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ABP/CCM-73/XIV

2015

**GENERAL ENGLISH**

Full Marks : 300

Time : 3 Hours

*The figures in the margin indicate full marks for the questions.*

1. Write a precis of the following passage and add a suitable title to it. 40

The impression that science started only in Europe was deeply embedded in the minds of educated people all over the world until recently. The achievements of Arab countries were occasionally mentioned, but there was very little reference to India and China. Thanks to the work of the Indian National Science Academy and other learned bodies, the development of science in India during both ancient and medieval periods has recently been studied. It is becoming clearer from these studies that India has consistently been a scientific country right from the Vedic to the modern times with the usual fluctuations that can be expected of any country. In fact, there cannot be found an example of a civilization, except perhaps that of ancient Greece, which accorded the same exalted place to knowledge and science as did that of India. There is nothing that bears comparison to knowledge. This epitomized our country's homage to learning and inspired our ancients' quest for knowledge.

It is universally acknowledged that much of the mathematical knowledge in the world originated in India and moved from East to West. The high degree of sophistication in the use of mathematical symbols and developments in arithmetic, algebra, trigonometry, and astronomy, especially the works attributed to Aryabhata, is indeed remarkable and should be a source of inspiration to all of us in India. It is, however, unfortunate that the period of decline in India coincided with that of ascendancy in Europe. It is perhaps the contrast



during this period that the Europeans believe that all modern science was European.

Even in the 19th century new dimensions were added to science and technology in this sub-continent though the scientists were mainly Europeans. It is with special reference to seismology, astronomy and geology. Since the spirit of science already existed in India it did not take her very long to absorb the great developments in Europe and start making her own contributions. However, technology was at a low ebb since industry was not encouraged during this period. The cream of our intelligentsia was drawn towards subordinate administrative roles with the result that technology did not grow. Recognition of this lacunae soon after independence has, however, set things right and quickly India has caught up with front ranking countries in science and technology. Our success in scientific agriculture is another proof that Indian citizens are willing to accept and are capable of accepting modern technology wherever it is of value to them.

One can always ask the question as to why with all our background we did not have an industrial revolution earlier. Why is there so much of superstition and irrationality and why is creative thinking still not so vibrant as it is in the West? Talking of superstition and irrationality one can see them everywhere, even in the most advanced countries in the West. As regards creative thinking, India has been a pioneer in art and literature in the past, and there are signs that she has become again active in those fields. Nevertheless, that we have made great progress in many directions can be seen by contrast with the development in neighbouring countries which, in spite of their economic strength; are yet to recapture the spirit of scientific research and self-reliance. But much still remains to be done in India, something in the nature of cultural renaissance to rekindle that spirit of rational appraisal and response to phenomena, both natural and man-made, among the lay public.

2. Write two essays selecting one from each of the following groups.  
(Each essay should be written in about 400 to 500 words)  $50 \times 2 = 100$



### Group-A

- (i) Developmental imbalance in different regions of India and the role of governance as a corrective measure.
- (ii) Indian Secularism and Religious Conversion.
- (iii) Sports as a career choice.

### Group-B

- (i) Bio-diversity of North-East India and its commercial viability.
  - (ii) Rhino poaching : Is there a solution ?
  - (iii) Fairs and Festivals of Assam.
3. Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow :

Water all over the world receives a low priority in public agenda. Climate change has become a major issue, prompted as it is by Nobel prize winners, environmental activists and climate scientists, NGOs, Hollywood stars and filmmakers. Water issues, sadly, have not elicited such support. Yet over the medium term of ten years water issues will have significantly more adverse impacts than climate change. The World Economic Forum report is therefore to be welcomed for providing water a much needed boost. This of course does not mean that climate change is not important. However, over the medium term, efforts to ensure the availability of adequate quantity of good quality water need greater emphasis. In addition, climate change has numerous uncertainties, but we know how to solve water problems. We also have the knowledge, technology and investment funds needed to solve them. Yet, poor water management continues all over the world and there is no sign that this situation will improve soon.

Ancient civilizations grew up on the banks of major rivers like Indus, Nile and Tigris-Euphratis where water was plentiful. Human beings are emotionally attached to water, much more so than any other resource like food or energy. This emotional attachment has made efficient water-management difficult. Throughout history, water has been used and abused as seen fit. We have yet to accept that water is a limited resource which must be used prudently.

One manifestation of this emotional attachment is that water is



provided free, or at highly subsidised price, almost everywhere. Agriculture accounts for nearly 70% of all global water use. Yet not a single country charges farmers full operation and maintenance costs for irrigation water, let alone investment costs.

Even for domestic water, people in very few cities pay the real cost. With sensible water pricing, utilities can be financially viable and people would use water efficiently.

Poor water management over the decades has created numerous structural problems. The Aral Sea used to be the world's fourth largest fresh water lake. The diversion of two rivers, Amu Darya and Syr Darya, which provided it with a steady flow of fresh water for cotton production has reduced it to only a small shadow of what it used to be. Lake Chad was one of the largest water bodies in Africa in the 1960s. Unsustainable water use has meant that its level and size have shrunk by 90%.

Take China. In the 1950s, the country had 50,000 rivers having catchment area of more than 100 sq. km. By 2013 this number has reduced to 27000. Rivers have disappeared because of over use by agriculture and industry. Anecdotal evidence indicates that Indian water bodies are facing similar fate.

Many of the mighty rivers have now become a trickle by the time they reach the sea. These include the Colorado, Nile, Yellow and Murray rivers. The World Commission on Water has noted that more half of the world's rivers are seriously depleted.

