

2014

GENERAL ENGLISH

Full Marks: 300

Time: 3 Hours

The figures in the margin indicate full marks for the questions :

1. Write a precis of either of the following passages and add a suitable title to it: 40
- (a) It is a basic premise of all serious writing on higher education that teacher represents the heart of the academic universe. Whether it is the communication of existing knowledge or the extension of the frontiers of knowledge, it is a university's body of teachers which bears the burden of its primary functions. Commission after commission has been set up under one luminary or another...Radhakrishnan, Kothari, Sen, but only their negative recommendations have been chosen immediate implementation by government while the positive ones have been rejected or postponed indefinitely. The cumulative effect of such a policy has been draconian.

Each such commission has emphasized the imperative need to attract a fair proportion of the country's talent into teaching profession. But how have we gone about this task? We have kept raising the entrance qualifications without enhancing the corresponding rewards. We have encouraged a demand for research degrees without assuming the burden or providing research facilities and fellowships on a national scale. This approach has already driven many dynamic young men and women away from teaching into alternative avenues. Any profession needs stability of service conditions if it is to attract talent. Such stability has been conspicuous by its absence in the case of teaching.

What the profession has needed desperately is a stable wage policy which defines a respectable minimum for teachers throughout the country but is flexible enough to allow for variations from university to university. At the present rate it would take the country another 50 years at least before there is an infrastructure for large scale research in every field. What we really need is a system which permits two channels of promotion, the first on the basis of satisfactory teaching over a given span of time, and the second, an accelerated one, on the

(Turn Over)

basis of significant research. This would restore to teaching its centrality in the profession and will also give continuing research the recognition which it has lacked.

Further, in order to improve its performance, the profession needs certain basic facilities. One is unable to see why in India we have to deny our teachers a desk and a chair and office space which the lowest functionary in the bureaucracy can call his own. Academics also needs reants for books and journals, for Xeroxing and typing, for study travel and for teaching and study aids if they are to raise the quality of teaching and research.

If we want the teaching profession to enrich the life of the nation, then we have to learn to cherish it more by honouring the living teacher than by celebrating rituals such as Teacher's Day. Freedom is the prime condition of full life and if we wish to help an organization flourish, we can do so best by assuring it the sustenance it needs.

(b) Change is the law of life, but the kind of changes that have taken place in recent times are truly remarkable and are bound to affect the power configuration in the world. In view of the vast area of change, let us divide the world into the developed non-communist world, the developed communist world and the developing communist and non-communist world. To be sure, these worlds overlap and, as often, as not, are in conflict.

The most striking change in the developed world of the first category, which inevitably takes in the second, is the end of the era of bipolar politics we have witnessed almost since the termination of the last World War to a multipolar regime. The impetus for this change has largely come from the developed non-communist world. Briefly this changes were determined by the prosperity Western Europe regained and measure of its self-confidence. These factors gave a new life and a meaning to the European Economic Community. Second, the phenomenal growth of Japan as economic superpower has meant that the two superpowers alone could not reorder the world without Japan's cooperation.

These were, of course, contributory factors to the making of the multipolar world. These were stirrings in the developed communist camp following Nikita Khrushchev's 20th Congress speech. The schism between the Soviet Union, the fountain-head of communism, and China, and the latter's sull-blown campaign to repudiate Soviet

(Turn Over)

(3)

leadership and decry "superpower hegemonism" cause world-wide repercussions. In the non-communist developing world, these was a continuing assertion of independence and, even more significantly a growing will to be a counted.

Although the two superpowers are still the most important members of the international community, they can no longer function as the sole arbiters of the world. Western Europe, still to free itself of American power that is, if it wants to, has to be consulted. And China in the developing non-communist world cannot be ignored. Nor can a clamorous developing non-communist world be entirely taken for granted. In the communist world, the most significant change has, of course, been the end of geriatric era and the coming to power of Mikhail Gorbachev. The realization of the new leader in the Kremlin that he has to reform a moribund system, in the new information and technological age has had two major consequences. One is inevitably a greater stress on the home front rather than expanding Soviet power abroad, and the other a new interest in seeking arms agreement with the West, principally the USA.

The most significant result of the latter factor has been the rather lately concluded Intermediate Nuclear Force agreement between the two super powers and an interest by the two sides in exploring further arms agreement. This is the first agreement on actually reducing weapons, instead of just fixing limits on their growth. At the same time, the nuclear armories of the two superpowers are crammed with stockpiles, and while idealists might wish to see the end of nuclear weapons, it will not happen if at all for a very long time.

2. Write two essays selecting one from each of the following groups:

50×2=100

GROUP-A

- (a) Culture and Society.
- (b) What ails Indian sports.
- (c) More governance, less government: an agenda for economic re-generation of India.

GROUP-B

- (a) Cultural heritage of Assam.
- (b) The prospects of eco-tourism in Assam.
- (c) Identity Politics in North-East-its causes and consequences.

