

GENERAL ENGLISH

Time Allowed : **Three Hours**

Maximum Marks : **300**

Question Paper Specific Instructions

Please read each of the following instructions carefully before attempting questions :

All the questions are to be attempted.

The number of marks carried by a question / part is indicated against it.

Word limit of the answers, if specified, should be adhered to.

You must not disclose your identity in any of your answers.

*Answers must be written in **ENGLISH** only.*

Q1. Write an essay, in around 800 – 1000 words, on any one of the following topics : **100**

- (a) Our Urban Survival Depends upon Efficient Waste Management
- (b) Paradox of Freedom and Responsibility
- (c) COVID-19 : A Natural Calamity or a Man-Made Disaster
- (d) Perils of Ecodegradation

Q2. (a) Write a letter to the Editor of an English daily, complaining against the SHO of your locality for his refusal to lodge an FIR in case of a vehicle theft. (Kindly do not write your name or address anywhere in your answer. Use ABC or XYZ for your name or that of the newspaper.) **25**

- (b) Write a report on the contribution of a local NGO in the area of mental health issues among adolescents and teenagers. (Please do not write your name or address anywhere in your answer. Use ABC or XYZ for your name or that of the NGO.) **25**

Q3. Write a précis of the following passage in about one-third of its original length. Do not assign any title to it :

50

Many remedies are suggested for the avoidance of worry and mental overstrain by persons who, over prolonged periods, have to bear exceptional responsibilities and discharge duties upon a very large scale. Some advise exercise, and others, repose. Some counsel travel, and others, retreat. Some praise solitude, and others, gaiety. No doubt all these may play their part according to the individual temperament. But the element which is constant and common in all of them is Change.

Change is the master key. A man can wear out a particular part of his mind by continually using it and tiring it, just in the same way as he can wear out the elbows of his coat. There is, however, this difference between the living cells of the brain and inanimate articles: one cannot mend the frayed elbows of a coat by rubbing the sleeves or shoulders; but the tired parts of the mind can be rested and strengthened, not merely by rest, but by using other parts. It is not enough merely to switch off the lights which play upon the main and ordinary field of interest; a new field of interest must be illuminated. It is no use saying to the tired 'mental muscles' — if one may coin such an expression — 'I will give you a good rest,' 'I will go for a long walk,' or 'I will lie down and think of nothing.' The mind keeps busy just the same. If it has been weighing and measuring, it goes on weighing and measuring. If it has been worrying, it goes on worrying. It is only when new cells are called into activity, when new stars become the lords of the ascendant, that relief, repose, refreshment are afforded.

A gifted American psychologist has said, 'Worry is a spasm of the emotion; the mind catches hold of something and will not let it go.' It is useless to argue with the mind in this condition. The stronger the will, the more futile the task. One can only gently insinuate something else into its convulsive grasp. And if this something else is rightly chosen, if it is really attended by the illumination of another field of interest, gradually, and often quite swiftly, the old undue grip relaxes and the process of recuperation and repair begins.

The cultivation of a hobby and new forms of interest is therefore a policy of first importance to a public man. But this is not a business that can be undertaken in a day or swiftly improvised by a mere command of the will. The growth of alternative mental interests is a long process. The seeds must be carefully chosen; they must fall on good ground; they must be sedulously tended, if the vivifying fruits are to be at hand when needed.

(464 words)

Q4. Read the following passage and answer the questions given below in your own words :

10 × 5 = 50

According to the *Arthasāstra* merchants travelling from place to place paid small road tolls which were collected by an officer called *Antapāla*, who was responsible for the upkeep of the road and its safety. If we are to believe the text these taxes formed a sort of insurance, for the *Antapāla* was expected to make good any loss suffered by the merchants from thieves. It is doubtful whether this system was regularly adopted in later times, when kingdoms were less well organized, but something like it must have prevailed in the Mauryan period. Tolls were also levied at the city gates on incoming merchandise, on a varying *ad valorem* tariff. The *Arthasāstra* suggests that essential goods such as grain, oil, sugar, pots and cheap textiles should be taxed at one-twentieth of their value, and other goods at rates varying from one-fifteenth to one-fifth. Various market dues were also levied, but the ten per cent sales tax recorded by Megasthenes is nowhere mentioned in an Indian source.