Water bodies in near all urban centres of the developing world are seriously polluted. There is no shortage of evidence. In 2011 water from more than half of China's largest lakes and rivers was declared unfit for human consumption. More than half of ground water in Northern China is so polluted that it is not suitable for bathing, let alone drinking.

The Indian government reported in 2013 that nearly half of the country's 445 rivers are too polluted for drinking in terms of biochemical oxygen demand and coliforms. If other pollutants like toxic chemi-



icals and heavy metals are considered, the overwhelming majority of water sources can no longer be used without expensive treatment. The economic, social, health and environmental costs of such heavy contamination are increasing steadily. In some countries, the real costs of poor water management are approaching as much as nearly 5% of GDP.

If current trends continue, the situation will get worse. Take industry. Nearly two-thirds of companies now consider that water poses a substantial risk to their business. Millions of people are dying each year due to water-related diseases. Droughts and floods are inflicting tens of billions of dollars in damages each year. The United Nations has estimated that the droughts are world's costliest natural disasters, inflicting 6-8 billion dollars annual losses. Every year floods contribute to major damages including loss of lives. All these can be significantly reduced by better water management.

As the eminent poet W. H. Auden noted, "Thousands have lived without love, but not one without water".

- (a) What structural problems have been created by poor water management over the decades ? 4
- (b) What evidence is there to prove that water bodies in all urban centres of developing world are seriously polluted ? 4
- (c) Why does the writer say that human beings are emotionally attached to water which in turn has made water management difficult ? 4
- (d) Between water and climate which one gets priority and why? 4
- (e) What does the writer say about the state of rivers in China and India ? 5
- (f) What, according to the United Nations, are the costliest disasters and why ? 3
- (g) Does the writer advocate for water pricing ? If he does, why ? 1+2=3
- (h) "Thousands have lived without love, but not one without water". Explain. 3



- (i) Write in your own words the summary of the passage. 20
4. Amplify in about 150 to 200 words the ideas contained in any one of the following : 20
- (a) Every cloud has a silver-lining
  - (b) The voice of the people is the voice of God
  - (c) There is no Indian in India.
5. Write in about 150 words a paragraph on *any one* of the following topics : 10
- (a) Use and abuse of Social Network
  - (b) The rising man-animal conflict
  - (c) The urban poor.
6. (a) Frame sentences with the following pairs of words to show the difference in their meaning : (*any three pairs*) 2×3=6
- (i) soar ; sore
  - (ii) instil ; imbibe
  - (iii) equable ; equitable
  - (iv) intense ; intensive
  - (v) sensible ; sensitive.
- (b) Frame sentences with *any five* of the following : 2×5=10
- (i) to make mountain of a molehill
  - (ii) at one's wit's end
  - (iii) to smell a rat
  - (iv) in the lurch
  - (v) tame (as verb)
  - (vi) wrong (as adverb)
- (c) Give the synonym and antonym of the following : 2+2=4
- (i) Abate
  - (ii) Meagre
- (d) Rewrite the following sentences as directed : (any five) 2×5=10
- (i) Everyone speaks English \_\_\_\_\_ (*Add a tag question*)
  - (ii) Everybody loves children  
(*Change into negative without changing the meaning*)
  - (iii) He who is averse \_\_\_\_\_ hardwork seldom succeed.  
(*Fill in the blank with correct preposition*)



- (iv) This fact is too evident to require proof.  
(Rewrite the sentence by removing "too")
- (v) We \_\_\_\_\_ each other for the last ten years. (know)  
(Fill in the blank with the correct tense of the verb 'know')
- (vi) He leads a most unhappy life.  
(Turn it into an exclamatory sentence)
- (vii) She is more intelligent than her sister.  
(Change into positive degree without changing the meaning)
- (e) Change the voice of **any five** of the following :  $1 \times 5 = 5$
- (i) Please read loudly.
- (ii) He was given five minutes extra time to finish the answer.
- (iii) Is the state not helping the poor ?
- (iv) Who will bell the cat ?
- (v) Do you know his address ?
- (vi) We should have done it by now.
- (vii) What cannot be cured must be endured.
- (viii) They will not agree to this proposal.
- (f) Change the form of narration of the following :  $2 + 3 = 5$
- (i) "I've bought a car today", said Harris, "but it is not insured yet and I cannot take anyone for a ride".  
(From Direct to Indirect form)
- (ii) He wished that he had the wings of a bird.  
(From Indirect to Direct form)
- (g) Correct **any five** of the following sentences :  $2 \times 5 = 10$
- (i) The candidates were asked to stop to write.
- (ii) The boy dares not to enter the room.
- (iii) They arrived timely.
- (iv) How many trips to Europe had you made last year ?
- (v) All his son-in-laws are rich people.
- (vi) He does not wish any reward.
- (vii) John, I and you have finished our studies.
- (viii) He labours had lest he any fail.



7. Imagine that a major ethnic violence broke out in Sonitpur district leading to several deaths, burning of houses and people fleeing from their homes in search of safety. As a government officer you were sent to the affected area to assess the situation and supervise relief operations. Write a report in about 250 words about the situation prevailing there and what you have done to control it. Also mention in the report the probable causes for the disturbance and add your recommendations for measures to prevent such happenings in future. (Address the report to the Deputy Commissioner of the concerned district) 30

OR

Recently you attended a state government sponsored programme of 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' in your locality. Write a report in about 250 words to be published in the Assam Tribune'. Sign yourself as 'X'.

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