(Turn Over)

(4)

3. Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow:

The great defect of our civilization is that it does not know what to do with its knowledge. Science has given us powers fit for the gods, yet we use them like small children. For example, we do not know how to manage our machines. Machines were made to be man's servants; yet he has grown so dependent on them that they are in a fair way to become his masters. Already most men spend most of their lives looking after and waiting upon machines. And the machines are very stern masters. They must be fed with coal and given petrol to drink and oil to wash with and they must be kept at the right temperature. And if they do not get their meals when they expect them, they grow sulky and refuse to work or burst with rage and blow up and spread ruin and destruction all round them. So we have to wait upon them very attentively and do all that we can to keep them in good temper.

Already we find it difficult either to work or play without the machines and a time may come when they will rule us altogether, just as we rule the animals.

And this brings me to the point at which I asked, "what we do with all the time which the machines have saved for us and the new energy they have given us ? On the whole it must be admitted, we do very little. For the most part we use our time and energy to make more and better machines; but more and better machines will only give us still more time and still more energy and what are we to do with them ? The answer, I think, is that we should try to become more civilized. For the machines themselves and the power which the machines have given us are not civilization but aids to civilization. But you will remember that we agreed at the beginning that being civilized meant making and linking beautiful things, thinking freely and living rightly and maintain justice equally between man and man.

Man has a better chance today to do these things than he ever had before; he has more time, more energy, less to fear and less to fight against. If he will give his time and energy which his machines have won for him to making more beautiful things, to finding out more and more about the universe, to removing the causes of quarrels between nations, to discovering how to prevent poverty, then I think our civilization would undoubtedly be the greater as it would be the most lasting that there has ever been.

(a) Instead of making machines our servants the author says they have become our masters. In what sense has this come about? 4

(Turn Over)

- (b) The use of machines has brought us more leisure and more energy. But the author says that this has been a curse rather than a blessing, why? 4
- (c) What exactly is the meaning of "civilization"? Do you agree with the author's views? 4
- (d) "Making more beautiful things" — what does it stand for? 3
- (e) Mention some plans in order to prevent poverty in the world. Who would receive your most particular attention and why? 3+1=4
- (f) What moral lesson has been imparted by the author? 2+1=3
- (g) Give meanings of the following phrases: 2×4=8
- (i) fed with coal.
- (ii) given petrol to drink.
- (iii) oil to wash with.
- (iv) kept at the right temperature.
- (h) Summarize the passage in our own words, highlighting the most pertinent points about the relationship between man and machine? 30
4. Amplify the idea contained in any one of the following; 30
- (a) When you are in Rome, be a Roman
- (b) Heaven lies about us in our infancy
- (c) Waste not, want not.
5. (a) Frame sentences with the following pairs of words to show the difference in meaning (any three pairs) 2×3=6
- (i) Ceremonial ; ceremonious
- (ii) Persecute ; prosecute
- (iii) Affectation ; affection
- (iv) Verbal ; verbose
- (v) Momentary ; momentous
- (b) Give the correct synonym and antonym of the following and write a sentence each with them: 2+2=4
- (i) Benevolence
- (ii) Authentic
- (c) Frame sentences with any five of the following: 2×5=10
- (i) about (as adverb)
- (ii) even (as verb)
- (iii) a jail bird
- (iv) ins and outs

(Turn Over)

- (v) to get the better of
- (vi) to turn over a new leaf
- (d) Rewrite the following sentences as directed (any five): $2 \times 5 = 10$
- (i) Every dark cloud has silver lining.
(Change into negative without changing the meaning)
- (ii) It is easier to preach than to practice.
(Rewrite in positive degree without changing the meaning)
- (iii) Not only money but health is also necessary for happiness.
(Change into simple sentence)
- (iv) Better rule in hell than serve in heaven. (Use 'to' for 'than')
- (v) "Would that I were rich", said the poor beggar.
(Change into indirect speech)
- (vi) I look forward _____ meeting you.
(Fill in the blank with correct preposition)
- (vii) _____ in Delhi for more than a week.
(Use the 'be' verb in the correct tense form in the blank)
- (viii) I am your well wisher _____. (Add a tag question)
- (e) Correct any five of the following sentences: $2 \times 5 = 10$
- (i) Shakespeare is greater than all poets.
- (ii) We stock a full range of general hardwares.
- (iii) She needs as many as five kilograms of salt.
- (iv) Please copy this word by word.
- (v) The tree was a great comfort during the midday scorching sun.
- (vi) I have to stay here until they will come back.
- (vii) I pulled the string tightly.
- (viii) She never ate and slept properly after her husband died.

6. Recently you attended a seminar on 'Disaster Management' in which matters like floods, erosion, fire, earthquakes etc. were discussed. Write a report in about 250 words to be published in 'The Assam Tribune'. Sign. yourself as 'X'. 30

Or

Imagine that a major part of Dhemaji District was recently ravaged by floods of severe intensity resulting in some lives lost and vast areas of standing crops totally damaged. As a government officer you were sent to the flood affected district to assess the loss and to supervise the rescue and relief operations. Write a report in about 250 words about what you saw and did in course of your stay there. (Send the report to the Deputy Commissioner of the concerned district.)