All craftsmen were expected to devote one or two days' work per month to the king, but this tax was probably often commuted to a sort of income tax on average daily earnings. There was also liability to forced labour (*viṣṭi*), though this does not seem always to have fallen very heavily upon the masses. Services in labour and gifts of provisions were expected by the king and his officers when on tour, and this might put small rural communities into serious difficulties. Such obligations of forced labour and service prevailed in some Indian States until very recent times.

So complex a system of taxation could not be maintained without surveying and accountancy. The Jātaka stories refer to local officers as "holders of the [surveyor's] cord" (*rajjugāhaka*), and the officers called in the Aśokan inscriptions *rajjūka* may have been the same; Megasthenes records that the land was thoroughly surveyed. Land was only transferred to a new owner after reference to the local land records, and this fact, with the name of the record keepers who had certified its transferability, was often noted in the copper-plate title deeds. The better organized kingdoms evidently kept full and up-to-date records of land ownership corresponding to the English Domesday

Book. Unfortunately they were written on perishable materials, and all have long since vanished.

Taxation was burdensome, especially in times of bad harvest or under rapacious kings. There are numerous references in Jātaka stories to the harsh exactions of local officers, and to peasants emigrating en masse from their villages to escape crushing taxation. In later South Indian inscriptions we read of something like the rent-strikes of later times, and of a whole village council being imprisoned for failure to pay tax. One inscription records an appeal to the Cōla emperor Rājarāja I, in protest against the looting of a village in punishment of tax default; in this case the king upheld the action of his local officers. A defaulting taxpayer was liable to eviction, though he might be given a year's grace or more in case of real need.

The textbooks on statecraft invariably stress the danger of unduly heavy taxation. Nobody can hold honey in his mouth without tasting some of it, and it is to be expected that local officers will claim more tax than their due, but really extortionate collectors are a great danger to the king's safety. Certain admirable general principles are laid down in our sources — taxation should never act as a check on trade and industry; the king should tax as a bee sucks honey, without hurting the flower; taxes should be fixed so as always to allow a profit to the taxpayer; articles of commerce should not be taxed more than once; increases in taxation should not be imposed without due warning. No doubt the better monarchs tried to maintain these principles in their fiscal policy.

Questions :

- (a) What, according to the *Arthaśāstra*, was the role and responsibility of *Antapāla* ?
- (b) What, according to the *Arthaśāstra*, was the rate of taxation on essential goods and services ?
- (c) Who maintained land records in ancient India and how ?
- (d) What kind of punishments were given to the tax defaulters in the ancient times ?
- (e) What were the principles of taxation followed by good monarchs ?

- Q5.** (a) Rewrite the following sentences after correcting the grammatical errors in each : *1×10=10*
- (i) Every boy must look into their own book.
 - (ii) The magistrate issued order for his arrest.
 - (iii) Neither Ramesh nor Suresh are going to the market.
 - (iv) When I entered the compartment, I saw there was no place for me.
 - (v) You like playing, isn't it ?
 - (vi) Have you seen him yesterday ?
 - (vii) Summarize the two first chapters of this book.
 - (viii) No matter what I will do, I can't make her happy.
 - (ix) He went to work despite of his illness.
 - (x) He is sleeping for two hours.
- (b) Make sentences using the following words in such a way that the meaning of each word is clear from the context : *2×5=10*
- (i) affect, effect
 - (ii) loose, lose
 - (iii) quiet, quite
 - (iv) unqualified, disqualified
 - (v) imitate, intimate
- (c) Use the following idiomatic expressions in sentences in order to bring out their meaning : *2×5=10*
- (i) to feel under the weather
 - (ii) to pull oneself together
 - (iii) to blow one's own trumpet
 - (iv) to be a good Samaritan
 - (v) to pull wool over one's eyes
- (d) Make adjectives from the following words : *1×5=5*
- (i) achieve
 - (ii) amuse
 - (iii) commerce
 - (iv) artist
 - (v) question

(e) Make nouns using the following words :

1×5=5

- (i) act
- (ii) busy
- (iii) coward
- (iv) dangerous
- (v) excite

(f) Rewrite the following sentences as directed :

2×5=10

- (i) Ramesh declared that he could not consent to my going.
(Change into direct speech)
- (ii) The company gave her a rousing reception when she joined.
(Change into passive voice)
- (iii) Who can surpass Einstein in intelligence ?
(Change into an assertive sentence)
- (iv) He has become very frail. He is recovering from an illness.
(Combine the two sentences using 'since')
- (v) Few historians write as interestingly as Joshi.
(Change the degree of comparison)