceiling must fall

When criminal jurisprudence evolves, the evidence which must constitute "beyond all reasonable doubt" to secure conviction of an alleged criminal, the ceiling must drop. In today's day and age, when residual DNA can be collected from the air that we pollute as we breath, we must allow advancements in science to drop unjust ceilings.

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We may also restrain individuals who have reached great heights from trampling on the floor and reducing its height.

Historical advantages have allowed the 'White Man' to artificially erect barriers based on his parochial construction of 'merit' to deny the Brown man's ascendance.

The upper classes brimming with privilege as well, must not be allowed to control the floor, for if they do, the underprivileged may never be able to look up, attached as they are to the floor's restraints. The principles of affirmative action exist to allow ~~a~~ a lowered floor for the disadvantaged to get a step up before they can rise as well. Begs the question asking, if the constituents of the house must ever be allowed to modify its parameters based on their whims ^{and} fancies.

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(But what of the walls?)

By focussing on the floor and the ceiling, we may lose track of the other appendages of use while trammelling human liberty. Maya Angelou suggests she knows why the caged bird sings. She knows the pain underlying the inhibitions forced upon some, that prevent emancipation. If mankind must advance, the walls must not be seen as restrictive either.

While we improve our levels of tolerance, and expand the horizons of excellence, we may benefit from widening the walls of ignorance as well. To continually push the limits of what it means to be good, when we raise the floor, we must do so in a manner that it is flexible, to accommodate interests of individuals of all circumstances.

for when we hear of Azim Premji's

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significant contributions towards charity,
we may not think he's pushing the
roof up. he's laying down a new floor
that the rest must climb to.

When Nandan Nilekani contributes over
₹ 300 crores to his Alma mater, he's asking
us all to see where the new floor is. We
must raise both ceiling and floor for
David and Goliath alike.

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Why raise ceiling when you can strip it off → The sky is a native blue
 ↓ so no restraints can limit the human spirit

maya Angelou
 I know why the
 caged bird sings

We must raise both the ceiling and the floor.

Dante's Goliath?

It seeks
 freedom
 ceiling & floor at
 its own
 barriers

① Poverty → absolute
 relative
 zero-sum game

R.K Narayan
 failed at English
 success a rebuttal

Literature:

→ To Kill a Mocking Bird
 Harper Lee

② International affairs → CNA
 → USA it can never
 drop below
 line 72 3 = Floor
 by Nixon
 → Russia

Atticus Finch

Shoot all Blue Birds if you
 want never kill a
 mockingbird -

③ Women emancipation "mother" or wife
 but human → femme extraordinaire → feeling

• barometer of
 racial equality

④ Science → ethics in testing → floor animals testing
 → Ceiling advancements unheralded

Free spirited
 goodness → Randa Nidhani;
 Wipro Pranjit

⑤ Sporting excellence → Gold by Phelps
 → Uain Bolt should now form
 floor
 Ceiling is for
 push human body
 frontier to be
 its best

Floor → tolerance

ceiling → ~~excellence~~
 frontiers of
 excellence

⑥ Philosophy → Car Tung →
 mind is limitless → why box up
 → push beyond.

Labour exploitation
 → Env harm → Nature has suffered enough
 Drop ceiling, raise

floor →
 Beyond reasonable doubt
 ↓ criminal conviction

⑦ Nobel Laureates → Excellence →
 prior awardes

⑧ Sir Francis Crick } racist one
 James Watson. } off them

As Nobel in Peace (Ethiopia → Abie → Endre
 ethnic violence

Accommodation of
 pluralism
Drop Floor - raise
ceiling

Drop Floor, Drop ceiling!
 → Racial intolerance
 Exclusion and obscuration
 superstitious
 behavior

Raise ceiling and floor → Flying man aircraft → Wings of fire

Limitations of man.

Tolerance must know its
 limits

Why the ceiling must remain → Human brotherhood -
 Saviors, bestiality → Capitalism with its great grand form

The floor → Dante & layered Hell → Not where separates man from beast

